

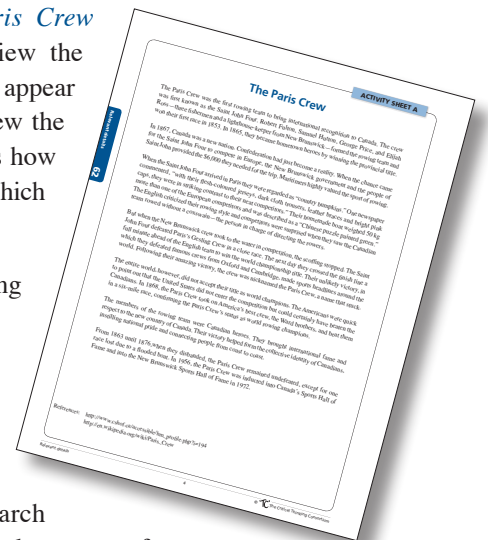
Relevant details

selecting the information or facts that are significant or useful for a specific research question and purpose

- Objectives:**
- learn to distinguish important from unimportant details, based on a research question and purpose;
 - appreciate the need to select relevant details thoughtfully.

Use the following activities to introduce the research strategy

- Invite students to watch the Paris Crew Historica Moments video available at <https://www.historica-dominion.ca/content/heritage-minutes/paris-crew>. This video features the Canadian rowing team that brought international sports fame to Canada by becoming unlikely world champions when they defeated European crews in the 1867 Paris Exposition regatta.
- After viewing the video, twice if necessary, ask students to identify its purpose. Suggestions may include: to inspire national pride, provide historic information about rowing in Canada, encourage belief in unlikely heroes, or offer a glimpse of Canadian sports heroes.
- After watching the video again, ask students to identify the important information conveyed in the video. Remind students to look for visual and oral information, including narration and character dialogue. Record student ideas.
- Discuss the challenges of producing such a video—one that is less than a minute long, highly engaging, and yet provides sufficient context and information that the event is understandable to a wide audience.
- Provide students with a copy of *The Paris Crew* (Activity Sheet A). Invite students to review the sheet and highlight information that did not appear in the video. With elementary students, review the information as a class. Discuss with students how the creator of the video may have determined which details were relevant.
- Based on the discussion, introduce the following criteria for selecting relevant details:
 - important to the research topic or question: details that are key to understanding the topic or question you are hoping to address;
 - contributes significantly to the research purpose: details that help to meet the particular purpose for researching the topic or question.
- Review with students the following clues that can help identify important information:
 - *prominent location*—important information is often located in the title, first and/or last paragraph, headings, topic sentences, and summary;



- *use of repetition*—important points are often made several times;
- *interesting facts*—information that stands out as being particularly interesting because it is unusual, exaggerated, bigger than life, surprising, or unexpected.

➤ Suggest to students that research can be conducted for a variety of purposes. For example, students might research an assigned topic to argue a point, defend a position against criticism, create a broad overview, or provide a light-hearted perspective. Discuss with students how to determine the extent to which details contribute to the research purpose. Examine the information conveyed in the Paris Crew video and identify how the information contributes to the video’s purpose.

Practise the strategy

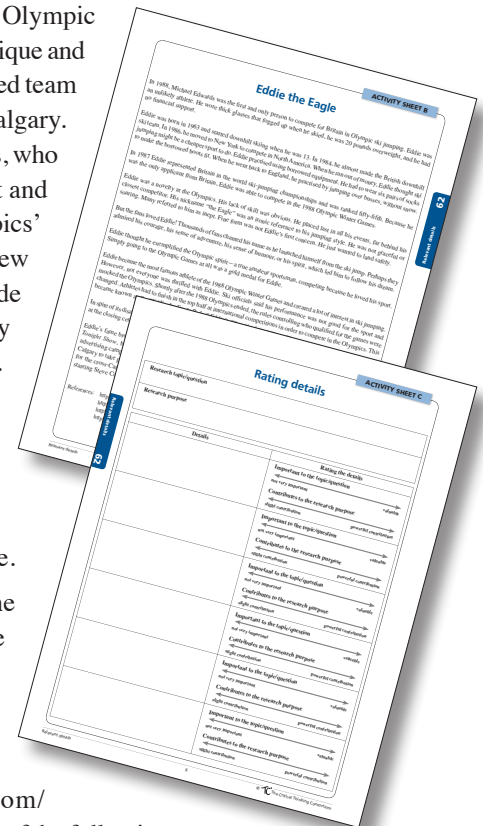
➤ Use one of the following activities to practise the strategy:

Option #1: Explain to students that the 1988 Olympic Winter Games held in Calgary included several unique and colourful competitors. One was a Jamaican bobsled team that had never seen snow before competing in Calgary. Another was the participation of Michael Edwards, who became known as Eddie the Eagle, Britain’s first and only ski jumper. Eddie became the 1988 Olympics’ “most-loved” loser, and he received more interview requests than any other athlete at the games. Provide students with a copy of *Eddie the Eagle* (Activity Sheet B) and *Rating details* (Activity Sheet C). Assign students individually or in pairs one of the following research tasks:

- Was the 1990 “Eddie the Eagle Rule” rule fair?
- Create a sports card profile of Eddie the Eagle.
- Does Eddie represent the true spirit of the Olympic Games or did his performance make fun of the games?

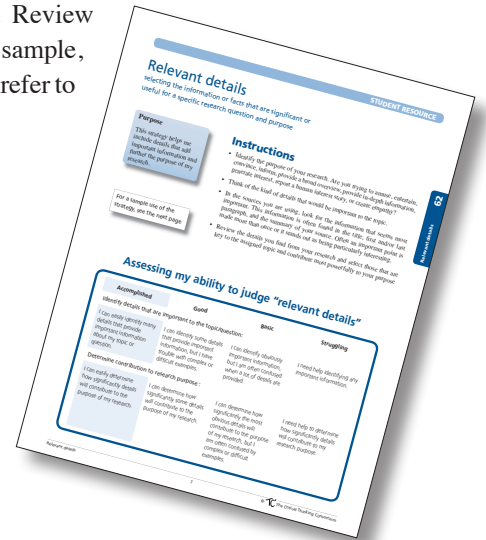
Option #2: Provide students with access to the article, *Stone Age cultures survive tsunami waves*, available at <http://www.nbcnews.com/id/6786476/#.U7RtkqgozA>. Assign students one of the following research tasks:

- Create a profile of these Stone Age people, explaining how they could escape a tsunami.
 - Evaluate the responses of modern people to these Stone Age tribes.
 - How similar/different are these Stone Age people from present-day humans?
- Discuss the underlying purpose of each of these research questions (inform, evaluate, compare). Provide students with a copy of *Rating details* (Activity Sheet C). Instruct students to gather and rate the details that would be most relevant for their research question and purpose.



Reinforce the strategy

- Introduce *Relevant details* (Student Resource). Review each of the elements: purpose, strategies, practice sample, and self-assessment rubric. Encourage students to refer to this chart when using the strategy in the future.



Apply the strategy in everyday teaching

- Invite students to use this strategy to create a 30-second snapshot (e.g., written profile, video) of an Olympic athlete or an Olympic sport. Brainstorm possible purposes for the snapshot such as promoting participation in the sport, fostering determination, encouraging an increase in funding support for athletes. Encourage students to use *Rating details* (Activity Sheet C) to select the most relevant details for their purpose.
- Encourage students to use this strategy in everyday situations, including the following:
 - finding out about people, places, and issues;
 - researching a variety of points of view;
 - creating a defence or argument to support your position;
 - researching a product;
 - promoting an event.

Assess use of the strategy

- Encourage students to refer to the rubric found in *Relevant details* (Student Resource) when self-assessing their understanding of this literacy strategy.
 - Allow students opportunities to apply the strategy two or three times without evaluation.
 - Guide students in interpreting and using the rubric to assess their own responses.
 - Encourage students to use the rubric whenever they use this strategy.
- To use the rubric for teacher evaluation of student work, remove the first person (student) reference from each descriptor.

The Paris Crew

The Paris Crew was the first rowing team to bring international recognition to Canada. The crew was first known as the Saint John Four. Robert Fulton, Samuel Hutton, George Price, and Elijah Ross—three fishermen and a lighthouse-keeper from New Brunswick—formed the rowing team and won their first race in 1853. In 1865, they became hometown heroes by winning the provincial title.

In 1867, Canada was a new nation. Confederation had just become a reality. When the chance came for the Saint John Four to compete in Europe, the New Brunswick government and the people of Saint John provided the \$6,000 they needed for the trip. Maritimers highly valued the sport of rowing.

When the Saint John Four arrived in Paris they were regarded as “country bumpkins.” One newspaper commented, “with their flesh-coloured jerseys, dark cloth trousers, leather braces and bright pink caps, they were in striking contrast to their neat competitors.” Their homemade boat weighed 50 kg more than one of the European competitors and was described as a “Chinese puzzle painted green.” The English criticized their rowing style and competitors were surprised when they saw the Canadian team rowed without a coxswain—the person in charge of directing the rowers.

But when the New Brunswick crew took to the water in competition, the scoffing stopped. The Saint John Four defeated Paris’s Gesling Crew in a close race. The next day they crossed the finish line a full minute ahead of the English team to win the world championship title. Their unlikely victory, in which they defeated famous crews from Oxford and Cambridge, made sports headlines around the world. Following their amazing victory, the crew was nicknamed the Paris Crew, a name that stuck.

The entire world, however, did not accept their title as world champions. The Americans were quick to point out that the United States did not enter the competition but could certainly have beaten the Canadians. In 1868, the Paris Crew took on America’s best crew, the Ward brothers, and beat them in a six-mile race, confirming the Paris Crew’s status as world rowing champions.

The members of the rowing team were Canadian heroes. They brought international fame and respect to the new country of Canada. Their victory helped form the collective identity of Canadians, instilling national pride and connecting people from coast to coast.

From 1863 until 1876, when they disbanded, the Paris Crew remained undefeated, except for one race lost due to a flooded boat. In 1956, the Paris Crew was inducted into Canada’s Sports Hall of Fame and into the New Brunswick Sports Hall of Fame in 1972.

References: http://www.cshof.ca/accessible/hm_profile.php?i=194
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris_Crew

Eddie the Eagle

In 1988, Michael Edwards was the first and only person to compete for Britain in Olympic ski jumping. Eddie was an unlikely athlete. He wore thick glasses that fogged up when he skied, he was 20 pounds overweight, and he had no financial support.

Eddie was born in 1963 and started downhill skiing when he was 13. In 1984, he almost made the British downhill ski team. In 1986, he moved to New York to compete in North America. When he ran out of money, Eddie thought ski jumping might be a cheaper sport to do. Eddie practised using borrowed equipment. He had to wear six pairs of socks to make the borrowed boots fit. When he went back to England, he practised by jumping over busses, without snow.

In 1987 Eddie represented Britain in the world ski-jumping championships and was ranked fifty-fifth. Because he was the only applicant from Britain, Eddie was able to compete in the 1988 Olympic Winter Games.

Eddie was a novelty at the Olympics. His lack of skill was obvious. He placed last in all his events, far behind his closest competitor. His nickname “the Eagle” was an ironic reference to his jumping style. He was not graceful or soaring. Many referred to him as inept. Fine form was not Eddie’s first concern. He just wanted to land safely.

But the fans loved Eddie! Thousands of fans chanted his name as he launched himself from the ski jump. Perhaps they admired his courage, his sense of adventure, his sense of humour, or his spirit, which led him to follow his dream.

Eddie thought he exemplified the Olympic spirit—a true amateur sportsman, competing because he loved his sport. Simply going to the Olympic Games at all was a gold medal for Eddie.

Eddie became the most famous athlete of the 1988 Olympic Winter Games and created a lot of interest in ski jumping. However, not everyone was thrilled with Eddie. Ski officials said his performance was not good for the sport and mocked the Olympics. Shortly after the 1988 Olympics ended, the rules controlling who qualified for the games were changed. Athletes had to finish in the top half at international competitions in order to compete in the Olympics. This became known as the “Eddie the Eagle Rule.” Eddie’s Olympic days were over.

In spite of its disapproval of Eddie, the International Olympic Committee president referred to him kindly in his speech at the closing ceremonies: “people set new goals, created new world records, and one has even flown like an eagle.”

Eddie’s fame brought him great success. He had a huge “non-victory” parade in his home town, appeared on *The Tonight Show*, became a sponsor for Eagle Airlines, wrote a book, recorded a song in Finnish, participated in advertising campaigns, co-hosted a BBC radio show, and earned a law degree. In February 2008, Eddie returned to Calgary to take part in the twentieth anniversary of the games, and was asked to serve as a torchbearer in Winnipeg for the cross-Canada relay leading up to the 2010 Olympic Winter Games. In 2009, a film called *Eddie the Eagle*, starring Steve Coogan, was made about his life.

References: <http://archives.cbc.ca/sports/olympics/topics/1322-8081/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eddie_%22The_Eagle%22_Edwards
<http://www.infoplease.com/spot/winter-olympics-eddie-eagle-edwards.html>
http://www.bbc.co.uk/gloucestershire/content/articles/2008/02/13/eddie_the_eagle_feature.shtml

Relevant details

selecting the information or facts that are significant or useful for a specific research question and purpose

Purpose

This strategy helps me include details that add important information and further the purpose of my research.

For a sample use of the strategy, see the next page.

Instructions

- Identify the purpose of your research. Are you trying to amuse, entertain, convince, inform, provide a broad overview, provide in-depth information, generate interest, report a human interest story, or create empathy?
- Think of the kind of details that would be important to the topic.
- In the sources you are using, look for the information that seems most important. This information is often found in the title, first and/or last paragraph, and the summary of your source. Often an important point is made more than once or it stands out as being particularly interesting.
- Review the details you find from your research and select those that are key to the assigned topic and contribute most powerfully to your purpose.

Assessing my ability to judge “relevant details”

Accomplished

Good

Basic

Struggling

Identify details that are important to the topic/question:

I can easily identify many details that provide important information about my topic or question.

I can identify some details that provide important information, but I have trouble with complex or difficult examples.

I can identify obviously important information, but I am often confused when a lot of details are provided.

I need help identifying any important information.

Determine contribution to research purpose:

I can easily determine how significantly details will contribute to the purpose of my research.

I can determine how significantly some details will contribute to the purpose of my research.

I can determine how significantly the most obvious details will contribute to the purpose of my research, but I am often confused by complex or difficult examples.

I need help to determine how significantly details will contribute to my research purpose.

SAMPLE

use of the strategy

Rating details

Research topic/question	
Research purpose	
Details	Rating the details
<i>Create a sports card profile of Eddie the Eagle</i>	
<i>Inform readers about who Eddie was and what he did</i>	
<i>Unaccomplished ski jumper who represented Britain in the 1988 Olympic Winter Games in Calgary</i>	<p>Important to the topic/question</p> <p>← not very important valuable →</p> <p>Contributes to the research purpose</p> <p>← slight contribution powerful contribution →</p>
<i>Fans loved him</i> <i>He was funny and entertaining</i>	<p>Important to the topic/question</p> <p>← not very important valuable →</p> <p>Contributes to the research purpose</p> <p>← slight contribution powerful contribution →</p>
<i>Didn't have any money</i>	<p>Important to the topic/question</p> <p>← not very important valuable →</p> <p>Contributes to the research purpose</p> <p>← slight contribution powerful contribution →</p>
<i>Became the most famous athlete of the 1998 winter games</i>	<p>Important to the topic/question</p> <p>← not very important valuable →</p> <p>Contributes to the research purpose</p> <p>← slight contribution powerful contribution →</p>
<i>Officials changed the qualification rules for Olympic participation as a result of his performance</i>	<p>Important to the topic/question</p> <p>← not very important valuable →</p> <p>Contributes to the research purpose</p> <p>← slight contribution powerful contribution →</p>
<i>Became successful because of his popularity</i>	<p>Important to the topic/question</p> <p>← not very important valuable →</p> <p>Contributes to the research purpose</p> <p>← slight contribution powerful contribution →</p>
<i>Will be a torchbearer in the 2010 Olympic Winter Games relay</i>	<p>Important to the topic/question</p> <p>← not very important valuable →</p> <p>Contributes to the research purpose</p> <p>← slight contribution powerful contribution →</p>