

Name: _____

Choosing Good Research Questions

Directions: Read each of the following questions. If you think it is a *good* research question put a check mark in the box beside the question. If the question is not a good research question, mark an X in the box . On the lines below the question, see if you can make it a better research question.

 X

1. Who invented the pencil?

A who question is too easy to answer. Instead, a student may want to find out how pencils came into use, how pencils are mass produced, or some specific question about how writing implements have changed over time.

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2. Why do many people want to eat organic food?

To be more specific, a student may ask what are the major differences between conventional and organic foods and tie those to health.

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3. How does the iPod work?

This is a good question that might be beefed up even more with a bit of history as to how it was developed and what changes have been implemented.

 X

4. What are all the holidays celebrated around the world?

This is way too broad. A student could choose to compare a holiday that is similar around the world, such as Independence Day celebrations.

 X

5. Who came up with the idea for cell phones?

Because the questions asks "who," it is way too narrow. Instead, specific questions about how cell phones work or how they were developed would offer broader views.

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X

6. Which sport is the best?

This is too broad. A more specific question related to a specific benefit, such as “What sports are best for cardiovascular fitness?” If something like this is chosen, an explanation of the benefit should be included.

X

7. When is the best time to get a new pet?

This could be improved with a more specific target, such as what are important qualities that pet owners need to have, or looking at specific pets and what sort of care they need.

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8. Why do students have to take state tests in school?

A history of how government mandated state testing might prove interesting to students.

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9. How can we help endangered species?

More specifically, how have scientists been able to improve the chances for survival for endangered species and/or how do organizations help endangered species?

X

10. Who won the Superbowl last year?

There’s just one answer here. A more interesting question might look at the history of the Superbowl, how it got started, or major changes that have occurred.