

Source Cards and Note Cards

As you proceed through your research project, you will need to keep track of which sources you use and what information you gather from the sources. You might do this with index cards, a notebook, handouts your teacher has given you, or a computer file. To make things simple, this description will refer to the place where you keep track of this information as “cards.” You can adapt this method for any system you want—but you definitely need a secure way to keep track of all your research.

Source Cards—Use these to keep track of every book, magazine or newspaper article, web site, interview, e-mail, etc. that you use during your research. You will gather your source cards together at the end of your project to create your works cited page. Putting the information in MLA format is a time-saver.

Information required for source card for book:

Call Number of Book	Source Number or Letter
Author's Last Name, First Name. <u>Title</u> . Publisher: Location of Publisher, Copyright Date.	

The actual source card would look something like this

979.4 RIN	A
Rintoul, William. <u>Oildorado: Boom Times on the West Side</u> . Valley Publishers: Santa Cruz, CA, 1978.	

Use the source guide sheets in the library media center to help you decide what information is needed for different kinds of sources (reference books, magazines, newspapers, database articles, websites, etc.).

Note Cards

Write down everything you need from your sources on your note cards. If you use the exact wording of the source, put quotation marks (“ ”) around the words. If you paraphrase the source (by putting ideas into your own words), don’t use quotation marks. If you add your own thoughts to an idea on a note card, write out “ME” next to the thought. This way you can be certain that you keep it separate from what you borrowed. Always be sure to note the source number, letter or name on your note cards!

Note Card suggested contents

Short description of what card’s about	Source No. or letter Page no. (If none, write NP)
Quote/paraphrase/note	

Sample note card with quotation:

Description of well blowout near Taft	Source A Pg. 197
“The fire raged uncontrolled, blasting from the gaping mouth of the well, leaping in a wide column an estimated 600 feet into the air.” The steel derrick was torn to pieces.”	

Sample notecard with paraphrase:

Community reaction to well blowout	Source A Pg. 188
Many people in nearby Buttonwillow thought that an earthquake had occurred because the ground was noticeably shaking. Unlike in an earthquake, however, this shaking didn’t cease. When citizens ran out of doors, they could hear a loud roaring in the distance. They could also see a huge smoky plume raising into the sky.	