

Methods of Research

Third Stage

Course Objectives: Teaching students the techniques of writing research, choosing topics, identifying sources, gathering support, quoting, paraphrasing and styles of documentation (MLA and APA).

Course Tutor:

Prof. Dr. Abed Shahooth Khalaf

Textbook:

1. Baily, E. P. & Philip A. Powell. (1981). Writing Research Papers: A Practical Guide. Harcourt School.

Why write a research paper?

- A research paper is the most practical of all college assignments
- To learn about sources available for research in general and your field in particular
- To learn how books are classified in the library
- How to deal with sources
- Provides valuable experience (draw conclusions)
- To solve a problem
- To learn more about things surrounding us
- To learn how other people think
- To gain more knowledge about the world

Reports and persuasive papers

Depending on length & presentation of content

1. **Report**: an organization of information about a subject without taking an argumentative stance. Presentation is objective, not persuasive. Collects, evaluates, organizes and restates information objectively.
2. **Persuasive paper**: presentation of ideas (thesis) that need support. Collects, evaluates, organizes and restates information in such a way to persuade the reader to accept his/her stance.

Both:

- Depend on collecting information from sources
- Require honesty

Steps in writing a research paper

- Choosing and narrowing a topic
- Identifying sources
- Gathering support
- Writing the paper
- Preparing the paper in final form

Choosing and narrowing a topic

- **Criteria**

- Your interest
- Availability of references

- **The procedure**

- Choose a topic that interests you
- Do some quick preliminary reading to learn about your topic and availability of sources
- While doing your preliminary reading, develop a working thesis statement and continue to refine it

Choosing a topic, **continue**

- **Pitfalls to avoid;**
- Don't choose a topic that is trite
- Don't choose a topic that is too contemporary
- Don't choose a topic that is too obscure
- Don't choose a topic just because you read an interesting book about it

Narrowing a topic

- **Steps:**
- General field of interest
- Narrow to a more specific subfield
- Go down to a more specific genre
- Select an aspect from this genre

Thesis statement

- It is the main idea of your paper, the single all-encompassing assertion that you want your readers to accept after reading your paper. It is the essence of the paper, and everything else in the paper is aimed at supporting it.
- **Components:**
 - Narrowed subject
 - Precise assertion

Identifying sources

- The library
- **Divisions:**
- Reference section
- Reserve section
- Periodical section (current issues, back issues)
- **Finding books** (the card catalog, each book, **three cards**)
- **Classification system**
- Dewey Decimal System (**numbers only**)
- Library of Congress System (**letters and numbers**)

Important links and sites

- Libgen.info.com
- En.bookfi.org
- SCI-HUB
- URL (Unified Reference Locator)
http://www.itralinea.it/specials/dialecttrans/eng_more.php.
- http://www.jostrans.org/issue06/art_diaz_munoz.pdf.
- DOI (Digital Object Identifier)
- DOI:10.12691/education-3-12-14
- <https://doi.org/10.21315/ijaps2019.15.1.4>

Bibliography cards for books

- **Items included:**
- Author(s) or group responsible
- Title and subtitle
- Translator(s)
- Editor(s)
- Edition
- Series
- Volume number
- Place of publication
- Date of publication

Gathering support

- **Need to know:**
- How to evaluate sources?
- How to take notes efficiently?
- How to develop and refine a working outline?

Evaluating Sources

Primary Sources: the original source of basic facts on your subject. Written by the author him/her self.

Advantages: you are less likely to be affected by the bias of others who filtered the material before you.

-You depend on your own judgment rather than on someone else's

-without primary sources, you do not know what you are missing.

Disadvantages:

-you have to do all the work yourself; selecting, filtering, evaluating & analyzing.

-they are difficult to find, time consuming

-they are difficult to understand

-narrow in scope

Evaluating Sources

-Secondary Sources: use primary sources (or secondary sources) as their basis.

Advantages:

-easy to find

-you can find what someone else's thinks about your topic

-combine details from several primary sources, providing more scope

Disadvantages:

-there is bias

-**The recommendation:** find as many primary and secondary sources as you can

-Primary sources: help determine the value of secondary sources.

-Secondary sources: help understand primary sources

Evaluating Sources

- **Relevant Material:** Titles might be ambiguous, vague. Be detective.
- check table of contents, preface, introduction, foreword.
- Check indexes.

- **Reliable Material:** can you trust this author? Be suspicious
- If the author says something unconvincing.
- Tone of the book, personality of the author.
- The author's attitude toward readers
- Date of publication
- Unsupported assertions.
- Authors who dwell on the unusual

Taking Notes

- The traditional system:
 - For each section and subsection, **organize note cards**.
 - Taking notes makes you lose your train of thoughts.

Why take notes?

- copying every source is money consuming
- You cannot remember all marked pages in different sources
- Notes work as reminders
- With notes, you cut down the material you need when you write
- Helps eliminate confusion
- Filling out note cards forces you to become actively involved with the material
- Note cards contain the essence of the material you have reviewed

How to take notes?

1. **Summary note cards:** condense the words from a source into a much shorter version written in your own words. The most common type of note cards you use

- You want to capture the main idea of a source but don't care about exact words
- The wording is not particularly effective.

2. **Quotation note cards:** using someone else's exact words to support your argumentation

- Get benefit of the effective wording to support your argumentation.
- Use quotation marks “ ”

How to take notes?

3. Paraphrase note cards: re-writing the original material using your own words.

The same length as the original

- The original is complex, poorly worded
- Highly technical
- When you do not need the exact words of the original
- Do not use quotation marks “ ”

4. Mixed quotation and paraphrase or summary note cards:

- You paraphrase or summarize but still feel some of the author's words are worth keeping

Evolving a working outline

(formal outline/summary-detailed outline)

- Reading in various sources teaches you that you need to divide and subdivide your topic into lesser and major sections
- Direction for your research
- Helps you keep track of what you have found and what gaps you need to fill

Introduction

Major topic

Support topic

Specific support

Specific support

conclusion

The Writing Process

- The process you follow to get words on paper, to move from the idea to the final product.
- **Prewriting**: preparation stage;
- come up with a topic, narrow it, prepare your thesis
- do your research to gather information for support
- Prepare a working outline
- **Two keys to good prewriting**;
- be a good bookkeeper.
- outline your paper.

The Writing Process

- **Writing**: the actual writing of the paper

Tips:

- depend on your outline to make sure you are ready to start writing
- try to fill the gaps
- write (rough draft) quickly to keep your train of thoughts
- if in doubt, just underline and move on
- immerse yourself in your subject
- look carefully at your outline, divide the paper into parts
- **Arrange your time**

The Writing Process

- **Rewriting**: the extra work that perfects your paper; correct spelling, grammatical mistakes
- Is your paper interesting?.
- Places where you have not been clear.
- Is the organization good?
- Places where you have been wordy.
- Ideas follow logically.
- Layout features (paragraphs, appearance of pages)
- Choice of words.
- Enough details to make the reader see what you mean.

Tips for Good Rewriting

- Put your draft aside for a few days
- If you know how to type, type a draft
- Read your draft aloud

Parts (Fundamentals) of the Paper

- **Introduction:**

1. Gaining the reader's interest,
2. Present your thesis,
3. Situate the paper in its context
4. Stating the topic of the paper clearly.
5. Begin the paper with an intriguing fact you learned in your research

Introduction:

Gaining the reader's interest,

- Use a motivator
 1. Tell a story
 2. Use a contrasting opinion to build interest
 3. End the introduction showing your position
 4. Arouse interest by showing readers that you can meet the challenge
 5. Combine a story with a contrasting opinion

Background Section

- Provides more space
- Extends the introduction
- Provides perspective on your topic
- Should be a justifiable exception
- Be conscious of length

The Body

- Divide the paper into major topics
 - If you can persuade the reader to accept the point in each major topic, then they should accept your thesis
- How to find major topics?
- The more you know about your topic, the easier to find major topics
 - Have smooth and clear transition from one major topic to the other, or else you may lose your readers

Conclusion

- **The conclusion:** two purposes;
 1. It summarizes the main points
 2. It provides a sense of finality
 - a. Reminds the reader of what has gone before
 - b. The clincher provides a sense of finality, refer to the introduction
 - c. Reference to the loop
 - d. Do not introduce something new unsupported
 - e. Return to the motivator to close the loop

Support

The key to good support is to make it very detailed then illustrate it

- Several kinds of detail;
 1. Extended examples
 2. Statistics (documentation)
 3. Statements by authors(documentation)

Unity

It means that all material in the paper is pertinent to the thesis statement. There should not be any digressions or asides that distract the readers from your main point

- The best place to check for unity is the outline

Coherence

A coherent paper is one in which the readers are never lost. They know when they are moving from one point to the next and how these points are related to the thesis.

-Three ways of achieving coherence:

1. Be sure to move clearly from one topic idea to the next, relate the upcoming topic to the one you have finished
2. When you begin a new major section, remind the reader of the thesis (mention key words from the thesis statement)
3. Provide transitions from idea to idea (first, second, finally)

Using Research Material

- **When to Quote?**

1. Quote only when there is good reason to do so. Use summaries and paraphrases instead.
2. When the original material is well worded, when not only the content, but style is worth retaining.
3. When the writer has written very clearly (complicated processes). Summary or paraphrase cannot do the job.
4. To take advantage of the words of an authority.
5. When you are using primary source material.

When NOT to Quote?

- When there is too much irrelevant information
- To avoid confusing the readers.

How much to Quote?

- Beginners quote a paragraph BUT they need a sentence
- How much you really need to illustrate your point

How to integrate Quotations, Paraphrases and Summaries?

- When taking from other sources, you need to;
- Clearly distinguish between your words and ideas and those taken from other sources
- Blend research material smoothly into your paper

Framing Research Material

- Quotations:

1. author's name (date of publication) and quotation marks at the beginning
2. Quotation marks and (note reference number) at the end

Paraphrases and summaries:

1. Note number at the end
2. Signal the beginning with an introduction (According to

When to frame?

- Whenever there is chance that the readers may think they are reading your words or ideas if an introduction is not provided.

Significance of introduction

- To identify the author to the readers, NOT only the date of publication
- When you are using long quotations
- Familiarize the readers with the content of the quotation

Plagiarism

- A form of dishonesty, presenting someone else's words or ideas without giving them credit
- Avoid plagiarism by documenting the words or ideas of others
- **Errors associated with plagiarism;**
 1. Presenting someone else's idea but not documenting it (so the idea seems to be yours)
 2. Presenting someone else's words without documenting them (so they seem to be part of your writing)
 3. Quoting someone else's words (perhaps even documenting them) but failing to use quotation marks.

Format Conventions

- A convention is an expected and accepted way of doing something
- **Placing Note References**
 1. number notes consecutively. Do not reuse a number
 2. use Arabic numerals 1, 2, 3
 3. type each number so it will appear to be raised one-half space above the line
 4. do not space before the number
 5. do not use slashes, parentheses, or periods with numbers.
 6. put the note number after the material to which it refers.

Presenting Quotations

- **Short Quotation**

If a quotation will take up four or fewer lines of typing in your paper, it is a short quotation.

Rules;

1. Type the quotation along with your own writing, without indentation
2. Use quotation marks to enclose the quoted material
3. Place a footnote number after the quoted material following all punctuation marks.

Long Quotations

If the quotation will take up more than four lines of typing in your paper, it is a long quotation.

Rules:

1. Triple space before and after the long quotation
2. Double space the quotation
3. Indent the quotation ten spaces from the left margin but retain the normal right margin.
4. Indent extra three spaces from the left if the line you are quoting begins a paragraph in the original
5. Do not use quotation marks unless the passage itself contains a quotation
6. Place a footnote number after the quoted material

Omitted Words

- You can indicate omitted words from the original if they are irrelevant by using this symbol **ellipsis mark** (. . .), three spaced dots with a space at the beginning and the end.
- Do not use ellipsis mark if you omit words at the beginning or end of a quotation.
- **If you omit the** end of a sentence and continue with the next sentence, use (. . . .), the period of the first sentence with no space, and three spaced dots as ellipsis mark

Added Words

- If you add an explanation within a quotation, use brackets to separate your words from the quoted material []
- Do not use parentheses.

An error in the quotation

- If you find an error in the quotation you want to use, place [sic] next to the error
- **Sic is a Latin word “thus”**, I have used the wording faithfully but I know it contains an error

Altering a quotation

- Quotations should be used intact; However,
- You can alter the capitalization at the beginning
- You can highlight or emphasize by underlining or italicizing
- Provide an explanation (emphasis added)

Punctuation with Quotation marks

- Periods and commas: always go inside the quotation marks
- Colons and semicolons: always go outside the quotation marks
- Question marks and exclamation points: go inside the quotation marks if the quoted material itself is a question or exclamation, otherwise they go outside the quotation marks.

Quoting a single line of poetry

- Treat a single line of poetry as a short quotation of prose
- Don't use a note every time you quote from the same poem
- Place the line number you are quoting immediately after the quotation marks

Quoting two or three lines of poetry

- Place the poetic lines in your paragraph as with a single line of poetry
- Separate the poetic lines with a virgule (/), space on both sides

Long quotation of poetry

- Triple space before and after the quotation
- Indent 10 spaces from the left margin
- Double space the quotation
- Triple space between stanzas
- Retain the poetic line and any other special features of the poem
- Document as for a single line of poetry
- Do not use quotation marks

Omitting lines of poetry

- Use a line of spaced dots about the same length as the line you just quoted

.....

Typing format

- Use black colour
- Type on only one side of each page

Margins and spacing

- One and half inches on the left and top
- One inch on the right and bottom
- Indent extra five spaces from the left to start paragraphs

Numbering pages

- Use Arabic numerals
- Do not number the first page, but count it as page 1
- For table of contents, preface, abbreviations, etc., use small Roman numerals i, ii, iii

Types of notes

- Documentation notes:

Two purposes

1. Support your work by showing authorities you base your reasoning on
2. Indicate to the readers where to go to check your research or to read for themselves

Types of notes

- **Support notes:**
 - Refer to sources that agree or disagree with your assertions

- **Explanatory notes:**
 - Provide comments, interpretations or side arguments to explain certain items in the paper

Placing footnotes

- After the last line of text, single space and then type a line 20 spaces long from the left side margin
- Then, double space to find the line on which to begin the first note
- Indent the first line of each note 5 spaces. All subsequent lines return to the left margin
- Raise each note number half a line
- Single space within each note, but double space between notes

Placing endnotes

- Double space twice from the title 'Notes' to find the line to begin the first note
- Indent the first line of each note 5 spaces. All subsequent lines return to the left margin
- Raise each note number half a line
- Single space within each note, but double space between notes

Footnotes or Endnotes

- Endnotes are recommended;

1. They make the paper easier to prepare

2. Most research papers contain only documentation notes

3. Footnotes at the end of the page get in the way

4. If you use support or explanatory notes, use footnotes

Elements of notes

- Person or persons responsible for the source you're documenting
- The title(s)
- Amplifying information to help the reader identify the work precisely
- Publishing information, help find the source
- The specific place you're referring to (page No.)

Bibliography

- The note has a number, the bibliography entry doesn't.
- Notes are in order of appearance in the paper, the bibliography is alphabetically arranged
- The first line of the note is indented 5 spaces from the left margin and all other lines go to that margin.
- In the bibliographic entry, only the first line of an entry goes to the left margin, and all subsequent lines of the same entry are set in five spaces from the left.
- In a note, the author's name is in normal order (first, middle, last).
- In a bibliography entry, the last name comes first.
- **You alphabetize with the author's last name**
- **If the work has more than one author, only for the first author the last name comes first**
- The note is like a sentence, the only period used is at the end of the note.
- In the bibliography entry, each group of information is a sentence and ends with a period.
- Publishing information in a note is in parentheses.
- A note gives a specific reference to a page or pages,
- A bibliography entry either gives no page numbers or gives the inclusive pages (article/book chapter)

The Bibliography Page

- Double space twice from the title 'Bibliography' to find the line on which to start the first entry
- The first line of each entry begins on the left margin, but all subsequent lines for an entry are indented five spaces
- Single space each entry, but double space between entries
- Begin an entry with the same author as the preceding one with ten hyphens instead of rewriting the author's name.