Organizing, Preparing, and Drafting a Research Report

Language Arts 1

What This Lesson is About

- Take your research and turn it into a strong report.
- Using the work you've done in past lessons: topic selection and reliable sources.
- Focus on historical fiction: combining real history and story details
  - **Example Topic Used for Explanation:** Studying pirates in history and how Robert Louis Stevenson included them in *Treasure Island*.

Planning Your Report

Think of your paper like a journey. Decide on the main points you want to explain.

For example, a topic could be *"The Role of Pirates in the 18th Century and How Treasure Island Shows Them"*.

Plan your paragraphs before you start writing:

- **Introduction**: Introduce pirates and your focus
- **Body Paragraphs**: History of pirates, characters in Treasure Island
- **Conclusion**: What you learned about pirates and historical fiction
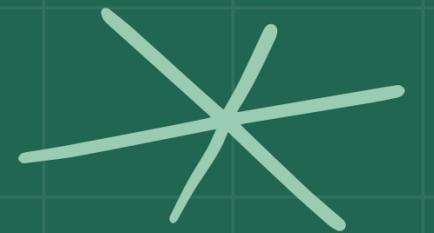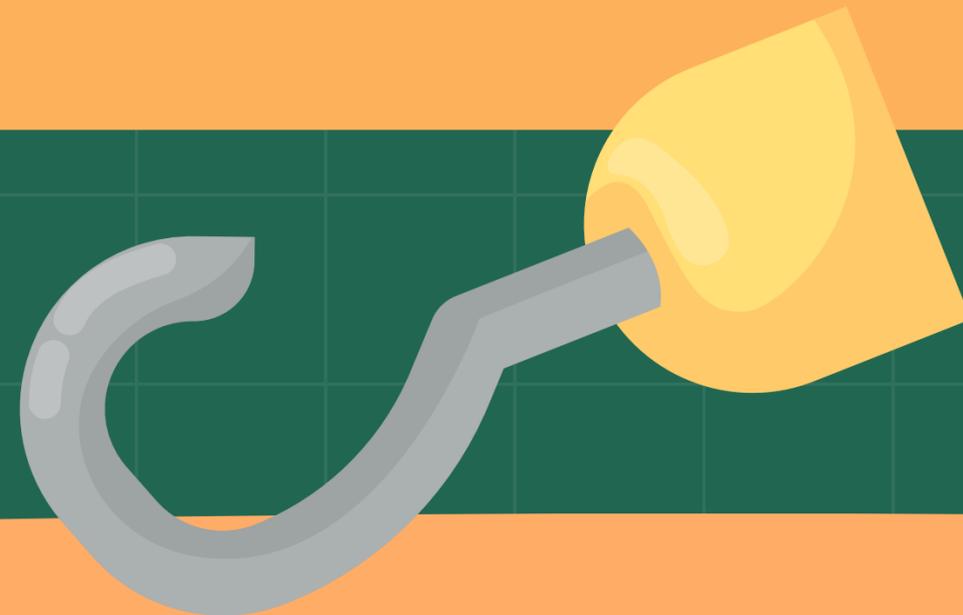
Structure of Your Report

- **Introduction:** Introduce your topic and purpose.
  - **Example:** "Pirates were real adventurers in the 18th century. Treasure Island shows us what life at sea might have been like."
- **Body:** Present your facts and ideas in organized paragraphs.
  - **Example:** Paragraph on real pirate life, paragraph on fictional pirates like Long John Silver.
- **Conclusion:** Summarize your learning and connect ideas.
  - **Example:** Show how history inspired the story.
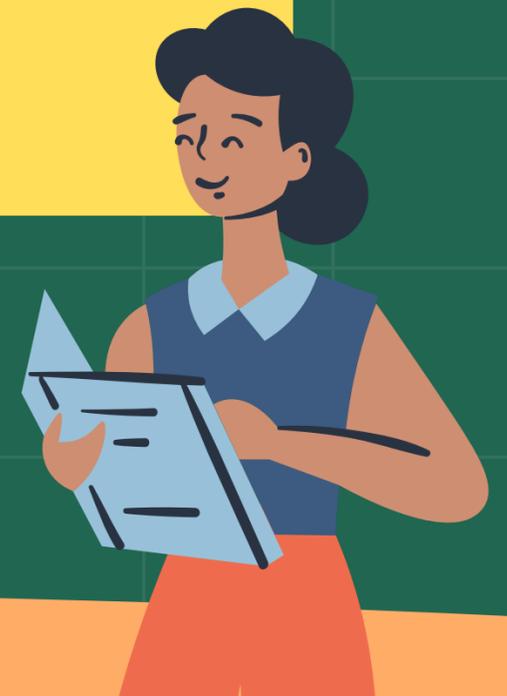
Organizing Information

- Use headings and subheadings to guide the reader.
  - **Example**: "Pirate Life in the 1700s" and "Pirates in Treasure Island"
- Group similar ideas together.
- Make sure each paragraph has one main idea.
  - **Example**: One paragraph for history, one paragraph for fictional characters.

Using Reliable Sources

- Your facts must come from trustworthy sources.
  - **Example**: History books, encyclopedias, or online history sites.
- Historical fiction combines real history + story details—check facts carefully.
  - **Example**: Compare real pirate behavior with Stevenson's pirates in Treasure Island.
- Cite sources correctly to show where your information comes from.

Paraphrasing

When inputting information from your sources, you must use your own words. For example, instead of copying a book sentence about pirates, explain it your way to help strengthen the connection to your thesis and topic of the body paragraph.

Why?
- Shows you understand your research.
- Helps avoid plagiarism and maintain academic integrity.
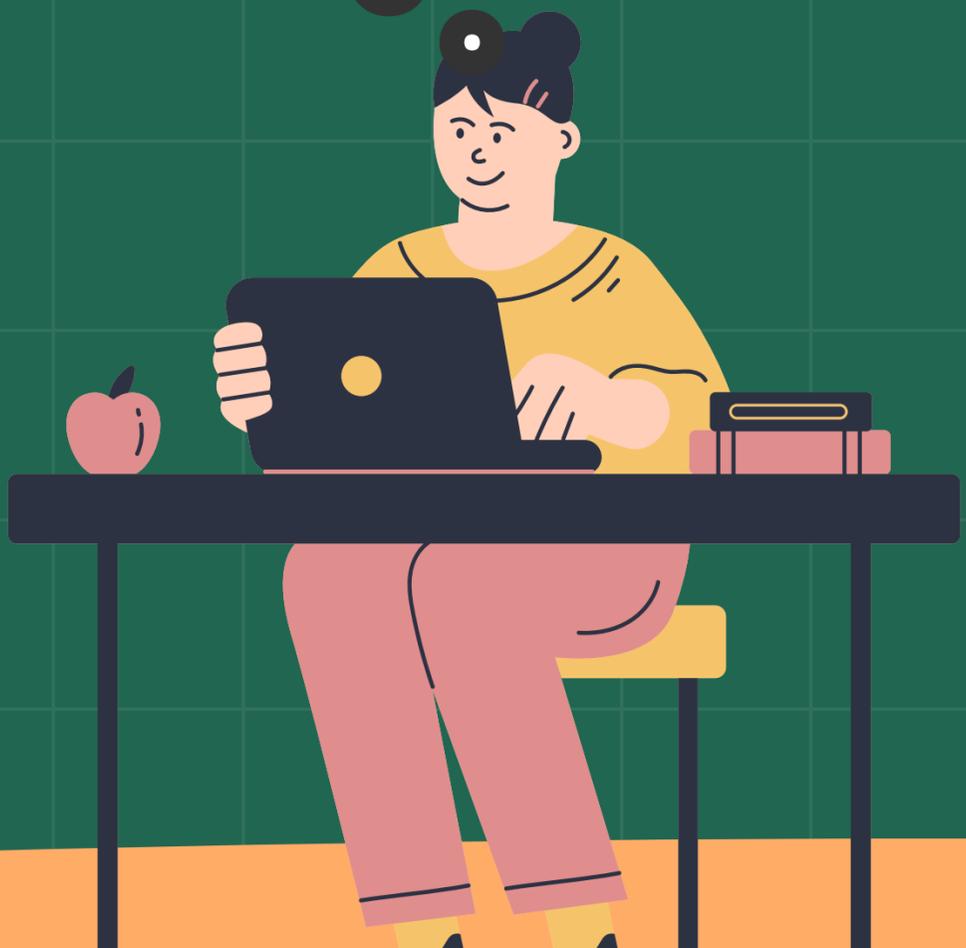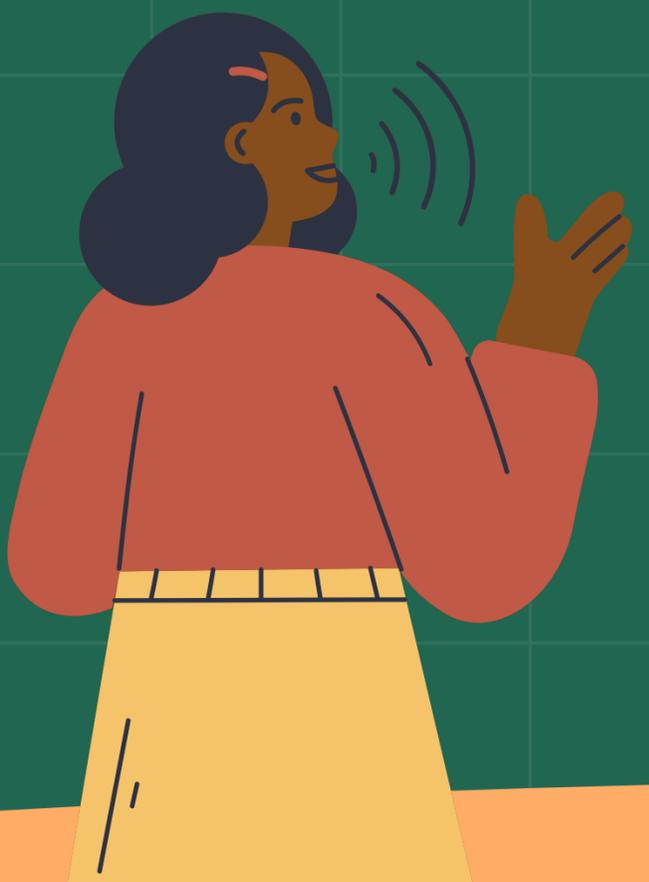
Example of Paraphrasing

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Original Text:

Howell Davis was a sailor who did just that. When his ship was captured by Irish pirates, Davis decided to join them, and soon rose up to be named captain. Davis is famous for capturing ships by clever trickery. He would pretend his ship was a merchant ship and sneak up on his prey. He once entered a port dressed like a gentleman, captured the governor of the colony, and held him for ransom.

Paraphrased Version:

Howell Davis was a sailor who became a pirate. When Irish pirates took over his ship, he chose to join them. He quickly became their captain. Davis was known for using smart tricks to capture other ships. He would disguise his ship to look like a merchant ship and surprise other ships. Once, he went into a harbor dressed as a rich man, captured the governor, and demanded money for his release.

MLA Citation:
"The Life of a Pirate." Elephango, 1 Sept. 2025

Drafting Your Report & Checking Your Report

- Start writing your introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Use your plan, notes, and headings.
- Focus on clear ideas and smooth transitions.
- **Example:** Start with an intro about pirate history, then describe how Treasure Island shows those pirates.

- Read through your paper carefully.
- Make sure ideas are organized and facts are correct.
- Check grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- **Example:** Make sure your historical facts match your sources, and your fictional examples are clear.
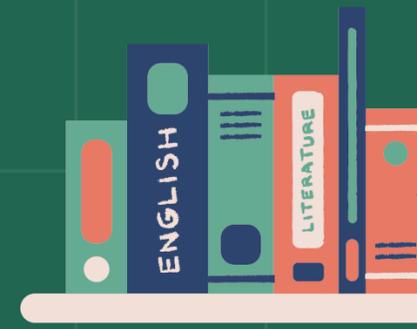
Your Goal for This Lesson

Combine your topic, research, and notes into a clear first draft, showing your understanding of historical fiction and Treasure Island.

Be ready to revise and polish your report in the next lesson.