

DREAM OF A NATION

www.dreamofanation.org



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8th Grade Common Core Alignment Big6 Research Project

Big6 is a six-stage research model designed to help students identify a topic of interest, learn about that topic and then teach others. Their research can result in solving a problem or creating an educational product using information. Some call it information literacy, information communication, or ICT skills.

Using the Big6 information literacy process, students identify information research goals, seek, use, and assemble relevant, credible information and then reflect—is the final product effective and was my process efficient? We have developed an in-depth unit plan for a Big6 information literacy process aligned to English Language Arts Common Core Standards for 8th grade utilizing the rich resources in *Dream of a Nation*. *Dream of a Nation* is a high Lexile level (1340), non-fiction text which aptly supports the Common Core emphasis on text range, quality and complexity. All *Dream of a Nation* chapters and articles are applicable for this Unit Plan. The standards addressed are the following:

Common Core Information Reading Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

Common Core Writing Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2a Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2b Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2c Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2d Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2e Establish and maintain a formal style.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.2f Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.9b Apply *grade 8 Reading standards* to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).

Common Core Speaking and Listening Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.5 Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Common Core Language Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will gain understanding of a self-chosen topic related to a current social, political, environmental and economic issue found in *Dream of a Nation*.
- Students will complete further research on the topic independently, take effective notes on the topic, and synthesize the information they research into a final product which involved both informational writing skills and creative, critical thinking.
- Students will present the product to their peers, community and teacher. Community, teacher and self-evaluation will provide constructive feedback on student products.

Teacher Planning:

This is a unit plan. Depending on length of class time and student reading and writing ability this unit can take from two to five weeks. Students need to have read at least three articles from *Dream of a Nation*. The more articles students have read the more opportunity there is for them to choose a research topic that genuinely interests them. Strategies for helping students understand readings are located in the [teacher resources section of our website](#). Teachers should familiarize themselves with the basic steps of [Big6](#) prior to implementation.

Unit Plan: Big6 Research on Dream of a Nation

Step 1 - Task Definition

1.1 Define the problem

After students have read one or several chapters from *Dream of a Nation* have them select an article most interesting to them. Have them answer the following questions about their topic:

What is the problem?

Who is involved?

Where is it happening?

When is this happening?

Why is it happening / Why is this a problem?

1.2 Identify the information requirements of the problem

What do they need to know in order to understand the problem/ explain the problem/ solve the problem? Have them write down the information they need to know on the student handout, Research Guide, Big 6.

Step 3 - Location and Access

3.1 Locate sources

Have students go to the Solutions and Actions page of the Dream of a Nation website:

<http://dreamofanation.org/solutions/> They should select the chapter of the book that contains the article they are using to launch their research. Click on the hotlink for their particular article. On this page students will find videos, partner organizations that tackle the issue and other articles.

Students can launch their independent research using the ideas, events and vocabulary on these pages.

Here are a list of other good research sites for students:

<http://www.ncwiseowl.org/zones/middle/index.htm>

http://www.proquestk12.com/productinfo/sirs_researcher.shtml

http://www.kcls.org/homework_help/

<http://environment.nationalgeographic.com/environment/?source=NavEnvHome>

<http://www.emagazine.com/>

<http://www.splcenter.org/>

3.2 Find information within the sources

Use the Trash or Treasure method of note taking instruction:

<http://mrjhlbrary.pbworks.com/f/Reading+for+Information+T+%26+T+note+taking+jansen.pdf>

Students can also use this graphic organizer:

<http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/pdf/idearake.pdf> to take notes on those elements within the text they find most relevant. Once they have taken notes have them develop their thesis using this

thesis generator: <http://johnmgarvey.com/apworld/student/thesiscreator.html>

Step 4 - Use of Information

4 Extract information from a source

Cite your sources! Use <http://www.easybib.com/> or, if you can, install <http://www.zotero.org/> and it will track and create your citations for you as you research on the web.

Understanding citations and plagiarism: <http://www.copyrightkids.org/>

Step 5 - Synthesis: Putting it all together

5.1 Organize information from multiple sources

Using the Tree Map Graphic Organizer template, have students write their Thesis Statement on the top line. All Main Details should be included on the branches underneath. Supporting Details go underneath each Main Detail. Students should evaluate as they fill in the Tree Map which notes are relevant and which are extraneous.

5.2 Create a product or performance

Products Suggestions

1. **Create a Prezi** online at: www.prezi.com. This presentation should detail a solution to your research problem. Include some supporting documentation (charts, graphs, tables, etc.) as appropriate.
2. **Create a zine** (a self-published magazine) using the online zine creator at: <http://zeen.com/> Your zine should educate readers about your topic using pictures and words. If your topic requires maps, charts, graphs or other visual data representations be sure to include those as well.
3. **Create a blog** at www.wordpress.com. Your blog should have at least four posts. In your blog address the problem and propose and explain a solution(s). Your blog should be aesthetically interesting and

- appropriate and include multimedia evidence to support your claims and solution(s).
4. **Create a PechaKucha** PechaKucha 20x20 is a simple presentation format where you show 20 images, each for 20 seconds, advancing automatically as you talk along to the images. For examples visit, www.pechakucha.org. Your pechakucha should address your topic in an entertaining and informative fashion and provide the audience with a compelling argument for why your issue needs to be addressed and how to address and/ or solve it.
 5. **Prepare a community service announcement (CSA)** to inform people in your community about the issue. Your campaign should include scripts or screenplays for your videos, sample print ads, scripts for radio spots, mock-up posters or billboards, etc. Have a target audience for your campaign, with appropriate research into why the campaign will work with this target audience.
 6. **Write an article** identifying the issue and proposing a solution for submission to a magazine. Your article will be in the style of the selected magazine and meet standards required by that publication for a feature article. Include appropriate documentation and illustrations including necessary charts and graphs. A bibliography must be prepared. Although the article does not need to be accepted for publication, it must be submitted to the magazine to earn credit. Some potential magazines for teen publication are listed here: <http://classroommagazines.scholastic.com/category/secondary-magazine>

Step 6 - Evaluation

6.1 Judge the product or performance

Students should judge student presentation as well as teachers. Teachers can create individual rubrics for different Student Products here: <http://www.schrockguide.net/assessment-and-rubrics.html>. Students can use our presentation rubric to assess their peers. Students should also judge themselves on their research and presentation. They can use the self-evaluation rubric to assess their own work and learning. Students can also write a reflection on their project in a free form paragraph or two.

6.2 Judge the information-solving process

In addition to judging the product students should also be graded on how well they gathered information, whether they adequately explained the problem and whether their solution is viable and takes into account all the details they uncovered in their research. Teachers can use the following link to create rubrics which align to Common Core Standards: <http://www.essaytagger.com/commoncore>

Please send *Dream of a Nation* examples of your students' finished research projects and suggestions for improvement of our Unit Plan. We appreciate your feedback and insights.