On April 20, 2012, I taught Ms. Broger’s 6th period 9th grade class at Venice High School. My objectives were to a) give them a little background information about what they were currently studying—Shakespeare—and b) to have them practice using scholarly sources and citing those sources. Additionally, speaking and listening skills are also standards based, so another objective was to present their findings.

To prepare, I created a patherfinder with vetted websites for them to look at. I scaffolded the lesson with a handout that they could fill in, which included the instructions, areas for them to fill in, and a place where they could write the citation down using the proper format. On the back I included their rubric. I feel that doing this really allowed them to focus on learning about their topic.

The lesson was to use the pathfinder to find five facts about a topic (that I wrote in for them), and then present the facts to the class.

For the most part, students were engaged and interested. I had to repeat to them to only use the pathfinder websites because they trusted sources—and using Yahoo/Google does not guarantee valid information. I also had to remind some students that this was a pair assignment, and they had to help their partner or not get credit. This got them back on track quickly.

What I took away from this lesson is that well-planned lessons that have built-in scaffolding run very smoothly. Also, giving instructions in small chunks are great for any scholar of any age.