

Research Paper

This paper will provide you the opportunity to write a research paper. A research paper is an organized summary of facts and information on a topic. For a research paper, the writer gathers information from many sources. The writer then presents an analysis of the information.

An analysis is the writer's conclusions about the meaning of the information in the paper.

- This research paper must be:
 - 5 pages double spaced
 - Times New Roman 12-14 point type
 - Referenced - Sources
 - Minimum number 5
 - Max. Encyclopedia 1
 - Max Internet 1
 - Works Cited Page

- This paper must be an example of good writing and will be evaluated on the following points:
 - Comprehension of Subject and Topic
The writing indicates a complete understanding of the topic and reflects the use of a range of resources. The works cited lists a variety of sources.
 - Idea Development
The writer develops relevant ideas clearly and fully. Information focuses on the topic. Details, examples, anecdotes, or personal experiences explain and clarify the information.
 - Organization
The writer organizes information logically in paragraphs, including an effective introduction and ending that engages the reader.
 - Language
The writer provides lively and descriptive language. Details, anecdotes and examples explain and clarify information.
 - Mechanics
Writing shows few errors in basic language convention.

- Your paper will be graded using the research evaluation form on the next page.

- Write your paper by completing the following assignments.

Essay Score Sheet

Ideas and Development

4	Extensive development of several ideas (or one important main idea) with extension and elaboration on all or most of the points. Look for uniqueness, interest to audience, and strong supporting details. Can be exceptional writing or extremely thorough.
3	Good development of ideas with many details extended and elaborated. Ideas are fairly well supported. May be an extensive list of ideas with little or no elaboration.
2	Adequately supported ideas with some details extended or elaborated.
1	Weak ideas minimally supported with little or no extension of details.

Organization, Unity, and Coherence

4	Completely organized with smooth flow from one ideas to the next through the use of transitions and sequencing. Unity is strongly evident with no wandering from the primary theme or plan.
3	Fairly well organized with good unity of plan. Some transitions may be used. Little or no digression from main ideas or writing mode.
2	Small amount of organization. Weak plan that may not be well unified. Ideas may be only minimally connected. May frequently wander from expected writing mode.
1	Lack of plan or coherence.

Word Choice

4	Precise, appropriate, accurate, and specific word choices convey the correct meaning and appeal to the audience. May be vivid and imaginative.
3	Word choices are appropriate and specific. May lack "sparkle" but meaning is clear.
2	Fair use of words. May be specific but have little variety. May be simplistic and occasionally vague, but generally effective.
1	Very simplistic. Meaning may be unclear or inappropriate.

Sentences or Paragraphs

4	Excellent control and formation of sentences. Variety of sentence structure, type and length, contribute to fluency and interest. Paragraphs used where appropriate. Few, if any errors.
3	Adequate control of sentence formation. Some mix of sentence types, lengths, and structures. May contain a small number of errors that do not interfere with fluency. May show some attempt at paragraphing.
2	Most sentences constructed correctly. May have little variety in type, length, or structure. May be somewhat monotonous or choppy. May contain several errors or lack control. May show no attempt at paragraphing.
1	Poor sentence structure with many errors that inhibit fluency or clarity. Lacks control.

Grammar and Usage

4	Error-free or very few errors in approximate proportion to length of paper.
3	Good grammar and word usage. Errors that do not detract from overall quality of the paper.
2	Fair grammar and usage. Errors may interfere with meaning. May be simplistic.
1	Poor grammar and word usage with frequent or serious errors.

Mechanics

4	Error-free or very few errors in approximate proportion to length of paper.
3	Most punctuation, capitalization, and spelling correct. Errors do not interfere with communication.
2	Some errors in punctuation, capitalization and/or spelling that may interfere somewhat with communication.
1	Frequent and/or serious errors in mechanics that interfere with communication.

Scoring 4=A 3=B 2=C 1=D



Assignment 1- What is a Research Paper?

A research paper is a written report based upon careful investigation of information from a variety of resources. In order to do the report, you will have to become a sort of information detective, searching through dictionaries, encyclopedias, almanacs, resource books, magazines and newspapers. By following the step-by-step procedures, you will choose a topic, research it, and write your report.

The keys to a successful research paper:

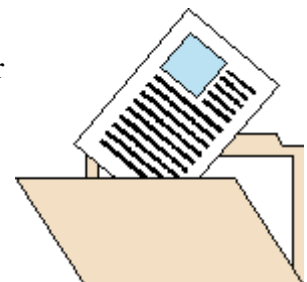
1. Choose a topic that interests you.
2. Follow the steps provided for you.
3. Plan a specific amount of “homework time” every night to work on your report.

Research Paper Specifications:

In the spaces below write the specifications for your research paper.

Number of Pages	Number of Resources:
Important Deadlines:	
Subject and Topic Selection:	
Resources:	First Outline:
Note Cards:	Final Outline:
First Draft:	Final Draft:
Bibliography:	Research Paper Due:

Before you begin working on your research paper, create a folder entitled “How to Write a Research Paper.” Keep all of your research paper worksheets in this folder. This folder will be a handy reference for you throughout this project and future research papers.





Assignment 2 - Research Paper Checklist

These are the steps you will follow as you write your research paper. Staple this checklist to the inside front cover of your “How to Write a Research Paper” folder. After each step is completed, place a check in the box.

		Completed
Step 1	Choose a Subject and a Topic	
Step 2	Write a Thesis Statement	
Step 3	Choose Reference Materials	
Step 4	Write a First Outline	
Step 5	Create Bibliography Cards	
Step 6	Take Notes	
Step 7	Write a final Outline	
Step 8	Write the first Draft	
Step 9	Revise the First Draft	
Step 10	Prepare the Works Cited	
Step 11	Write a final copy	
Step 12	Add finishing touches	
		Completed
Teacher's Initials		



Assignment 3- Long-Range Planner

In order to do a research paper properly, you must plan your time carefully. Use this long-range Planner to jot down the deadline for each of the steps of your paper. Then figure out how much time each week you will need to spend working toward completion of that deadline.

Month of _____

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday



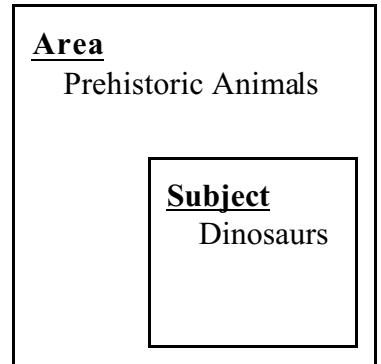
Assignment 4 - Choose a Subject

If you have not already been assigned a specific subject for your research paper, the first step will be to choose one. Take your time choosing a subject. It is a very important part of the process and may mean the difference between an average paper and a great paper.

Keep these points in mind:

- 1. Because you will be spending a lot of time researching and writing your paper, the subject you choose should be interesting to you. This does not mean that you have to know a lot about the subject you choose. In fact, the fun will be in the discovery of new information.
- 2. The subject you choose should have plenty of resource information available. Before you decide on a subject, you should check the encyclopedia and the card catalog at the library to make sure that you will have enough information to write a complete and informative paper.
- 3. Consider how much time you have to work on the project and the length of the paper. Then ask yourself, "Is this subject worth spending this much time on?" And "Will I have enough time to do a complete job on this subject?" If your answers are "yes" then you've made a good choice.

When given a research paper assignment, you will often be directed to choose your subject from a specific area (for example prehistoric animals). Think of the subject as a smaller category of the area. For example, if the area is "Prehistoric Animals," your subject might be "dinosaurs."



Resource Material

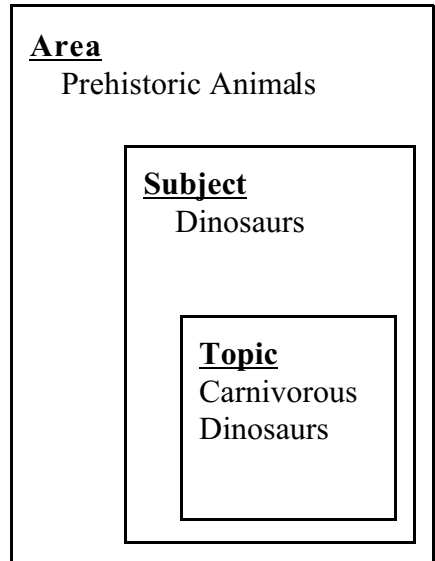
Once you choose a subject for a report, you have to make sure that resource materials on that subject are available. Use an encyclopedia, a dictionary, an almanac, newspapers, magazines and books listed in the card catalog to find at least five resources and write them on the lines below.



Assignment 5 - Choose a Topic

Now that you have chosen the subject of your research paper, you need to do some research to help you focus on an even more specific subject. This is called the topic of your paper. The topic of your paper tells exactly what you will be writing about. For example, the subject of "Dinosaurs" would probably be too general for a research paper. Do you

really have time to write a thorough paper about this huge subject? Of course not. That's where the topic comes in. The topic of your paper should be something that you can successfully research and write about in the time given you, and in the number of pages allowed. If the subject of your paper was "dinosaurs," your topic might be the "Death of the Dinosaurs," "Carnivorous Dinosaurs," or "Dinosaurs that flew."



Investigating Topics

Use an encyclopedia to investigate the various topics concerning the subject you have chosen for your paper. Read through the encyclopedia articles on your subject. These may be found in the form of subheadings. The encyclopedia may suggest other related articles that might capture your interest, too. Then on the lines below, list topics that are mentioned in the encyclopedia articles.



Assignment 6 - Brainstorming

Write the subject of your paper in the center space below. In the surrounding spaces, write down all of the topics you can think of to discuss in your paper. After you have finished, group like topics together. Then using highlighter markers, assign each group a different color by filling in the cloud with the appropriate color.

A central rectangular box with the word "Subject" written inside. Surrounding this box are 12 empty thought bubbles of various sizes, arranged in a circular pattern. Each bubble is connected to the central box by a series of smaller circles, representing a thought process. The bubbles are intended for students to write down topics related to their subject.



Assignment 7 - Purpose and Thesis Statement

After you have chosen your subject and focused on a topic, you need to think about the purpose or main idea of your research paper. What do you want to say about your topic? This main idea is written in the form of a statement called the **THESIS STATEMENT**. By writing a thesis statement, or statement of purpose, you will help yourself focus your research and note taking. Your thesis statement, placed near the beginning of your paper will give the reader a better understanding of your purpose in writing the paper. Your thesis statement can take a variety of forms:

1. A QUESTION about your topic

Example: What were the problems in England that led the Pilgrims to settle in

Sentence _____



Your research paper could then explain, describe, or chronologically detail your answer.

2. PROVE or DISPROVE a theory or idea

Example: Does air pollution affect the earth's weather and the ozone layer?

Sentence _____



Using facts about the ozone layer and the destructive agents in these sprays, you can prove or disprove the theory.

3. COMPARE or CONTRAST two or more things

Example: The Soviet educational system operates much differently than the educational system of the United States.

Sentence _____

4. A SUMMARY of the information about your subject

Example: In California, scientists are working hard to save a nearly extinct bird—the California Condor.

Sentence _____

The thesis statement for my research paper will be:



Assignment 8 - Effective Note Taking

Take notes on the following page. Use the top card for your works cited information and the bottom card for notes. Use a separate sheet for each note so you can order and reorder your notes later on. As a rule of thumb, try to limit each card to one or two sentences on a single idea or subtopic. Be sure and color code each card. By focusing on one idea, you can more easily group and reorganize your cards later on.

Effective Note Taking

1. Keep your topic, thesis statement and audience in mind at all times. Do not record material unrelated to your topic.
2. Make sure that summaries or paraphrases correctly reflect the meaning of the original.
3. Be accurate. Make sure that direct quotations are picked up word-for-word, with capitalization, spelling, grammar, and punctuation precisely as in the original. Make sure that every direct quotation begins and ends with quotation marks.
4. Double-check statistics and facts to make sure that you have them right.
5. Distinguish between fact and opinion by labeling opinions as such: Dr. Graves things that . . . or According to grace Jackson . . .
6. Nonessential parts of a quotation can be cut if the overall meaning of the quotation is not changed. Indicate omissions of nonessential material from a quotation by using ellipsis points, a series of three or four spaced dots. Use three dots (. . .) When cutting material within a single sentence. Use four dots (. . . .) When cutting a full sentence, a paragraph, or more than a paragraph from a quotation. Also use four dots when cutting material from the end of a sentence.
7. Always double-check page references. It's easy to copy these incorrectly.

Quote, Paraphrase, or Summarize

1. **Direct quotation**. Use direct quotation when the source material is especially well-stated - - that is, when it is memorable because of its clarity or other exceptional qualities. Also use direct quotation when the exact wording is important historically, legally, or as a matter of definition.
2. **Paraphrase**. Use paraphrase as your most common note form. Make this the form that you always use unless you have a good reason to quote your source or to summarize it.
3. **Summary**. Use summary when the source runs too long to be succinctly quoted or paraphrase.
4. **Quotation plus summary or paraphrase**. Write this kind of note when the exact words of the source are desirable but require some explanation in order to be made clear, to be properly attributed, or to be distinguished as fact or opinion.