

Lesson Skill: Organizing information into short reports

Strand Research

SOL 3.11

4.9

5.9

Materials

- Sticky notes
- Interview Questions handout (attached)
- Resources, such as encyclopedias, atlases, and almanacs

Lesson

1. Have the class brainstorm to create a list of prominent people from their grade-level *History and Social Science Standards of Learning*. Explain that they will be using various resources to research these individuals and that they will also write a short report on them.
2. Group students in twos or threes, and have each group select a person to research. Have students decide what they want to know about their person and develop a list of questions. Remind students that they will also be writing a report and they should gather as much information as possible.
3. To help students create good questions, show them how to develop, evaluate, and select questions whose answers will provide quality material. Have each student write a question about a prominent person on a sticky note. Divide the board into a T-chart and label them “Important” and “Less Important.” As a class, decide where each question should go. Once students seem to understand the concept of quality questions, help them construct some that will provide descriptive answers.
4. In their groups, have students create five questions to research on their person and record the questions on the Interview Questions handout. Have them conduct their research and credit the author, title, and date of each resource. Before they begin writing, talk to students about the importance of developing a strong opening, elaboration, and closing. Still in groups, have students evaluate and organize their information and write a short report. Then, have them review and edit their reports within the small groups.
5. Have students share the reports with the class.

Strategies for Differentiation

- Provide pictures of prominent people.
- Provide resources at varying reading levels.
- Provide examples of questions that lead to detailed answers.
- Create groups based on readiness, learning styles, an/or level of interest.
- Use sentence strips instead of sticky notes.

Interview Questions

Directions: Create five questions to research about your prominent person. The questions should lead to detailed answers.
