



Research Considerations

One of the most challenging things about a project is the research that goes into it. Below are a few useful tips to help you get the most from your time reading through books, the Internet, newspapers and magazines.

Make the most of the table of contents and the index of the books you have. They will take you right to the parts of the book that are most relevant to your topic.

Try to find the best sources on your topic. Ask your teacher or ask a librarian.

Read the introduction and first chapter of a book. Also, read the conclusion. There is often excellent insight contained in these sections. Usually you can find useful quotations to use in your essay.

Use Canadian sources when applicable. It's always best to use sources that look at a topic from a Canadian angle.

Cross reference. If you are researching a subject such as Terry Fox, you might need to look up terms such as 1980s or Marathon of Hope.

On the Internet, use trusted and authoritative sources like The Canadian Encyclopedia. Your teacher can probably direct you to these, but look for sources that are put together by media outlets, universities, and museums.

Do a Google News search on your topic. It is always interesting to see if your topic has been in the news lately. This will show that you are up to date on your subject and it may provide you with more insight.

The iceberg theory. The largest part of an iceberg – more than half – is actually below the water, and out of sight. This is often the case with research. You need to read a fair bit to get to know your topic. The amount of research that ends up in your final project is probably going to be a small part of what you read. That's okay.

Make use of your local public library. Your school's library will be a great place to start, but your local public library will give you the opportunity to get your hands on a lot more research material if you need it, particularly online databases.