

# Research Paper Guidelines

## RATIONALE:

The research paper is an important part of this course's curriculum. By completing this assignment, you will learn valuable skills that can be applied to other classes, to college, and to your career field. Skill areas that this assignment focuses on include finding and evaluating sources of information, reading for information, note taking, organizing information, outlining, word processing skills, and public speaking.

You have up to the stated due date to turn in each part of the project. Assignments turned in after a due date will not receive credit unless there are extenuating circumstances.

## REQUIREMENTS:

- You must have 5-7 different **scholarly** sources for your paper. You will receive training on databases, but you may also use some internet sources as long as you do not use Wikipedia, Ask.com, eHow, or student aids like Shmoop and Sparknotes.
- Your paper must be a minimum of 5 pages typed and double spaced. This includes the works cited page.
- The paper must be completely in MLA format including the works cited page and the in-text citations.
- In order to avoid plagiarism, you must properly cite your sources both in the essay itself and the works cited page.

## Selecting a Topic

When choosing your research topic, you should make sure you select something that is narrow, researchable, and manageable. On the following page, you will begin to map out three potential research topics that meet these expectations. From there, you will select one of the three to focus on.

## Narrowing the Topic

Once you've selected your topic, you'll need to determine how the main topic can be broken into a minimum of 5 subcategories. If the subcategories seem too broad, you may consider using a subcategory as your main topic and breaking it down. For example, if the topic I select is "Early Childhood Education" to begin with and my subcategories include "student learning styles, influential figures, activities/techniques, brain development of children, and classroom management techniques" I would quickly realize that my topic is too broad. I could easily write an entire essay on each of those subcategories. Therefore, I could narrow my topic by selecting just "Student Learning Styles" and breaking it down into 5 subtopics: kinesthetic, visual, verbal, auditory, and social.

**Ask yourself the following question once you've selected a topic: Would I produce a more precise essay if I focused on one of the subcategories as my main topic? If so, how would I break it into sections?**

You do not need to submit this page; it is for you to help gather and organize your thoughts.

## BRAINSTORMING

When selecting your research topic, think of current events, social issues, laws, trending topics, history, and/or influential people. Then, select three that are narrow, researchable, and manageable. Fill in the chart below with potential ideas.

Current Events	Social Issues	Laws/ Gov't Issues	Trending Topics	History	Influential People
EX: Pandemics	EX: Gay Rights	Ex: Gun Control	Ex: Entitlement in professional sports	Ex: The role of the USMC in the Civil War	Ex: John Dewey's impact on education

<b>TOPIC 1:</b>	<b>TOPIC 2:</b>	<b>TOPIC 3:</b>
Break the topic into 5 subcategories:	Break the topic into 5 subcategories:	Break the topic into 5 subcategories:

## Final Topic Selection Brainstorm

Final topic selection:

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Why did you choose this topic? Explain how the topic is narrow, researchable, and manageable.

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