SIRS Discoverer
Back-to-School Update

Released August 2017
In preparation for the school year, use this guide to help with activities and lessons that equip students with:

- Critical Thinking
- Reading Fluency
- Research Skills
- Media Literacy
- Global Awareness
- STEM Education
- Information Literacy

Plus new additions and curriculum activities curated by our editors!
Critical Thinking

Develop critical thinking skills with 60 age-appropriate, editorially-created Leading Issues.

- Students can:
  - Select a topic and evaluate the evidence for a Leading Issue in the supporting articles
  - Answer the critical thinking questions and then come up with own questions
  - Analyze the editorial cartoon and answer visual literacy questions
  - Choose the viewpoint that has the strongest evidence then write an argumentative essay

New 2016-2017 Content!
5 New Leading Issues: Electoral College, Gender Identity, Health Care, Refugees, and Vaccines
Reading Fluency

Tools that assist students with reading fluency:

• **Nonfiction Books collection** offers 500+ visual engaging books to read on any device from publishers such as DK and Rourke
• **Current Events** delivers opportunities for daily reading
• **Lexile levels** are associated with each article and can be sorted, filtered, or searched (**in advanced search**)
• **Text-to-speech** provides audio and mp3 downloads
• **Language translation** is available in 12 languages

New 2016-2017 Content!
16 New Books from DK and Rourke Publishing
Research Skills

“Elementary school is when kids first begin to learn how to learn. Kids start using search engines quite early on, making elementary school the perfect time to teach research skills that become a foundation for a lifetime of learning.” — Concordia University

Teach research skills by having students do their first research project using Animal Facts:

• Explore an animal category type then select two animals and read the facts
• Compare and contrast the characteristics of two animals using this Animal Comparison graphic organizer
• Use Animal Facts to create a poster, tri-fold brochure, flip board, or pyramid display

New 2016-2017 Content!
40 New Animal Facts
300 Total in Collection
Media Literacy

“Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media. Media literate youth and adults are better able to understand the complex messages we receive from television, radio, Internet, newspapers, magazines, books, billboards, video games, music, and all other forms of media.”— Media Literacy Project

Media literacy activities:

- View the monthly Spotlight On... Visual Literacy feature and answer the questions to analyze the image
- View the editorial cartoon in the monthly Spotlight On... In the News feature and answer the questions to interpret the cartoon
- Explore the Images source type in any search result. Use images from the gallery to create a poster or flyer

New 2016-2017 Content!
1,400 New Images Added (Out of 37,280)
Visual Literacy and In the News Updated Monthly
Global Awareness

“All humans are citizens of the world, and teaching that fact to children in school can make them more sensitive to global issues and inspire them to look outside their own walls. A globalized classroom helps students to see the local significance of international events.” — Edudemic

Global awareness activities:

• Explore the world and browse the maps collection of nations, regions and world historic maps

• Use Country Facts & Maps to choose two countries and complete the Country Comparison graphic organizer

• Read articles in the Countries and Cultures sections of the Social Studies subject tree

New 2016-2017 Content!
264 Country, State, and Canada Facts Updated Yearly
STEM Education

“To succeed in this new information-based and highly technological society, students need to develop their capabilities in STEM to levels much beyond what was considered acceptable in the past.”—National Science Foundation

STEM learning activities:

• Find hands-on projects in the Home & Personal Projects, Science & Nature Projects sections of the subject tree.
• Use Science Fair Explorer to discover science fair projects using everyday materials found in any home.
• Read articles in the Science and Technology and Math categories of the subject tree.
• Explore science, math, and technology eBooks in Nonfiction Books collection.

New 2016-2017 Content!
11 New Science and Technology eBooks Added
Information Literacy

Teach students beginning information literacy skills by teaching them how to use SIRS Discoverer.

Elementary and middle school student tutorials guide students on the facets of doing research by showing how to

- Search keywords
- Browse subjects
- Compile research

New 2016-2017 Content!
1,800 Articles Added (Out of 121,350)
30 New Sources (Out of 2,392)

Information literacy is a set of abilities requiring individuals to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information." — ACRL
# Curriculum Activities and Calendar

See the [Activities page](#), [Events Calendar](#), and [Share This blog](#) for activities, projects, and printables for the entire school year!

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<th>September</th>
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<td><strong>Seeing Both Sides: Junk Food, Yes or No</strong></td>
<td><strong>A Recycled Band</strong></td>
<td><strong>Sand Art Menorah and Candles</strong></td>
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<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Make a Natural Water Filter</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities for the 100th Day of School!</strong></td>
<td><strong>Bring on the (Educational and Fun) Song Parodies!</strong></td>
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<td>April</td>
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<td><strong>Reveal Your Animal Instincts!</strong></td>
<td><strong>Should We Ban Competitive Eating?</strong></td>
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