



The Writing Center



Research Essay Worksheet

Putting Content into Structure

This outline is designed to help you write a research paper. In your thesis statement, you must let the reader know the main focus of your essay. You will express an opinion as to what you believe about your research topic. Both of these objectives must appear in your thesis.

How to proceed:

1. On separate paper draft a rough draft of everything you can think of regarding your research topic to date.
2. Use the form below to outline your rough draft to isolate what is important to your essay.

Your Introduction

Drafting a working thesis statement:

Remember that your thesis statement must tell the reader what your topic is, what your focus will be, and why it is important. Your thesis statement is the most important sentence of your paper and therefore must be clear and concise, yet thorough.

What else do you need in your introduction?

Who? _____

What? _____

When? _____

Where? _____

Why? _____

How? _____

What else to consider

You must incorporate references to your research in your paper. It is the background against which your essay is set. This can be done in the introduction or it can be done in its own body paragraph.

Your Body Paragraphs

Use your thesis statement and introduction to draft your body paragraphs

Your how and why of your essay often dictate what your topic sentences will be. What are the arguments you wish to use to prove your own viewpoint? What examples, descriptions, quotations, or statistics can you use to prove your point?

What is the topic sentence of your first body paragraph?

What is the evidence in this paragraph that proves your topic sentence?

What is the topic sentence of your second body paragraph?

What is the evidence in this paragraph that proves your topic sentence?

What is the topic sentence of your third body paragraph?

What is the evidence in this paragraph that proves your topic sentence?

What is the topic sentence of your fourth body paragraph?

What is the evidence in this paragraph that proves your topic sentence?

You most likely will have more than four paragraphs. Use additional paper to work out what you want them to be.

Your Conclusion

Here is your working thesis statement:

Draft a reflection on your thesis that deepens its meaning.

What observations and conclusions do you have? Have you proven your thesis?

Is there anything else that needs to be said?
