

How Do I Write a Research Paper?

Step 1 - The Topic: Determine the general topic of the research - in this case, you are studying a specific individual, and how he/she promoted positive change through good leadership.

Step 2 - Preliminary Research: Read an overview of this individual. You can search for information online or at your local library. Make sure to write down the website or book information of any sources that may come in handy in the future.

Step 3 - Focus: Using the initial information you learned about your leader, think about what you want to focus your research on. What was particularly interesting about this person's accomplishments or leadership style. This will essentially become your paper's argument.

Step 4 - Statement of Purpose: Answer the following question, "*why am I interested in this leader, and what do I want to learn by studying him/her?*" Your statement of purpose should be very specific. See the back side of this paper for further information.

Step 5 - Question: Write 5 *factual* and 5 *interpretive* questions about your topic. Factual questions will help the reader understand basic background information about your topic; meanwhile, interpretive questions will force you to analyze and think deeper about your topic. They will also help you develop a thesis statement.

Examples (provided by http://www.crlsresearchguide.org/10_brainstorming_questions.asp)

Factual Questions answer who, what, where, when, and why.

Interpretive Questions consist of the following (think of these are the higher level questions you ask in your tutorial session):

Visit the above website to find examples of the following types of questions:

- * Hypothetical - How would things be different today if something in the past had been different?
- * Prediction - How will some look or be in the future based on the way it is now?
- * Solution - What solutions can be offered to a problem that exists today?
- * Comparison or Analogy - Find the similarities and differences between your main subject and a similar subject, or with another subject in the same time period or place.
- * Judgement - Based on the information you find, what can you say as your informed opinion about the subject.

Step 6 - Group: Classify your questions - decide which questions relate to each other most, and group them under the same headings. Example headings may include statistics, causes, solutions, effects, future, etc.

Step 7 - Consider Sources: Make a list of possible sources (books, magazine articles, newspapers, documentaries, etc.). Make a source card for each source. The card should

include the author, title, date of publication, publisher, page number, and/or website address. Number each of your source cards.

Step 8 - Note Cards: Create a note card for each sub-topic (your sub-topics are the classified question headings from Step 6). Write the sub-heading at the top of each card, write one main point underneath, identify a direct quote that relates to the point, and include the source number.

Step 9 - Thesis Statement: The thesis statement appears in the first paragraph of your research paper, and provides the reader with an idea about what you will be discussing. It is the main argument of your paper. Construct your initial thesis statement by answering your statement of purpose.

Step 10: Make an Outline: Look at your sub-topics and decide how to logically arrange all the information you have found in your research. Use the attached outline worksheet to help arrange your ideas.

Step 11 - Write the Paper!: Use your outline and note cards to guide your writing.

* See the attached “tip sheets” for each of the 11 steps - for an electronic version, visit <http://www.crlsresearchguide.org>