ACADEMIC RESEARCH WRITING IS ABOUT BECOMING PART OF THE "CONVERSATION"

EAVESDROP, ENTER, & ENGAGE
ASSIGNMENT DETAILS THAT MATTER

• Scope
• Purpose
• “Angle”
• Audience
"WORKABLE" TOPIC

• point of interest
• claims and evidence
• quality sources
• Propose a topic formally IF REQUESTED.
SOURCE TYPES

• Primary – original text/document itself

• Secondary – Someone’s comments or analysis of a primary source
EVALUATE SOURCES

• Date published
• Author Expertise
• Scholarly Publisher
• Internet: Database over Google
TRUSTED SOURCES

• **GCHS** - InfoTrac, Gale Student Resources, Opposing Viewpoints, EBSCO

• **SWIC** – Academic Universe, JSTOR, EBSCO, OCLC FirstSearch, Opposing Viewpoints
USING SOURCES

• KEEP TRACK OF POTENTIAL SOURCES – MLA info
• READ & ANNOTATE
• THINK ABOUT & MAKE CONNECTIONS
CREATE A PLAN

• List main topics, subtopics, and/or questions in a logical order to guide research & notetaking. Change it as you go.
  • What ? do you want to find answers to?
  • What are the most imp. Ideas I want to show in the paper?
  • What bkgd. Info. is needed?
  • What are the main sections going to be about & how do they relate?
  • How can the info. be best organized?
  • What conclusions are expected after reading the paper?
TAKE NOTES – BE METHODICAL

• DIRECT QUOTATIONS
  • In your actual paper = Use quotes sparingly & for specific points

• PARAPHRASING

• SUMMARY
AVOID PLAGIARISM

• Intentional
• Accidental
• Patchwork

CREDIT OTHER WRITERS & RESEARCHERS WHERE DUE.
DON’T SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES OF CHEATING.
HELP YOUR READER FIND MORE INFO.
THESIS STATEMENT / QUESTION TO EXPLORE

• DEFINITION – single declarative/inquisitive statement that shares the directed/projected idea of the paper; identifies topic, focus, and suggests what will be explored

• DOESN’T HAVE TO BE WRITTEN FIRST!

• PLACEMENT—Somewhere in the opening section (Depends on length & organization)
THESIS STATEMENT - GUIDELINES

• Never a question!
• Never announces (“In this paper…”, etc.)
• Directs where the inquiry of the paper might go
• May suggest your conclusions – DOESN’T HAVE TO
• Has a confident tone – Is specific NOT vague
BE CONTINUALLY FLEXIBLE

• LOOK OVER NOTES — Look for gaps or overages in research. Search further if needed. Discard unrelated info.

• COHERENCE — Arrange logically — by time, space, cause & effect, order of importance, etc. Consider your lead and your closing.

• AUDIENCE & PURPOSE — Make sure info. fits these; tweak if needed
DRAFT THE PAPER

Pull together your ideas, research, and plans into sentences and paragraphs through synthesis – create a unique paper
GUIDELINES FOR DRAFTING

• Be flexible! It’s a draft; you can change it!
• Try to write in as few sessions as possible to keep it fluid.
• Follow your plan, but make changes as needed to make it flow.
• Consider 3rd person your strongest option for narration
• The formality of the piece is ALWAYS dependent on audience
• Use your own voice – your academic one, perhaps
• Give credit! Keep careful parenthetical citations as you write.
• Save EVERYTHING.
DRAFTING THE OPENING

• Attract your reader’s attention and clearly indicate what direction the paper might go. Include the thesis statement where it works most effectively.

• **DO NOT**
  • Write a boring beginning
  • Repeat the title word for word
  • Announce (unless the paper is REALLY long and divided into sections)
  • Give everything away from the start
DRAFTING THE BODY

• Provide the evidence – keep ideas moving from one place to the next like a plot unfolds in a story (use suspense)
  • Keep track of sources as you write—go ahead and cite it (MLA Style)

WHY WAIT?

• Write in present tense unless referring to historical events
• Each paragraph needs to feel like a unit
• Be sure to change paragraphs when ideas shift
• Make sure evidence really relates to the topic / backs up claims—not just randomly thrown together!!
STRATEGY NOT FORMULA

• IN ANY ORDER (change it up)
  • Evidence
  • Example/Quote & Cite
  • Explanation/Analysis

THEY SAY... . .
I SAY. . .
DRAFTING THE CLOSING

• Bring your paper to a satisfying close and say something worthwhile
  • DO NOT
    • Monotonously repeat yourself
    • Announce
    • Merely summarize main ideas
  • RESPECT YOUR READER
    • PROPOSAL - Call for change – solve the problem
    • POSITION - Take a stand
    • EVALUATION - Make your evaluation clear

• WHY DOES IT MATTER?
DOCUMENT SOURCES USING MLA STYLE

• IN TEXT PARENTHEtical
• + WORKS CITED
READ (ALOUD), REREAD, & REVISE

• THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

• Unity – does it all fit together?
• Coherence – does it all make sense?
• Organization – does the way it’s organized work for the reader?
• Appropriate use of transitions – is there motion?
• Strong paragraph structure & appropriate shifts
• Wording & Convention choices
• Sentence structure & Varied beginnings
• Did you meet topic and length requirements?
TONE

THINK CONVERSATIONAL
NOT CONVERSATIONAL

Just get your reader to THINK.
TITLE GUIDELINES

• Communicate the topic & Focus
• Straightforward often better than “cute”
• Colon can be helpful : narrow down after
• NOT a complete sentence
MAKE IT “TEACHER-READY”

• COPYEDIT
• REREAD ALOUD
• PRINT or SUBMIT
PRESENTING INFORMATION

• *If asked to do so.

• To be sure you have a firm grasp on the knowledge you are gaining through researching your topic and to share both your findings and writing.

• Be prepared to talk about your ideas during the process of research and to share your final research project findings. In a 3 to 5 minute, informal talk, present your evidence and convince your audience that your argument/solution/or analysis is valid. Use information you found in your research and be ready to answer questions posed by your listeners or to refute their opposing viewpoints or differing opinions.
ACADEMIC RESEARCH WRITING IS ABOUT BECOMING PART OF THE “CONVERSATION” WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO CONTRIBUTE?