

UNITED STATES HISTORY I: RESEARCH PAPER

Learning to write a research paper is one of the most crucial skills a student acquires during their high school career. There is a specific methodology to the construction of a quality research paper. Together, on a step by step basis, we will continue to build on the process that was used last year to compose well developed a theses, conclusion, bibliography, preliminary draft, and final paper.

PROCESS:

1. *Conduct extensive research* pertaining to a topic of your choice from the Election of 1800 up and through Lincoln's election in 1860. It is preferred that no research papers cover issues taking place during the American Civil War.
2. *Develop an original thesis.* A properly constructed thesis statement is crucial in terms of starting in the right direction. It dictates your research, the premise of your argument as well as the quality of your final paper.
3. *Research is what your argument, as well as your paper, depends on.* Remember, quantity does not equal quality. Be sure that your research not only supports your thesis, but also *advances it*.
4. *Synthesize research* into an organized outline. Synthesis refers the ability to put separate parts (research information) into a new, original final product. This final product will be the research paper.
5. *Compose a preliminary draft* in preparation for peer editing. It is important that your rough draft be as fully developed as possible. The time between the preliminary draft and the final copy due date is short and is best used for editing, not actually writing the final copy.
6. *Fine tune your draft into a completed research paper* with a captivating, organized argument based on your thesis; supported by factual and properly cited information.

ASSESSMENT: This is a comprehensive assessment. There will be a series of evaluations throughout the process used to assess your work:

1. **Research** - You will be required to carefully document your research. This will include relevant evidence for your paper and source information. Format will be discussed at a later date.
2. **Thesis Statement-** Your thesis statement should be specific; it should cover only what you will discuss in your paper. The thesis statement usually appears in the paper's first paragraph. Your topic may change as you write, so you may need to revise your thesis statement to reflect exactly what you discuss in the paper. Remember, if information

does not support/advance your thesis statement, it should not be included in your paper.

3. **Outline-** it is much easier to review and revise a well-organized outline. When done correctly, writers and their editors can point out potential issues; choppy flow, absence of evidence, etc... very quickly and efficiently.

- The formatting follows these characters, in this order:

I. Roman Numerals: I.

A. Capitalized Letters: A.

1. Arabic Numerals: 1.

a. Lowercase Letters: a.

4. **Preliminary ('Rough') Draft-** the rough draft is arguably the most important step in the research paper process. It allows a writer to realize whether or not enough evidence has been collected, or alternatively, if more is needed. Additionally, a rough draft should be handed in as close to "final proof" as possible.

5. **Final Research Paper:** All Students must use:

- a. 12 point font - double spaced
- b. Times New Roman
- c. 3-5 pages- 5 page maximum.
- d. MLA Format
- e. Hard copy must be submitted on the date assigned (TBD), no exceptions to this requirement.

ACADEMIC GUIDELINES:

- **Sources:**

- ***Secondary Sources:*** Each student needs to utilize at least four sources.

- **At least TWO sources must be non-websites!!**

- Please note that Worldbook & Infotrac are not considered websites, they are journal search engines. In addition a Google book while accessed via the computer is a source for books again not considered a website.

- **Primary Source(s):** Each student must **reference and analyze at least three primary sources**. Examples: letters, newspaper articles, advertisements, journal entries.
- **Rubrics:** will be distributed in the near future.

POSSIBLE PAPER TOPICS: BELOW ARE EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE PAPER TOPICS, NOT THESIS STATEMENTS.

- The American Revolution- military, political, economic, etc...
- The Constitutional Convention and events following-
- President Jefferson and the early United States, Lewis and Clark, Louisiana Purchase, etc...
- War of 1812- causes, leadership, battles, outcomes, etc...
- President Andrew Jackson- style of government, changes and reforms, etc...
- Slavery or the "Peculiar Institution"
- Reform Movements - women's rights, education, mental health, etc...
- American Expansion: LA Purchase, Missouri Compromise, Mexican-American War, etc...

First due date is _____ :

Assignment: On a 4x6 note card identify the specific topic you plan on researching which shows a hint of your thesis. (I know as you may change and/or refine the topic as you go through the research PROCESS)

✓ **Acceptable examples:**

- Impact that Stamp Act had on agitating colonists against the authority of the King.
 - Role that women had during the American Revolution - perhaps focused on the home front OR on the battlefield.
- **NOT acceptable:** The American Civil War, causes of, major events