

# Research Questions

Asking questions about your topic is an important step in the research process! Use this guide to record your questions. Answering these questions (and asking new ones) can help guide the rest of your research process!

Your topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Context	Example: Great Chicago Fire	Your Topic
<b>Big Picture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What outside people, ideas or events were influencing your topic?</li> <li>• What was happening around the city, region, country, world in relation to your topic?</li> <li>• What else does your viewer need to understand the background of your topic?</li> <li>• What's the origin of your topic? How did it all get started?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who settled Chicago?</li> <li>• What were Chicago's buildings made of in the 1870s?</li> <li>• Were there a lot of fires in cities in the 1870s?</li> <li>• How many people were killed in Chicago fires before this fire?</li> <li>• Did Chicago have a fire department? When did it start? How effective was it?</li> </ul>	
<b>Right before</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are the main players?</li> <li>• How are they preparing for the events of this topic?</li> <li>• What events led to or caused the main event?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What types of people lived in the areas around the Great Chicago Fire?</li> <li>• What made Chicago vulnerable to such a big fire?</li> </ul>	
<b>Main event</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happened?</li> <li>• How and why?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where/how did the fire start?</li> <li>• How far did it spread?</li> <li>• How many were killed as a result of the fire? How much property was destroyed?</li> <li>• How long did the fire last?</li> </ul>	
<b>Right after</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were some positive reactions to the event? By whom?</li> <li>• What were some negative reactions to this event? By whom?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who was blamed for the fire?</li> <li>• How did people start to rebuild afterward?</li> <li>• Were people insured for their losses?</li> <li>• Did the city or state or federal government help with recovery?</li> </ul>	
<b>Long after</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are things different today because of the topic?</li> <li>• Did this topic influence other historical events, people or ideas?</li> <li>• Why is this topic important in history?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How did buildings/neighborhoods change to prevent this happening again?</li> <li>• Has there ever been another disaster in Chicago as bad as the Great Fire?</li> <li>• Did the Fire benefit Chicago in any way? How?</li> <li>• How has the response to other disasters been different or better than the response to the fire?</li> <li>• What did Chicago learn?</li> </ul>	