



ACADEMIC RESEARCH
WRITING IS ABOUT
BECOMING PART OF THE
“CONVERSATION”

EAVESDROP, ENTER, & ENGAGE

ASSIGNMENT DETAILS THAT MATTER

- Scope
- Purpose
- “Angle”
- Audience

“WORKABLE” TOPIC

- point of interest
- claims and evidence
- quality sources
- Propose a topic formally IF REQUESTED.

SOURCE TYPES

- Primary – original text/document itself
- Secondary – Someone's comments or analysis of a primary source

EVALUATE SOURCES

- Date published
- Author Expertise
- Scholarly Publisher
- Internet: Database over Google

TRUSTED SOURCES

- **GCHS** - InfoTrac, Gale Student Resources, Opposing Viewpoints, EBSCO
- **SWIC** – Academic Universe, JSTOR, EBSCO, OCLC FirstSearch, Opposing Viewpoints

USING SOURCES

- KEEP TRACK OF POTENTIAL SOURCES – MLA info
- READ & ANNOTATE
- THINK ABOUT & MAKE CONNECTIONS

CREATE A PLAN

- List main topics, subtopics, and/or questions in a logical order to guide research & notetaking. Change it as you go.
 - What ? do you want to find answers to?
 - What are the most impt. Ideas I want to show in the paper?
 - What bkgd. Info. is needed?
 - What are the main sections going to be about & how do they relate?
 - How can the info. be best organized?
 - What conclusions are expected after reading the paper?

TAKE NOTES – BE METHODICAL

- DIRECT QUOTATIONS
 - In your actual paper = Use quotes sparingly & for specific points
- PARAPHRASING
- SUMMARY

AVOID PLAGIARISM

- Intentional
- Accidental
- Patchwork

CREDIT OTHER WRITERS & RESEARCHERS WHERE DUE.
DON'T SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES OF CHEATING.
HELP YOUR READER FIND MORE INFO.

THESIS STATEMENT / QUESTION TO EXPLORE

- DEFINITION – single declarative/inquisitive statement that shares the directed/projected idea of the paper; identifies topic, focus, and suggests what will be explored
- DOESN'T HAVE TO BE WRITTEN FIRST!
- PLACEMENT – Somewhere in the opening section (Depends on length & organization)

THESIS STATEMENT - GUIDELINES

- Never a question!
- Never announces (“In this paper...”, etc.)
- Directs where the inquiry of the paper might go
- May suggest your conclusions – DOESN’T HAVE TO
- Has a confident tone – Is specific NOT vague

BE CONTINUALLY FLEXIBLE

- **LOOK OVER NOTES** – Look for gaps or overages in research. Search further if needed. Discard unrelated info.
- **COHERENCE** – Arrange logically – by time, space, cause & effect, order of importance, etc. Consider your lead and your closing.
- **AUDIENCE & PURPOSE** – Make sure info. fits these; tweak if needed

DRAFT THE PAPER

Pull together your ideas, research, and plans
into sentences and paragraphs through synthesis
– create a unique paper

GUIDELINES FOR DRAFTING

- Be flexible! It's a draft; you can change it!
- Try to write in as few sessions as possible to keep it fluid.
- Follow your plan, but make changes as needed to make it flow.
- Consider 3rd person your strongest option for narration
- The formality of the piece is ALWAYS dependent on audience
- Use your own voice — your academic one, perhaps
- Give credit! Keep careful parenthetical citations as you write.
- Save EVERYTHING.

DRAFTING THE OPENING

- Attract your reader's attention and clearly indicate what direction the paper might go. Include the thesis statement where it works most effectively.
- DO NOT
 - Write a boring beginning
 - Repeat the title word for word
 - Announce (unless the paper is REALLY long and divided into sections)
 - Give everything away from the start

DRAFTING THE BODY

- Provide the evidence – keep ideas moving from one place to the next like a plot unfolds in a story (use suspense)
 - Keep track of sources as you write—go ahead and cite it (MLA Style)
WHY WAIT?
 - Write in present tense unless referring to historical events
 - Each paragraph needs to feel like a unit
 - Be sure to change paragraphs when ideas shift
 - Make sure evidence really relates to the topic / backs up claims—not just randomly thrown together!!

STRATEGY NOT FORMULA

- IN ANY ORDER (change it up)
 - Evidence
 - Example/Quote & Cite
 - Explanation/Analysis

THEY SAY...
I SAY...

DRAFTING THE CLOSING

- Bring your paper to a satisfying close and say something worthwhile
 - DO NOT
 - Monotonously repeat yourself
 - Announce
 - Merely summarize main ideas
 - RESPECT YOUR READER
 - PROPOSAL - Call for change – solve the problem
 - POSITION - Take a stand
 - EVALUATION - Make your evaluation clear
 - WHY DOES IT MATTER?

DOCUMENT SOURCES USING MLA STYLE

- IN TEXT PARENTHETICAL
- +WORKS CITED

READ (ALOUD), REREAD, & REVISE

• THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Unity – does it all fit together?
- Coherence – does it all make sense?
- Organization – does the way it's organized work for the reader?
- Appropriate use of transitions – is there motion?
- Strong paragraph structure & appropriate shifts
- Wording & Convention choices
- Sentence structure & Varied beginnings
- Did you meet topic and length requirements?

TONE

THINK CONVERSATIONAL
NOT CONVERSIONAL

Just get your reader to THINK.

TITLE GUIDELINES

- Communicate the topic & Focus
- Straightforward often better than “cute”
- Colon can be helpful : narrow down after
- NOT a complete sentence

MAKE IT “TEACHER-READY”

- COPYEDIT
- REREAD ALOUD
- PRINT or SUBMIT

PRESENTING INFORMATION *

- *If asked to do so.
- To be sure you have a firm grasp on the knowledge you are gaining through researching your topic and to share both your findings and writing.
- Be prepared to talk about your ideas during the process of research and to share your final research project findings. In a 3 to 5 minute, informal talk, present your evidence and convince your audience that your argument/solution/or analysis is valid. Use information you found in your research and be ready to answer questions posed by your listeners or to refute their opposing viewpoints or differing opinions.



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WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO
CONTRIBUTE?