We live in a world where the majority of research is now done on the internet. It is vital that we prepare our students by teaching them how to access this medium, think critically about the information gathered, and then demonstrate their mastery in both standardized-test and written-exam format.

21st Century Fact Finds: Using Online Research Tools to Reinforce Common Core Skills is a resource that does all of this and more. It hones such traditional educational skills as reading comprehension, critical thinking, and vocabulary building, while harnessing the modern power of the information-rich internet for classroom use.* This book allows students to thoughtfully and responsibly conduct research and learn on their own terms. Ultimately, this gives students a sense of ownership and a stake in learning.

*Note: All of the research tasks in this book can be completed using traditional sources (e.g., dictionaries, atlases, encyclopedias, etc.) if by necessity or preference.

How to Use This Book

This book consists of 25 stories. Each story is written at grade level with a word count of 425–550 words. Story topics are high-interest and written to hook a student's attention. For example, topics include an octopus in a post office, a world where a day is always longer than a year, and a farmer who milks a herd of animals with fangs.

While each story is based on truth, there are varying degrees of factual inaccuracy. For example, a country may be in an incorrect location, a mammal may be called a reptile, or a historical event may be placed in the wrong century. Some stories have zero errors, while others have one, two, three, or even four errors.

No matter the number of errors, students are directed (by icons and words) to research specific topics using these tools:

* ✳ dictionary
* ✳ thesaurus
* ✳ encyclopedia
* ✳ calculator
* ✳ atlas

* ✳ image search
* ✳ translator
* ✳ metric converter
* ✳ temperature converter
* ✳ currency converter

All of these sources can be accessed with computers online or in more traditional paper and book form. The specific tools used for each story will depend on the story's content. A teacher should be prepared to be flexible when it comes to sources.

Stories can be read in any order.

"My time machine works!" Rohan's little brother Tyler said.

"I don't believe you," Rohan said.

"I knew you wouldn't," Tyler responded. "That's why I made sure to come back with proof. Look at these photographs. I took them to prove that I went back in time. The first photo is when I went back to 1513. I went to St. Augustine. That's a city in northeast Florida. It's the oldest continuously occupied European-established city and port in the continental United States."

Tyler touched the photo and said, "I didn't **linger** too long in St. Augustine. It's best to only make short, quick trips when you time-travel, otherwise people start asking too many questions. I made sure to talk with Ponce de León before leaving, though. León was the first European explorer to the area. He founded the city when his ship first landed. That way he could use it as a base. He asked me, "Quieres una naranja?"

Rohan looked at the picture where his brother was pointing. His brother was standing next to a man dressed in Spanish armor. Behind them was an orange grove. The man in Spanish armor was giving an orange to Tyler.

"You can linger over that photo later," said Tyler. "Now I want you to look at this one. This one is when I went back to the Battle of Gettysburg. This battle took place in Arizona in 1863. Fighting took place for three days in July. The battle is often described as the war's turning point, but it came at great cost. There were more people who died in this battle than any other during the war."

"What war was that?" asked Rohan.

"The Revolutionary War, of course," Tyler answered. "George Washington was one of the generals. He was fighting against General Robert E. Lee. Look closely at this picture, and you can see me standing behind Washington. Washington is meeting with Major General Meade."

Rohan looked closely at the picture. He saw his brother standing behind Washington and Meade. The two generals had serious expressions on their faces.

"I don't suppose you lingered there, either?" asked Rohan.

Tyler answered, "No one would want to linger anywhere near a battlefield during battle. I suppose if you went to a historic battlefield today, you might linger over some of the exhibits."

Rohan said, "I don't believe you ever went to these places, but I will tell you what I do believe. I believe that you used a computer to alter these photos. I also believe that you should write your time-travel stories down. You can be a science-fiction writer, maybe even a famous one."

Grinning, Tyler said, "I will let you take a ride into the future on my time machine. You can find out if you are right!"

Why didn't Rohan believe that the time machine worked? It is time to check facts.

Thesaurus

1. Write down one synonym and one antonym for *linger*.

synonym: _____ antonym: _____

2. Out of the word pairs below, which taste would you most like to have linger in your mouth? (Circle your choices)

ice cream or **peanut butter**   **lemon** or **cherry**

fried crickets or **fried rice**   **hot pepper** or **cinnamon**

Atlas

Find St. Augustine, Florida. In which part of Florida is it located?

Ⓐ northeast   Ⓑ southeast   Ⓒ northwest   Ⓓ southwest

Translator (from Spanish to English)

Quieres una naranja? _____

Search Engine/Encyclopedia

Fill in the blanks.

1. When Did Ponce de Leon land in Florida? _____

2. When was St. Augustine founded? _____

3. Did Ponce de Leon bring oranges to Florida? _____

4. Which war was the Battle of Gettysburg part of? _____

5. In which state was the battle fought? _____

6. Was Washington alive during the Battle of Gettysburg? _____

In Your Own Words

Write two short paragraphs. In the first paragraph, tell how you know Tyler was making up a story. In the second paragraph, tell where you would go if you could take a trip in a time machine. Tell why. Also write about what you might do there and who or what you might see.

Images:
1. south
2.–4. north
5. They are the opposite.

Search Engine/Encyclopedia:
1. Cairo
2. north

Fact Find #12: A Herd with Fangs

Dictionary:
1. a job or profession, a way of spending time
2. Accept appropriate responses.

Images:
1. Check drawings for accuracy.
2. top

Temperature Converter:
1. 172.4
2. It would have to be Fahrenheit, otherwise the snake would not survive such high temperatures.

Search Engine/Encyclopedia:
1. True
2. True

Fact Find #13: The Perfect Soft-Boiled Egg

Thesaurus:
1. Possible answers include *adapt*, *change*, and *modify*.
2. C

Atlas:
1. California, New Jersey
2. Appalachian, Allegheny

Temperature Converter:
1. 100°C
2. Yes

Calculator:
1. 36.6, 175.4°F
2. 25.62, 186.4°F

Fact Find #14: Time Machine

Thesaurus:
1. Possible synonyms include *delay*, *loiter*, *amble*, *dillydally*, and *crawl*. Possible antonyms include *go*, *hurry*, *leave*, and *rush*.
2. Answers will vary.

Atlas: A

Translator: "Do you want an orange?" Or, "Want an orange?"

Search Engine/Encyclopedia:
1. 1513
2. 1565
3. Yes
4. War Between the States, or American Civil War
5. Pennsylvania
6. No

Fact Find #15: Georgia, Georgia

Dictionary:
1. Possible answers include *anxious* or *fearful that something bad or unpleasant will happen*.

Translator: (Note: Answers are given phonetically.)
1. gamarjoba
2. didi maloba

Atlas:

Georgia (country): T̲b̲i̲l̲i̲s̲i̲; B̲l̲a̲c̲k̲ ̲S̲e̲a̲; R̲u̲s̲s̲i̲a̲, T̲u̲r̲k̲e̲y̲, A̲r̲m̲e̲n̲i̲a̲, A̲z̲e̲r̲b̲a̲i̲j̲a̲n̲

Georgia (U.S. state): Atlanta; Atlantic Ocean; Florida, A̲l̲a̲b̲a̲m̲a̲, Tennessee, North Carolina, S̲o̲u̲t̲h̲ ̲C̲a̲r̲o̲l̲i̲n̲a̲

Images: The bobcat's tail is shorter.

Metric Converter:
1. leopard = 132 pounds
2. bobcat = 18 kilograms
3. The leopard weighs more.

Fact Find #16: Around the World

Dictionary:
1. a narrow strip of land with water on either side, forming a link between two larger areas of land
2. An island is completely surrounded by water.

Currency Converter: Answers depend on the current exchange rate.

Atlas

Suez Canal
1. Egypt
2. Mediterranean and Red Seas
3. Africa

Panama Canal
1. Panama
2. Atlantic and Pacific Oceans
3. South America