

But Where do I Start?

The research process and the writing process are connected. Research is of little value unless you effectively communicate what you have learned. The same skills that you use to write an expository paper are used to develop the research paper or project. Developing a clear and focused thesis, sketching an outline, drafting, revising, peer reviewing, and editing all are steps with which you are already familiar.

The steps that you should take are as follows:

1. read about a broad topic with "peripheral vision," looking for subtopics and important terms
2. identify focused questions you are interested in investigating (See Thesis Generator <http://mciu.org/~spjvweb/thesisgenerator.html>)
3. gather a working source list (See MLA Style <http://mciu.org/~spjvweb/mla.html>)
4. gather information and evaluate the sources of information (see CARRDSS <http://mciu.org/~spjvweb/carrdss.html>)
5. take notes on note cards
6. develop clear and focused preliminary thesis (see Developing a Thesis <http://mciu.org/~spjvweb/thesis.html>)
7. identify strong supporting points and rank them, making certain that the
8. research and logical reasoning support them
9. develop an outline or construct and complete a visual organizing tool
10. prepare a rough draft WITHOUT USING NOTES
11. add research documentation to the draft (See **In-text Documentation**)
12. revise the draft
13. have a peer review your work
14. revise the draft
15. edit the draft
16. prepare, proofread, and submit the final copy

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