

# RESEARCH DESIGN

## (FOCUSED PROPOSAL + INFORMAL ASSESSMENT/OUTLINE + ANNOTATED WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY)

The Research Design will “jump-start” your project, help you think about your topic in a concentrated way. You’ll do some initial exploration with words on paper. You’ll come to think things you wouldn’t have if you only mused about your topic. It will also push you to get researching early to see what’s “out there” about and related to your topic.

The research design does NOT have to follow strict MLA formatting guidelines\* (it can be single-spaced), but keep it neat. Make sections to address each part listed below and use headings (and numbers if you wish) to separate the sections.

### PARTS OF YOUR MULTIGENRE RESEARCH DESIGN

\*make sure your name, course info, and date are at the top

1. Name your topic (in a solid paragraph that explains what you want to explore).
2. Describe what you already know about your topic (without consulting anything, go to the keyboard and freewrite what you already know. Ideally, let it sit a day or so, then reread, refining for specificity and editing for redundancies). If you want, this might be a good place to use bullet points.
3. Tell what you want to learn about (Let your curiosity drive this).
4. Describe the origins of your research. What sparked your interest in the topic? Why do you want to know more about it?
5. List at least a dozen questions you have about your topic (or 20, or 50). You can number them if you’d like.
6. Describe your plan for collecting information about your topic. Think of what type of information you hope to find or what sections/sub-topics you hope to discover. Consider shaping this plan like an informal outline (what Don Murray would call a sketch).
7. Provide a preliminary annotated (working) bibliography. (Don’t skimp on this one. Show me you have a thorough sense of what is out there.) Note: you will not be limited to these sources as you may find more or better sources, but you need at least 4 or 5 solid places to find info on your topic.

### ANNOTATED WHAT?

“An annotated bibliography provides a brief note about each of the sources you’ve listed, in addition to its complete citation information. These notes, or annotations, are typically no longer than two or three sentences.”<sup>1</sup>

In your annotated bibliography:

- Provide an MLA citation entry just like you would on a works cited page.
- Provide a clear description of the content of each source and some indication of how you might use each. You might include specific passages you might use, connections you find with your other sources, specific places or sections (of your project) where you will potentially use the source’s info.

You can create your annotated bib entries manually or use a citation wizard, but be sure the MLA entry looks just right and you maintain a consistent format throughout.

You will bring your research design to WRITE CLUB as well as submit it via Dropbox.

\*Much of this assignment has been borrowed and adapted from ideas and suggestions in Tom Romano’s *Fearless Writing*.

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<sup>1</sup> Palmquist, Mike. *The Bedford Researcher*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011.