



Grade 4 Theme 6 Research Report

Performance Standard W2.1 Write a well organized two-paragraph composition that addresses a single topic.

GLES: [4] 2.1.1 Writing a paragraph that maintains a focused idea and includes details that supports the main idea

[4] 2.3.1 Writing a variety of simple and complex sentences including the conjunctions and, or, but, or because

[4] 2.3.3 Identifying and correcting mistakes in punctuation (i.e., end of sentences, commas in dates, salutations and closings in letters, and commas in series and capitalization (i.e., book titles, beginning of sentences and proper nouns)

[4] 2.4.1 Rearranging and/or adding supporting details to improve focus and support main ideas

[4] 2.5.1 Giving credit for others' information by citing title and source (L)

Performance Standard W2.6 Use resources such as computers, word processing software, dictionaries, and thesauruses to make choices when writing.

Purpose:

Connect Houghton Mifflin nonfiction literature with Reading Writing Workshop Research/ Report in Theme 6.

Select and research a topic.

Practice taking notes.

Write two paragraphs that stay on topic with accurate details.

Use technology to find information.

Document two sources.

Use multi-resources to write a final report.

Focus on traits of organization and conventions.

Resources/materials:

HM Teacher's Edition for Theme 6

Student anthologies for Theme 6

Transparencies RWW6-1, RWW6-2

Student copies of a research plan (Attachment 5- Hoyt, L. 2002)

Notecards

Gallon size Ziploc bags

Class copies of Guidelines for Taking Notes (Attachment 1), Ways to Begin a Report (Attachment 2)

Assessment rubrics for each student (Attachments 3 and 4)

Optional texts: *Yuck! A big book of little horrors* by E. Merriam

The Wise Woman And Her Secret by R. Snedden (see Reference)

Connection to Houghton Mifflin literature:

Student Anthology – *Salmon Summer*, pages 632-653; *Wildfires*, pages 658-684; *Rain Forest*, pages 654-657

Leveled Readers with lessons described in teacher edition on pages 685O-685R

Step One - mini lessons to precede report/research writing:

Immersion in nonfiction literature:

- HM student anthologies provide several excellent nonfiction texts for students to read with a writer's eye for what makes good expository writing. *Wildfires and the Cycles of Nature* by Seymour Simon include lessons to practice finding topic, main ideas, and supporting details (Transparency 6-12). Practice page 208 would be helpful if available.
- Another choice of literature to introduce writing nonfiction is *Yuck*. It has short selections that describe micromarvels such as germs on a toothbrush and real life photographs. The kids show emotions such as laughing, gagging, excitement, etc. This is an opportunity to point out that the author has great Voice, one of Six Traits, because the students felt emotion, and students also wanted to read the entire book.

Selecting topics:

- Introducing a research/report writing project with trade books can peak interest, model good writing, and open a discussion about the inquiry process. For example, *A Wise Woman* by Eve Merriam is a fictional book for opening a discussion about inquiry. It portrays a child who is very curious about her world and asks many questions. Following the reading of the story, ask students what questions they might want to investigate under an umbrella topic such as ancient civilization, earth science, Alaska animals, famous Americans, etc. (An umbrella topic helps young writers focus their research.)
- Picking a workable research question is critical to students' success with writing their report. Ask students to list three to four burning questions they have on the main topic. Their next step is to narrow down their questions to one big idea they wonder about and want to study. Talk about narrowing down a topic and give examples of questions that are too broad to answer in two paragraphs. Also, discuss how a question that can be answered with one or two sentences would not be a good research project. Discuss who their audience will be. It is helpful for students to meet with partners and/or groups to discuss their choices in terms of two broad or two small.
- Once the topic is selected, students fill out some type of a report/research plan for their teacher to review. (Attachment 5) The teacher reviews the plans with each student in a conference and/or writes comments on the plans and passes them

back to students. Students store their plans and other research items in Ziploc bags. (Each student has a Ziploc with his or her name on it.)

Steps for Report/Research Writing:

- As a whole group, students read the HM text, *The Rain Forest*, and look for the basic steps of composing a research report. (Transparency RWW6-1) Teacher posts a chart of the steps in the classroom for future reference. Another option would be for students to copy the steps for report/research writing in the reference section of their Writer's Notebooks.

Skimming and Scanning nonfiction text:

- In large or small groups, discuss the differences between large, small, and bold print in nonfiction text. Look at pictures, scales, diagrams, charts, captions, etc., and note how they inform the reader.
- With partners and HM text, *Seal Island Kids*, students can practice skimming, scanning, and writing notes on post-its.

Notetaking:

- Teacher models taking notes and documenting sources. Develop guidelines for taking notes. (Attachment 1) The guidelines can be posted and/or copied in the Writer's Notebook reference section. Students revisit their research plans and write three to five questions on notecards before each research session. Students will need a minimum of twelve facts and document two or more sources for a two or more paragraph report. Notecards are kept in the research bags.
- Students practice taking notes before they begin their research. One strategy (Hoyt, 2000) is to practice looking for one key word that summarizes one or more paragraphs with three to five additional words to support the key word. *Wildfires* in HM student anthologies for Theme 6, works well for practicing the strategy as a whole class. The strategy is described in detail in *Snapshots*. This strategy is **the most effective** if practiced frequently beginning earlier in the school year. There is an optional assessment rubric for notetaking. (Attachment 3)

Determining Importance:

- After three or more sessions of accumulating facts, students are ready to organize their information. Model this process by organizing a topic into categories. Transparency RWW6-2 is available for this lesson.

Step Two - Mini lessons to write a research/report:

Prewrite

- Teacher models how to fill in a topic web or another graphic organizer with facts she or he has collected. Students fill in a topic web.

- Teacher demonstrates ways to begin a nonfiction report. (Attachment 2) This could include examining how other authors begin their nonfiction text. Post a chart listing ways to begin a report.

- Teacher repeats this lesson with effective ending sentences.

Draft

- Teacher demonstrates a final write of a two-paragraph report that includes an opening sentence, four sentences with details, and a concluding sentence. *Step Up to Writing* method works well to scaffold organizing expository writing.
- Students are provided assessment rubrics before they begin writing. (Attachment 4) The above step could include the explanation of this rubric.
- Students write first rough draft, approximately 30-45 minutes. The rubric and draft are stored in research bags.

Revise

- Students review rough drafts and check their reports with the assessment rubric. (Attachment 4) They revise and edit their report for teacher review.
- Teacher reads the rough drafts and writes comments on post-it notes/and or conferences with students. Teacher meets with groups of students that have the same types of revision issues. The other students meet with a peer and/or teacher to revise their drafts.

Final draft

- Students write a final draft that includes two sources and turn the draft and research bag into their teacher.

Publish

- Students share reports in some way. There is list of ideas for sharing in Teacher Edition, page 657G. An extension of the report would be an investigation report/poster. Linda Hoyt has an excellent section on investigations in her book *Make It Real, Strategies for Success with Informational Texts*.

Assessment:

- Teacher can grade the written research reports for a writing grade and notetaking for a reading grade. (Attachment 3, 4) Another grade could be for effort during the whole report/research writing process.

Teacher Reference:

Hoyt, L. (2002). *Make It Real*. Heinemann.
 (2000). *Snapshots*. Heinemann.
 (1999). *Revisit, Reflect, Retell*. Heinemann.

Mentor Texts:

Merriam. E. (1991). *The Wise Woman And Her Secret*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Snedden, R. (1996). *Yuck!* Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
Sneed B. Collard III. (1993). *Sea Snakes*. Boyds Mills Press.
(1997). *Animal Dads*. Scholastic Inc.
(1997). *Creepy Creatures*. Charlesbridge Publish.

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Guidelines for Taking Notes

- Look for main ideas as you read.
- Write each main idea as a heading.
- Look for facts and details that explain each main idea.
- List these facts and details below the heading.
- Don't write everything. Choose only important information.
- Use sentences or just words and phrases.

Reference Houghton Mifflin Grade 3, Theme 4

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Ways to begin a report

- Snapshot (picture) or unusual image
- Action
- Question
- Interesting fact

Practice ways to begin a report on rain forests pretending you are going to narrow down the report to two paragraphs.

- Start with a question How –Why- What

_____?
_____?

- Start with a very pertinent fact.

_____.

- (Snapshot) _____.

- Topic _____.

- Start with a movement. _____

_____.

- Start with a startling or interesting fact. Did you know that

_____?

Research/Report Note Card Reading Assessment



Your reading is going to be assessed for notetaking using a 6-point grading scale.

5-6_____points Note cards list more than twelve facts and two sources.

3-4_____points Note cards list twelve facts and two sources.

1-2_____points Note card list less than twelve facts and no sources.

Points Earned

_____5-6 Above Standard

_____3-4 Meets Standard

_____1-2 Below Standard

Research/Report Assessment based on 6 traits grading scale

Ideas

_____ 5-6 Report is factual and well researched. The topic is interesting and not too broad. There are two or more sources listed.

_____ 4 Report is factual. The topic is not too broad. There are two or more sources listed.

_____ 3 Report is factual. The topic is too broad. Facts are missing in some places. There are fewer than two sources listed.

_____ 1-2 Report is not focused on a single topic. Many facts are needed. There are no sources listed.

Organization

_____ 5-6 There are a minimum of two paragraphs. Main ideas are stated in topic sentences and grouped in the two paragraphs. The conclusion is effective.

_____ 4 There are two paragraphs. The two paragraphs are organized logically. There is a conclusion.

_____ 3 There are two paragraphs. The facts are not in logical order with a topic. The ending is not clear.

_____ 1-2 The report is not focused on a single topic. The facts and ideas are disorganized. There is no ending.

Conventions:

_____ 5-6 Almost no errors in capitalization, grammar, and spelling.

_____ 4 There are some errors, but do not effect understanding.

_____ 3 There are more than several mistakes, but do not affect understanding.

_____ 1-2 There are a number of mistakes that make it hard to understand the information.

Total 18 points

_____ 15-18 Above standard

_____ 10-12 Meets standard

_____ 9 and below Does not meet standard

Research Plan

Researcher _____ Topic _____

My big questions: What do I most want to learn?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

How will I find answers? What sources are likely to help? Be sure to include at least one interview related to your topic. _____

Interview

Written Sources

Source	Author	Publisher
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_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Data-Gathering Strategy

There are many ways to gather data. You can take notes, cut them up, and classify them; use index cards or graphic organizers; combine sketching and writing; or ?

To gather my information, I will _____

How will you present what you have learned? (Write a report, make an oral presentation, create a book, make a poster, or _____)