

## Lesson Plan: Shaking Up Research Skills: A Beginner Websearch Activity for Lower Elementary Students

- Overview

The book *Shaking Things Up* by Susan Hood, an anthology of biographical poems about women who shaped history, illustrated by thirteen different artists, is a perfect starting point for elementary students to learn information literacy skills and practice academic research in a group.

- Resources & Preparation

- Materials and Technology

- Multiple copies of the book, *Shaking Things Up* by Susan Hood
- Student access to computers/internet

- Instructional Plan

- Student Objectives:

- Search the school or public library catalog for books and information

1. As a class, read the poem “Taking the Heat” about firefighter Molly Williams, illustrated by Shadra Strickland in the book *Shaking Things Up*. Then show students the “Sources, Books, Websites, and More,” section at the back of the book. In the additional sources for Molly Williams, point out how author Susan Hood explains that much of the information available on the internet was incorrect.
2. Discuss situations where someone might want to do more thorough research instead of just checking the internet. List examples on the board.
3. Define primary and secondary sources using examples from the “Sources” section in *Shaking Things Up*. For example, the section on Nellie Bly (journalist) contains a link to an archive of articles she wrote, while the section on astronaut Mae Jemison includes a link to her personal website.
4. Divide students into groups and let each group choose a poem out of *Shaking Things Up*. If possible, let each group use their own copy of the book. Have students work together to fill out the “*Shaking Things Up* Research Worksheet” on the following page. Students will need to look up more information about both their poem’s subject and the poem’s illustrator.
  - a. For more information about the poem’s subjects, have students search Biography.com, the Encyclopedia Britannica (Britannica.com), the National Women’s Hall of Fame (womenofthehall.org), or the National Women’s History Museum (nwhm.org)
  - b. Encourage students to search any other websites listed in the “Sources” section for their subject.
  - c. For more information about the poem’s illustrators, explain to students that each of the illustrators who worked on this book has her own website. Encourage students to search for this website on their own, but don’t hesitate to help them if they get stuck. For example, at least one of the illustrators shares a name with a fashion designer, while another has the same name as a politician.
5. Give each group a few minutes to present what they found to the class.

- Additional Resources

- See attached worksheet

*Shaking Things Up*  
Research Worksheet

My Subject:

What extraordinary thing did she do? (1-2 sentence summary)

When did this happen? (See the Timeline on page 6)

Other books about my subject from the library catalog:

Another fact about my subject:

I found this fact on...

The illustrator for my subject:

Her website address:

Who is she? (1-2 sentence biography)

Other books illustrated by this artist from the library catalog:

Another fact about this illustrator from her website: