SIRS Issues Researcher
Back-to-School Update

Released August 2017
SIRS Issues Researcher: Creating Critical Thinkers

In preparation for the school year, use this guide to help create activities and lessons that aid students with:

- **Topic Selection**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Visual Literacy**
- **Reading Support**
- **Workflow Tools**
- **Information Literacy**

Plus new additions and curriculum activities curated by our editors!
New 2016-2017 Content!

• 12 new Leading Issues (out of 356 Leading Issues)
  • Including Abortion Funding, Driverless Vehicles, Heroin Abuse, Job Automation, Net Neutrality, Private Space Sector, Prescription Drug Prices, Public Funding of the Arts, Sharing Economy, Transgender Children, U.S.-Mexico Border Wall

• 37 new sources including 11 books from ReferencePoint Press (2,191 total sources)
  • Including ReferencePoint Press books, Project Syndicate, Los Angeles Times Online, Chicago Tribune Online

• 8,100 new articles (~131,000 total articles)

• 750 new multimedia/statistics (more than 24,000 multimedia/statistics)
Help students **select a topic** using these activities:

- Browse Leading Issues from **front page**:
  - **Trending Pro/Con Leading Issues** to find a topic trending in the news
- **Categories** to drill down to a topic of interest
- **View all issues** to see all issues alphabetically
- Use the **Research Guide** and fill out Step 1 to assess interest, purpose, and intended audience to aid in choosing a topic
Critical Thinking

Develop **critical thinking** skills though these Leading Issue features:

- **Overview:** Read the Essential Question and overview for general context
- **Viewpoints:** Look at viewpoint statements and evaluate the arguments
- **Supporting articles:** Analyze the evidence for each viewpoint
- **Critical Thinking & Analysis questions:** Answer the critical thinking questions to uncover the nuances of the issue
- **Timeline:** View timeline for an historical perspective and to learn key events related to the issue
Visual Literacy

Teach **visual literacy** using these features:

- View and analyze the featured editorial cartoon on each Leading Issue page
- Explore the Multimedia/Statistics source type in any search result. Use images from the gallery for research projects
- Browse the **infographics** and **editorial cartoons** in the image collection*
- Explore the **Maps of the World** for visual literacy and global awareness*

*Accessible via Educators’ Resources*
Informational text tools that support varied student reading:

- **Lexile level**: Associated with each article and can be sorted, filtered, or searched (using advanced search)
- **Text-to-speech**: Provides audio and mp3 downloads
- **Language translation**: Available in 12 languages
- **Article summaries**: Offer concise descriptions of each article to aid comprehension
- **Recently Added Articles**: Deliver opportunities for daily reading
Workflow Tools

Tools to support student collaboration and assignment completion:

• **Google Integration**: Save any article to Google Drive or Google Classroom

• **Citation**: Use the MLA or APA citation at the bottom of each article or Export to Easybib

• **Email**: Send any article to a personal email account

• **Notes Organizers**: Use set of five PDF organizers to organize and synthesize research
Information Literacy

Teach and develop students’ information literacy skills using these Curriculum Guides:

• Editorial Cartoons
• Infographics
• Primary Sources
• Research
• Statistics
• Writing Arguments
## Curriculum Calendar

The [Share This blog](#) provides classroom activity ideas:

### September

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. Constitution activity</th>
<th>Worksheet, “How to Identify Fake News in 10 Steps”</th>
<th>Facilitate discussion on immigration</th>
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</table>

### January

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Unit on Timelines using School Uniforms as example. Have students make their own timeline.</th>
<th>Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month</th>
<th>Take Women’s History Quiz then view Women’s Rights Leading Issue</th>
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### April

<table>
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<tr>
<th>World Autism Awareness Day</th>
<th>Mental Health Awareness Month</th>
<th>Read a YA novel that correlates with a Leading Issue</th>
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### October

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<tr>
<th>December</th>
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### June

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Worksheet adapted from several sources, including Melissa Zinn, assistant professor of communication and media at Westminster College.

ProQuest Guided Research products equip students to hone information literacy skills. Free trials are available.
For more information...

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