

Research Paper Checklist

By Nicole Nichols-West

- ☐ Choose a Topic
 - ☐ Pick a topic which interests and challenges you.
 - ☐ Focus on a limited aspect.
 - ☐ Obtain teacher approval for your topic.
 - ☐ Re-read your assignment sheet carefully to be certain you know what is expected.
 - ☐ Select a subject you can manage.
 - ☐ Avoid subjects that are too technical, learned, or specialized.
 - ☐ Avoid topics that have only a very narrow range of source materials.
- ☐ Find Information
 - ☐ Use search engines and other search tools as a starting point.
 - ☐ Pay attention to domain name extensions (if it ends with edu or org)
 - ☐ Be selective of com (commercial) sites.
 - ☐ Be wary of personal home pages - their quality vary greatly.
 - ☐ Check out public and university libraries, businesses, government agencies.
 - ☐ Contact knowledgeable people in your community.
 - ☐ Write down full bibliographical information.
- ☐ Your Thesis
 - ☐ Write your thesis statement down in one sentence.
 - ☐ Find arguments to support and defend this belief.
- ☐ Outline
 - ☐ Think through your topic carefully and organize it logically
 - ☐ Include in your outline an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.
 - ☐ Make the first outline tentative.
 - ☐ In the introductions, state your thesis and the purpose of your research.
 - ☐ State how you plan to approach your topic.
 - ☐ Explain briefly the major points you plan to cover.
 - ☐ In the body, present your arguments to support your thesis statement.
 - ☐ In the conclusion, restate or reword your thesis and summarize your arguments.

- ☐ Draft
 - ☐ Thesis statement is concise and clear.
 - ☐ Arguments are presented in a logical sequence.
 - ☐ All sources are properly cited.
 - ☐ Your intentions and points are clear in the essay.
 - ☐ Read your paper for grammatical errors.
 - ☐ Correct all errors that you can spot.
 - ☐ Get someone else to read it over.