RESEARCH COMPETENCE

Charles Dickens

Introduction

Drive/Speakeasy 3 provides the framework for a research competence project for modern language classes, starting with the article *A Tale of Two Centuries – Charles Dickens at 2012*.

Pupils will get acquainted with Charles Dickens through the article on page 12, doing some preliminary research first. Then they will select a topic that is linked to Dickens' life and work, the age that he lived in or some aspect of Victorian journalism and literature. They will formulate their research question and start doing research.

After having done the research, they will have to present their findings to the class in an oral presentation.

In all, the whole project may take two weeks (6 hours) and the students will have to work in groups at some point.

Drive/Speakeasy 3 provides guidelines for oral presentations, including reflection, but **not** on writing an essay, nor on academic writing skills.

For theoretical background and rationale we refer to recent publications about research competence in language education:

- Bart Laureys, *Stapstenen*, (De Boeck) 2007.
- Spark 4, *Research Competence* (supplement), 2012.

The research skills that are covered:

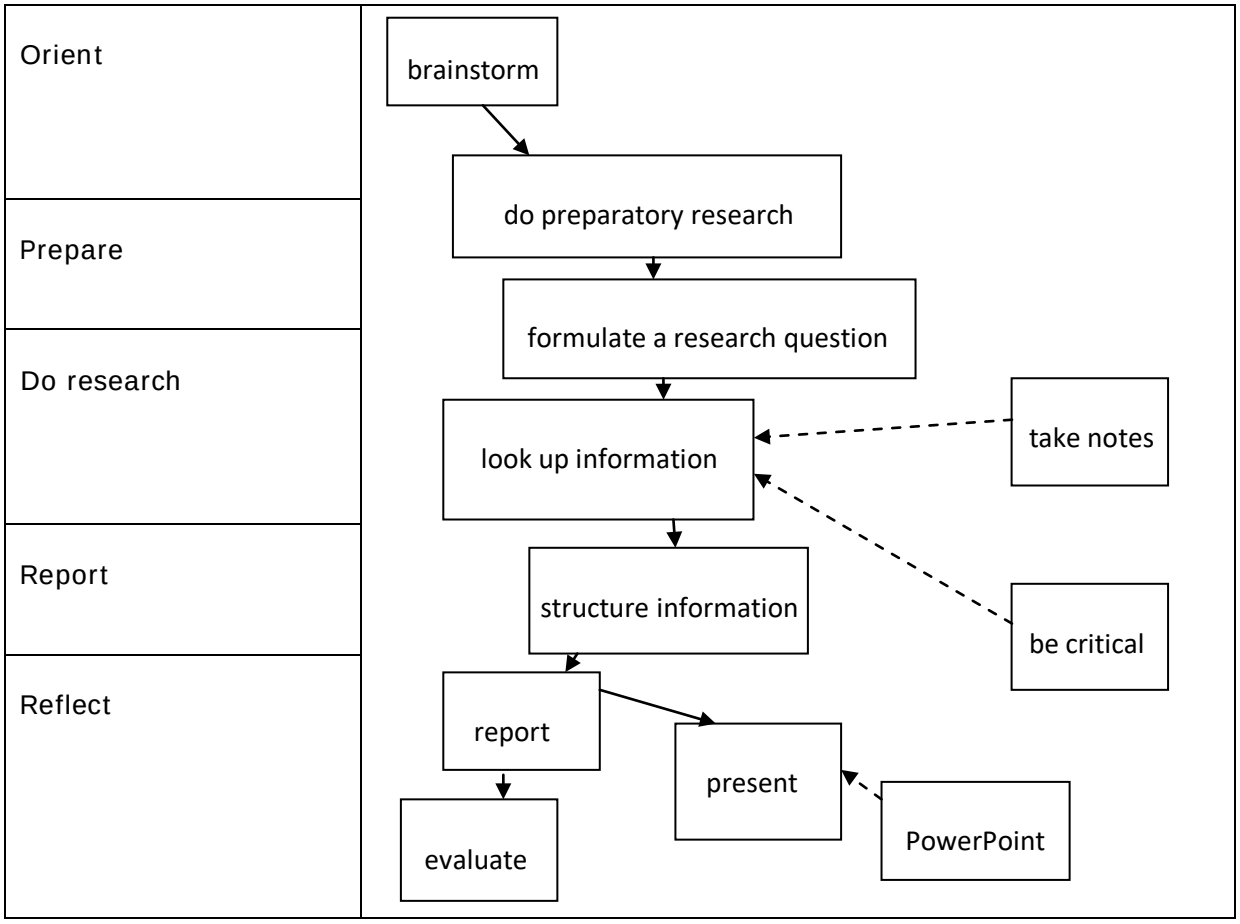
- how to brainstorm on a subject;
- how to formulate a good research question;
- how to take preparatory notes;
- how to look up information;
- how to structure information;
- how to draw up a bibliography;
- how to do an oral presentation;
- how to develop arguments and conclude;
- how to assess yourself and your team members.

The project text will be descriptive and explanatory, rather than argumentative. Still, students should be critical about facts and opinions on Dickens and assess sources.

These are some fields of study that your students can choose from:

- Dickens as a social reformer
- Dickens as an author
- Dickens as a literary innovator
- Dickens as a journalist
- Dickens as a public speaker
- Dickens as a Victorian
- Dickens' personal life

The process



Timing

1st hour: read the article on p. 12 and do the exercises
2nd hour: brainstorm, preliminary research and formulate research questions
3rd hour: research, taking notes
4th hour: further research, taking notes and structuring information
5th hour: outlining and preparing a PP-presentation
6th hour: presenting
7th hour: presenting, feedback and reflection

Brainstorming and formulating a research question

Tell students to choose a (sub)topic and to formulate their research question and subquestions.

Their brainstorming and initial research should be done in small groups of 3 or 4.

Coach them in the process, but do not give them the research question(s) yourself.

Brainstorming

The objective of brainstorming is to put your thoughts and ideas onto paper, without worrying too much about whether they make sense. Brainstorming yields lots of random thoughts and associated words, which can be turned into logical schemes at a later stage. These schemes will provide the subject-matter and the structure of your presentation.

- Write your topic or subject in the middle of a large piece of paper.
- Add lines connecting words that belong to different lists or branches into a mind map. Use *who, what, where, when, why and how?* as subheadings of your mind map. The result is a large cluster or spider web structure, which will need more ordering at a later stage.
- Alternatively, make a bullet with each subtopic and start listing things up. The order in which your subtopics are listed is not so important at the moment. You simply need as many ideas as your brain can produce.
- Look at your piece of paper and you will feel new ideas pop up! Write them down fast.
- Number your main ideas. Number the subtopics.
- If you are a visual type, add graphs or images to your list or mind map.

Preparatory research

- In order to formulate a good research question you will need to do some preliminary investigation. Find out if a question is researchable, starting an initial search on the Internet. Use general articles (from *Wikipedia* for instance) for this;
- Find out if there is enough information on the Internet to do the research;
- Decide if your question is not too narrow nor too broad;
- Find out if your question is not too technical, too academic. In some cases the discussion is too complex and the technical vocabulary too narrowed down;
- Also check what libraries you have in your neighbourhood and what scientific literature they offer. Ask the librarian how the books are organized, which departments the library has and how you can take copies. Books and magazines are usually stored in filing cabinets or bookcases, but a lot of information is digitally accessible. Some of the information can be consulted in the reading room, and some can be borrowed for consultation at home.

Formulating a research question

- By doing the brainstorming activity you have written down lots of ideas. Your interest for the main topic has grown, but you have not formulated a research question yet. Take your time to do this.
    - What do you want to know?
    - Why do you want to know that?
    - How are you going to answer your question?

- Formulate some question that needs to be answered by your research. Take your time, because this is a very important step in the process. Formulating a research question is not such an easy thing. University researchers often need many months before their question is on paper.

- Avoid working on some matter that does not interest you at all. While doing a research project you will learn a lot about the process of scientific work. You also need to learn something about your topic, which is an aspect of Victorian literature in this case. Doing research should be fun.

- Don't make it too easy for yourself! Some questions could be rather predictable and could be answered by looking up only one article on Wikipedia. You will need something more challenging and complex.

  Too easy: *Whose Arctic expedition was Charles Dickens particularly interested in?* (The one of John Franklin to the North-West Passage)

- On the other hand, your research should not be about something that remains too general either.

  Example: *What is Victorian literature all about?* is too open. You wouldn't know where to begin your research. Rather focus on one writer or even better: on one aspect of this writer.

- Your research question should be practical.

  Think about what you want to do with your topic. Will you describe it, define it, compare it, explain it, assess it and express your opinion? Will you talk about causes and consequences, origins, characteristics, differences?

  Example: Will you describe the social themes that Dickens introduced in his writings (about social class, prostitution, child labour)? Will you paraphrase and define these themes, list them, explain what he did about them, what his commitments and political preferences were, why he developed them, explain what other people thought about them, find out how Dickens influenced other people, who his opponents were? Will you explain what you think of his ideas about society? Will you assess whether his views are 'modern'.

  Example: Dickens as a Victorian author
  Research question: Was Dickens a racist?
  Subquestions: What did Dickens write about Jewish people?
  What did he write about Black people?
  What did he write about the Inuit?
  What did he write about Indians?

Examples of possible research questions.

- Dickens as a social reformer
  - Did Dickens approve of the social theories of John Ruskin?
  - What was his opinion of the British class system and social mobility?
  - Which party politics did he support/oppose?
  - Which aspects of social reform did he advocate? In his books? In his life?
  - In how far were his social concerns built on his own personal experiences?
  - Was Dickens a Marxist? A liberal? A socialist? A Tory?
- Dickens as an author
  - Who were Dickens' literary friends?

    - Why was Dickens so immensely popular in his time? Why is he still popular today?
    - Is the film *Great Expectations* a satisfactory translation of the book?
    - Which authors was he influenced by (Milton, Fielding, Dryden, Smolett)?
    - What was his relationship with the illustrators of his works?
- Dickens as a literary innovator
    - What genres did Dickens admire/copy?
    - In what ways did the reading public have an impact on his writing?
    - In what way did he copy/parody the *Penny Dreadful* horror literature of his youth?
    - How could he reach the masses?
    - Was Dickens an innovator in the choice of his topics, in the style that he used, in the way that he reached his audience?
- Dickens as a journalist
    - Is writing in instalments an invention of Dickens?
    - How did his work as a journalist and social investigator have an influence on his writing?
- Dickens as a public speaker
    - How was he received as a public speaker in England, Scotland, Ireland and in America?
    - What were the topics that he spoke about?
    - How did he convince his audiences? Which techniques did he use?
    - What was Dickens' interest in theatre like? Did he actively promote theatrical adaptations of his books?
    - What was his humour like? What did people laugh at at the time?
- Dickens as a Victorian
    - Charles Dickens as a Victorian author. Which ideas from Dickens' books were modern and controversial in his day, which are still modern today?
    - Did Dickens (re-)invent Christmas?
    - Was Dickens an anti-Semitist? Was he a racist?
    - How did Dickens view blacks, Jewish people, Inuit, Indians?
    - What was Dickens' position concerning the Indian Mutiny?
    - Did he have an influence on the way Victorians regarded prostitutes and prostitution?
    - What about love and marriage in Dickens' time?
    - What were his political views and bias? Can you call Dickens a socialist?
- Dickens as a person
    - What was Dickens' relationship with his father, his mother Elizabeth, his first love Maria, his wife Catherine, his friends, his secret mistress Ellen Ternan? In what way did they determine the lives of his fictional heroines?
    - Why are there so many incompetent parents in his novels?
    - What locations can be associated with Dickens (London, Kent)? Are people still commemorating him there?
    - What effect did his divorce have on his character and on his writing?
    - What effect did his affair with Ellen Ternan have on Dickens' life and work?
    - What was his relationship with his wife, children, pets, friends like?
    - In what way did the railroad accident he was involved in influence his further life?
    - What secrets were there in his life?
    - Why was he involved in spiritism and in the supernatural?
    - Does religion have a considerable impact on his work?
- Dickens' heritage
    - Does the theme park *Dickens' World* represent Dickens' heritage in a correct way? Why (not)?
    - Which authors have denounced the books of Charles Dickens and on which grounds did they do that?

- Why is Dickens still popular today? Can you measure and assess his popularity?
- What happens at the bicentennial in February 2012? Which institutions participate in the celebration and what is their message?

- Evaluate your research question

	yes	no
Is the question interesting enough for you? Talk about this with your team members. Is the topic really something for you?		
Is the question researchable? Will you find enough information to answer it?		
Do you have access to sources?		
What types of information will you need to look up? (books, statistics, journals, manuals, articles, reviews, films?)		
Is there enough time to do the research?		
Is the scope of the information ok?		
Is your question broad enough and narrow enough? Do you have enough subquestions?		
Will it be possible to build a realistic action plan with research actions that make sense?		

Drawing up a research plan

- Before you start your hunt for information, consider what you know about the subject already and ask you friends or teacher what they know about it.

- Draw up a **search action plan**, which can act as a group contract. Your research will be done as team work, so you need to draw up a plan or a logbook. On the plan, note down your progress. Turn your plan into some kind of a contract, which guarantees a fair distribution of the work. Use the model below.

Research question:
Research subquestions:

Team members:				
place date	objective of subtask 1	subtask	who? deadline?	task done?
	objective of subtask 2			
	objective of subtask 3			
	objective of subtask 4			

Decide on

- the actions that you need to take (reading, taking notes, interviewing, sending questionnaires);
- the types of information sources that you will consult (books, magazines or newspaper articles, TV-programmes, films, Internet);
- libraries, resource centres that you will visit;
- deadlines that all team members need to respect;
- who will do the presentation of your research.

Looking up information

- The search for information is called *heuristics* (from Greek: *search*). You will find out more about your topic by reading books, magazines, watching clips on TV-channels, looking for materials in libraries and on the Internet.
- The printed works from your library have been selected, reviewed and sorted by experts. Works in libraries are catalogued and these catalogues contain cross-references to other works which can be sent to you from all over the world.
- You need to be more critical about the information from Internet sources than with books from (academic) libraries. Some academic sources and journals are accessible on the Internet, however, although many of these (such as Open University) require an access code.
- It is wise to rely both on library and on Internet sources, looking for materials that cross-check your information. One of the rules of good research is to find two

independent sources that confirm the same data. Ideally these can be data got from trusted library sources that back up data from Internet sources.

- Searching in libraries:
    - Know that libraries are interconnected and that you can ask books to be sent from other libraries for free, although the whole process of asking a book can take some time.
    - Start your search with consulting the Wiki-bibliography and look on http://www.bibliotheek.be. Most libraries have online catalogues which are available without access codes.
    - Ask your librarian how books are organised: along themes from abstract to concrete (SISO) or along clusters of subjects in domains (ZIZO). Libraries provide access to magazines and papers through *Mediargus*. *Biblion* provides quality reviews.
    - Libraries typically have archives which hold
        - **Primary sources**: letters, images, memoirs, accounts from an individual, such as the letters of Dickens, the manuscripts of Dickens. They are original documents from witnesses who had direct contact with your subject.
        - **Secondary sources**: books, articles, studies written about the primary sources.
        - Literary magazines, anthologies, (scientific) journals, reviews, abstracts, monographs, essays, case studies, thesauri, biographies (such as *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biographies* (2004), Bibliographies (systematic lists of books), media, encyclopaedias.

Searching on the Internet

- When looking up information on the Internet, choose a search engine. Most people have *Google* or *Bing* as their default search engines. Set your default on *Google.com* and not on *Google.be.* If you like to try out an alternative, choose English engines such as *alltheweb*, *altavista*, *msn*, *wisenut*, *hotbot* or *ask*.

  Example: to know more about Dickens, you can start with Wikipedia. Use the search box. Wikipedia offers an interesting list of books (a bibliography) on the subject at the end of each of its articles.

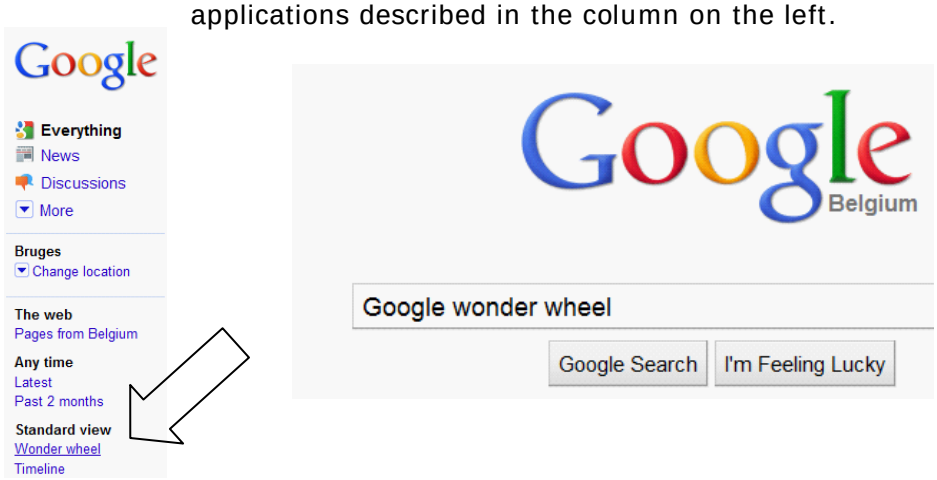
- Type your search word into the search box. If your word is too general, you will get too many sites.

  Example: When you enter the words *Charles Dickens* in the search box, you will get over 22 million sites. Too many to search.

  In order to limit your scope, you will need to search in a more specific way. Be as specific as possible in introducing your search terms.
    - Put a word combination in quotation marks: “Charles Dickens”
    - Use Advanced Search methods: OR, AND, NOT

- Select the language: English
- Use *Wonder Wheel*

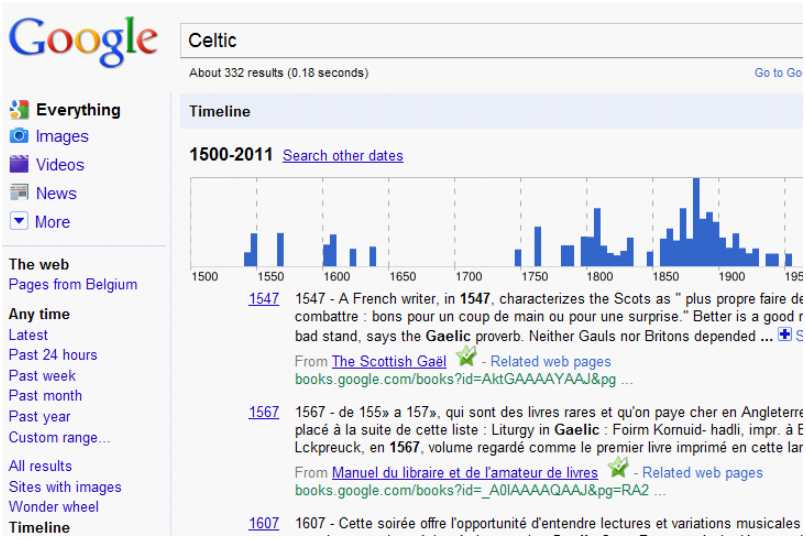
If you wish to activate the Wonder Wheel search device, make sure you work in the *Google in English* module. Activate *Wonder Wheel* by typing *Google Wonder Wheel* in the Search box and hit the *Search* button. Find the applications described in the column on the left.



- Timeline

Timeline is a useful tool with which you can project your theme or topic on a line. By zooming down to years or even months, you will find a set of related articles about what happened at the time. Find the *Timeline* option in the column on the left, right under *Wonder Wheel*.

Example:



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Unfortunately, both *Wonder Wheel* and *Timeline* are sometimes unavailable.

- Use Google scholar

For scientific work, you can make use of *Google Scholar*. This beta-programme was designed for academic purposes and yields titles of sources, publications which you can consult in libraries and add to your bibliography. Access *Google Scholar* by selecting the *More Options* tab in Google. Or type *Google Scholar* in the search box.

Check Internet sources

- As a reader, be critical about your sources. Always double-check information by finding a second independent source that confirms your data.
- Check the author of a site by clicking on the *About Us* button on the home page.
- Use the grid below.

	yes	no
A. Author, data		
1. Can you find back the name or the identity of the author or editor?		
2. Is the author a member of an institution?		
a religion?		
a political party?		
3. Does he/she have a title?		
4. Can you find out why the author has made the site?		
5. Is it clear what his/her target audience is?		
6. Do you see any telephone numbers, e-mails, names and/or addresses of people?		
7. Can you find an e-mail address on which you can react or ask questions (Mailto.)?		
8. Does the author mention his/her own sources?		
B. Time indications		
9. Can you find any date on which the information was put on the web?		
10. Has the site been updated (recently)? Can you check that?		
11. Do all hyperlinks (still) work? Broken links may mean the site is out-of-date.		
C. Commercial?		
12. Does the author of the site try to have you pay money in any way?		
13. Are there any ads on the website page?		
14. Is this a commercial site?		
15. Does the suffix after the dot in the URL generate trust? .com or .co = commercial; .ac = academic; .gov = government; .org = organisation; .edu = education		
D. Quality		
14. Are the language and the layout of good quality? Emotional or factual?		
15. Does what you read make sense?		
16. Can your information be checked or tested? Can you verify the		

information in printed and published sources?		
17. Is the author's point of view impartial and objective?		

Did you tick off *yes* with the questions under A, B and D? And *no* with A2 and C? You can trust your source.

Taking notes

Brainstorming and research yield lots of information. But as you go along with your search, make sure you take good notes. These notes will provide the material for your presentation.

Take notes whenever you read a source, be it a book, an article or some video clip. Your notes will be records that can be organized at a later stage into a coherent structure. Always take notes of what you are reading in order to avoid losing research time. You need a written record of the sources that you have consulted in such a way that you can easily find back and structure your information later on.

At all times do you need to realize where your ideas came from in order to avoid plagiarism.

Index cards

People used to write their information on index cards. They could write down ideas, facts, quotes, bibliographical addresses or paraphrases on these cards, which were put into a certain order after some time. Nowadays we use **electronic index cards**.

Example:

Main topic: Dickens Related words: workhouse, child labourer Summary: Dickens worked at a workhouse, sticking labels on bottles when young. He rose to fame as a journalist and writer. Biography of early age to success. Address: Hibbert, C., *The Making of Charles Dickens*, Harper & Row, 1967.

4.1.2 Electronic files

Write down your records in an electronic file such as this:

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Key words from the text:…….</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">What is the book about (in one sentence)?</td></tr>
<tr><td>The contents of the book</td><td rowspan="2">Write down the page number in this column.

You will need the page number when you refer to direct quotes.</td><td>Compare the ideas from the text with what you already knew about the topic. How does this information relate to other texts that you have read?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Synthesis of the main ideas or key ideas</td><td>Is there anything that I don't understand</td></tr>
</table>

	The number will allow you to find back your information quickly;	that I need to follow up? Identify fields of knowledge that you will need to investigate at a later stage.
Paraphrases of the key ideas		Write down your ideas about the text. Think critically about what the author claims. Is the author saying anything that contradicts the findings/opinions of other authors? Express your opinion about the arguments that the author uses. Do I agree/disagree with what the author is saying?
Direct quotes. Make sure the quotes are copied word for word (verbatim). Put these in quotation marks.		Does the author contradict or confirm what other authors said? What conclusions can you make from what you learned from the text?
Correctly copy bibliographical data: the author's surname, the author's first name, the title of the book, article, video, the title of your magazine, its publisher, the place and date of publication, the page numbers of the article, Internet site details, including the web address, the library number, so that you can easily find back the text.		

An example:

Key words from the text: Victorian – sexism - aestheticism		
What is the book about (in one sentence)? The examination of letters, journals, censored texts shows the dominance of masculine sexual desire in Victorian novels from O. Wilde, Swinburne, Tennyson.		
Correspondence of Hallam He talks about friendship associated with the Good, the True and the Beautiful	p.24	Hallam was under attack for his homosexual bias and defends himself by referring to the Greek philosophers.
Bibliographical data: Dellamora R., *Masculine Desire: the sexual politics of Victorian aestheticism*, (The University of North Carolina Press), 1990, 276 p. ISBN 0807842672, 9780807842676		

Your turn:

Key words from the text:		
What is the book about (in one sentence)?		
	p.	
Bibliographical data:		

Bibliographical address

You need to write down the **bibliographical address** with each source that you consulted, according to strict rules. A list of such addresses of consulted sources is called a bibliography. There are many ways of writing a bibliographical list. Use the one that you use in your lessons of history and/or Dutch/French.

If you have no model, use the following notation:

A book

Morgan, J., *Artistic expression in the Victorian Era*, James Nisbet & Co, Cardiff,1905, pp. 542.

An article

Jones, D., 'The impact of the Industrial Revolution on artistic production', in *National Library of Wales journal*, summer, Volume XXVI/1, 1989, pp.23-56.

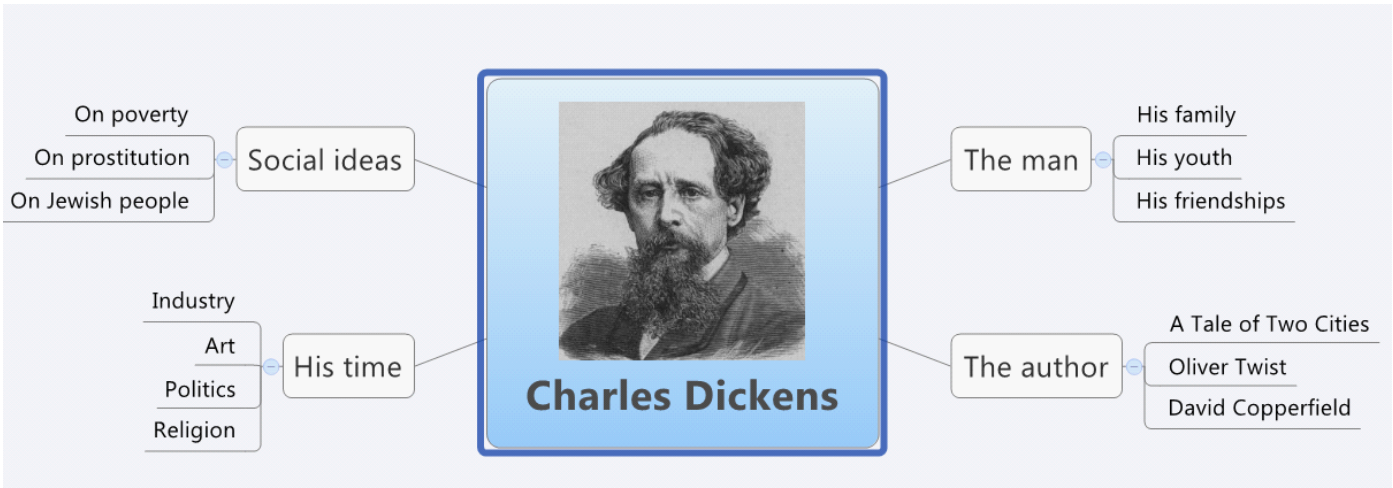
A website

Curthoys, N., 'Future directions for Dickensiana: the ethos of a nation', internet, htttp://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/2001/curthoys.html viewed on 11 April 2013.

Structuring the information

- As you find data that answer your research question you need to process these and discern categories and subcategories. The best way of structuring your information is by means of some graphic presentation.
- You can use different principles or criteria that decide the order of your materials. Example: books, articles, videos and audio materials.
- In most cases, however, you will order your findings thematically, according to key words from your index cards.
- Use some graphic organiser in order to structure all aspects of your research topic. Needless to say that *mind maps* are powerful and accessible graphic organisers.
    - Draw a mind map as you do the research.
    - Use a blank sheet of paper in landscape (put it in a horizontal position);
    - Write the main subject in the middle;
    - Branch out main subtopics, starting from the middle;
    - Write these in different colours;
    - Start in the upper right corner and work clockwise;
    - Use capitals that everyone can read, add symbols or drawings.
    - Or use an open source mind map programme such as www.xmind.net/

Example:



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Alternatively, use outline from your word processor in order to put your data in a hierarchical structure.

Example (alphanumerical outline)

1 Victorian Social Theories
2 Dickens' social theory
    A Social classes
    B Class mobility
    C Class mobility in his life
    D Class mobility in his literature
        1 Dombey and Son
        2 Hard Times

Conclusion

Write a preliminary report as you conclude your research. Fill in the research structure:

Write down your initial research question:
Write down the subquestions:
Why did you choose the research question?
Which methods have you used in your research? • reading books • reading articles • consulting websites • watching video clips
Did you do all research actions listed in your contract or logbook? If not, why not?
What were the results of your research?
Were you able to check sources?
What extra research actions still need to be undertaken?
What are your conclusions? Or recommendations?

Look back on the criteria for choosing a good research question. Was you research question challenging, researchable and balanced?

Presentation

Reporting in writing

Writing an academic report or essay is a complex and challenging task which is not discussed within the scope of this issue but will be discussed in the Spark series fifth and sixth form and in Drive/Speakeasy 3 2012/2013. As it is, focus on reporting in an oral presentation.

Oral preparation

The structure that has been set up in previous stages is, of course, the backbone of your oral preparation in which you present your research findings to an audience.

Do the presentation alone or with your team and make arrangements.

Know exactly how many minutes you have for this, what is expected, who the audience will be, what location will be available and if computers and beamers work in case you want to project.

Before the presentation

- Have the outline of your presentation on a sheet of paper. This could be a mind map or some prompt notes with key words, main headings, some phrases perhaps in point-form. If you know your topic well enough, you can give the talk from these headings and point-form cues. But do not bring a full text of your presentation which you read out to the class!

- Decide whether you provide handouts for the audience and have these printed and distributed before your presentation starts;

- Think of your audience. What do they expect to hear from you? Do you need to inform, convince or entertain them?

- Prepare your speech at home. Rehearse and get feedback from a friend, a member of your family or your domestic animal;

- Estimate the time you will need for your presentation;

- Consider if there will be interaction with your audience. Will you allow questions to be asked during your presentation or only at the end? Or not at all? Will you ask some question to the audience yourself? Do you let your audience talk in pairs for a minute in order to discuss some controversial topic? Expect that someone may react to what you say and you may need to be clear in your response.

- Know what criteria will be used in the evaluation of your presentation. Ask your teacher about that. In most cases you will be assessed on efficient communication and on your use of correct language;

- Think of the grammar and vocabulary forms you have recently discussed and make sure these are correct in your speech;

- Look up the pronunciation of difficult words from your paper. Look up the correct forms in a pronouncing dictionary and add phonetic marks. Add emphasis on certain key words and notes about which concepts you wish to repeat.

During the presentation

- Start with an attractive address (*captatio*). Greet your audience and catch their attention with a quote, an anecdote, a question they could answer, some reference to current news, ask your audience what they know about the topic;

- Explain what you wish to demonstrate. Formulate your research question. Explain why you have chosen your topic. Show your audience the structure of your presentation. Tell the audience that they can ask questions during or at the end of your presentation;
  Use markers such as: In the second part of my presentation I'll show you … The next part will discuss … My next argument is …;

- Avoid clichés: I'm going to talk about …;

- Start out with a very clear statement in which you outline your subject and the main items you will be talking about;

- Relax while you speak. Take deep breaths before you start and avoid panic at the beginning. Many speakers start with an icebreaker for that reason. They show something or ask the audience some question to answer in pairs as an introduction to their talk;

- Talk loudly. That generates more word and sentence stress, which leads to a better intonation. When you wish to talk loud, you will need more breath. Taking in more breath will relax you. Speaking up reduces fear;

- Don't hurry. Slow down when you stress your main points. Take a pause when you see that people take notes;

- When someone asks a question, make sure everyone has heard it. It is wise to reformulate the question from a member of the audience for the whole group to hear. That gives you time to think about your answer;

- Never give out visual materials, such as books or prints, for individual inspection while you are talking to the group. It would distract the people who are looking at them. If you wish to show an illustration from a book, show it to the class or project the page on a screen.

Body language

- Non-verbal communication is important. In most cases the way you say things has more impact on people than the message itself.

- Keep something in your hands while speaking: the remote control, some book or papers with statistical material, a photo which you can show;

- Stand up, turn towards your audience and don't stand in front of the screen;
- Don't cross arms or legs;
- Don't fiddle with your papers, glasses, hair or your ballpoint;
- Don't bend over the table;
- Don't put your hands in your pockets;
- Smile;
- Make eye contact. Don't look at your preparation all the time. Don’t just stare at your teacher all the time. A good technique is to divide the room into four sections and move your eyes from section to section. Most speakers don’t look anyone straight in the eye, but look at a point on their foreheads.
- Move hands.
- Avoid staying in one place.
- If you feel that people are bored, sleepy or not concentrated, change your position, the speed or volume of your voice.

PowerPoint

- Using PowerPoint is often of great help, but technically things may go wrong. So make sure the computer you will be using has Internet connection (if required) and the necessary programmes and players installed. Take some time to set everything in operating condition, connecting VCRs, computers, beamers, speakers, overhead projectors…

- Make sure you know how to operate the PowerPoint presentation: how you can go back to a previous slide, switch from screen to screen, use the remote control. Always be prepared for some unexpected hitch, some battery that gives up, some

access code you need to start the computer with… Computers are very simple, except for a few thousand details that can go wrong.

Practical layout classroom

- Check where the computer is situated;
- Also check where you will sit or stand;
- Locate the projection screen and the projector;
- Check the light in the room. You will probably need dimming lights.
- Turn off some of the lights in the classroom so that the slides are clearly seen and the audience can still make notes;
- The PP presentation supports your speech, it doesn't replace it. Graphics can't save you when your speech is poor and you are unprepared;
- Don't read from the slides;
- Avoid flashy backgrounds;
- Make sure people can read the words on your slide: check the colour scheme and the size (18) and use a clear font (Verdana, Arial, Tahoma);
- Make sure the colours are right. Avoid fluorescent text colours and check colour contrast on the screen, not on your computer;

- Use an opening slide and a slide with your table of contents next;
- Every slide should have a heading or title;
- Apply the 7x7 rule: 7 lines and 7 words in a line;
- Put images left or right of texts. Images should support the content;
- Use bullets;

- Avoid animations, decorations, bells and whistles; Show the whole slide in one go instead of using special effects;
- Avoid too many clicks.
- Do not show too many slides. That makes the audience nervous.

- Use the evaluation grid below.

Evaluation of a PP presentation		
	yes	no
Do my PP slides show key ideas only?		
Is there a clear structure in the outline of my presentation?		
Are there visual links (such as recurring headings or logos) connecting my slides?		
Are the visuals underscoring the key points?		
Have I used the 7x7 rule?		
Have I checked the text and background colour on the projection screen?		

- Conclusion: repeat your initial question, synthesize what you have just said, repeat your main points and conclude, adding some personal experience perhaps, or some philosophical thought.

- Ask if there are any questions and thank your audience.

- After the presentation

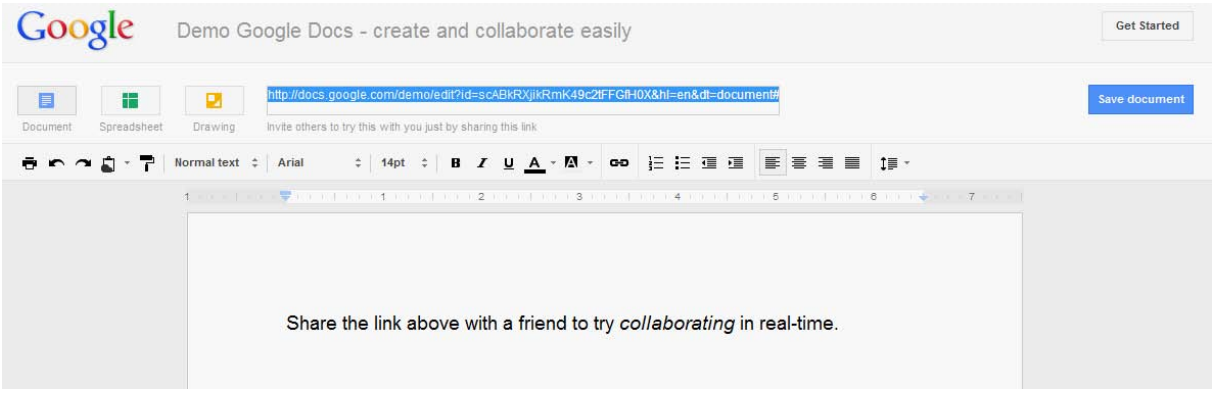
- Ask friends in the class for feedback and assessment.
- Use the evaluation grids below.

- Self-evaluating oral presentations

Self-assessment speaking		
	much/little	Remedies if low scores
1. The listeners could easily follow.	5 4 3 2 1	Speak slowly. Do pronunciation exercises. Ask help from someone else.
2. I had the impression that I did not make a lot of mistakes.	5 4 3 2 1	Next time prepare your speech by adding notes on language. Ask someone to listen to your speech and look up grammar points.
3. I did not get stuck at one point.	5 4 3 2 1	Talk without worrying too much about mistakes
4. I felt confident.	5 4 3 2 1	Prepare your speech with care, use visuals. Speak loudly. Rehearse.
5. My accent was good.	5 4 3 2 1	Listen to English speakers
6. I could find the words I needed.	5 4 3 2 1	Look up words and synonyms before the speech, draw up word lists about your subject.

Team work

- Here are some conditions for team work to succeed:
    - There must be a clear goal. The goal should be expressed by the team, not by the teacher. It must be expressed concisely as an objective with a well-defined product or performance at the end of the project;
    - The team should decide on the results of the project. The results will be reached at the end of a trajectory which the team processed;
    - The members of the team should be competent and should have developed research skills. The assignment, starting with the research question, is feasible and on their level, but at the same time challenging as well.
    - The members of the team must agree on one common goal. A team member who only focuses on his own personal goal should be monitored by the group.
    - Team members are working together in an open atmosphere, trust each other and collaborate without hidden agendas.
    - In a good team members work with all other members and not just with one friend in the team.
    - The team can expect praise and encouragement when they work well. The feedback should be explicit and honest.
    - A team needs a leader. The leader works for the success of the team and not for personal recognition.
    - Share texts within an electronic platform such as *Google Docs*. This device is found under Google *More, Even More*. It allows you to invite friends to join you in writing online in real time. Spreadsheets and drawings can be shared as well.



[Afbeelding 14]

- Assessing group work

Self-Assessment Team Work	seldom	now and then	often
1 I encouraged my teammates to participate.			
2 I listened to my teammates.			
3 I did take my fair share of the workload.			
4 I took responsibility.			
5 I asked for explanations when needed			
6 I explained a number of things to members who did not understand			
7 I spoke English all the time and encouraged the team to do so as well			
8 I shared information with my teammates.			
9 All team members have worked equally hard in this project. Yes/No.			
10. What would we do differently next time?			
11. Is working in a group more satisfying and effective than working by yourself?			
12. This my role in the group:			
13. These are the things I learned from working in a team:			

Evaluation

	yes	no
Was my initial research question feasible, researchable?		
Has my search been wide enough to ensure I've found all the relevant material? Has it been narrow enough to exclude irrelevant material?		
Did I look up information in an efficient way?		
Is the number of sources I've used appropriate for the length of my paper?		
Am I satisfied with my (our) oral presentation?		

Why (not)?		

What have I learned about the topic?

Overall Evaluation		
What did I know about the topic before I started?	What new information have I learned?	What more do I wish to know about my topic?

WORKSHEETS

RESEARCH COMPETENCE

Charles Dickens

Introduction

You will get acquainted with Charles Dickens through the article on page 12, doing some preliminary research first. Then you will select a topic that is linked to Dickens' life and work, the age that he lived in or some aspect of Victorian journalism and literature. You will formulate your research question and start doing research.

After having done the research, you will have to present their findings to the class in an oral presentation.

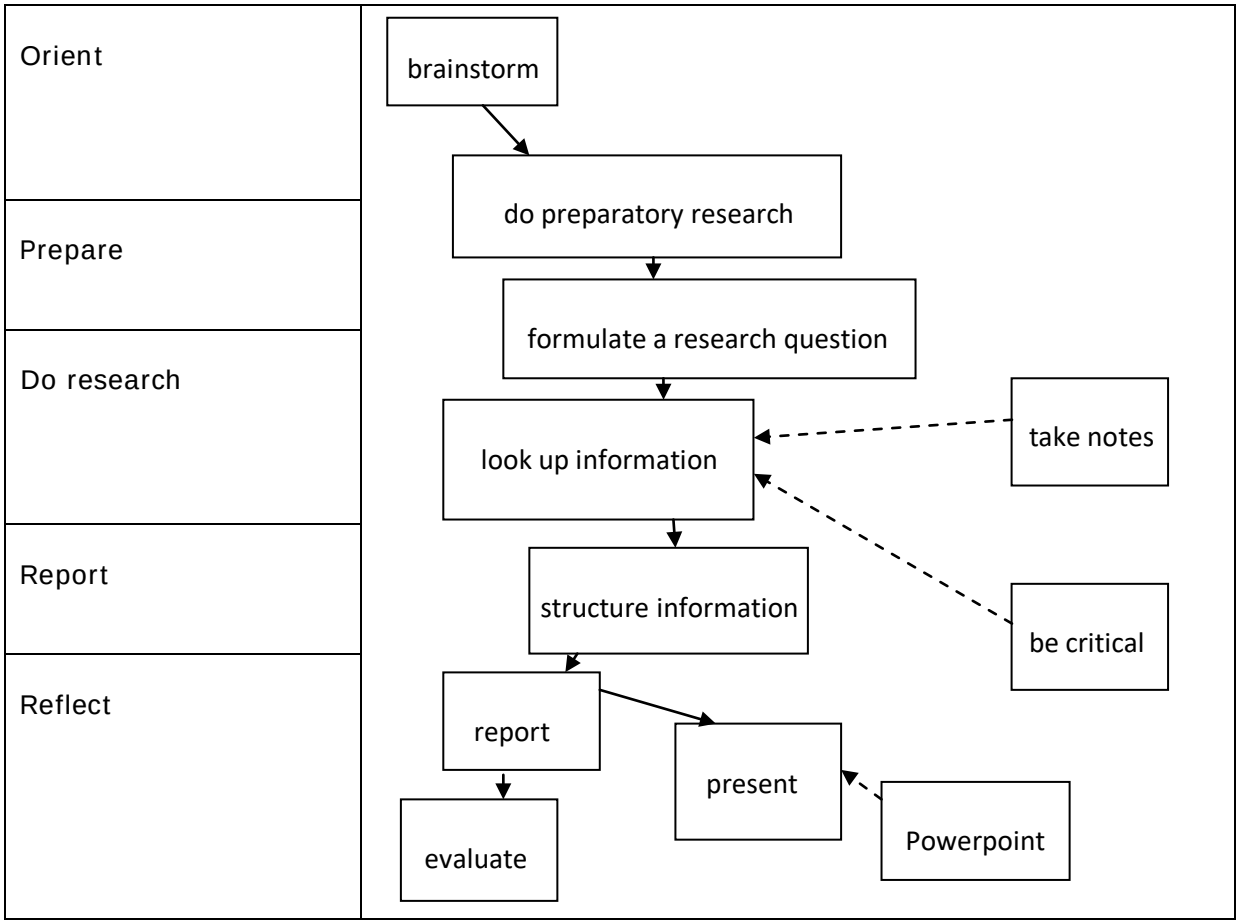
The research skills that are covered:

- how to brainstorm on a subject;
- how to formulate a good research question;
- how to take preparatory notes;
- how to look up information;
- how to structure information;
- how to draw up a bibliography;
- how to do an oral presentation;
- how to develop arguments and conclude;
- how to assess yourself and your team members.

These are some fields of study that you can choose from:

- Dickens as a social reformer
- Dickens as an author
- Dickens as a literary innovator
- Dickens as a journalist
- Dickens as a public speaker
- Dickens as a Victorian
- Dickens' personal life

The process



Brainstorming

The objective of brainstorming is to put your thoughts and ideas onto paper, without worrying too much about whether they make sense. Brainstorming yields lots of random thoughts and associated words, which can be turned into logical schemes at a later stage. These schemes will provide the subject-matter and the structure of your presentation.

- Write your topic or subject in the middle of a large piece of paper.
- Add lines connecting words that belong to different lists or branches into a mind map. Use *who, what, where, when, why and how?* as subheadings of your mind map. The result is a large cluster or spider web structure, which will need more ordering at a later stage.
- Alternatively, make a bullet with each subtopic and start listing things up. The order in which your subtopics are listed is not so important at the moment. You simply need as many ideas as your brain can produce.

- Look at your piece of paper and you will feel new ideas pop up! Write them down fast.

- Number your main ideas. Number the subtopics.

- If you are a visual type, add graphs or images to your list or mind map.

Preparatory research

- In order to formulate a good research question you will need to do some preliminary investigation. Find out if a question is researchable, starting an initial search on the Internet. Use general articles (from *Wikipedia* for instance) for this;

- Find out if there is enough information on the Internet to do the research;

- Decide if your question is not too narrow nor too broad;

- Find out if your question is not too technical, too academic. In some cases the discussion is too complex and the technical vocabulary too narrowed down;

- Also check what libraries you have in your neighbourhood and what scientific literature they offer. Ask the librarian how the books are organized, which departments the library has and how you can take copies. Books and magazines are usually stored in filing cabinets or bookcases, but a lot of information is digitally accessible. Some of the information can be consulted in the reading room, and some can be borrowed for consultation at home.

Formulating a research question

- By doing the brainstorming activity you have written down lots of ideas. Your interest for the main topic has grown, but you have not formulated a research question yet. Take your time to do this.
    - What do you want to know?
    - Why do you want to know that?
    - How are you going to answer your question?

- Formulate some question that needs to be answered by your research. Take your time, because this is a very important step in the process. Formulating a research question is not such an easy thing. University researchers often need many months before their question is on paper.

- Avoid working on some matter that does not interest you at all. While doing a research project you will learn a lot about the process of scientific work. You also need to learn something about your topic, which is an aspect of Victorian literature in this case. Doing research should be fun.

- Don't make it too easy for yourself! Some questions could be rather predictable and could be answered by looking up only one article on Wikipedia. You will need something more challenging and complex.

  Too easy: *Whose Arctic expedition was Charles Dickens particularly interested in?* (The one of John Franklin to the North-West Passage)

- On the other hand, your research should not be about something that remains too general either.

Example: *What is Victorian literature all about?* is too open. You wouldn't know where to begin your research. Rather focus on one writer or even better: on one aspect of this writer.

- Your research question should be practical.

  Think about what you want to do with your topic. Will you describe it, define it, compare it, explain it, assess it and express your opinion? Will you talk about causes and consequences, origins, characteristics, differences?

  Example: Will you describe the social themes that Dickens introduced in his writings (about social class, prostitution, child labour)? Will you paraphrase and define these themes, list them, explain what he did about them, what his commitments and political preferences were, why he developed them, explain what other people thought about them, find out how Dickens influenced other people, who his opponents were? Will you explain what you think of his ideas about society? Will you assess whether his views are 'modern'.

  Example: Dickens as a Victorian author
  Research question: Was Dickens a racist?
  Subquestions: What did Dickens write about Jewish people?
  What did he write about Black people?
  What did he write about the Inuit?
  What did he write about Indians?

- Evaluate your research question

	yes	no
Is the question interesting enough for you? Talk about this with your team members. Is the topic really something for you?		
Is the question researchable? Will you find enough information to answer it?		
Do you have access to sources?		
What types of information will you need to look up? (books, statistics, journals, manuals, articles, reviews, films?)		
Is there enough time to do the research?		
Is the scope of the information ok?		
Is your question broad enough and narrow enough? Do you have enough subquestions?		
Will it be possible to build a realistic action plan with research actions that make sense?		

Drawing up a research plan

- Before you start your hunt for information, consider what you know about the subject already and ask you friends or teacher what they know about it.

- Draw up a **search action plan**, which can act as a group contract. Your research will be done as team work, so you need to draw up a plan or a logbook. On the plan, note down your progress. Turn your plan into some kind of a contract, which guarantees a fair distribution of the work. Use the model below.

Research question:				
Research subquestions:				
Team members:				
place date	objective of subtask 1	subtask	who? deadline?	task done?
	objective of subtask 2			
	objective of subtask 3			
	objective of subtask 4			

Decide on

- the actions that you need to take (reading, taking notes, interviewing, sending questionnaires);
- the types of information sources that you will consult (books, magazines or newspaper articles, TV-programmes, films, Internet);
- libraries, resource centres that you will visit;
- deadlines that all team members need to respect;

- who will do the presentation of your research.

Looking up information

- The search for information is called *heuristics* (from Greek: *search*). You will find out more about your topic by reading books, magazines, watching clips on TV-channels, looking for materials in libraries and on the Internet.

- The printed works from your library have been selected, reviewed and sorted by experts. Works in libraries are catalogued and these catalogues contain cross-references to other works which can be sent to you from all over the world.

- You need to be more critical about the information from Internet sources than with books from (academic) libraries. Some academic sources and journals are accessible on the Internet, however, although many of these (such as Open University) require an access code.

- It is wise to rely both on library and on Internet sources, looking for materials that cross-check your information. One of the rules of good research is to find two independent sources that confirm the same data. Ideally these can be data got from trusted library sources that back up data from Internet sources.

- Searching in libraries:

    - Know that libraries are interconnected and that you can ask books to be sent from other libraries for free, although the whole process of asking a book can take some time.

    - Start your search with consulting the Wiki-bibliography and look on http://www.bibliotheek.be. Most libraries have online catalogues which are available without access codes.

    - Ask your librarian how books are organised: along themes from abstract to concrete (SISO) or along clusters of subjects in domains (ZIZO). Libraries provide access to magazines and papers through *Mediargus*. *Biblion* provides quality reviews.

    - Libraries typically have archives which hold

        - **Primary sources**: letters, images, memoirs, accounts from an individual, such as the letters of Dickens, the manuscripts of Dickens. They are original documents from witnesses who had direct contact with your subject.

        - **Secondary sources**: books, articles, studies written about the primary sources.

        - Literary magazines, anthologies, (scientific) journals, reviews, abstracts, monographs, essays, case studies, thesauri, biographies (such as *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biographies* (2004), Bibliographies (systematic lists of books), media, encyclopaedias.

Searching on the Internet

- When looking up information on the Internet, choose a search engine. Most people have *Google* or *Bing* as their default search engines. Set your default on

Google.com and not on *Google.be.* If you like to try out an alternative, choose English engines such as *alltheweb*, *altavista*, *msn*, *wisenut*, *hotbot* or *ask*.

Example: to know more about Dickens, you can start with Wikipedia. Use the search box. Wikipedia offers an interesting list of books (a bibliography) on the subject at the end of each of its articles.

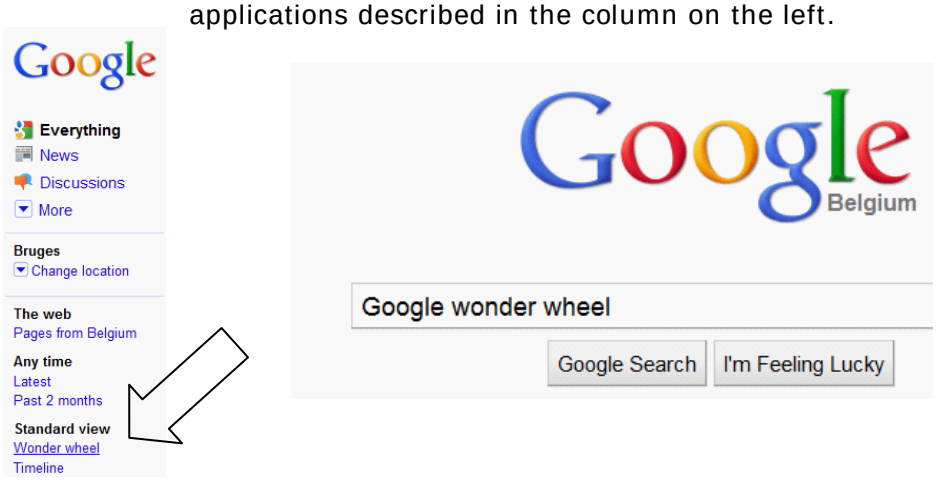
- Type your search word into the search box. If your word is too general, you will get too many sites.

  Example: When you enter the words *Charles Dickens* in the search box, you will get over 22 million sites. Too many to search.

  In order to limit your scope, you will need to search in a more specific way. Be as specific as possible in introducing your search terms.

  - Put a word combination in quotation marks: “Charles Dickens”
  - Use Advanced Search methods: OR, AND, NOT
  - Select the language: English
  - Use *Wonder Wheel*

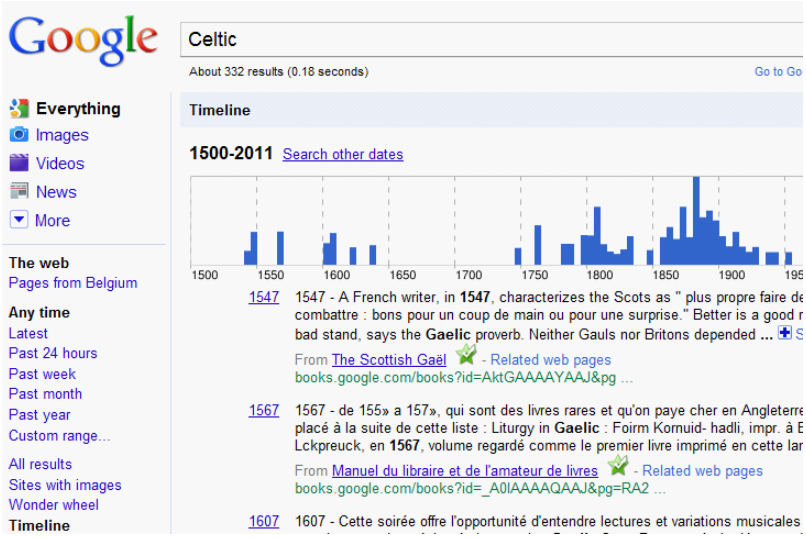
  If you wish to activate the Wonder Wheel search device, make sure you work in the *Google in English* module. Activate *Wonder Wheel* by typing *'Google Wonder Wheel'* in the Search box and hit the *Search* button. Find the applications described in the column on the left.



  - Timeline

  Timeline is a useful tool with which you can project your theme or topic on a line. By zooming down to years or even months, you will find a set of related articles about what happened at the time. Find the *Timeline* option in the column on the left, right under *Wonder Wheel*.

Example:



[afbeeldingen 10, 11 en 12]

Unfortunately, both *Wonder Wheel* and *Timeline* are sometimes unavailable.

o Use Google scholar

For scientific work, you can make use of *Google Scholar*. This beta-programme was designed for academic purposes and yields titles of sources, publications which you can consult in libraries and add to your bibliography. Access *Google Scholar* by selecting the *More Options* tab in Google. Or type *Google Scholar* in the search box.

Check Internet sources

- As a reader, be critical about your sources. Always double-check information by finding a second independent source that confirms your data.
- Check the author of a site by clicking on the *About Us* button on the home page.
- Use the grid below.

	yes	no
A. Author, data		
1. Can you find back the name or the identity of the author or editor?		
2. Is the author a member of an institution?		
a religion?		
a political party?		
3. Does he/she have a title?		
4. Can you find out why the author has made the site?		
5. Is it clear what his/her target audience is?		
6. Do you see any telephone numbers, e-mails, names and/or addresses of people?		
7. Can you find an e-mail address on which you can react or ask questions (Mailto.)?		
8. Does the author mention his/her own sources?		

B. Time indications		
9. Can you find any date on which the information was put on the web?		
10. Has the site been updated (recently)? Can you check that?		
11. Do all hyperlinks (still) work? Broken links may mean the site is out-of-date.		
C. Commercial?		
12. Does the author of the site try to have you pay money in any way?		
13. Are there any ads on the website page?		
14. Is this a commercial site?		
15. Does the suffix after the dot in the URL generate trust? .com or .co = commercial; .ac = academic; .gov = government; .org = organisation; .edu = education		
D. Quality		
14. Are the language and the layout of good quality? Emotional or factual?		
15. Does what you read make sense?		
16. Can your information be checked or tested? Can you verify the information in printed and published sources?		
17. Is the author's point of view impartial and objective?		

Did you tick off *yes* with the questions under A, B and D? And *no* with A2 and C? You can trust your source.

Taking notes

Brainstorming and research yield lots of information. But as you go along with your search, make sure you take good notes. These notes will provide the material for your presentation.

Take notes whenever you read a source, be it a book, an article or some video clip. Your notes will be records that can be organized at a later stage into a coherent structure. Always take notes of what you are reading in order to avoid losing research time. You need a written record of the sources that you have consulted in such a way that you can easily find back and structure your information later on.

At all times do you need to realize where your ideas came from in order to avoid plagiarism.

Index cards

People used to write their information on index cards. They could write down ideas, facts, quotes, bibliographical addresses or paraphrases on these cards, which were put into a certain order after some time. Nowadays we use **electronic index cards**.

Example:

Main topic: Dickens Related words: workhouse, child labourer

Summary: Dickens worked at a workhouse, sticking labels on bottles when young. He rose to fame as a journalist and writer. Biography of early age to success. Address: Hibbert, C., *The Making of Charles Dickens*, Harper & Row, 1967.

Electronic files

Write down your records in an electronic file such as this:

<table>
<tr><td colspan="3">Key words from the text:…….</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">What is the book about (in one sentence)?</td></tr>
<tr><td>The contents of the book</td><td rowspan="5">Write down the page number in this column.

You will need the page number when you refer to direct quotes.

The number will allow you to find back your information quickly;</td><td>Compare the ideas from the text with what you already knew about the topic. How does this information relate to other texts that you have read?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Synthesis of the main ideas or key ideas</td><td>Is there anything that I don't understand that I need to follow up?

Identify fields of knowledge that you will need to investigate at a later stage.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Paraphrases of the key ideas</td><td rowspan="3">Write down your ideas about the text.

Think critically about what the author claims. Is the author saying anything that contradicts the findings/opinions of other authors?

Express your opinion about the arguments that the author uses. Do I agree/disagree with what the author is saying?</td></tr>
<tr><td>Direct quotes. Make sure the quotes are copied word for word (verbatim).

Put these in quotation marks.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Does the author contradict or confirm what other authors said?

What conclusions can you make from what you learned from the text?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Correctly copy bibliographical data:

the author's surname, the author’s first name, the title of the book, article, video, the title of your magazine, its publisher, the place and date of publication, the page numbers of the article, Internet site details, including the web address, the library number, so that you can easily find back the text.</td></tr>
</table>

An example:

Key words from the text: Victorian – sexism - aestheticism

What is the book about (in one sentence)? The examination of letters, journals, censored texts shows the dominance of masculine sexual desire in Victorian novels from O. Wilde, Swinburne, Tennyson.		
Correspondence of Hallam He talks about friendship associated with the Good, the True and the Beautiful	p.24	Hallam was under attack for his homosexual bias and defends himself by referring to the Greek philosophers.
Bibliographical data: Dellamora R., Masculine Desire: the sexual politics of Victorian aestheticism, (The University of North Carolina Press), 1990, 276 p. ISBN 0807842672, 9780807842676		

Your turn:

Key words from the text:		
What is the book about (in one sentence)?		
	p.	
Bibliographical data:		

Bibliographical address

You need to write down the **bibliographical address** with each source that you consulted, according to strict rules. A list of such addresses of consulted sources is called a bibliography. There are many ways of writing a bibliographical list. Use the one that you use in your lessons of history and/or Dutch/French.

If you have no model, use the following notation:

A book

Morgan, J., *Artistic expression in the Victorian Era*, James Nisbet & Co, Cardiff,1905, pp. 542.

An article

Jones, D., 'The impact of the Industrial Revolution on artistic production', in *National Library of Wales journal*, summer, Volume XXVI/1, 1989, pp.23-56.

A website

Curthoys, N., 'Future directions for Dickensiana: the ethos of a nation', internet, htttp://www.lib.latrobe.edu.au/2001/curthoys.html viewed on 11 April 2013.

A TV-programme

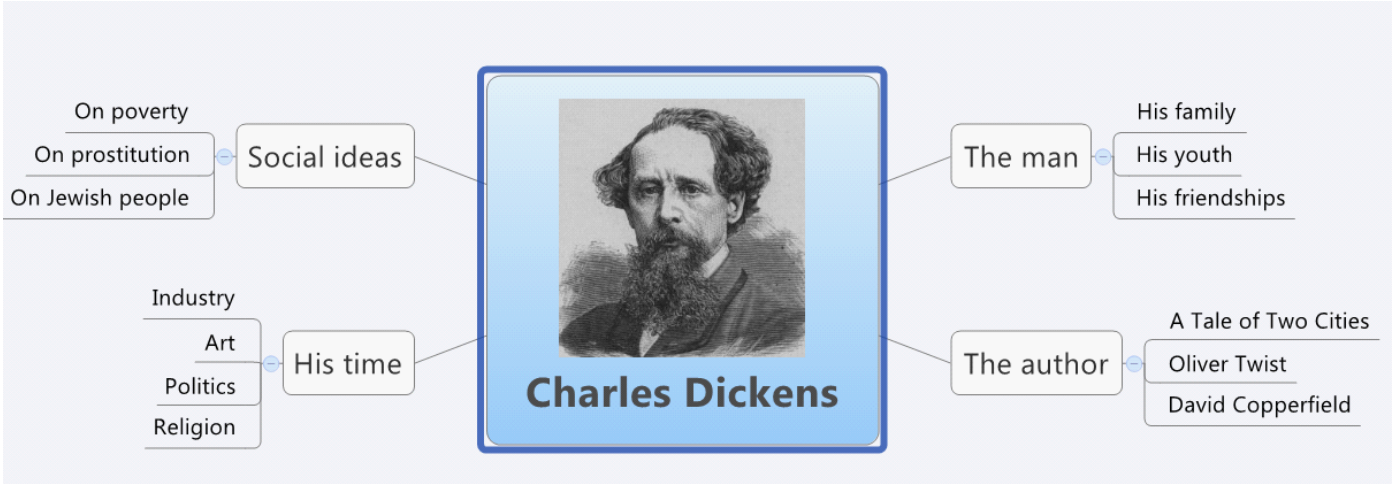
'Dickens' first journey to the USA', in *News 12 New Jersey*. 9 June 2011.

Structuring the information

- As you find data that answer your research question you need to process these and discern categories and subcategories. The best way of structuring your information is by means of some graphic presentation.
- You can use different principles or criteria that decide the order of your materials. Example: books, articles, videos and audio materials.
- In most cases, however, you will order your findings thematically, according to key words from your index cards.
- Use some graphic organiser in order to structure all aspects of your research topic. Needless to say that *mind maps* are powerful and accessible graphic organisers.
    - Draw a mind map as you do the research.
    - Use a blank sheet of paper in landscape (put it in a horizontal position);
    - Write the main subject in the middle;
    - Branch out main subtopics, starting from the middle;
    - Write these in different colours;

- Start in the upper right corner and work clockwise;
- Use capitals that everyone can read, add symbols or drawings.
- Or use an open source mind map programme such as http://www.xmind.net/

Example:



[afbeelding 13]

Alternatively, use outline from your word processor in order to put your data in a hierarchical structure.

Example (alphanumerical outline)

1 Victorian Social Theories
2 Dickens' social theory
    A Social classes
    B Class mobility
    C Class mobility in his life
    D Class mobility in his literature
        1 Dombey and Son
        2 Hard Times

Conclusion

Write a preliminary report as you conclude your research. Fill in the research structure:

Write down your initial research question:
Write down the subquestions:
Why did you choose the research question?
Which methods have you used in your research? • reading books • reading articles • consulting websites • watching video clips
Did you do all research actions listed in your contract or logbook? If not, why not?

What were the results of your research?
Were you able to check sources?
What extra research actions still need to be undertaken?
What are your conclusions? Or recommendations?

Look back on the criteria for choosing a good research question. Was you research question challenging, researchable and balanced?

Presentation

Reporting in writing

Writing an academic report or essay is a complex and challenging task which is not discussed within the scope of this issue but will be discussed in the Spark series fifth and sixth form and in Drive/Speakeasy 3 2012/2013. As it is, focus on reporting in an oral presentation.

Oral preparation

The structure that has been set up in previous stages is, of course, the backbone of your oral preparation in which you present your research findings to an audience.

Do the presentation alone or with your team and make arrangements.
Know exactly how many minutes you have for this, what is expected, who the audience will be, what location will be available and if computers and beamers work in case you want to project.

Before the presentation

- Have the outline of your presentation on a sheet of paper. This could be a mind map or some prompt notes with key words, main headings, some phrases perhaps in point-form. If you know your topic well enough, you can give the talk from these headings and point-form cues. But do not bring a full text of your presentation which you read out to the class!

- Decide whether you provide handouts for the audience and have these printed and distributed before your presentation starts;

- Think of your audience. What do they expect to hear from you? Do you need to inform, convince or entertain them?

- Prepare your speech at home. Rehearse and get feedback from a friend, a member of your family or your domestic animal;

- Estimate the time you will need for your presentation;

- Consider if there will be interaction with your audience. Will you allow questions to be asked during your presentation or only at the end? Or not at all? Will you ask some question to the audience yourself? Do you let your audience talk in pairs for a minute in order to discuss some controversial topic? Expect that someone may react to what you say and you may need to be clear in your response.

- Know what criteria will be used in the evaluation of your presentation. Ask your teacher about that. In most cases you will be assessed on efficient communication and on your use of correct language;

- Think of the grammar and vocabulary forms you have recently discussed and make sure these are correct in your speech;

- Look up the pronunciation of difficult words from your paper. Look up the correct forms in a pronouncing dictionary and add phonetic marks. Add emphasis on certain key words and notes about which concepts you wish to repeat.

During the presentation

- Start with an attractive address (*captatio*). Greet your audience and catch their attention with a quote, an anecdote, a question they could answer, some reference to current news, ask your audience what they know about the topic;

- Explain what you wish to demonstrate. Formulate your research question. Explain why you have chosen your topic. Show your audience the structure of your presentation. Tell the audience that they can ask questions during or at the end of your presentation;
  Use markers such as: In the second part of my presentation I'll show you … The next part will discuss … My next argument is …;

- Avoid clichés: I'm going to talk about …;

- Start out with a very clear statement in which you outline your subject and the main items you will be talking about;

- Relax while you speak. Take deep breaths before you start and avoid panic at the beginning. Many speakers start with an icebreaker for that reason. They show something or ask the audience some question to answer in pairs as an introduction to their talk;

- Talk loudly. That generates more word and sentence stress, which leads to a better intonation. When you wish to talk loud, you will need more breath. Taking in more breath will relax you. Speaking up reduces fear;

- Don't hurry. Slow down when you stress your main points. Take a pause when you see that people take notes;

- When someone asks a question, make sure everyone has heard it. It is wise to reformulate the question from a member of the audience for the whole group to hear. That gives you time to think about your answer;

- Never give out visual materials, such as books or prints, for individual inspection while you are talking to the group. It would distract the people who are looking at them. If you wish to show an illustration from a book, show it to the class or project the page on a screen.

Body language

- Non-verbal communication is important. In most cases the way you say things has more impact on people than the message itself.

- Keep something in your hands while speaking: the remote control, some book or papers with statistical material, a photo which you can show;

- Stand up, turn towards your audience and don't stand in front of the screen;
- Don't cross arms or legs;
- Don't fiddle with your papers, glasses, hair or your ballpoint;
- Don't bend over the table;
- Don't put your hands in your pockets;
- Smile;
- Make eye contact. Don't look at your preparation all the time. Don't just stare at your teacher all the time. A good technique is to divide the room into four sections and move your eyes from section to section. Most speakers don't look anyone straight in the eye, but look at a point on their foreheads.
- Move hands.
- Avoid staying in one place.
- If you feel that people are bored, sleepy or not concentrated, change your position, the speed or volume of your voice.

PowerPoint

- Using Powerpoint is often of great help, but technically things may go wrong. So make sure the computer you will be using has Internet connection (if required) and the necessary programmes and players installed. Take some time to set everything in operating condition, connecting VCRs, computers, beamers, speakers, overhead projectors…

- Make sure you know how to operate the Powerpoint presentation: how you can go back to a previous slide, switch from screen to screen, use the remote control. Always be prepared for some unexpected hitch, some battery that gives up, some access code you need to start the computer with… Computers are very simple, except for a few thousand details that can go wrong.

Practical layout classroom

- Check where the computer is situated;
- Also check where you will sit or stand;
- Locate the projection screen and the projector;
- Check the light in the room. You will probably need dimming lights.
- Turn off some of the lights in the classroom so that the slides are clearly seen and the audience can still make notes;
- The PP presentation supports your speech, it doesn't replace it. Graphics can't save you when your speech is poor and you are unprepared;
- Don't read from the slides;
- Avoid flashy backgrounds;
- Make sure people can read the words on your slide: check the colour scheme and the size (18) and use a clear font (Verdana, Arial, Tahoma);
- Make sure the colours are right. Avoid fluorescent text colours and check colour contrast on the screen, not on your computer;

- Use an opening slide and a slide with your table of contents next;
- Every slide should have a heading or title;
- Apply the 7x7 rule: 7 lines and 7 words in a line;
- Put images left or right of texts. Images should support the content;
- Use bullets;

- Avoid animations, decorations, bells and whistles; Show the whole slide in one go instead of using special effects;
- Avoid too many clicks.
- Do not show too many slides. That makes the audience nervous.

- Use the evaluation grid below.

Evaluation of a PP presentation		
	yes	no
Do my PP slides show key ideas only?		
Is there a clear structure in the outline of my presentation?		
Are there visual links (such as recurring headings or logos) connecting my slides?		
Are the visuals underscoring the key points?		
Have I used the 7x7 rule?		
Have I checked the text and background colour on the projection screen?		

- Conclusion: repeat your initial question, synthesize what you have just said, repeat your main points and conclude, adding some personal experience perhaps, or some philosophical thought.

- Ask if there are any questions and thank your audience.

- After the presentation

- Ask friends in the class for feedback and assessment.
- Use the evaluation grids below.

- Self-evaluating oral presentations

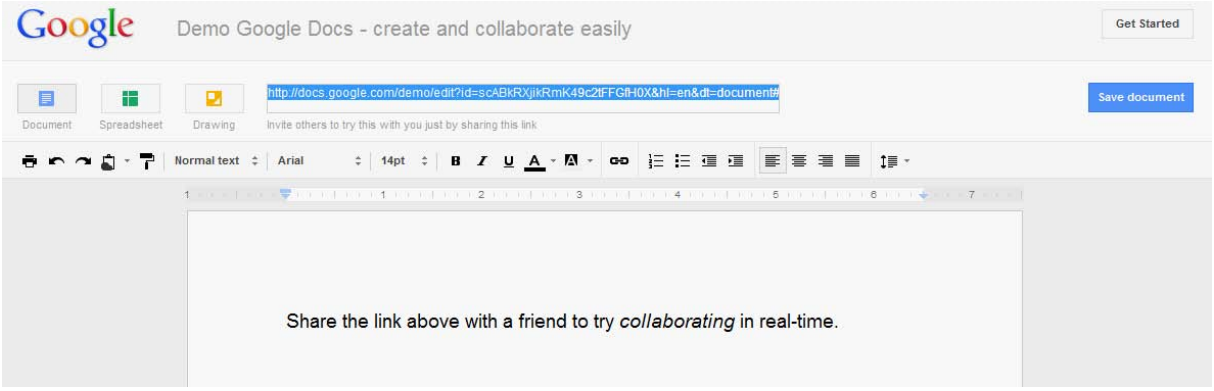
Self-assessment speaking		
	much/little	Remedies if low scores
1. The listeners could easily follow.	5 4 3 2 1	Speak slowly. Do pronunciation exercises. Ask help from someone else.
2. I had the impression that I did not make a lot of mistakes.	5 4 3 2 1	Next time prepare your speech by adding notes on language. Ask someone to listen to your speech and look up grammar points.
3. I did not get stuck at one point.	5 4 3 2 1	Talk without worrying too much about mistakes
4. I felt confident.	5 4 3 2 1	Prepare your speech with care, use visuals. Speak loudly. Rehearse.
5. My accent was good.	5 4 3 2 1	Listen to English speakers
6. I could find the words I needed.	5 4 3 2 1	Look up words and synonyms before the speech, draw up word lists about your subject.

Team work

- Here are some conditions for team work to succeed:

    - There must be a clear goal. The goal should be expressed by the team, not by the teacher. It must be expressed concisely as an objective with a well-defined product or performance at the end of the project;
    - The team should decide on the results of the project. The results will be reached at the end of a trajectory which the team processed;

- The members of the team should be competent and should have developed research skills. The assignment, starting with the research question, is feasible and on their level, but at the same time challenging as well.
- The members of the team must agree on one common goal. A team member who only focuses on his own personal goal should be monitored by the group.
- Team members are working together in an open atmosphere, trust each other and collaborate without hidden agendas.
- In a good team members work with all other members and not just with one friend in the team.
- The team can expect praise and encouragement when they work well. The feedback should be explicit and honest.
- A team needs a leader. The leader works for the success of the team and not for personal recognition.
- Share texts within an electronic platform such as *Google Docs*. This device is found under Google *More, Even More*. It allows you to invite friends to join you in writing online in real time. Spreadsheets and drawings can be shared as well.



[Afbeelding 14]

- Assessing group work

Self-Assessment Team Work	seldom	now and then	often

1 I encouraged my teammates to participate.			
2 I listened to my teammates.			
3 I did take my fair share of the workload.			
4 I took responsibility.			
5 I asked for explanations when needed			
6 I explained a number of things to members who did not understand			
7 I spoke English all the time and encouraged the team to do so as well			
8 I shared information with my teammates.			
9 All team members have worked equally hard in this project. Yes/No.			
10. What would we do differently next time?			
11. Is working in a group more satisfying and effective than working by yourself?			
12. This my role in the group:			
13. These are the things I learned from working in a team:			

Evaluation

	yes	no
Was my initial research question feasible, researchable?		
Has my search been wide enough to ensure I've found all the relevant material? Has it been narrow enough to exclude irrelevant material?		
Did I look up information in an efficient way?		
Is the number of sources I've used appropriate for the length of my paper?		
Am I satisfied with my (our) oral presentation? Why (not)?		

What have I learned about the topic?

Overall Evaluation		
What did I know about the topic before I started?	What new information have I learned?	What more do I wish to know about my topic?