THE RESEARCH PAPER

Research Paper	• Based on sources, usually books or articles that you have read on a particular topic. • It is a paper with a point of view that responds to specific questions that you, the writer, have generated. • It is a paper in which you, yourself, draw conclusions and make inferences. • **NOT** merely a reporting of what you have learned.

Understanding a Topic	A research paper is **not** a summary of information. A research paper enhances a reader's understanding of a particular topic by offering analysis, argument, and interpretation of sources. A research paper says not only "I found it!" but "Here's what it means."
Creating a Topic	One-sided topics like "The History of the Tank," "The Advantages of Dentistry," or "The Development of Feminism." are usually well researched in encyclopedias, history books, and elsewhere. They require you only to compile the known facts. To create a topic, think about one that will allow you to consider the evidence, reach conclusions, and change such topics into two-sided questions. For example: "Are Tanks Essential to Modern Warfare?" What are the Advantages and Disadvantages of Dentistry?" "Do Women Still Face Job Discrimination Today?"
Engaged with a Topic	At the beginning of your research paper, it is helpful to present some evidences of your engagement with the topic. Unless you were given a particular assignment, you are writing about something because you chose the topic yourself. Why? What interest you about this topic? What is the context for your report?
Evolve through Questions	A research paper begins with questions to focus a topic, take notes, or formulate a point of view. There are two kinds of questions: a question that requires you to find information, and a question that invites you to draw inferences from source material. A research paper needs to evolve from questions that invite you to draw inferences.
Synthesis and Analysis	A research paper needs to combine synthesis (pulling together information from various sources) with analysis (enhancing these sources by your own interpretation). When you plan your paper, consider what parts are synthesis and what parts are analysis. Students often weigh their papers heavily in the area of synthesis and neglect analysis.
Quotations as Support	When you quote from primary or secondary sources, be sure that you are quoting for a reason, not because you want someone else to write your paper for you. If all the quotations were removed from your paper, your assertions should still be evident and the sense of your paper should remain the same. Quotations may support your own conclusion, but they should not state these conclusions. You should do that.

Some Research Topics to Consider

Source: University of Illinois Online Library

Abortion

Abortion

Acid rain

Acquaintance rape

Active shooters

Adoption

Affirmative Action programs

AIDS

Airline safety, security

Alternative fuel/hybrid vehicles

Animal rights

Assisted suicide

Attention deficit disorder

Battered woman syndrome

Bioterrorism

Birth control and Pregnancy

Body image

Campus violence

Capital punishment

Charter schools

Child abuse

Child rearing

China Emissions

Civil rights

College admission policies

College athletes

College tuition planning

Conservation

Copyright Law

Criminal psychology

Cults

Cultural expectations and practices

Cybersecurity

Deforestation

Depression

Discrimination

Discrimination in education

Distance education

Divorce rates

Domestic abuse

Dreams

Drinking age, legal

Drug legalization

Eating disorders

E-business

Education and funding

Emigration

Employee rights

Endangered species

Energy

Ethics

Family relationships

Family values

Female genital mutilation

Feminism

Fracking

Freedom of religion

Freedom of speech

Gambling, online gaming

Gang identity

Gay parenting

Gay pride

Gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender

Gender discrimination

Gene Therapy

Genetic screening

Genocide

Global warming

Greenhouse effect

Gun control

Hacking

Hate crimes

Hazing

Home schooling

Homeland Security

Homelessness

Human Embryo Genome Editing

Identity theft

Illegal aliens

Immigration

Impeachment

Intelligence tests

International relations

Interracial marriage

Islamophobia

Landfills

Learning disabilities

Literacy in America

Marine pollution

Marriage and Divorce

Materialism

Media bias

Medicaid, Medicare reform

Memory

No Child Left Behind

Nuclear energy

Occultism

Oil spills

Online retail

Outsourcing

Partisan politics

Pesticides

Physical attraction

Plagiarism

Police brutality

Political correctness

Pollution

Population control

Portrayal of women

Poverty

Prayer in schools

Prescription drugs

Prisons and prisoners

Race relations

Radioactive waste disposal

Reality television

Recycling

Refugee crisis

Reverse discrimination

Schizophrenia

September 11th

Sex crimes

Sex education

Sexual harassment

Smog

Social Security Reform

Soil pollution

Sports

Standardized tests

Stereotypes

Substance abuse

Suffrage

Suicide

Sweatshops

Television violence

Terrorist violence

Three Strikes Law

Transgender athletes

Violence and Rape

Welfare

White collar crime

Wildlife conservation

Zika Virus