



Research & Data Collection

In order to better understand your issue, you will need to conduct research on it; find out who the stakeholders are, including both your allies and your opponents; and collect data. Keeping up to date on the latest information about your issue will educate you on what has been done, what needs to be done, and how your proposal to affect change fits in.

To keep track of all of the data you collect, create Research files. These files will help you to sort and retrieve information when you need it, particularly when questions and comments arise from stakeholders.

Researching the Issue

- Research the past but also keep up to date on current events. Continue to research at least once every week because new stories pop up all the time and you don't want to find yourself out of the loop!
- Use the school media center, local library, and local newspapers as sources of information.
- Scan the internet for articles that relate to your issue; remember to put your search terms in quotes if you want to research an exact phrase (e.g. "Strohacker Park").
- Ask a librarian for help.
- Ask other participants, your teachers, and parents to help you find sources about your issue.
- Take note of the creator of each source and the possible purposes they had in creating the source.
- Skim all of the sources you come across.
- Print or copy those sources that apply to your issue. Make sure you record the date and publication information of each source.

Collecting and Organizing Data

- Carefully review all of the sources you printed, copied, or found online.
- Determine whether the source supports or is in opposition to your position.
- Highlight important information from the source.
- Summarize the information presented by the source and your thoughts on it.