Be A Super Researcher

with Six Simple Steps!

1. **Take a deep breath and read the assignment.**
   - Review the prompt and notice what questions you might try to answer with your research.

2. **Identify keywords and related words to use as search terms.**
   - Circle, underline, or highlight *keywords* in your assignment.
   - Make a list of these keywords and *related terms* or *synonyms* for those keywords. You want to have several search terms to try out as you hunt through resources.

3. **Evaluate available resources and decide where to start.**
   - Start your research by finding and reading an overview of your topic.
   - A *reference source* is often the best place to find an overview.
   - Evaluate each source, asking yourself questions such as: Who wrote this? What perspective or bias might they have? When was it written? Is it a primary or secondary source? Is this trustworthy source of information? What authority or particular knowledge does the creator have?

4. **Search resources, using search terms and research questions as guides.**
   - In a print source, look in the *table of contents* and the *index* for your search terms.
   - On a website, be sure to dig beyond the first page. Keep an eye out for your search terms!
   - Using a search engine (like Google), type in combinations of your search terms combined with Boolean operators (and/or).
     - Remember: AND will narrow your search. OR will expand your search.

5. **Track your sources and cite them as you work.**
   - When you find a source that you want to use, go to Noodle Tools and create a new citation entry.
   - Using the notecards in Noodle Tools, be sure to connect each notecard to a source from your citation list.

6. **Record information in an organized way.**
   - Take careful notes, primarily paraphrasing or summarizing information from your sources.
   - Be selective about the direct quotes you record – note WHY you might use this direct quote.

**REMEMBER:**

- Cite everything – even when you have summarized or paraphrased information!
- You might not use all the information you’ve gathered in your final product – that’s okay! It’s better to have a little more information than you need than to discover you’re missing vital facts at the last minute.

*Keep in mind the ultimate goal of your research -

**a great final product!**