STUDENT LEARNING WORKBOOK

# Selecting a Meaningful Research Project

## Exploring Our School and Community

**English for Basic Research**

M.3/6 • Term 2 • Week 1




**Notice an issue. Ask a question. Choose a project.**

Name: _____

Class: _____ No.: _____

Date: _____



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# Get Ready to Investigate

## Your mission

Your group will choose a school or community topic that you can investigate. You will explain what you want to find out, why it matters, and why your group can study it.

You do not need to know the answer yet. Your project begins with something you want to understand.



## I can...

- ☐ identify at least three possible research issues.
- ☐ choose a topic that fits our time and resources.
- ☐ explain why our topic matters and who may benefit.
- ☐ share ideas and listen respectfully to my group.

## Warm-up – What do you notice?

Look at the four school scenes.
Choose two scenes. Describe what you can see.

**Canteen**



**Classroom**



**Canteen Queue**



**Library**



**Scene 1:** _____

I notice _____

_____

_____

**Scene 2:** _____

I notice _____

_____

_____

## Talk with a partner

Which situation would you like to understand better? Why?

"I would like to understand _____

because _____."

_____

_____

_____

## Remember!

Describe what you can see before guessing why it happened.






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# Words That Help Us Think

## 1 Issue

An **issue** is a situation, concern, or question that people may want to understand or improve. An issue does not have to be a serious problem.

**Example:** Some students leave food unfinished.
We could investigate this situation to understand students' reasons.

**Another example:** Students prefer different kinds of books.
This is worth studying even when nothing is wrong.



## 2 Research topic

A **research topic** is the subject your study focuses on.
It tells people what you plan to investigate.
A useful topic is focused enough to guide your work.

**Broad subject:** Reading

**Focused topic:** Reading preferences among students in M.3/6

The focused topic tells us what we will study and which group we will focus on.



## 3 Evidence

**Evidence** is information that helps us answer a research question.
It may come from people's responses, observations, or records.

**Example:** Students answer an anonymous questionnaire about the books they enjoy.
Their responses provide evidence about their reported preferences.

**A guess is not evidence**

"I think everyone dislikes reading" is a guess unless information supports it.




## Quick Check

**Complete each sentence using the word bank.**

**issue • research topic • evidence**

1. Our study focuses on reusable water bottle habits. This is our _____.
2. Students' questionnaire responses can provide _____.
3. A long queue at the canteen is an _____ we could investigate.



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# Words That Help Us Choose

## 4 Relevant

A topic is **relevant** when it connects to the people, place, or purpose of your study.

**Ask: Does this topic matter to the people involved?**

**Example:** Students' experiences of waiting at the school canteen are relevant to students who buy lunch there.




## 5 Feasible

A project is **feasible** when it is possible to complete with the time, resources, skills, and access available.

**Resources** are things you can use, such as paper, devices, materials, or help. **Access** means being able to reach the people or information you need, with permission.

**Example:** Asking one class about book preferences may be feasible. Asking every teenager in Thailand during one schlol week would not be feasible for our class project.



## 6 Benefit

A **benefit** is a useful result or advantage that may come from the research.

**Ask: Who could use what we learn, and how?**

**Example:** Findings about book preferences may help the librarian choose books students want to read.

**Research can suggest useful actions, but it cannot promise that a problem will be solved.**




## Quick check — Choose and explain

**A** A group wants to study lunch queues at its own school.
Who might find the topic relevant? _____

**B** Another group plans to interview 5,000 students tomorrow.
Is this feasible for a small class project? Why? _____

**C** Complete the sentence.
Research about library use may benefit _____
by helping them _____.



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# Let's Learn: What Makes a Good Topic?

**A suitable project topic should pass three checks.**

## 1 Check 1 — Is it meaningful?

A **meaningful topic** has a clear **purpose.** It helps us understand something that matters to a group of people.

**Ask:**

- What do we want to understand?
- Why is it worth finding out?
- Who may benefit?




## 2 Check 2 — Is it manageable?

A **manageable topic** is small and focused enough for your group to handle.

**You can make a topic smaller by choosing:**

- one issue or behaviour;
- one class or group;
- one place;
- a short, realistic period of study.




## 3 Check 3 — Is it possible to investigate?

Your group needs a realistic way to collect information.

**Ask:**

- Can we reach the people or information we need?
- Do we have enough time and suitable materials?
- Can we investigate respectfully and with permission?

Together, Checks 2 and 3 help you decide whether a project is **feasible.**



## Worked example

**Starting idea:**
Environmental problems around the world

This matters, but it includes many problems, countries, and people. It is too broad for our class project.

→

**Improved topic:**
Reasons students in M.3/6 leave food unfinished at school

This focuses on one situation and one accessible group.

→

**Possible benefit:**
The findings may help the class suggest practical ways to reduce food waste.



## Check your understanding

1. **Which topic is more manageable? Circle one.**
   - **A.** All teenagers' hobbies around the world
   - **B.** After-school hobbies of students in M.3/6

2. **Explain your choice.**
   _____
   _____

3. **Complete the three checks.**
   A suitable topic is meaningful, _____, and possible to _____.



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# From a Broad Idea to a Focused Topic

## Follow the steps

### 1 Choose an area

Start with something familiar, such as reading, food, English learning, or school facilities.



### 2 Choose one focus

Decide which part interests you. For example, "reading" could become "book preferences."



### 3 Choose a group or place

Decide whose experiences or which setting you will study. For example, "students in M.3/6."



### 4 Check the topic

Ask whether it is meaningful, manageable, and possible to investigate.



## Worked example

| Step | Example |
|---|---|
| **Area** | English learning |
| **Focus** | Practising English outside class |
| **Group** | Students in M.3/6 |
| **Focused topic** | Ways students in M.3/6 practise English outside class |

## A topic and a question are different

- A **topic** names the subject of your study.
- A **research question** says what you want to find out about that subject.

**Topic:** Ways students in M.3/6 practise English outside class

**Question:** How do students in M.3/6 practise English outside class?

You will develop your research questions further in Week 2.

## Guided practice

**Complete the topic using the suggestions.**

**Area:** Reading

**Possible focus:** favourite book types / reasons for visiting the library

**Possible group:** students in our class



**Our focused topic:** _____

## Try another

**Choose a focus and a group.**

**Area:** Reusable water bottles



**Our focused topic:** _____



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# Investigate Fairly and Respectfully

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## Find out first



Research begins with curiosity. Do not decide what the answer must be before collecting evidence.

### Unfair starting statement

"Students waste food because they are careless."

This assumes a reason and judges the students.

### Fair research topic

"Reasons students in our class leave food unfinished."

This allows different explanations to be investigated.

## Choose a respectful topic

For this class project, avoid topics that require classmates to reveal private information, such as:

- **family income**
- **medical conditions**
- **individual disciplinary records.**

Ask your teacher to check your topic and planned activity before you collect information.



## How could we collect evidence?

| Method | What it means | Suitable example |
|---|---|---|
| **Questionnaire or survey** | People answer the same set of questions. | Ask classmates which book types they prefer. |
| **Interview** | Ask someone questions and listen to their answers. | Ask volunteers about their experiences of using the library. |
| **Observation** | Watch a situation carefully and record what happens. | Count students waiting in a queue at agreed times, with permission. |

## Remember!

- Choose a method that fits what you want to find out.
- Observation can show how many students are waiting. To understand how students feel about the wait, you need to ask them.

## Important rules

- **Participation is voluntary:** students may choose not to answer. **Respect their choice.**
- You can keep responses **anonymous,** which means **without names.**

## Check your understanding

1. Rewrite this statement as a fair topic:
"Students do not use the library because they are lazy."

_____

2. You want to know students' favourite book types. Which method could you use?

_____

3. Your group wants classmates to share private medical details. What advice would you give?

_____



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# Practise with Support

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## Activity A Sort the topics

**Write:**
**R** = ready to consider; **N** = needs narrowing; **C** = needs changing because it asks for private information.

**Example:** *Every environmental problem in the world* → **N**

| | Possible topic | R, N, or C |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Favourite book types among students in our class | _____ |
| 2 | The hobbies of every teenager in the world | _____ |
| 3 | Family income of named classmates | _____ |
| 4 | Ways students in M.3/6 practise English at home | _____ |
| 5 | All transport problems in Thailand | _____ |

**Choose one topic marked N. Make it more focused.**
**Original number:** _____
**Improved topic:** _____
_____

## Activity B Explain a benefit

**Example:**
**Topic:** Book preferences in our class
**Who may benefit?** The librarian
**How?** The findings may help the librarian choose suitable books.

**Now try:**
**Topic:** Students' experiences of waiting at the school canteen
The findings may **help** _____
by _____.

## Activity C Complete a feasibility statement

**Word bank:** class • time • questionnaire • manageable

"Our project is _____ because we will focus on one _____. We can use a short _____ and complete the work in the available _____."


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# Try It On Your Own



## A Identify three possibilities

Think about your school or community. Write three situations you would like to understand better.
An issue can be a problem, a habit, a preference, or an experience.

| | Issue or situation | Who is involved or affected? |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | | |
| 2. | | |
| 3. | | |

## B Develop one idea

Choose one issue from your table.

**My focused research topic:**

**What I want to find out:**

**Why this topic matters:**

**Who may benefit, and how:**

**Why the project could be feasible:**



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# Apply: Choose Your Group Project



**Work in a group of three or four.**

Share your individual ideas. Make a group list of at least five different issues.

## 1 Group members: _____

_____

## 2 Our five possible issues

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

## 3 Shortlist two topics

Choose two promising ideas. Write them as focused topics.

**Topic A:** _____

_____

**Topic B:** _____

_____

## 4 Discuss each check.

Write ***Yes***, ***Not yet***, or ***Need help***.

| Topic check | A | B |
|---|---|---|
| 1. We can explain why it matters. | | |
| 2. It focuses on a clear issue and group or place. | | |
| 3. We can reach suitable information with permission. | | |
| 4. It fits our time and resources. | | |
| 5. It avoids sensitive personal information. | | |

## 5 Think a little deeper

Both topics may be useful. Which is more realistic for your group now? *Explain using time, resources, or access.*

_____

_____

## 6 If access changes...

What could you change if you cannot reach the people you planned to ask?

_____

_____

## 7 Our chosen topic: _____

_____



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# Prepare and Share Your Project Pitch



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**A pitch** is a short explanation that helps others understand your idea.

## Read the model

"We noticed that some students leave food unfinished. We would like to investigate their reasons. This topic is important because unfinished food becomes waste. Our findings may help the class suggest ways to reduce waste. We could collect information using a short anonymous questionnaire, where students do not write their names. Our project is manageable because we will focus on one class."

## Build your one-minute pitch

**1 What we noticed**

We noticed that _____

_____ .

**2 What we want to investigate**

We would like to investigate _____

_____ .

**3 Why it matters**

This topic is important because _____

_____ .

**4 Who may benefit**

The findings may help _____

_____ .

**5 A possible way to collect information**

We could collect information by _____

_____ .

**6 Why it is feasible**

This project is manageable because _____

_____ .

## Share the discussion fairly

**Each member should:**

- ☐ contribute an idea;
- ☐ listen without interrupting;
- ☐ ask or answer a useful question;
- ☐ help the group explain its choice.

**Useful expressions:**

- "What do you think?"
- "Can you explain your idea?"
- "I agree because..."
- "Could we make the topic smaller?"
- "We have not heard your idea yet."

## Peer feedback

**One strength of the project:**

_____

_____

**One question or suggestion:**

_____

_____



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# Check Your Learning

**Formative review • Practice before the test**

**Complete this page independently.**

## 1 Match the words and meanings.

Write the correct letter beside each word.

1. **Evidence** _____
2. **Feasible** _____
3. **Benefit** _____

A. A useful result or advantage

B. Information that helps answer a question

C. Possible with available time and resources

## 2 Choose the more manageable topic.

- ☐ All students' learning habits around the world
- ☐ Ways students in M.3/6 practise English after school

Explain your choice.

_____

_____



## 3 Improve the topic.

A group proposes: "All food problems in Thailand."
Write a smaller topic suitable for a school project.

_____

_____



## 4 Evidence or assumption?

A student says, "Everyone avoids the library because the books are boring."
What should the group do before accepting this explanation?

_____

_____



## 5 Show your own understanding.

Our group's topic is _____.

_____.

It matters because _____

_____.

One reason it is feasible is _____

_____.



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# Think Deeper • HOTS

**Discuss first. Then write your own reasons.**

Use what you learned about meaningful, manageable and feasible topics.

## 1 Compare and decide

**Topic A:**
Environmental problems around the world.

**Topic B:**
Reasons students in M.3/6 leave food unfinished.



Which is more suitable for your class project? Give two reasons.

My choice: _____

Reason 1: _____

_____

Reason 2: _____

_____

## 2 Solve a problem

Your group wants to ask 300 students about reading preferences.
You have only one lesson to collect information.



How could you change the plan while keeping its main purpose?

_____

_____

_____

Why would your new plan be more feasible?

_____

_____

## 3 Challenge an assumption

A student says: "Students leave food unfinished because they *do not care about waste.*"

Do we have enough evidence to accept this explanation? Explain.

_____

_____

_____



Write a fair question that could help the group investigate.

_____

_____



**Think about** time, access and evidence.
There may be more than one sensible answer.



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# Think Deeper • Apply and Adapt



## 4. Think about consequences

A group asks classmates to write their names and family income on a questionnaire.

1. What problem could this cause?

2. Suggest a safer school-related topic.

## 5. Transfer your learning

A group wants to find out WHY students use reusable water bottles.
It plans only to count the bottles.

1. Will counting answer the whole question? Explain.

2. What else could the group do?

## CHOOSE YOUR CHALLENGE

**Support** Use these sentence starters if helpful:

"This could cause..." "A safer topic is..." "Counting shows..." "To find out why, we could..."

**Stretch** Your group may ask students about their experiences, but cannot observe at lunchtime. Choose a topic and an evidence collection method that fit this limit. Explain why they fit.



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# Week 1 Summative Test

## Selecting a Meaningful Research Project



Name: _____

Class: _____ No.: _____ Date: _____

Total score: _____ / 30

30 items • 1 point each

## PART I MULTIPLE CHOICE • 20 points total

**Questions 1–5** **Directions: Circle the letter of the best answer.**

**1** **What is a research topic?**

- ○ **A.** The final answer to a study
- ○ **B.** The subject a study focuses on
- ○ **C.** A list of group members
- ○ **D.** A personal opinion about a problem

**2** **Which situation could become a school research topic?**

- ○ **A.** A student's imaginary holiday on Mars
- ○ **B.** A story about a talking pencil
- ○ **C.** A superhero's secret identity
- ○ **D.** Students' experiences of waiting at the canteen

**3** **Which topic is the most focused?**

- ○ **A.** Book preferences among students in M.3/6
- ○ **B.** Education around the world
- ○ **C.** All problems faced by teenagers
- ○ **D.** Reading in every country

**4** **Why should a research topic be meaningful?**

- ○ **A.** It guarantees a high score.
- ○ **B.** It makes the project sound difficult.
- ○ **C.** It helps us understand something that matters.
- ○ **D.** It allows us to avoid collecting information.

**5** **What makes a project manageable?**

- ○ **A.** It includes as many countries as possible.
- ○ **B.** It fits the group's available time and resources.
- ○ **C.** It requires information the group cannot access.
- ○ **D.** It studies every part of a broad subject.



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