Research Writing

What is research writing?
- Presents a thorough exploration of a topic
- Uses sources to support your OWN ideas
- Requires an investigation of a RANGE of sources on your topic
What do sources in research do?

- Provide important statistics
- Explain specialized procedures or technical information
- Provide background information
- Cite the views of an authority on the topic
- Provide relevant explanation
- Provide supporting detail
The Research Process

- Choose a broad topic
- Understand your purpose - What type of paper are you being asked to write?
  - Problem-solution paper: How parents can limit their preschoolers’ exposure to televised violence
  - Argumentation paper: why the government should limit violence on television
  - Explanatory paper: the nature and amount of violence on primetime network television
Research Process cont.

- Understand the assignment
- Draft a preliminary thesis/purpose statement
- Locate sources; know how many your teachers require & whether they want books, articles...
  - Books
  - Articles/journals
  - Reference pages from published articles
  - Scholarly websites/search engines (googlescholar.com)
  - Do field research – talk to people who KNOW about your topic
Read & Annotate Sources

- Are they trustworthy? Where did they come from? (Hint...if they came from The Enquirer, chances are they are not trustworthy)
- Annotate sources - write notes/questions in margins, circle important information you may want to use in your paper
- Summarize sources on index cards (Each source should have its own card)
Use the right “P!”

- **PARAPHRASE...NOT PLAGIARIZE!**
- Paraphrase: restatement of an author’s original ideas in your own words & style...know your writing style
  - You must alter the style & wording of the original material
  - You may not add any ideas
  - You may not alter the meaning of the original material in any way
  - You MUST still give author credit for his/her idea even when you paraphrase
Direct Quotes

- Sometimes, the author says it best, so you may want to quote him or her.
- For example: “An economic system does not exist alone. A person or collection of people will make major decisions about how to use resources and allocate goods” (Schaefer 423).
- You can combine paraphrasing and quotes if it works better for your style.
Exhaust Your Sources...not yourself!

- Go through each source thoroughly; skim them more than once
- Based on your summary index cards, decide what sources are most useful to the overall purpose of your paper
- Remember to go through sources’ bibliography/works cited pages...you may find more resources that are useful
Write a Draft

- Introduction should have some sort of “HOOK”
- Introduction should be in the present verb tense
- When you quote or paraphrase an author, you must always give him or her credit, otherwise you are plagiarizing
- Do not curse in your writing, even if you are thinking it!
- Write in a formal, academic voice
Intro, Body, Conclusion

- Remember, your introduction should give background information based on the topic and end with YOUR THESIS STATEMENT (Purpose).
- You should have info based on both sides of the argument in intro.
- The BODY focuses on your ideas and YOUR side of the argument, using your research sources as support…CREDOBLE SUPPORT MAKES YOU MORE CREDIBLE!
- Conclusion should bring paper to a close…make some recommendations based on your topic, for instance.
Quotes/Punctuation

- End marks, like periods, question marks, commas, always go outside parenthesis if you have a source at the end of your sentence.
- Some authors have claimed that if you study hard, you can pass any type of test (O’Dell 422). If there is a quote in the middle of sentence, comma goes inside the quote.
- Jade O’Dell has claimed that, “the most successful college students are the ones who go to class,” and the ones who show they care (455).
A bibliography or works cited page is the last page(s) of your paper.
This page shows all of the resources you used to support your argument/ideas.
Know the format (MLA/APA) your teacher wants you to use.
Always in alphabetical order by author’s last name or if not author, use title of article.
Check yourself!

- Make sure your writing style is formal and academic...avoid conversational language
- A missing period on your bibliography page could cause you to lose points
- Check yourself for paraphrasing and quoting
- Do not OVER QUOTE...instead, put it in your OWN WORDS
- Do not be tempted to purchase a paper online...teachers have plagiarism software!
Helpful websites

- Grammargirl.com (great for punctuation help)
- owl.english.purdue.edu
- www.ccc.commnet.edu/mla
- For scholarly online articles
  - Googlescholar.com