

Research Paper and Report Writing

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

PREWRITING: PLANNING AND RESEARCHING

Practice Creating Note Cards

Directions Once you have located useful sources, you are ready to take notes on what you learn. Most research paper writers take their notes on index cards. Here are some guidelines to help you as you prepare your note cards.

1. At the top of the card, write the subject of the notes. Later this heading will help you to organize your note cards and to find the information you need.
2. Identify the author and the title of your source. You don't need to write down the publisher or the copyright date; those details are on your source cards. You just need to know where you got the information for each note card.
3. Write down one idea or fact per card. Note the number of the page where you found the information.
4. Make sure that any dates, names, or other facts are correct. If you quote material from your source, make sure you copy it word for word and put quotation marks around it. Anything that is *not* in quotation marks must be in your own words.

Imagine that you are writing a research paper on animals that are in danger of becoming extinct. Your main idea is that many endangered species can be saved. Read the excerpt from page 37 of *Birds in Peril* by John P. S. Mackenzie and create a note card for it.

The original purpose of this book was to write only about the endangered species—species officially listed as endangered by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and by the International Council for Bird Preservation. On a number of counts, however, we cannot resist including the trumpeter swan. It was listed as endangered for many years but is no longer endangered. Its recovery—from a low of sixty-nine birds in 1932 to a stable level of more than seven hundred in the western United States alone—is due entirely to a dedicated group of government biologists and conservationists. The trumpeter is included here to illustrate how close a species can come to extinction and still recover.
