

Writing a Research Paper: Generating Questions & Topics

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Dr. Sonali Gholap



What's a Research Paper?

A research paper –

1. requires you to critically think about, evaluate, organize, and compose;
2. is an assignment or project that grows over time as you interact with other sources;
3. varies in length;
4. is generally written on a topic decided by your teacher.



How Do You
Start?

Typically, the hardest part of starting a paper is **starting!**



- How do you usually choose a topic?
 1. Read.
 2. Talk with a friend or classmate.
 3. Write down your initial thoughts about the topic.



Brainstorming Techniques:
Let's Workshop!



Ask a Question,
Make a List

Topic: Attendance in College Classrooms

- *Possible question:*

- Should attendance be required for a passing grade?

- *Possible answers:*

- No (why?)
- Yes (why?)
- Dependent (on?)

- *Possible Reasons:*

- Students are too busy to always go to class.
- Students can't participate if they're absent.



Freewriting

- What is **freewriting**?
 - You write without thinking, or stopping. The trick is to write whatever comes to mind, even if you trail off topic.

Let's try!



- Cubing is a good way to look at your topic from 6 different perspectives. Here's what you do:
 - Describe it
 - Compare it
 - Associate it
 - Analyze it
 - Apply it
 - Argue for and against it



What is Your Purpose?
Who is Your Audience?

What is your purpose?

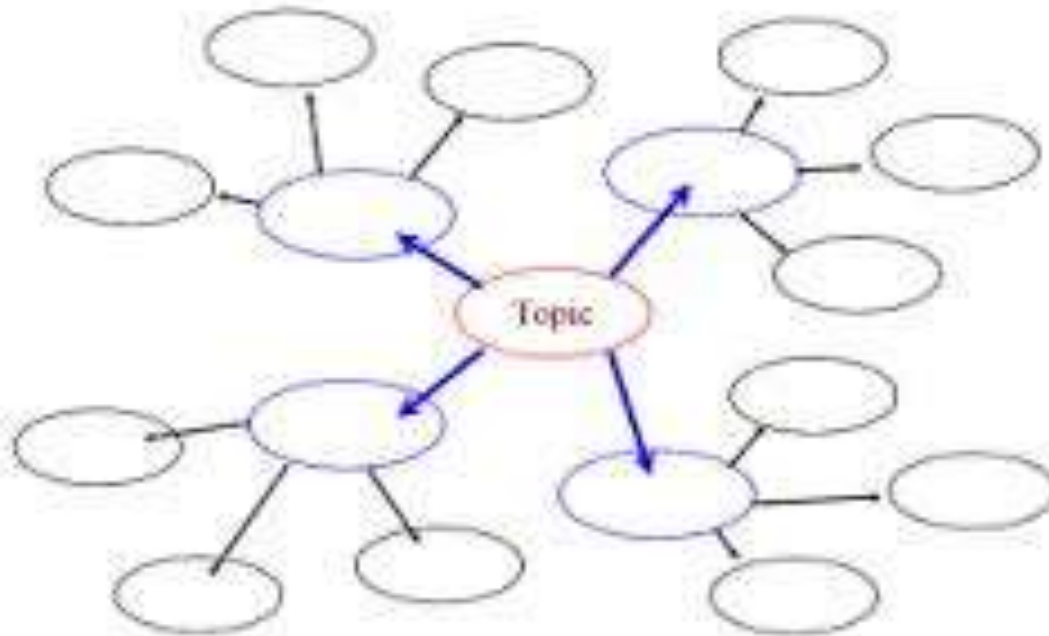
- Sometimes we get blocked because we don't know why we're writing this.

Who is your audience?

- Knowing who would read about our topic helps us focus our message and find a starting point.



Clustering/Mapping





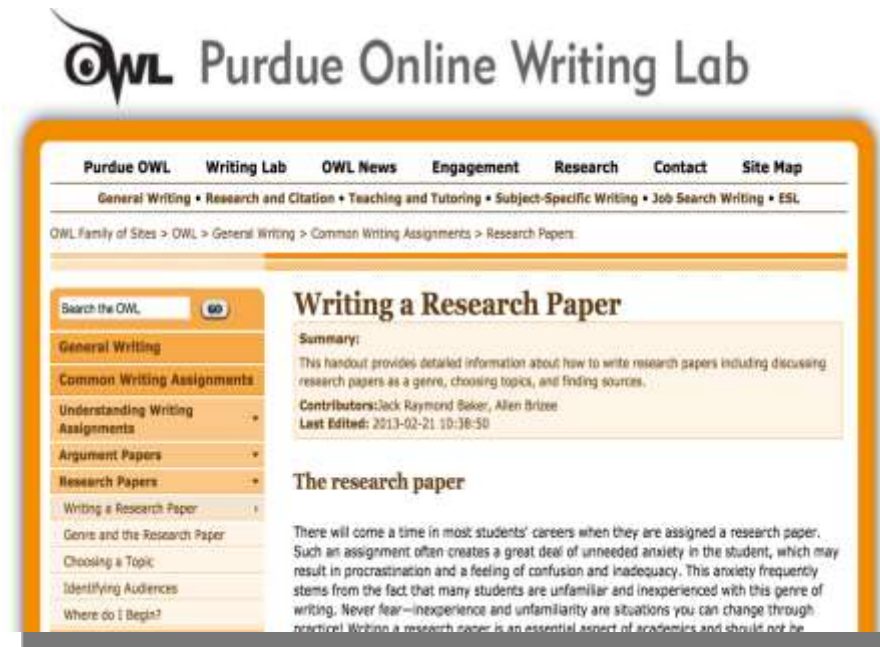
Hopefully this presentation has helped you develop some skills for thinking about topics and developing questions.

The OWL is also Helpful

- There are many resources on the OWL's website, one of which is about research papers and generating questions.

Here's the link:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/658/1/>





The End

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