



STEP BY STEP MENTORING PROGRAM

Caring and Growing... Together

Writing a Research Paper: Step-by-Step Procedures

There is a number of criteria that must be met in order to write a good research paper. The following steps will help you develop and write a high quality research paper.

The Preliminaries

1. Select a topic
2. Begin preliminary reading
3. Restrict the subject
4. Develop a preliminary thesis statement

Gathering Data

1. Compile the working bibliography
2. Prepare the bibliography on cards in correct form (3" x 5" cards)
3. Begin extensive work in the library reference room; be sure to check:
 - a. general bibliographies
 - b. trade bibliographies
 - c. indexes (books and collections, literature in periodicals, newspaper indexes, pamphlet indexes)
 - d. library electronic catalogue

Taking Notes

1. Develop a preliminary outline
2. Evaluate your source material; which is primary material and which is secondary material?
3. Begin note-taking on cards (4" x 6" cards)
4. Avoid plagiarism

Writing the Paper

1. Develop the final outline; test your outline
2. Prepare to write:
 - a. put your note cards in the order that your outline is in
 - b. consider your (real and imagined) readers and how their expectations may affect your tone and style
3. Write the rough draft
4. Check your documentation carefully
5. Revise and rewrite
6. Check the format of the text, citations, notes, and bibliography (most instructors recommend MLA or APA format)
7. Proofread

Modified from: <http://www.educationatlas.com>

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