My Research Project: Generate a Matrix of Research Questions

Use the following table to generate potential research questions. You need not complete every cell in the table, and you can create more than one question in each cell. To complete the activity, choose a row such as “Information” and then generate questions that focus on, for example, defining what is known about the issue, tracing causes and effects, charting trends, and so on.

To generate questions, use freewriting or the sentence starters found in previous My Research Project activities.

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|  | Definition  (Describe specific aspects of the issue.) | Causes and Effects  (Ask what leads to a specific result.) | Trends  (Ask about sequences of events.) | Relationships  (Examine connections between aspects of the issue.) | Similarities and Differences  (Compare and contrast.) | Strengths and Weaknesses  (Assess relative merits.) |
| Information:  What is known—and not known—about the issue? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| History:  What has occurred in the past that is relevant to the issue? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Assumptions:  What conclusions—merited or not—have writers and readers already made about the issue? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Goals:  What should happen (or not happen)? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Outcomes:  What has happened so far? What is likely to happen? |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Policies:  What are the best procedures for carrying out actions? For making decisions? |  |  |  |  |  |  |