

# Research Skills Help Sheet

## 1. Break down the question

- ✓ Identify your **task** (e.g. write a report, create a fact file).
- ✓ Identify what information you need to know to complete the task. This is your '**research**'.



## 2. Research - Keywords

- ✓ Highlight the key words in the **research**.
- ✓ Remember to only use the key words in your online search. Don't copy the whole question.



## 3. Research - Skimming and scanning

- ✓ **Skim** the search results for websites that might be useful.
- ✓ **Scan** the websites for the answer to your questions.
- ✓ Save any useful websites to return to them if you need to.



## 4. Research - ABC Website Evaluation

- ✓ Use the checklist on the back to evaluate whether the website is a **credible** source of information.



## 5. Research – Reading and notetaking

- ✓ You need to spend time **reading** through the information on the websites in order to learn the information you need to know to complete the task.
- ✓ Make notes as you are reading when you find useful information.
- ✓ Don't just copy and paste text from the internet.
- ✓ When using other people's words or ideas we need to rewrite them, so that our teacher can see that we understand the information we are using in our task.



## 6. Research – Synonyms and definitions

- ✓ Use **synonyms** or definitions to change the key words in your search.
- ✓ Find more specific information, to simplify searches, or blocked websites.



## 7. Writing up your task

- ✓ Using your notes, write up your research in the format stated in the question.
- ✓ Make sure you check off everything you need to include from **1. Break down the question**.

**A**

## Authority

### What should I look for?

- ✓ Who is the author and are they an expert in this subject?
- ✓ Is this information on a reputable website?
- ✓ Check the top and bottom of the webpage for clues.

### How can I tell?

- ✓ Look at the domain name (.com, .edu, .net, .org).
- ✓ Is there an 'About Us' (or similar) that tells you more information?
- ✓ Search for the author in a separate google search to learn more.

**B**

## Bias

### What should I look for?

- ✓ Is the information balanced?
- ✓ Is it more fact, or more opinion?
- ✓ Is a product, service, or idea being sold?

### How can I tell?

- ✓ Identify the purpose (persuade, inform, entertain).
- ✓ Facts may have references to other sources.
- ✓ Is the author an expert?

**C**

## Current

### What should I look for?

- ✓ When was the information written/published?
- ✓ Is the information consistent with your knowledge, or other sources?

### How can I tell?

- ✓ Is there an obvious date of publication? (usually underneath the headline).
- ✓ The copyright year will tell you when the site was last updated (bottom of the page).