

# Research Organizer

**1. Get Started** Find a 'researchable' topic by reading a broad, general article about it.

- Search **Britannica Online** from the library's website to read an overview.
- OR try the library's print version of **World Book Encyclopedia**.

**Thesis Statement** What do you plan to prove and how do you plan to prove it. Try using one of these prompts to start: **Even though.....While..... Although.... Because.... Since...**

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**2. Find Sources** What words describe your topic or are related to it?

List keywords, synonyms, **broader** subjects, **narrower** subjects. Brainstorm a bit. These words will be your search terms for books, articles, websites, etc.


## Find books

- Search **Destiny**, our library catalog (you'll probably want to search with your **broad** keywords since your narrow ones might be too specific.)

## Find Articles

- Search **Vermont Online Library Academic OneFile** is the database that will probably have the most articles.).
  - Use your **narrow** (specific) keywords in the **Advanced Search**.)
  - Remember to check the **full text** box.
  - Create an account so you can bookmark and save the good articles. Or email them to yourself. Or print them. Or do all three, but don't lose them.

## Find Websites

- Use **SweetSearch** (you'll get better results than with Google—really)
- Use WebPath Express (you'll find results that educators have selected.)
- OK, now try **Google**, but search **smart**:
  - Put quotes around phrases ex. "Japanese internment camps"
  - Click **Advanced Search** and limit your searches to .edu or .org sites
  - Use NOT to get rid of false results

### 3. Evaluate Your Sources

Are they high quality? Are they reliable? Are they objective? And most importantly do your sources support your thesis statement? It's easy to get off track when you find a source with lots of information on the broad topic, but you want information about your specific thesis. Keep your focus on your thesis.

### 4. Take Notes

Note cards? Notebook paper? EasyBib? What works for you?

- Paraphrase or summarize your notes.
- Make sure your notes help you prove your thesis statement.
- Remember to cite your sources on your notes (really, this is important).

### 5. Cite Your Sources

Use **EasyBib.com** to keep track of your sources. Create an account—you will use it for other projects in school.

### 6. Organize and Write

- Organize your notes first, before writing. Try using a chart, diagram, or outline to get organized. It may seem like an extra step, but it makes the writing so much easier.
- Write a draft. Focus on the notes that prove your thesis. Make sure you cite your sources.
- Have someone else read it—a friend, a parent—and ask for comments.
- Edit. This is important. Is your paper logical? Is your thesis clearly stated? Do you have good transitions between paragraphs? Do you have a strong conclusion? Did you include all your parenthetical references and a final bibliography? What about grammar and spelling?
- Finish. Review your instructions. Did you include everything?

### 7. Evaluate Your Paper

Take a moment and look at your final product and see what you think...

Is your final product something you are proud of?