



Justice & Injustice

# WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER

# Choose a Topic


- You will need to choose one topic from the following:
  - A U.S. law or bill that is controversial
    - Health care reform
    - Military draft law
    - Gay marriage laws
    - Any other
  - A famous U.S. trial where justice served is questionable
    - Salem witch trials
    - Brown vs. the Board of Education
    - Scopes monkey trial
    - Patty Hearst trial
    - Other trial from U.S. history

# Research Your Topic

- **First, write your main research question that you want to answer.**
- Use your favorite search engine (I like Google! Remember to avoid Wikipedia and other non-academic sources. Need more details? See the resource on Internet Research.).
- Keep track of your sources in order to avoid plagiarizing.
- Remember to get all of the source info for your works cited page:
  - Title of the source
  - Page number(s) of quotes
  - Publisher
  - Authors
  - Date published
  - Date accessed (for a website)
  - URL or the web address




# How Many Sources?

- You will need to support your ideas.
  - For this paper, you need a minimum of six sources; however, you may have more.
  - Why so many?
    - You need to answer all of your reader's questions.
    - You need to fully support your ideas with research and proof.
- 




# Citing Your Sources

- Why do we cite?
    - So others know where we got our information.
    - We don't want to take credit for facts and ideas that aren't ours.
    - Sources add credibility to our research.
  - Any paper turned in without a formatted Works Cited page will be given a grade of zero.
  - You must cite each time you use a fact or quote in your paper.
  - We will use MLA format for our paper.
- 



# How Do I Cite?


- Please refer to the directions on the Justice & Injustice Unit.
  - You'll also find handouts for citing sources in the Resources section of the course.
  - Also, check out Purdue's OWL.
    - This is an amazing website!
    - Tons of useful information.
    - MLA format questions answered.
    - Tips of writing a research paper.
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# Completing a Works Cited Page

- This is a page that lists all the sources you used in your paper.
- Use the information that you wrote down when you began researching.
- Once again, use the resources available to help you write a Works Cited page:
  - Justice & Injustice Unit
  - Handouts in the Resources section
  - Purdue's OWL




# Organizing Your Thoughts


- Once you have all your research and ideas, it's time to get organized.
  - There are many ways to organize your thoughts; choose what works best for you:
    - Graphic Organizers
    - Outlines
    - Web/Spider Map
    - Any other method that works for you!
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# Start Writing!

- It may seem overwhelming, but once you have all your research and have organized your thoughts, you have all the tools to write your paper.
  - Remember, a research paper is just like a 5-paragraph essay, only *longer*.
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# Paragraph 1: Introduction

- Hook
    - Catch your reader's attention
    - Ideas: questions, facts, anecdote, definition, quote...
  - Bridge
    - Explains your topic
    - Connects the hook to the thesis
  - Thesis Statement
    - Clearly states your main idea and arguments
- 



# Next Paragraphs

- Set the Stage
    - Provide your reader with background information, historical context or other information that will be useful in helping your reader understand your points.
    - Be sure to cite your sources.
- 



# Middle Paragraphs

- Present the facts
  - Support your viewpoint with your research.
  - Cite your sources.




# Last Paragraphs

- Pull it all together
  - Discuss the answer to your question.
  - Explain how your points contribute to your answer.




# Conclusion

- Wrap it up
    - Restate your thesis.
    - Highlight the significance of this topic.
    - End with a final thought:
      - Tie it back to your hook in your introduction.
      - Leave your readers thinking.
      - Use a quotation, question, or challenge for your reader.
- 



# Remember Good Writing

- Avoid using contractions in formal writing.
  - Never use the words, “In my opinion.” Why? Because it’s assumed the entire paper is your opinion supported with credible research.
  - Vary your sentence length. Avoid choppy sentences.
  - Double check basic mechanics rules.
  - Capitalize correctly.
  - Punctuate correctly.
  - Avoid using the first person, “I.”
  - Write in the third person.
  - Use a formal tone. Avoid slang.
  - Use spell-check and grammar check.
- 



# Final Words

- Look at the rubric to make sure you've completed all the requirements.
- Questions? Ask!
  - Send me a message.
  - I'm here to help!