6th Grade Language Arts—
Pathways Assessment Project

A Collaborative Project—Language Arts Department, Library Media Department and TAG Teachers

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Davenport Community Schools
Davenport, IA

June 2005
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Sixth Grade Language Arts – Pathways Project

The integration of the *Pathways to Knowledge* model into curriculum continues to be a K-12 district goal and initiative.

**Goals**

The *Pathways to Knowledge* model is to be utilized with the Sixth Grade Language Arts Research Paper. Another goal of this model is to develop an assessment tool to determine teacher and student use of the model’s components.

**Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria**

Teachers will also see the alignment of many of the *Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria*. Thus, use of the *Pathways to Knowledge* model supports teachers’ classroom instructional efforts and their work with the *Iowa Teaching Standards and Criteria*.

**Requirements**

Sixth Grade Language Arts teachers are to incorporate *Pathways to Knowledge* model language and processes into their research paper work. Students’ understanding and use of this model will be reported to the Secondary Language Arts Coordinator. As fifth graders, students completed a “Pathways” research project. This is the next step of implementation for them.

**Benchmarks**

Several 6th grade Language Arts Benchmarks are relevant to this project:

Students will be able to:
- apply the writing process
- employ the *Pathways to Knowledge Research Model* throughout the informational paper process
- develop paragraph(s) using topic sentences, supporting details, and concluding sentences
- develop multi-paragraph writing
Pathways to Knowledge Overview
The Sixth Grade Project

What students must know and be able to do:

1. Write a research project:
   a. Thesis statement
   b. Main idea
   c. Fiction/Non-fiction
   d. Note-taking skills
   e. Organization:
      i. Intro, body, conclusion
      ii. Works cited
   f. Revising and Rewriting
   g. Personal Reflection

2. Use the Pathways Research Process:
   a. Use Pathways language
   b. Describe the research process
   c. Recognize where they are in the process
   d. Show evidence of:
      i. Formulating questions
      ii. Note-taking
         1. Locate relevant information
         2. Paraphrase
      iii. Interpreting
      iv. Reflecting

3. Use Technology:
   a. Inspiration software
   b. E lockers
   c. Social, Ethical, and Human Issues:
      i. Note-taking
      ii. Plagiarism
      iii. Citations
   d. Technology Research Tools
      i. Search Engines
      ii. Websites
      iii. OPAC
      iv. Online Databases
   e. Technology productivity tools:
      i. Word Processing
      ii. Spreadsheet
      iii. PowerPoint
Pathways to Knowledge

Follett’s Information Skills Model

Appreciation
- Sensing
- Listening
- Reading
- Curiosity
- Enjoyment

Establishing my focus
- Formulate initial questions
- Defining question/need
- Brainstorm
- Build background
- Clustering
- Outlining

Explore relationships
- Explore general sources
- Relate to prior knowledge
- Identify key words
- Narrowing/broadening
- Listing

Planning and implementing my search strategy
- Schools, library media centers & classrooms
- Libraries (public, academic, special)
- Government agencies
- Telecommunications providers
- Community business/industry
- Print & Electronic Resources (general references such as encyclopedias, atlases, indexes, almanacs, books and magazines)

Search
- Home computer resources
- Museums
- Zoos
- Planetariums
- Nature centers
- Colleges & Universities
- Optical technology (laser videotape, CD-ROM, other)
- Historical sites
- Internet
- Recording bibliographic information
- Knowing when to get help

Interpretation
- Tools (indexes, subject trees, search engines, periodical databases, electronic card catalogs)
- Skinning and scanning
- Questioning techniques
- Identifying alternative topics
- Note-taking, summarizing and storing information
- Rechecking information

Communication
- Choose appropriate communication format
- Integrate concepts
- Determine themes, patterns, trends
- Organize
- Evaluate format selection
- Express ideas through:
  - Video
  - Research report
  - Oral
  - Mural

Evaluation
- Checking for effective communication of new knowledge
- Evaluating and refining the question
- Using appropriate tracking tools to assess & modify search strategies

Reflection & developing my personal meaning
- Reflect
- Evaluate

Constructing and presenting my new knowledge
- Assess a need
- Computer presentation software
- Satellite careers
- Documentary

Thinking about my process/product
- Reflect
- Answer a question
- Portfolio

Evaluating process & product
- Assessing/reassessing personal information seeking process

Assessing usefulness of my information
- Practice responsible, ethical use of information
- Respect intellectual property
- Reflection
- Conclusion

Identify information providers & tools
- Select information resources & tools
- Seek relevant information

Follett’s Information Skills Model

Pathways to Knowledge
©1997 Third edition, Follett Software Company
http://www.Follett.com
Appreciation
During the Appreciation stage, teachers develop student interest in whatever subject will be used for the research product with focused anticipatory sets. Teachers will spark curiosity by using read alouds, think alouds, word walls, exploring non-fiction, video and electronic material, inviting guest speakers, and/or providing simulations. Teachers may also collaborate with other content area teachers.

Presearch
During the Presearch stage, students and teachers will further develop background information by using Inspiration Software to do group brainstorming and to cluster similar information. After reflecting, the teachers model the development of guiding questions by focusing on a particular branch of the web. Students will be introduced to the concept of the thesis statement. The teachers and media specialists model identifying key words to be used in locating information and how the key words may be different or combined depending upon the source. Students identify key words using their guiding questions and explore general resources. Students will be introduced to their eLockers in preparation for saving materials which will begin in the Search component.

Search
During the Search stage, students will identify and choose sources of information, begin developing their search strategies, and do the actual research. Initially, teachers/media specialists will model the effective and ethical process of note taking. They will give students practice in clarifying the main idea and paraphrasing and will talk about the issue of plagiarism. Students will be instructed in proper methods of citation and introduced to an online citation maker. Teachers will work closely with the media specialist to be sure students have skimming/scanning skills and knowledge of nonfiction conventions.

Students can use the LMC to access print/non-print sources. The Media Specialist will introduce students to OPAC, online databases and search engines to locate appropriate and authoritative websites. Teachers need to be actively involved in the search process by monitoring where students are in the research process, guiding them to the next correct step, and giving individual instruction where needed. The Search stage will take time. If students are rushed through this stage, the other stages will suffer.

Interpretation
During the Interpretation stage, students start to make meaning out of the information they’ve documented (analyze, synthesize, and evaluate). This can start at the Search stage if students record reflections as they take notes. Use of graphic organizers such as Inspiration Software either as a group or individually will help in this process. Students draft the final form of their thesis statements. They need to decide if they have complete
and comprehensive information to support their thesis statements or if they need to move back to the Search stage.

**Communication**
During the Communication stage students will complete their product. Students will be made aware of the audience for their information. Teachers/Media Specialists will show examples of organizational plans (i.e., outlines/webs) which students may use to organize information. They will present examples of finished products and rubrics to assist students in the creation of the product that will communicate their information most effectively. The rubrics will also assist students in the revisiting and revision process. They will finalize their citations.

**Evaluation**
During the ongoing Evaluation stage, students will assess their movement through the Pathways Research Process. They will use Pathways language as they talk about their process in the group. This will involve personal reflection about each component in the process as they are working. They will evaluate their own products using the rubric provided. Teachers will also evaluate the final product using the rubric. The collaborating team of teachers will reflect upon the effectiveness of the implementation of the Pathways Research Model and the collaborative process.
### Pathways to Knowledge

#### 6th Grade Collaboration Grid

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom Teacher</strong></td>
<td><strong>Library Media Specialist</strong></td>
<td><strong>TAG Facilitator</strong></td>
<td><strong>SpEd Teacher</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher introduces unit and gives overview of Pathways process.</td>
<td>Contribute to word wall.</td>
<td>Provides enrichment materials.</td>
<td>Provides reading support strategies and help as needed with study guides or written quizzes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word wall</td>
<td>Pull selected books and identifies and gathers resources.</td>
<td>Create hot lists of both fiction and nonfiction materials.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce/provide rubric.</td>
<td>Review and revisit use of OPAC.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher provides time for reflection.</td>
<td>Order books from AEA.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create hot lists of both fiction and nonfiction materials.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A P P R E C I A T I O N</strong></td>
<td>Provide structure for student overview of content.</td>
<td>Model the use of Inspiration Software.</td>
<td>Assist individual students and groups as they need support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guide brainstorming, webbing, clustering, etc.</td>
<td>Model the use of eLocker/eDesk.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teach the thesis statement concept.</td>
<td>Provide sources.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assist students to write guiding questions.</td>
<td>Develop keywords for guiding questions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Create note sheets.</td>
<td>Monitor student progress.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help students identify the possible need to return to the Presearch component.</td>
<td>Help students identify the possible need to return to the Presearch component.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teach conventions of non fiction.</td>
<td>Review conventions of non fiction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Make the connection with building reading strategies (i.e. main idea, paraphrasing)</td>
<td>Instruction in necessary OPAC, online database, and web search skills.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teach note taking process.</td>
<td>Monitor note taking.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teach citation process.</td>
<td>Teach ethical use of information. (Plagiarism)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Monitor note taking.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERPRETATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>COMMUNICATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>EVALUATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>Additional Actions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher will use graphic organizers (i.e. Inspiration Software) to model analyzing and synthesizing information to make meaning (comprehension).</td>
<td>Show examples of organizational plans (i.e. outlines and/or webs)</td>
<td>Guide students in self-evaluating their product using the product rubric.</td>
<td>Support and monitor students in writing thesis statements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model writing of the thesis statement.</td>
<td>Explain product rubric.</td>
<td>Work with students who want to revisit and revise their product.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6th Grade Pathways Glossary</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Citation</strong></td>
<td>Documenting the author/source</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The District’s Research Format</strong></td>
<td>In-text citation and works cited format developed for use by secondary students/teachers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>eDesk</strong></td>
<td>A file in the eLocker folder with information that teachers make available to students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>eLocker</strong></td>
<td>A personal file available on the DCSD server for each student in which work can be stored. It is not available to students from their homes.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enrichment</strong></td>
<td>Extra learning opportunities available that expand topics studied as a class.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate</strong></td>
<td>Determine the value of some idea and make judgments based upon the information available.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guiding Questions</strong></td>
<td>BIG questions that guide research.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hot List</strong></td>
<td>A list of internet sites gathered by an instructor for use by students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inspiration Software</strong></td>
<td>A graphic organizer, which allows students to electronically create brainstorming, mindmaps, and concept maps—all of which can be easily converted to outlines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Key words</strong></td>
<td>Specific words and phrases to use in searching for information.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KWL</strong></td>
<td>A strategy that activates prior knowledge and begins the questioning process.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Model (Verb)</strong></td>
<td>To do an academic task while “talking through” the thought processes involved in deciding the steps needed to accomplish it.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-fiction Conventions</strong></td>
<td>Attributes that differentiate non-fiction from other types of literature.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Note sheet</strong></td>
<td>A graphic organizer created by teacher and students from questions generated about a topic. This is used by students for note taking as they read for information.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online Databases</strong></td>
<td>Web-based lists of sources and the actual articles, e.g., Electric Library and EBSCO.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OPAC</strong></td>
<td>The electronic catalog in the LMC or on any computer with Internet connections. (OLD terminology: card catalog)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Outline</strong></td>
<td>A linear, traditional method of organizing information into main topics and subtopics.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pathways Research Process</strong></td>
<td>A collaborative 6-stage research process which is part of the District’s CSIP.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Patterns</strong></td>
<td>Pieces of information that can be put together to create predictable groups or suggest predictable occurrences.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Plagiarism</strong></td>
<td>Using information or writing done by someone else without giving credit to the source.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation Software</strong></td>
<td>Any software that presents information in an electronic format, e.g., PowerPoint.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Thesis Statement</strong></td>
<td>The sentence in the introduction that is the whole point of the paper—what the researcher has learned.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>A chronological list of events presented visually.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Trends</strong></td>
<td>Patterns that appear to be occurring with increasing frequency.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Venn Diagram</strong></td>
<td>Two concentric circles or squares used to help organize similarities and differences.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Web</strong></td>
<td>A graphic organizer used to categorize information—useful in recognizing key words.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Word Wall</strong></td>
<td>Common, high frequency content words used in the unit that are posted on the wall with definitions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Works Cited Page</strong></td>
<td>The last page of research paper which lists required source information in alphabetical order and District format. (OLD terminology: bibliography)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Sources

Web Sites:

- Core Knowledge: The Write Stuff [Two Column Notes]
  http://www.coreknowledge.org/Ckrpro27/esrcs/lessons/02_3_Writestuff.pdf

- Flip-It
  http://aliceinfo.org/FLPT_focus.html

- Ideas About Notetaking and Citing Sources [Jamie MacKenzie Electronic Format]
  http://www.standrews.austin.tx.us/library/Notetaking.htm

- The Kentucky Virtual Library Presents: HOW TO DORESEARCH

- Note Star [Electronic format]
  http://www.4teachers.org/

- Research Building Blocks: Notes, Quotes, and Fact Fragments
  http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view_printFriendly.asp?id=146

Books:
ISBN 0-9674078-2-6

Order online at http://fnopress.com

Brochure created by Marcia Jensen
Davenport Community Schools
January 16, 2004

Note Taking
Featuring the method of Debra Kay Logan

Information from your Library Media Center
Note-Taking Sheets:

To find out more...

How to Take Notes

Types of Notes:

- Lists
  - Use topics bullet Pointed
  - Do not repeat
  - Emotio, obvious
  - Synonyms
  - Symbols
  - Abbrev.
  - The sources
  - Quotation marks
  - Facts and phrases
  - No complete sent.

Personal Response

- Credit given to the author
- Exact information with quotation

Summary

- A short review of the information

Paraphrase

- A few words in a piece of work
- Rephrasing is not changing
  - Words to say the same thing
  - Paragraphs using different

Fast Facts

- List
- Numbers
- Definitions

References:

- Logan Debra Kay
- Information

- How to take notes

- Researchers' personal rec.
- Personal Response

- How to materialize
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualities</th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Qualities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Notetaking:</strong></td>
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<td>--Detailed</td>
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<tr>
<td>--Complete Sentences</td>
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<tr>
<td>--Information in paragraphs</td>
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<td>--No quotation marks</td>
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<td>--Does not use symbols/abbrev.</td>
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<td><strong>Tracking Sources:</strong></td>
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<td>--Does not cite sources of info.</td>
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<td>--Does not identify sources of</td>
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<td>quotations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Citing Sources/Bibliography:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>--Citation form not filled out.</td>
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<td>--Citation form inaccurate.</td>
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<td>--Citation form incomplete.</td>
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<td><strong>Evidence of Progress:</strong></td>
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<td>--No notes.</td>
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<td>--Inadequate evidence of time on</td>
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<tr>
<td>task.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Comments &amp; Student information needs:</strong></td>
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</table>

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Pathways to Knowledge Terms

**Appreciation** sparks curiosity and imagination, which can lead to the beginning of research. Appreciation grows throughout the research process.
- Possible strategies include reading, viewing, listening, discussing, and writing.

**Presearch** includes exploring connections between information and topics, connecting to prior knowledge, and developing questions.
- Possible graphic organizers include webs, mindmaps, KWL charts, and concept maps.
- Possible strategies include building background information, exploring general sources of information, identifying key words, brainstorming, and narrowing/broadening topics.

**Search** includes selecting and using a variety of information resources, planning and implementing the search strategy, and recording information to answer questions.
- Possible graphic organizers include flow charts and Venn Diagrams.
- Possible strategies include asking questions to clarify meaning, evaluating and choosing relevant sources and information, using information sources appropriately, skimming and scanning, using notetaking methods, recording works cited information, and practicing responsible and ethical use of information.

**Interpretation** includes the process of analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information. Searchers assess the usefulness of their information and reflect to develop personal meaning.
- Possible graphic organizers include webs, concept maps, and Inspiration software.
- Possible strategies include drawing conclusions, paraphrasing, reflecting, organizing information, and practicing responsible and ethical use of information.

**Communication** includes using a format to create a product that shares new knowledge.
- Possible graphic organizers include flow charts, presentation software, storyboards, timelines, and graphs.
- Possible strategies include organizing information, applying information to answer a question, developing a product using the writing process, and practicing responsible and ethical use of information.

**Evaluation** is ongoing and helps each student think about the research process and assess the product.
- Possible graphic organizers include evaluation charts, rubrics, and checklists.
- Possible strategies include the use of appropriate tracking tools (e.g., logs, journals, timelines, checklists, and calendars) to evaluate each stage of the Pathways Research Process.
Name_____________________________

District Pathways to Knowledge Evaluation Checklist

Place a Y or an N in each blank.

Appreciation
1. _______ Activities were used to spark my interest.
   Turn page over and complete # 17.

Presearch
2. _____ I participated in the group brainstorming.
3. ____ I identified key words.
4. _____ I wrote guiding questions.
5. _____ I browsed through various sources of information.
   Turn page over and complete # 18.

Search
6. _____ I prepared at least five entries on my working works cited page.
7. _____ I took accurate notes using the correct format.
8. _____ I used a variety of print/non-print sources: OPAC, Electric Library, online databases, Internet, film, books, encyclopedia, and/or periodicals.
9. _____ I answered my guiding questions accurately and completely.
   Turn page over and complete # 19.

Interpretation
10. _____ I revisited my notes and added personal comments and reactions.
11. _____ I created an outline/web.
12. _____ I wrote a clear thesis statement that indicates the meaning the topic has for me.
   Turn page over and complete # 20.

Communication
13. _____ I wrote an introduction including a relevant thesis statement.
14. _____ I wrote the body of my paper. My paragraphs start with topic sentences, include supporting details, and end with closing sentences.
15. _____ I wrote a conclusion that summarizes the paper and returns to the meaning of the thesis statement.
16. _____ I used in-text citations as directed by my teacher.
17. _____ I compiled a relevant works cited page using the District’s Research Format.
   Turn page over and complete # 21.
Name____________________________________
Evaluation: My comfort level during each state of the Pathways Research Process:

18. **Appreciation Stage**

<table>
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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Miserable</td>
<td>So-So</td>
<td>Very comfortable</td>
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</table>

19. **Presearch Stage**

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<td>Very comfortable</td>
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20. **Search Stage**

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21. **Interpretation Stage**

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**Communication Stage**

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<td>Very comfortable</td>
<td></td>
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**Evaluation Stage (This refers to your reactions to 1-22.)**

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22. **Working through Pathways’ six stages helped me complete the research project.**

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</tbody>
</table>
Pathways Teacher Response Sheet
6th Grade Research Project

1. Did your knowledge of the Pathways Model increase during the research activities?
   □ Yes
   □ No

2. Did your awareness and use of the Pathways language increase as you worked through the process with your students?
   □ Yes
   □ No

3. Did you become more comfortable using the Pathways language as you worked through the process?
   □ Yes
   □ No

4. I collaborated with the following on this project:
   □ Library Media Specialist
   □ TAG Facilitator
   □ SpEd Personnel
   □ Reading Teacher
   □ Another Teacher
   □ Other

5. Did the collaboration result in better research papers?
   □ Yes
   □ No

6. Did use of the Pathways model increase the number of research papers turned in?
   □ Yes
   □ No

7. Comments
APPENDIX
## Sixth Grade Writing Benchmarks

Students will be able to:
- Apply the writing process
- Employ the *Pathways to Writing Research Model* throughout the informational paper process
- Develop paragraph(s) using topic sentences, supporting details, and concluding sentences
- Use specific writing forms (e.g. personal narrative, comparison/contrast, poetry)
- Develop multi-paragraph writing (e.g., informational writing or compare/contrast)

## Sixth Grade Writing Rubric: Informational Writing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Needs</th>
<th>Meets</th>
<th>Exceeds</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing Process</strong></td>
<td>Lacks evidence of prewriting, drafting, and revising/editing</td>
<td>Evidence of prewriting, drafting, and revising/editing</td>
<td>Evidence the process enhances quality of final product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic Sentence</td>
<td>Topic sentence is an incomplete sentence or unclear</td>
<td>Shows evidence of topic in a complete sentence</td>
<td>Clearly states what paragraph is about using rich vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Supporting Details</td>
<td>Fewer than three sentences support the main idea</td>
<td>Each of three (minimum) sentences supports the main idea</td>
<td>Three or more sentences support the topic in logical order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding Sentence</td>
<td>Does not have a sentence that restates the main idea</td>
<td>Restates the main idea</td>
<td>Summarizes the main idea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>Many errors in sentence structure, spelling, usage, punctuation, and capitalization</td>
<td>Some errors in sentence structure, spelling, usage, punctuation, and capitalization</td>
<td>Very few errors in sentence structure, spelling, usage, punctuation, and capitalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form</td>
<td>Form does not adequately support topic</td>
<td>Form is appropriate to topic (involves subject and purpose)</td>
<td>Form effectively accomplishes purpose/topic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
assignment is to write a paper on kinship systems using your own family as an example, you might come up with either of these two thesis statements:

My family is an extended family.

This is a weak thesis statement because it merely states an observation. It doesn’t justify any discussion on the topic, so your reader is likely to stop reading your essay after encountering it.

While most American families would view consanguineal marriage as a threat to the nuclear family structure, many Irian families, like my own, believe that these marriages help reinforce kinship ties in an extended family.

This is a strong thesis because it shows how your experience contradicts a widely-accepted view; thus, it justifies discussion of this topic. A good strategy for creating a strong thesis is to show how a topic is controversial. Readers will be interested in reading the rest of your essay to see how you support your point.

A strong thesis expresses one main idea.

Readers need to be able to see that your paper has one main point. If your thesis expresses more than one idea, then your readers might confuse your readers about the subject of your paper. For example:

Companies should exploit this potential by using web pages that offer both advertising and customer support.

This is a strong thesis statement because it shows the relationship between two ideas. Hint: a great many clear and engaging thesis statements contain words like because, since, so, although, unless, and however.

A strong thesis statement is specific.

A strong thesis statement shows your reader exactly what your paper will be about. Making your thesis statement specific will also help you restrict your paper to a manageable subject. For example, if you’re writing a 7 to 10-page paper on hunger, you might say:

World hunger has many causes and effects.

This is a weak thesis statement for two major reasons. First, world hunger can’t be discussed thoroughly in 7 to 10 pages. Second, many causes and effects are vague; you need to identify specific causes and effects. A revised thesis might look like this:

Hunger persists in Appalachia because jobs are scarce and farming in the infertile soil is rarely profitable.

This is a strong thesis because it narrows the subject to a more specific and manageable topic, and it also identifies some specific causes for the existence of hunger.

How to Write a Thesis Statement

Almost all of us—even if we don’t do it consciously—look early in an essay for a one- or two-sentence condensation of the argument or analysis that is to follow. We refer to that condensation as a thesis statement.

Why Should You: Essay Contain a Thesis Statement?

- to test your ideas by distilling them into a sentence or two
- to better organize and develop your argument
- to provide your reader with a “guide” to your argument

In general, your thesis statement will accomplish these goals if you think of the thesis as the answer to the question your paper explores.

How to Generate a Thesis Statement If the Topic Is Assigned

Almost all assignments, no matter how complicated, can be reduced to a single question. Your first step, then, is to distill the assignment into that specific question. For example, if your assignment is “Write a report on the local school board explaining the potential benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade class,” turn that request into a question like “What are the potential benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade class?” After you’ve chosen the one question your essay will answer, compose one or two complete sentences answering that question.

Writing Tutorial Services
Ballantine Hall 206
Indiana University
855-6758
www.indiana.edu/~wthl/

See our website for hours, times, and locations

Revised 7/7/04
Q: What are the potential benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade class?
A: the potential benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade class are . . .

A: Using computers in a fourth-grade class promises to improve . . .

How to Develop a Thesis Statement If the Topic Is Not Assigned

If your assignment doesn’t ask a specific question, or if there’s no specific assignment, your thesis statement still needs to answer a question about the issue you’d like to explore. In this situation, your job is to figure out what question you’d like to write about. A good thesis statement will usually include the following attributes:

- It deals with a subject that can be adequately restated given the nature of the assignment.
- It expresses main idea.
- It takes on a subject upon which reasonable people could disagree.
- It asserts your conclusions about a subject.

Here’s how to generate a thesis statement for a social policy paper. Let’s say that your class focuses on the problems posed by drug addiction. You find that you are interested in the problems of crack babies, babies born to mothers addicted to crack cocaine. You start out with a thesis statement like this:

Crack babies.

This fragment isn’t a thesis statement. Instead, it simply indicates a general subject. Furthermore, your reader doesn’t know what you want to say about crack kids.

Your readings on the topic, however, have led you to the conclusion that not only do these babies have a difficult time surviving premature births and withdrawal symptoms, but their lives will be even harder as they grow up because they are likely to be raised in an environment of poverty and neglect. You think that there should be programs to help these children. You change your thesis statement to look like this:

Programs for crack kids.

This fragment not only answers your subject, but it focuses on one main idea: programs. Furthermore, it raises a subject upon which reasonable people could disagree, because while most people might agree that something needs to be done for these children, not everyone would agree on what should be done or who should do it. Still, the fragment is not a thesis statement because your reader doesn’t know your conclusions on the topic.

After reflecting on the topic a little while longer, you decide that what you really want to say about this topic is that in addition to programs for crack babies, the government should develop programs to help crack children cope and compete. You revise your thesis statement to look like this:

More attention should be paid to the environment crack kids grow up in.

This statement asserts your position, but the terms more attention and the environment are vague. You decide to explain what you mean by the environment, so you write:

Experts estimate that half of crack babies will grow up in home environments lacking both cognitive and emotional stimulation.

This statement is specific, but it isn’t a thesis. It merely reports a statistic instead of making an assertion. You revise your thesis statement again to look like this:

Because half of all crack babies are likely to grow up in homes lacking good cognitive and emotional stimulation, the federal government should finance programs to supplement parental care for crack kids.

Notice that this thesis answers the question, “What should be done for crack kids, and why?” When you started thinking about the paper, you may not have had a specific question in mind, but as you became more involved in the topic, your ideas became more specific. Your thesis also became more specific to reflect your new insights. Your ideas about a topic may change over the course of writing a paper. Keep in mind that your thesis statement may need to be revised as you write and revise your paper, to reflect your changing ideas on the subject.

How to Tell a Strong Thesis Statement From a Weak One

A strong thesis statement takes some sort of stand.

Remember that your thesis needs to show your conclusions about a subject. For example, if you are writing a paper for a class on fitness, you might be asked to choose a popular weight-loss product to evaluate. Here are two thesis statements for such a paper:

- There are many positive and negative aspects to the Banana Herb Tea Supplement.
- This is a weak thesis because it fails to take a stand. In addition, the phrase negative and positive aspects is vague.

Because the Banana Herb Tea Supplement promotes rapid weight loss that results in the loss of muscle and lean body mass, it poses a potential danger to consumers.

This is a strong thesis statement because it takes a stand, and because it’s specific.

A strong thesis justifies discussion.

It should be possible for reasonable people to disagree on the subject you’re exploring in your paper. Because a good thesis indicates your point of view on this subject, it should justify discussion of the topic. If your
Helpful Sites on Thesis Statement Development

“A Guiding Question or Problem.” QEP & ICT: Making the Connection through Project-Based Learning. QESN-RÉCIT Workshop Series. 19 May 2005


<http://www.corning-cc.edu/writingcenter/developing_solid_thesis_statements.htm>.

Rohrbach, Carol, and Joyce Valenza. What is a Thesis? 19 May 2005


The American Dreamers:
Note taking Sheet

Name of American Dreamer: _______________________
Occupation: _______________________

Biographical Information:
Year of birth: ________  Location of birth: ________
Year of death: _________  Location of death: ______________________
Cause of death: ______________________________
Married to: ______________________________
Children: ______________________________
Where did he/she live? _________________________
Highest level of education: _______________________

The dream:
What was the nature of this person’s dream?
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
What goals did the person select in order to achieve this dream?
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
What were some obstacles to achieving the dream?
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Was this dream achieved? If so, tell when and how. If not, why not?
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________
Endangered Animals - Notetaking

Name of Animal ________________________________

**Body description:**
- Height ________  Length ________  Weight ________
- Feathers ______ Fur ______ Skin ______ Other __________________________
- Color(s) ________________________________________________

________________________________________________________

**Diet:**

**Predator:**

**Prey:**

____________________________________________________

**Lifespan:** How long does this animal live? ______________

**Reproduction:** Number of babies? ___________  Gestation? ___________ months

**Population**

status:____________________________________________________

____________________________________________________

**Habitat and geographic range:**

- Grassland/prairie/steppe/savanna/pampas ________  desert ________
- Deciduous forest ________  taiga/boreal/coniferous forest ________
- Jungle/rainforest ________  ocean/marine ________
- Tundra ____ and/or freshwater/swampmarsh/pond ________
Why is your animal endangered?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What will be the effects on the ecosystem if this animal is gone?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Conservation efforts/human intervention:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Are these efforts working? Why or why not?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Other interesting information:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Heading and Title

A research paper does not need a title page; however, some instructors may require one. Instead, beginning one inch from the top of the first page and flush with the left margin, type your name, your instructor’s name, the course title, and the date on separate lines, double-spaced.

Double space again and center the title. Double space also between the lines of the title, and double space between the title and the first line of the text.

Do not underline your title. Do not put quotation marks around your title.

Margins

Except for page numbers, leave margins of one inch at the top and bottom and on both sides of the text.

Indent the first word of a paragraph one-half inch (or five spaces) from the left margin. Indent set-off quotations (quotations longer than four lines) one inch (or ten spaces) from the left margin, but do not change the right margin. Do not use quotation marks at the beginning and end of the set-off quotation. If something is quoted within the set-off quotation, use quotation marks.

Spacing

A research paper must be double-spaced throughout, including quotations and the list of works cited. For a handwritten paper, follow instructor’s directions for spacing.

Space one space only after end punctuation (i.e., period, question mark, exclamation point).

Page Numbers

Number all pages consecutively throughout the paper by creating a header that places your last name and the number of the page in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top, flush with the right margin (right justified).

Do not use the abbreviation “p.” before the page number or add any punctuation mark.
MLA-Based Works Cited

Guidelines for Reference

One Author

One Editor

Two Authors


Three or More Authors

Two or More Books by the Same Author


Signed Newspaper Article

Signed Article in a Magazine

Encyclopedia Article

Signed Editorial

Government Publication

Pamphlet
An Interview:


Parks, I.M. Personal Interview. 27 July 1999.


Online Information Database:


Article in an Online Periodical:


Television:


Film:


Personal or Professional Site:

Author (if given). Title of Site underlined. Date. Name of Institution or Organization associated with site. Date of access. Network address.


Short Work from a Web Site:

Author’s name (if given). Title of short work in quotation marks. Title of site, underlined. Date of publication or last update. Sponsor of the site (if not named as the author). Date of access. The URL in angle brackets.

*Usually at least some of these elements will not apply or will be unavailable. For example, in the following model, no date of publication was available. (The date given is the date on which the researcher accessed the source.)


To Cite a Previously Published Scholarly Article in a Collection:

Give the complete data for the earlier publication and then add “Rpt. In” (Reprinted in), the title of the collection, and the new publication facts:


Information on a CD-ROM:


Abbreviations For Omitted Material:
n.p. No place of publication given
n.p. No publisher given
n.d. No date of publication given
n. pag. No pagination given (doesn’t apply to online sources)

Parenthetical Citations in Text:
Author and Page:
(Brown 10). (Burns and Duncan 11). (Edwards et al. 12).

Author Is Not Given:
Use the title or shortened version of the title:

Two Titles Are Identical:
Include next item in the works-cited entry:

Information Given in Text:
When author’s name and the title are given in the text, the resulting parenthetical citation will be a page number: (20).

More Than One Book in Your Works Cited Written by the Same Author:
Enough information must be given either in the text or in the citation to distinguish it. (Burns, Infinity 20).
If Burns is mentioned in the text: (Infinity 20).

If Infinity is mentioned in the text: (Burns 20).
If both book and author are mentioned in the text: (20).

Electronic Source Citation:
Note: The citation should match an entry on the Works Cited page.
If this is your Works Cited entry,

your in-text citation would look like this: (“Fresco”).

If this is your Works Cited entry,
Romance Languages and Literatures Home Page. 1997. Dept. of Romance
Langs. and Lits., U of Chicago. 8 July 1998
<http://humanities.uchicago.edu>.

your in-text citation should look like this: (Romance Languages).
A Novel Analysis of *Fahrenheit 451*

*Fahrenheit 451* is a novel written by Ray Bradbury that was published in 1953. This futuristic science fiction story takes place in an atmosphere where firefighters start, not put out, fires. Bradbury’s never-ending love affair with books may have been embedded in the foundation of this novel.

Ray Douglas Bradbury was born on August 22, 1920, in Waukegan, Illinois; the third son of Leonard and Esther Bradbury. He began writing stories on butcher paper in his late pre-teen years. At the tender age of twelve, he began writing at least four hours a day. He was said to be “an unimaginative child” (“Bradbury, Ray Douglas”). Recalling his fond childhood memories of the local fire station, Bradbury idolized the firemen prepared to battle a ruthless inferno:

> And I did pass the firehouse often, coming and going to the library, nights and days, in Illinois, as a boy, and I find among my notes many pages written to describe the red trucks and coiled hoses and clump-footed firemen, and I recall the night when I heard a scream from a part of my grandmother's house and ran to a room and threw open a door to look in and cry out myself. (Mogen 106)

Receiving no further formal education after graduating from a Los Angeles high school in 1938, Bradbury self-taught himself by going to the library at night and typing away at his typewriter during the day. Ray Bradbury’s first story, “Hollerbachen’s Dilemma,” was published in *Imagination!*, an amateur fan magazine. The following year he published four issues of his
Works Cited


## Library Research and Production

### Planner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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<th>Thursday</th>
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</table>

**Generalization:**

**Concepts:**

**Guiding Questions:**

---

**Today's Date** __________________________

**Teacher** __________________________

**TAG teacher** __________________________

**LMS** __________________________

**SpEd teacher** __________________________

**Period(s)** __________________________

**Number of Students** __________________________

**Project Title** __________________________

**Project Due Date** __________________________

---
### End Product:

**Schedule**
- Check librarian's schedule
- Check TAG schedule
- Check SpEd schedule
- Reserve library space
- Reserve computer lab
- 403
- 404
- 405
- 406
- 408

**Prepare**
- Resources
  - Pull
  - Reserve slips
  - MM project.
  - Screen
  - Print bib
  - Checkout
  - Analog Movie Projectors
  - Digital Movie Projectors
  - Prepping lab
- Lesson
  - Equipment
  - PowerPoint
  - Class Links
  - Outline
  - Web Quest
  - Bib / pathfinder
  - Script
  - Activity sheets
  - Bookmarks

**Follow-up**
- Debrief team
- Reshelf resources on
- Update unit folder
- Planner
- Graphic Organizers
- Assesments
- Bibs
- Signs

**TAG Instructional Role**

**SpEd Instructional Role**

**LMS Instructional Role**

169
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electronic Tools</th>
<th>InfoLit Key Concepts</th>
<th>Pathways Curriculum</th>
<th>AASL Standards</th>
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<td>Question/thesis</td>
<td>1-Appreciation</td>
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<th>IA Teaching Standards</th>
<th>DCSD CSIP Goals</th>
<th>Building Goals</th>
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<td>Apply the writing process</td>
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<td>1-Enhance academic performance and support for implementation of DCSD student achievement goals.</td>
<td>Student achievement</td>
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<td>Employ the Pathways to Knowledge Research Model throughout the informational paper process.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-Competence in content knowledge</td>
<td>Early intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop paragraphs using topic sentences, supporting details, and concluding sentences.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3-Competence in planning and preparing for instr.</td>
<td>Safe and drug-free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop multi-paragraph writing.</td>
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<td>4-Strategies meet multiple learning needs</td>
<td>Career and employment</td>
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<td>5-Variety of assessment methods</td>
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<td>6-Competence in classroom management</td>
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<td>7-Professional growth</td>
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</table>
Notes for scaffolding and instruction:

What do students need to know in order to succeed in this project?

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What will be done to provide the framework students need for success?

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Team Debriefing and Final Evaluation

What went well?

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Challenges:

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Changes for next time:

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Notes:
What is your style of collaboration? Check below using descriptions based on work by David Loertscher.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style Description</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-contained teaching:</strong></td>
<td>You use the text and any related workbooks or learning packages. You have loads of materials dealing with your curriculum that you have purchased and keep in your classroom. You tend to use these materials rather than visiting the LMC or using its resources for most of your teaching. You don’t need help from the library media specialist. TAG teachers pull identified students to work with them. Other students don’t see the TAG teacher or need help from the library media specialist in order to meet your criteria.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching with a borrowed collection:</strong></td>
<td>You borrow materials from your LMC and other available and convenient libraries for use in your classroom during a specific unit. Students use the materials you have borrowed, but don’t need to go to the LMC for anything. You might ask the library media specialist to help you find something or check out your materials. TAG teachers pull identified students to work with them. Other students don’t see the TAG teacher or need help from the library media specialist in order to meet your criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teaching with resource help:</strong></td>
<td>You rely on the library media specialist, the LMC, and the TAG teacher for ideas on materials, activities, reference information, and training in technology. You might also use them to provide unit enrichment and supplementation. Library materials and activities as well as use of higher order thinking skills and differentiation are integral to the content of your unit rather than supplementary. Students are required to meet certain objectives while using library materials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Teacher/TAG/Librarian partnership in resource-based teaching and curriculum development:** | You work with the library media specialist and TAG teacher as a teaching team to construct a unit of instruction that will use all resources fully. The TAG teacher and the library media specialist co-teach the unit with you, interacting with all students in providing instruction as well as materials and ideas. This includes:  
  - Analyzing student needs and abilities.  
  - Preparing unit objectives together.  
  - Deciding which content will be covered. The teacher decides subject area content, the library media specialist advises on information literacy skills, and the TAG teacher advises on higher order thinking skills.  
  - Planning and preparing materials to be used.  
  - Creating activities that will allow students to meet the unit objectives.  
  - Presenting the unit.  
  - Evaluating the unit together.  
You consult with the librarian and TAG teacher when curriculum changes are being considered in order to facilitate in advance changes in materials and activities that will be needed from the TAG program and teacher, the LMC and the Library Media Specialist. |