**Research Essay**

Once I think I am done, I will re-read this booklet over to ENSURE I have met all the requirements: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Introduction:** You want me to write a what? A Research Essay. Here is the deal. First of all, I want you to SIT DOWN AND ACTUALLY READ what is given to you. Too often I have questions when the information is sitting right in front of you. Take responsibility for your own learning, and I will help as a guide.

**Definition of a Research Paper:** A research paper is a piece of expository writing organized into an introduction, a body and a conclusion which explores the facts related to a particular topic and which provides adequate documentation of those facts. The research paper you are writing is formal, factual and avoids argument. You may present information which supports a particular view on your topic; however, your findings must be supported with documented facts.

Remember, I do not trust you. I also do not care about the colour of your shirt, or your favourite juice. I do not want a report. Unlike an essay, a report does not have to present an argument or point of view. I want a research essay that you take a stand on, and you give me credible facts from somewhere else.

**Step one: Finding a Topic:** Choose a topic which interests and challenges you. Your attitude towards the topic may well determine the amount of effort and enthusiasm you put into your research. Do a few searches and be sure you can find enough information on this topic. Remember to think about your THESIS the entire time. What do you want to say/prove? Remember, no one cares about your favourite makeup, or sports car, just like you didn’t care I had on a green shirt. Check with me once you have chosen a topic.

**How to Narrow your Topic:** Now you have a general topic idea, it is time to refine and narrow its scope. Asking questions, brainstorming, making lists, and webbing are some methods for achieving this.

**Ask Questions**

One of the basic methods of beginning research is to start with the four Ws: Who? What? Where? When?

Other useful questions are: How? Why? Which?

You should be able to mentally answer all of these questions before writing your essay.

**Brainstorming**

This is a technique which allows you to record random ideas about your topic. Remember that at this stage, every idea is valid. Use the following model to help you get started.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| What I Already Know | What I Need to Know | Where I Need to Look |
|  |  |  |

**Make Lists**

If you choose “violence” as a topic, it is far too broad a subject to cover in your paper. You must identify the various sub-topics associated with violence and select one on which to expand. For example:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Types:  Gang, media, child abuse, vs women, school, sport, etc. | Contributing Factors  Poverty, media coverage, gender (power), racial, national (war), religious, economic, desensitization | Related Ideas  Environment of fear, nature of violent acts, weapons of preference, age or perpetrators, social reaction, incidence, fascination with violence |

**Step Two: Finding Information:** Believe it or not, some people lie. Therefore, be careful when looking for resources, and do not trust those liars on Wikipedia.

* Find at least four sources
* You must use four *different* types of sources, two of which must be text references. If you are using more than the required four sources, you must have a minimum of two text sources. (FYI: Accessing online journals, and newspapers counts as a text resource. *Examples of Sources:* book, magazine, journal (online), newspaper, interview, broadcast, website,
* Check OPAC and Infotrac in the library first. These will lead you to text sources
* Next, access Canadian Newspapers online, through Proquest. You will access newspaper articles and online journals
* If you still need additional information, search Google for *good* websites. Be sure to use Easybib.com to record the bibliographical information (author, title, place of publication, publisher, date of publication, page numbers, URLS, creation or modification dates on Web pages, and your date of access)

**Step Three: Write your Thesis Statement:** This is the most important part of the research essay. You are about to tell the reader EXACTLY what the author (you) is trying to prove. Let’s stop right here, and take some time to think about this important step.

A Thesis Statement is a single, assertive sentence that announces the writer’s position on a topic and states exactly what the writer intends to prove. It possesses an element of controversy and proposes an answer to a question.

**IT MUST BE ARGUABLE, PROVABLE, and WORTH PROVING**.

Put your thesis to the test by answering these questions in your head right now.

Could someone reasonably argue the opposing viewpoint?

Is there valid evidence to support your position?

Does it add something new to the reader’s understanding of the issue? (Does it pass the “so what” test?)

The thesis statement is the most important sentence in the essay because it offers a concise outline of the content and organization of the essay. The thesis statement is often found in the LAST sentence of the introduction.

**How a thesis is developed**

1. Select a general topic:

* Banking on the internet
* Canadian NHL teams
* Macbeth

1. Select the issue with which you want to deal (Or ask a specific question about the topic):

* is banking safe on the internet?
* Government funding of NHL teams
* Macbeth as a classic tragic hero

1. Identify the two sides of the issue (or answer to the question):

* banking on the internet is safe (Is unsafe)
* it is (Is not) the responsibility of the Canadian government to fund the NHL
* Macbeth is (is not) an example of a classic tragic hero

1. Choose the side you want to defend (Hypothesis): Banking on the internet is safe

* Banking on the internet is safe
* It is the responsibility of the Canadian Government to fund the NHL
* Macbeth is an example of a class tragic hero

1. List proofs for your side (test to see if position is valid)

* Banking on the Internet is safe because:
* Encryption codes make access secure
* Passwords authenticate users
* Bonded employees monitor internet sites
* It is the responsibility of the Canadian government to fund the NHL to:
* Preserve national Integrity of hockey
* Guarantee employment of Canadians
* Generate millions of tourism dollars
* Macbeth is an example of a classic tragic hero because he:
* Allows Lady Macbeth to influence his actions
* Believes in the witches paradoxical prophesies
* Is relentless in his quest for the crown

1. Design your thesis

**Step Four: Prepare an Outline/ Organize Notes**

The purpose of an outline is to help you think through your topic carefully and organize it logically before you start writing. A good outline is the most important step in writing a good essay. Check your outline to make sure that the points covered flow logically from one to the other.

**Research Essay Sample Outline**

1. Introduction

Thesis: Write your thesis statement here…

1. Topic Sentence of 1st body paragraph (your ***actual*** topic sentence)
   1. Point one
   2. Point two
   3. Point three
2. Topic Sentence of 2nd body paragraph (your ***actual*** topic sentence)
   1. Point one
   2. Point two
   3. Point three
3. Topic Sentence of 3rd body paragraph (your ***actual*** topic sentence)
   1. Point one
   2. Point two
   3. Point three
4. Conclusion
5. Works Cited

Follow this format as best as you can but know this, the research essay is changing vastly. Some people focus on two main points, some focus on five main points. For the sake of making this as easy as possible because this is your first big research paper, I would like you to find three main points and discuss those three main points. Therefore, we will be creating a five paragraph standard essay.

You must hand in a completed outline before starting the rough draft of your essay. This outline may be completed on EasyBib.com, printed off and handed in, or IT MUST be done on the graphic organizer. Please see me for the research essay graphic organizer, as it is worth 20 marks and MUST be done before you can move on.

Due Date for outline: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Research Paper Outline Mark: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/20**

**Step Five: Write your rough draft**

Be sure you have adequate information and ALL of your sources are cited appropriately. Do not forget about parenthetical citations. I am not reading this draft over, but your peer is. This paper is formal; therefore, it is written in third person, present tense. Remember the example I showed.

Due Date for Rough Draft: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Step Six: Revise and Edit Rough Draft**

Read your paper out loud. Read your paper out loud, and then read your paper out loud. Once you are done this, find a classmate to peer edit your essay. Please be aware that YOU and YOUR partner get marks for peer editing. Come see me for the peer editing sheets when you are ready.

Due Date for Peer Editing: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Peer Editing Mark: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_/20** (10 for creating the rough draft, and 10 for editing)

**Step Seven: Handing it all in**

I would like this paper handed in a SPECIFIC WAY. Once you obtain your outline and your peer editing sheets back, keep them. Once you are sure your paper is up to your best standards, hand it in the following way:

**Staple OR paper clip in this order: Final draft, rough draft, peer editing, outline, various notes and drafts**

**Just a few more things....**

Please ensure you look over the rubric and have met all the requirements.

Please respect due dates, and use your time wisely.

**How do you format an Essay in MLA?**

Take a look at the style sheet Mrs. Harding gave you. I want it THAT detailed. Think of the 11 and 6 points as a checklist and be sure you have completed them all. Mrs. Harding also gave you a style sheet that shows exactly what the first page of a research paper should look like.

The Works Cited is the important last page of your research essay that lists all of the resources you used to research your paper. It allows the reader to find more information, and it proves you did not plagiarize. In order to learn how to EXACTLY formulate your works cited page, please visit <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/media/pdf/20110928111055_949.pdf> Or Google Owl at Purdue and click on the MLA citation chart. Or you may come see me for the printed version of the guide.

**Research Paper Rubric**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Class: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **5** | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** |
| **Content**  **(x5)** | -addresses all aspects of the topic/question  -offers specific support for ideas  -exceeds reading expectations that are relevant to the topic | -addresses most aspects of the topic/question  -offers adequate support for ideas  -recognizes wide reading of sources that are relevant to the topic | -addresses some aspects of the topic/question  -offers partial and/or general ideas  -adequate (minimum) reading | -addresses few aspects of the topic/question  -offers little support for ideas  -recognizes some time spent reading about the topic | -barely addresses the topic/question  -offers little or no support for ideas  -below acceptable amount of reading done |
| **In-text Citations**  **(x2)** | -all supportive facts are documented accurately  -has the minimum required (4) | -almost all supportive facts are documented accurately  -has 3 in-text citations | -most supportive facts are documented accurately  -has 2 in-text citations | -attempts to document some borrowed material but many are done inaccurately  -has 1 in-text citations | -in-text citations are barely or not existent (1) |
| **Organization**  **(x4)** | -organizes ideas logically and coherently  -creates a superior introduction  -creates a superior conclusion | -organizes most ideas logically and coherently  -creates a very good introduction  -creates a very good conclusion | -organizes some ideas logically and coherently  -creates a good introduction  -creates a good conclusion | -organizes few ideas logically and coherently  -creates an adequate introduction  -creates an adequate conclusion | -lacks organization and coherence  -introduction is very weak/ineffective  -conclusion is very weak/ineffective |
| **Style**  **(x2)** | -uses clear and varied sentences  -demonstrates superior word choice  -voice is clearly evident | -sentence variety is evident  -demonstrates very good word choice  -voice is evident | -uses some sentence variety  -demonstrates good word choice  -voice may be evident | -uses little sentence variety  -demonstrates satisfactory word choice  -voice may be evident | -uses little or no sentence variety  -demonstrates limited word choice  -no voice |
| **Works Cited**  **(x2)** | -completed accurately with no errors  -exceeds the minimum required amount  -in alphabetical order  -only those sources that are used in the paper are listed in the Works Cited | -completed fairly accurately but has 1 – 3 errors  -meets the minimum required amount | -completed somewhat accurately but has 3 – 5 errors  -has one less than the minimum required amount | -has many errors (> 5)  -has 2 less than the required amount  -not in alphabetical order  -lists sources that are not used in the paper | -barely acceptable  -not in alphabetical order |
| **Mechanics** | -employs perfect or nearly perfect mechanics ( | -displays a couple of mechanical errors | -displays a few mechanical errors that do not impede clarity | -displays a few mechanical errors that do impede clarity | -displays numerous errors which impede clarity |

\_\_\_\_ Outline Completed /20 **Project in total is work 120 marks.**

\_\_\_\_ Rough Draft Completed /10

\_\_\_\_ Peer Editing Completed /10

**TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ /80**