

Research Paper Directions and Rubric

How to write a research paper

1. Choose your topic
 - a. Ask important questions
 - b. Pick something you like/are interested in
 - c. Stay original
2. Research
 - a. Find Sources
 - i. Find at least 10 sources (yes, 10!)
 1. If you cannot find 10 sources, your topic is too broad or too specific. Change your topic.
 2. Do NOT use Wikipedia, About.com, Google, etc. as sources. These are NOT legitimate sources. But, you can use these to find legitimate sources!
 - ii. Add each of the 10 sources to your bibliography.
 - iii. For each source, print (if reasonable) your source.
 1. Turn off color and attempt to only print important information (i.e. skip advertisements, extra pictures, etc.), but leave headers and footers to remind you where the source came from.
 2. Use selection to only print data and text
 3. For each source, you can now highlight important information.
 - b. Find useful/interesting information
 - i. For each source, make sure you find specific useful information
 - ii. Highlight information, but be sure you are not duplicating information between sources (do not highlight birthday in 2 different sources)
 - c. Identify the goal of the paper
 - i. Why are you writing it? Argumentative? Analytic? Are you just sharing information?
 - d. Audience
 - i. Who are you writing your paper for? A teacher? A colleague/peer?
 - e. Organize information
 - i. You can write information in index cards or separate pieces of paper.
 - ii. Use a graphic organizer or something similar to organize your information into sections (early life, career, politics, demographics, habitat, death, interesting information, etc.)
 1. Find quotes as necessary from sources.

Research Paper Directions and Rubric

3. Create your outline
 - a. Write this section as an outline. You do not need full sentences or paragraphs. Just write points.
 - b. Create your thesis – your main point
 - c. Create your sub-points.
 - i. Roughly 1 paragraph – 1 page per sub point
 - ii. Be sure you have enough data to fill in your sub point
 - iii. Include data points within each sub-point.
 - iv. **Be sure each data point is cited**, to remind you where the data was found. You may need this when writing your paper, to add additional information.
4. Write your Paper
 - a. Begin by writing the body paragraphs. Using your outline, create a paragraph/page for each sub point
 - i. Be sure to cite any sources as you write
 - b. Write your conclusion
 - i. Summarize your paragraphs into a conclusion
 - c. Write your introduction
 - i. Repeat your conclusion by telling the reader what you are about to say
 - d. Attach your bibliography
 - i. Be sure to un-check any sources that you are NOT actively using
5. Edit /Revise
 - a. Edit your paper, and revise as necessary
 - i. Find additional sources as necessary (be sure to include in your bibliography)

Research Paper Directions and Rubric

Paper		Possible Points	Awarded Points
Organization	How is the paper organized? Does it flow nicely or are there abrupt changes? Are different topics separated by paragraphs?	10	
Plagiarism	Paper must be your own words, or no more than 10% cited quotes. To receive the most points, there should be no directly copied sentences that are uncited.	10	
Grammar/Punctuation	Paper should use correct grammar, punctuation, spelling and writing rules.	5	
Tone/Style	Does the paper show a consistent writing style? Are the paragraphs similar in structure? The paper should be consistent throughout (i.e. One paragraph is long and detailed while others are short and abrupt.) This is the most unique part of the paper, showing how you write and your personal style.	10	
Introduction	Does the introduction show your thesis? It should have enough detail to capture the reader's interest and hint on what information you are going to share.	5	
Conclusion	Does it wrap up your paper, reminding the reader of what they have been told?	5	
Use of Quotes (citation)	If you have included any quotes, are they correctly cited and included in your bibliography? Or, you did not use any quotes.	5	
Sub-total for Paper		50	
Bibliography			
Number of sources	Did you include at least 10 sources?	5	
Appropriateness of sources	Were all your sources reputable and accurate? No Wikipedia, Google, Yahoo, etc.	2	
MLA/APA format	Your bibliography should be in either MLA or APA format. You will be marked down if you have simply included URL's instead of an appropriate bibliography.	3	
Sub-total for Bibliography		10	
Sources			
Printed and attached	Sources should all be printed and attached to your paper. I should be able to find most of your information from your paper in a source.	5	
Highlighted	This paper requires you to highlight your sources, so you can easily find useful information. I expect your sources to be highlighted with information that you used in your paper. Not all highlighting needs to be included in the paper, but all information in your paper needs to be highlighted.	10	
Sub-total for Sources		15	
Outline			
Organization	Your outline is your organization tool for your paper. Each heading should be a different paragraph or sub-topic in your paper. I should be able to match your outline to your paper for details and organization.	15	
Citation	Every fact in your outline should be cited. If you have multiple facts for a topic from one source, you cite the topic. Just remember, the reader should be able to easily move from your outline to the source where the fact was found	10	
Sub-total for Outline		25	
Sub-Total for all sections		100	
Penalty	A late penalty of 10% per day late will be subtracted from your subtotal.		
Final Grade		100	

Research Paper Directions and Rubric

Comments:	
Paper:	
Bibliography:	
Sources:	
Outline:	
Overall Impression:	