

The Big6™ Skills

The Big6 is a process model of how people of all ages solve an information problem. From practice and study, we found that successful information problem-solving encompasses six stages with two sub-stages under each:

1. Task Definition

- 1.1 Define the information problem
- 1.2 Identify information needed

2. Information Seeking Strategies

- 2.1 Determine all possible sources
- 2.2 Select the best sources

3. Location and Access

- 3.1 Locate sources (intellectually and physically)
- 3.2 Find information within sources

4. Use of Information

- 4.1 Engage (e.g., read, hear, view, touch)
- 4.2 Extract relevant information

5. Synthesis

- 5.1 Organize from multiple sources
- 5.2 Present the information

6. Evaluation

- 6.1 Judge the product (effectiveness)
- 6.2 Judge the process (efficiency)

People go through these Big6 stages—consciously or not—when they seek or apply information to solve a problem or make a decision. It's not necessary to complete these stages in a linear order, and a given stage doesn't have to take a lot of time. We have found that in almost all successful problem-solving situations, all stages are addressed.

In addition to considering the Big6 as a process, another useful way to view the Big6 is as a set of basic, essential life skills. These skills can be applied across situations—to school, personal, and work settings. The Big6 Skills are applicable to all subject areas across the full range of grade levels. Students use the Big6 Skills whenever they need information to solve a problem, make a decision, or complete a task.

The Big6 Skills are best learned when integrated with classroom curriculum and activities. Teachers and library media specialists can begin to use the Big6 immediately by:

- Using the Big6 terminology when giving various tasks and assignments
- Talking students through the process for a particular assignment
- Asking key questions and focusing attention on specific Big6 actions to accomplish.

More information can be found on the Big 6 website:

<http://www.big6.com/>