

I-Chart

What is an I-Chart and why is it important?

The I-Chart or “Information Chart” (Hoffman, 1992) is an excellent strategy for guiding students in a research project that involves many sources. This strategy helps students organize the information they need to write a research report.

How can I use an I-Chart with my students?

After students have chosen a topic, use I-Chart template to help them develop and write three or four questions that will guide the research process (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4). Encourage students to write the kinds of sources they will use (books, magazines, Internet sites, etc.) down the left side of the outline (Source 1, Source 2, Source 3). Students should write what they already know about each question in the “What We Know” row. Students continue to fill in the I-Chart as they find relevant information in the sources. Finally, students should use the information in the columns to write a brief summary of the information for each question.

Following is a completed I-Chart on the topic of cobras.

Topic: Cobras	Q1: Do experts consider the cobra the most dangerous animal?	Q2: What are the characteristics of the cobra?	Q3: Do humans and cobras live together without fear?	Q4: What are cobras capable of doing in nature?
What We Know:	Yes. Many wildlife experts believe the cobra is one of the deadliest snakes.	The cobra is probably vicious, dangerous, and sneaky.	No. I do not think that humans and cobras live together without fear, because cobras hunt humans.	Cobras are capable of creeping and blending in with dead leaves and tree bark.
Source 1: <i>Animals of Africa</i>	Yes. Cobras are strong and quick killers.	Some cobras are strong, quick, and fearless.	Cobras live with humans without fear, but humans can't live with cobras without fear.	Cobras are capable of surviving in nature because they are aggressive and afraid of nothing.
Source 2: <i>The Marvel of Animals' Behavior</i>	Yes. The cobra is considered extremely dangerous.	Some cobras are fast, mobile, and great hunters.	Yes. In some places, humans worship cobras.	Cobras are capable of moving fast and destroying anything in their paths.
Source 3: <i>Illustrated Encyclopedia of Animals</i>	Yes. Experts consider the Indian cobra to be the most dangerous snake of all.	Some cobras are smart, dangerous, and poisonous.	No. Cobras kill people.	Cobras are capable of playing dead or going limp when danger is near. Cobras have inflated hoods to protect from neck bites.
Summary:	Yes. All sources agree that cobras are one of the most dangerous animals. They are strong and quick killers that don't fear anything at all, including man.	Cobras are dangerous, poisonous, smart, quick hunters, fearless, fast, and mobile.	In some places, humans and cobras can live together without fear, but in most places they cannot because cobras kill humans.	One main thing a cobra can do in nature is survive. Cobras survive by destroying anything that gets in their way, going limp when danger is near and protecting themselves from neck bites.



Name: _____ Date: _____

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Topic:	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Q5:	Q6:
What we know:						
Source:						
Source:						
Source:						
Summaries:						

Name: _____ Date: _____

I-Chart

Topic:	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:
What we know:				
Source 1:				
Source 2:				
Source 3:				
Summaries:				

Name: _____ Date: _____

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Topic:	Q1:	Q2:	Q3:	Q4:	Other Interesting Facts	New Questions
What we know:						
Source:						
Source:						
Source:						
Summaries:						