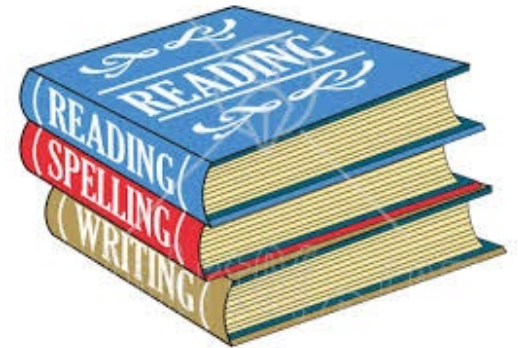


The Writing and Reading Center

Writing a Research Paper



Some Advice in Framing the Research Scope :

- Decide upon the scope of analysis and research, as you need to have a focused research question. Avoid having an overly broad research question as your research might prove unmanageable to focus. Also avoid an overly narrow research angle that you won't find enough information about. So start with a broad question and narrow your focus accordingly. The more you read, the more you will be able to focus and refine your research question and focus your scope on an angle of analysis and thus have the research necessary to construct your argument.
- The sources you use can be scholarly journal articles, news articles, or reports issued by organizations—governmental and non-governmental, local or international.

Research Categories

- **Economy**
- **Poverty and hunger**
- **Immigration**
- **Public policy**
- **Health**
- **Industry**
- **Worker's rights**
- **Water security**
- **Cultural issues**

- Social issues**
- Security**
- International policy**
- Human rights**
- Environment**
- Justice**
- Agriculture and food security**
- Education**
- Technology**

You can start with one of the above research categories, then do more research to narrow down the scope of your research question and topic.

In Framing the Research Question, Consider

- How do these issues reflect or are affected by deeper social, cultural, political and/or economic realities?
- What are the debates/arguments that underscore these issues?
- Isolating a particular debate or issue that interests or challenges you, what cultural norms and values are invoked?
- In what ways are people today affected by this issue or debate?
- Who should be concerned about your topic, and why?
- How has this debate or issue changed over time? What has caused these changes?
- What changes must occur to alleviate the effects of this problem, or the larger population? What would you propose should be done? What must be considered before implementing your proposal?

What are in-text or parenthetical citations?

These are abbreviated citations in the text of your essay to indicate the source you used in this section of your paper.

Why is using in-text citations important?

It is important because you are expected to indicate the intellectual property of the writers or researchers you are citing in your academic work. Failure to do so equals plagiarism and can result in serious academic consequences.

Do you need in-text citations even if you have a works-cited page?

Yes, you do. You need to use in-text citations—in addition to the works-cited page—whether you quote or paraphrase from the original source to indicate the intellectual property of the writer who you are citing.

Incorporate Research by:

Summarizing:

- involves putting the main idea(s) from your source into your own words in a much shorter and condensed form. You must cite and reference the original source to avoid plagiarism.

Paraphrasing:

- involves writing a passage from your source material into your own words. Paraphrased material is usually shorter than the original passage, whereby the text is condensed slightly. You must cite and reference the original source to avoid plagiarism.

Quotations:

- Must match the source document word for word and must reference the author. You have to use quotation marks to denote the passages and cite and reference the original source to avoid plagiarism.

Why is an Outline Important!

- For research papers, an outline helps you keep track of large amounts of information.

You create an outline because:

- Aids in the process of writing
- Helps you organize your ideas
- Presents your material in a logical form
- Shows the relationships among ideas in your writing
- Constructs an ordered overview of your writing
- Defines boundaries and groups

How To Create an Outline?

- Determine the purpose of your paper.
- Determine the audience you are writing for.
- Develop the thesis of your paper.

Then:

- **Brainstorm:** List all the ideas that you want to include in your paper.
- **Organize:** Group related ideas together.
- **Order:** Arrange material in subsections from general to specific or from abstract to concrete.
- **Label:** Create main and sub headings.

Sample Research Paper Outline

- Introduction: Background information of the problem/issue and thesis
- Body: Causes of the problem
- Effects of the problem (short and long term)
- What the government, Organizations, and civil society are doing
- What else needs to be done
- Conclusion: Restate your thesis and summing up your discussion.

What should an annotated bibliography include?

- The annotated bibliography will be a resource for your readers to learn more about and evaluate your sources.
- The annotated bibliography should include all your cited sources (sources used in your research, both primary and secondary) and a five-line or more annotation and summary of the key arguments in that source and your take on how and whether that source is useful in enriching your research and your understanding of your research topic. (See the sample annotated bibliographies before you start writing yours.)

- Some annotations may summarize; others may assess or evaluate a source or may reflect on the source's possible uses for the project at hand. Some annotations may address all three of these steps.
- Consider the purpose of your annotated bibliography and/or your instructor's directions when deciding how much information to include in your annotations.
- The title Annotated Bibliography should be centered in the middle of your page.
- Arrange your citations in alphabetical order.
- After each complete citation, you should start your annotation on a new line. Then you should tab/indent your annotation as if you are block quoting. (See example below)

Example of an MLA annotation:

Cain, Eric. "The Finland Phenomenon: Inside the World's Most Surprising School System." *Forbes*, 2 May 2011, www.forbes.com/sites/erikkain/2011/05/02/the-finland-phenomenon-inside-the-worlds-most-surprising-school-system/?sh=3ac35b52572d. Accessed 24 Aug. 2021.

Finland has a much more effective education system because of the following factors. Schools do not give standardized tests. Each school has curriculum autonomy, and each teacher has classroom autonomy. Children do not begin school until the age of 7. In addition, students do not get grades until they are in 8th grade. All teachers are required to have a Master's degree. There are no private schools in Finland. Finland's education budget goes directly into the classrooms, as both teachers and administrators have the same salary. In addition, students do not get any homework because the schools believe that what they learn is mastered in the classrooms. The focus, while in school, is on each individual student. If a student is failing, the teacher makes plans to address the student's individual needs. Likewise, if a student is ahead or unchallenged, then the teacher addresses this as well by making adjustments to the student's curriculum.

Example of an APA annotation:

Cain, E. (2011, May 2). The Finland phenomenon: Inside the world's most surprising school system. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <https://www.forbes.com/>

Finland has a much more effective education system because of the following factors. Schools do not give standardized tests. Each school has curriculum autonomy, and each teacher has classroom autonomy. Children do not begin school until the age of 7. In addition, students do not get grades until they are in 8th grade. All teachers are required to have a Master's degree. There are no private schools in Finland. Finland's education budget goes directly into the classrooms, as both teachers and administrators have the same salary. In addition, students do not get any homework because the schools believe that what they learn is mastered in the classrooms. The focus, while in school, is on each individual student. If a student is failing, the teacher makes plans to address the student's individual needs. Likewise, if a student is ahead or unchallenged, then the teacher addresses this as well by making adjustments to the student's curriculum.