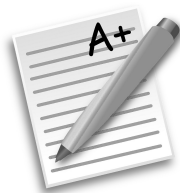


Research & Writing

helpful guidelines



Researching multiple sources

Research is an investigation of information and opinions from various sources, analyzing and evaluating what is given, then using these sources for exposition and evidence in your paper.

Using multiple sources

- Show *sources* of your information, ideas, and summary.
- What is presented in a source? Problems, solutions, or both?
- How valuable and relevant is this source to the chosen topic? Do these sources present new ideas and facts, or the same?
- How credible or truthful is this? Why do you believe this? Read the checklist for *Evaluating an Information Source*
- Do not include *too many* direct quotes nor just-copied parts; main summaries and conclusions should come from student

A caution concerning news & internet

In this age of global media, information and images about world situations and events have a strong influence on people. In order to attract audiences, media companies will often focus on stories of problems, crimes or disasters, rather than less dramatic news about good things and helpful solutions. This one-sided negative view can lead to stereotyping and overgeneralizing. Also, media companies and internet sources often have particular viewpoints which influence their news and information. Many of the media and internet sites selectively choose experts and facts to support their viewpoint, while ignoring contrary views and facts. Often, governments, corporations, and interest groups use the news media and internet to influence public opinion. Therefore, students need to critically evaluate the information they find.

Evaluating an Information Source

[from Cal State Chico library; Is this source or information good?]

1. Currency

how current is the information

- ✓ When was the information published or posted?
- ✓ Does the time period that the information was published matter in relation to your topic? Are the facts still valid?
- ✓ When was the information last revised?
(for the internet, this is often found in the footer area)
- ✓ For a web source, are the links current or are they broken?

2. Relevance

the importance of this information in relation to one's topic

- ✓ What is the depth or thoroughness of this information?
- ✓ Is this information central to your topic?
- ✓ Is the information unique?
- ✓ Who is the intended audience?
- ✓ Is the information at the appropriate level for your research or does it target a different type of audience?
- ✓ Is better information available in another source?

3. Authority

the credibility of the source

- ✓ Who is the author or organization giving the information?
- ✓ Are the author's credentials or affiliations listed?
- ✓ Is the source respected by other organizations or scholars?
- ✓ Is contact information available?

4. Accuracy

the reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the content

- ✓ Where does the information come from?
- ✓ Are the sources listed?
- ✓ Are the sources respectable?
- ✓ Is the information verified in other sources?
- ✓ Does the language or tone seem free of bias?
- ✓ Is there a particular ideology that is being supported?

5. Purpose

the author's the reasons for presenting this information

- ✓ What is the purpose of the information?
to inform? teach? sway opinion? sell? entertain?
- ✓ Is their purpose to be objective, or merely persuasive?
- ✓ Is the source attempting to debunk or counter-argue other information sources, or popular viewpoints?
- ✓ Is there explicit or implicit bias?

Using & citing information sources

- Make notes and outline what is given from each source.
- Discern what is most important and relevant to your chosen topic, purpose, or questions.
- Support your points with reasoning or by citing a fact, or with both reasoning and facts.
- Use facts and citations throughout your writing.
- Use phrases such as, "according to..." – to make it clear that you are summarizing, paraphrasing, or quoting.
- Give credit to the source of an idea, unless it's your own.
- Use sources fairly. When quoting, consider the author's intention. Use statistics accurately, not simply disregarding facts that support a conclusion you disagree with.
- Use the sources for information, ideas, facts and evidence; but most of your paper should be your own words, your own summary, synthesis, thinking and reasoning.

Ways of using information from sources

- 1) *Quote* – copy something, line by line, then credit it.
- 2) *Paraphrase* – write what is stated, but in your own words.
- 3) *Summarize* – state the main thesis, ideas, and key points.
- 4) *Synthesize* – combine and integrate key ideas, themes, facts
- 5) *Explain* – make these ideas and facts more understandable

Writing guidelines for a summary or essay

The Introduction contains either a *thesis*, a *purpose statement*, or a *brief summary* of the issue to be discussed in the Body

- a *thesis* is a statement of truth or a solution; which should then be explained and supported by evidence and reason
- a *purpose statement* summarizes the essay's purpose, aim, inquiry, or the overall question to be answered
- also in the introduction, briefly state the main ideas to be discussed, or the questions to be answered
- also one can introduce the main sources or texts used

The Body should be logically *organized* into paragraphs or sections of sub-topics, kinds of summary, facts, comparisons, contrasts, causes, effects, arguments, proposals, conclusions.

Sometimes it is helpful to notice how the information-source organizes their points, ideas, facts, arguments, & conclusions.

Be Selective about what concerns, facts, examples are most important & relevant. Avoid excessive or repetitive details.

Distinguish (*and point out*)

- facts, inferences, beliefs, opinions, arguments, values
- point out any exaggerated or hasty conclusions, unsound reasoning, or perceived bias.
- distinguish between what is restated from the source and your own insights, inferences, opinions, arguments.
- point out some similarities and differences, as you compare different sources of information.

Conclusion – reiterate the most important ideas, concerns, and conclusions, including a summary of your opinions.

Checklist for Research & Writing

Research

- ✓ research topic or issue is clear
- ✓ information sources are stated in notes & worksheets
- ✓ selected sources are informative, credible & relevant
- ✓ relevant & practical information was collected
- ✓ key facts and quotes are collected
- ✓ key vocabulary words & concepts are identified
- ✓ intelligent questions are posed in the research process
- ✓ many ideas are paraphrased in your own words

Introduction

- ✓ clear and concise statement of purpose, thesis, or topic; which sums up the overall exposition, essay, or presentation
- ✓ brief preview of the subtopics and ideas to be discussed
- ✓ the main sources of information are mentioned
- ✓ overall, the introduction interests the reader

Body of Content *(grading rubric page 2)*

- ✓ shows a careful reading of the information sources and an understanding of the topic discussed
- ✓ presented information and summarizing is credible and accurate, as well as significant and relevant
- ✓ uses exposition, analysis, explanation, summary, synthesis, paraphrasing, quotes, examples, and rational persuasion
- ✓ shows an understanding and appropriate use of vocabulary terms and concepts important to this subject
- ✓ summarizes the problems and causes, main concerns and reasons for concern, and any proposed solutions
- ✓ synthesizes & integrates all of the important information, causes and effects, concerns and ideas
- ✓ compares & contrasts the information, the reasoning and viewpoints from different sources
- ✓ analyzes & critically evaluates the information, arguments, inferences, and conclusions from the sources
- ✓ presents evidence, facts and examples to support the summary and any conclusions
- ✓ shows thoughtful and sound reasoning
- ✓ distinguishes between facts, inferences, and opinions
- ✓ recognizes & identifies implicit values and beliefs
- ✓ identifies exaggerated or hasty conclusions, unsound reasoning, or possible bias
- ✓ effectively communicates one's own ideas, beliefs, values, and thoughtful solutions

Selectivity & Organization

- ✓ overall exposition shows *selectivity* in identifying the issue's main aspects, main concerns, relevant facts and examples
- ✓ paragraphs & sections *relate* to the topic, purpose, or thesis; with related connection and transitions between
- ✓ summary and synthesis has a *logical organization*; with aspects of the topic logically categorized
- ✓ sub-topics, key facts, comparisons, contrasts, causes, effects, arguments, proposals, and conclusions are *distinguishable*
- ✓ the organization helps the reader to better understand the topic, issue, main ideas, and all other aspects of exposition

Conclusion

- ✓ the most important ideas, concerns, and conclusions are reiterated and emphasized
- ✓ personal ideas, beliefs, conclusions and opinions are shared, along with suggested actions
- ✓ the conclusion can be a final statement to the readers:
 - what is most important to recall or think about
 - what is most important to know
 - what is most important to do

Mechanics & Usage

- ✓ No consistent errors in grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and word usage

References & Citations

- ✓ credible information sources are cited & referenced correctly
- ✓ uses information, quotes and facts with accuracy and fairness, in relation to the author's meaning & intent

Graphic organizers for research and pre-writing

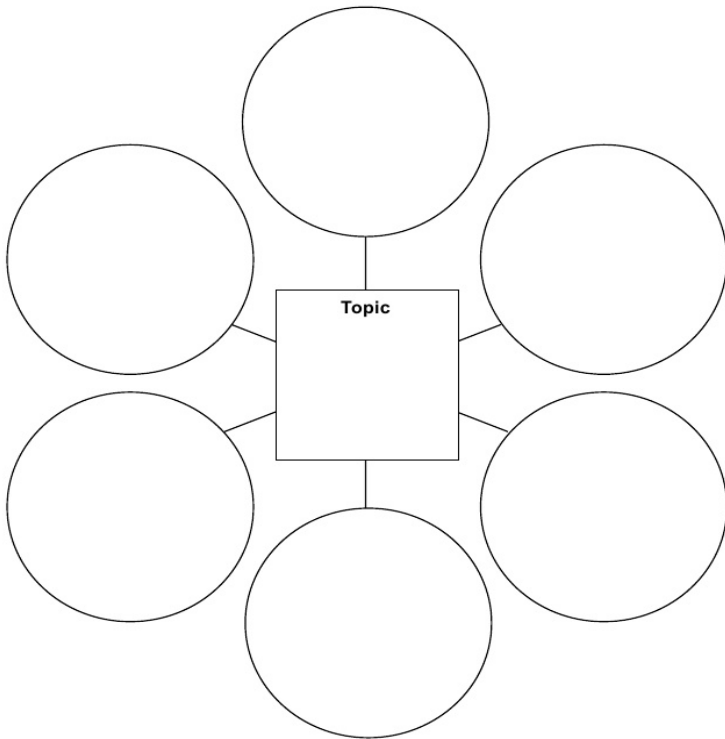
Here are 2 online organizer tools, intended more for younger grades yet could also be useful for high school students: [Persuasion Map](#)
[Popplet-maker](#)

Here's a printed-out web organizer

Name _____ Date _____

Cluster/Word Web 3

Write details about your topic in the circles.



Note – *This is part of a Booklet on Global Education with a Research and Writing assignment on global issues,*

[Global Education: Research & Writing on Global Issues](#)

This includes a student assignment for researching and writing about a global issue, though any particular issue can be chosen. It includes assignment guidelines, learning objectives, class ideas, question and note-taking worksheets, critical thinking questions, writing guidelines and rubric, general objectives and themes in global education, and an extensive outline of global issues for research and study.

from **EducationForWorldSolutions.org**

a non-profit website, free of ads, dedicated to global education on world issues, with hundreds of links to information websites