The Big 6 Information Problem Solving Process

**Big6: 1 Task Definition**

**Topic:** The task involves selection of a topic. A good topic has enough available information at the student’s grade, ability, and interest level. The student will understand the topic and where to look for topic ideas.

- Locate ideas in teacher’s list, textbooks, library sources
- Find at least three different sources: books, online resources, experts

**Subtopic:** A good subtopic answers: What do I want to know about my topic?

- Person: Early life, education, accomplishments
- Place: history, leaders, government, people, economy
- Thing: Who, what, why, where, why/how
- Specific subtopics: Locate in general sources such as encyclopedias

**Big6: 2 Information Seeking Strategies**

**Sources:** A source is readable by the student and has information that matches the topic and subtopics.

- Sources: anything and everything used for information
- Formats: the form information comes in
  - Print: books, references, magazines, newspapers, etc.
  - Nonprint: Videos, software, research databases, internet sites

**Big6: 3,4 Location & Access, Use of Information**

**Read/Think/Select/Write**

- Read or view a “chunk” with your pencil down (for intermediate age, a chunk is a paragraph)
- Think about what was read. What was important?
- Select key facts from each “chunk” to match subtopics. (No sentences – only key words or important facts)
- Write down only the important facts that answer the questions
- Give credit to the source: author, title, copyright date.

**Big6: 5 Synthesis**

**Organize notes. Create rough draft/Create Final Product**

- Sort notes into subtopic sections
- Move them into logical order for writing
- Create a “sloppy copy” of product (written report, poster, multimedia project, etc.)
- Create final research product and include list of sources

**Big6: 6 Evaluation**

**Ask:** Before handing in the assignment, students should stop and think about their assignment. The student should check their work asking the following questions…

- How well is my project organized?
- Did I have enough reliable information?
- Am I proud of my project?

**TEACHER TIPS**

- Include your librarian in the planning of the project and in the teaching of research skills
- Use the sample planning sheets, graphic note taking organizers, documentation sheets, product ideas, and evaluation forms that are included in the guide.
- Be aware that giving your students opportunities to learn research skills not only meets TEKS objectives but also helps them become better problem solvers, critical thinkers, and decision makers.
1. Task Definition
Write your topic.
Write four good questions about your topic that you will answer in your research.
1)
2)
3)
4)
What kind of a research product will you complete?

2. Ways of Finding Information
What are my best sources of information?

3. Location and Access
Where are the sources I need?
How do I find the information in each source?

4. Use of Information
Read, listen, or view information from sources.
Choose necessary information and take notes.

5. Synthesis
Organize all necessary information about your topic.
Create a product that shows what you learned.

6. Evaluation
Did you do a good job?
What did you do best?
How could you have done better?

Adapted from: Eisenberg, Michael and Robert Berkowitz. The Big6. Worthington, Ohio: Linworth, 1