How to Research Complex Topics

Recommended Citation

"How to Research Complex Topics", pegasus, January 01, 1994, https://nautilus.org/pegasus/how-t--research-complex-topics/

Welcome

Teacher Orientation ⋮ **Activity Guides**

Getting Started 2: How to Research Complex Topics

Students learn how to develop a research plan, organize their findings and evaluate sources of information.

Rationale

Complex topics have no single right answer and no single source of information. Researching a complex topic challenges students to construct a "map of the territory" and evaluate the relevance of their findings. This activity provides a valuable framework for conducting research both on and off the Internet.

Materials

"How to Research Complex Topics" worksheet

Procedure

1. Introduce the activity and divide the class into small groups of 2 to 4 students. Challenge students to discover as many sources of information as possible, and to look for different points-of-view on the topic.

2. Provide adequate time for the groups to access Virtual Expeditions and complete the worksheet. If necessary, ask key questions of groups to support their research process.

3. Debrief the activity with a class discussion.
   - What did you learn about researching complex topics?
   - What part of the process was most challenging? Why?

◦ Did you discover a wide variety of opinions? Describe the spectrum of opinions you found.

  ◦ What did you learn about evaluating information? What criteria did use to evaluate the quality and accuracy of information?

4.

Extensions

- *And Now For Our Findings.* Organize and synthesize your findings on a topic into a written report or classroom presentation.

- *Crossfire.* Conduct a debate between opposing or differing opinions on an issue or topic.

View this online at: https://nautilus.org/pegasus/how-to-research-complex-topics/

Nautilus Institute
608 San Miguel Ave., Berkeley, CA 94707-1535 | Phone: (510) 423-0372 | Email:
nautilus@nautilus.org