

Big 6

How to get an "A" Writing a Research Paper

[Big 6 Web Page](#)

[Howard High School](#)

Writing a Research Paper

➔ Step 1

➔ Step 2 & 3

➔ Step 4

➔ Step 5

➔ Step 6

Step 1 : Task Definition

- ☞ What you need to know:
- ☞ What is the assignment?
- ☞ How is it going to be graded?
- ☞ What steps do I need to take to complete the project and receive a good grade?
- ☞ How long do I have to work on it?



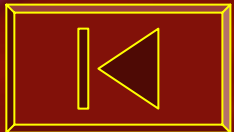
Step 1 : Task Definition

- ☞ A research paper is a long, formal essay or report that presents information from a number of sources. Your purpose is to inform or explain. You are not telling a story.
- ☞ Informational – summarizes factual information from a variety of sources.
- ☞ Analytical – goes one step further, the writer analyzes the information and presents his or her own conclusion.



Step 1: Topic Choice: should meet all of the following requirements.

- ☞ 1. Can you find enough material on the topic?
- ☞ 2. Can you make the topic interesting to your audience?
- ☞ 3. The topic is objective not subjective.
 - ☞ a. Objective - undistorted by emotion or personal bias; based on observable phenomena
- ☞ 4. The topic is specific enough to be covered completely in the space available to you.



Step2 & 3:

☞ Information Seeking: Sources,
Strategies, Location and Access



Step2 & 3: What you need to know:

- ☞ - What type of information do I need for this task?
- ☞ - How many different sources, types of information do I need?
- ☞ - Where can I go for this information?
- ☞ - How do I know if the information is good/valid?



Step2 & 3: Sources

- ☞ When you look for sources you have a variety of places to seek information. The library or media center has print resources like books and journals. Online databases found on the internet are print resources that are in electronic format. All schools in Howard County have databases purchased for student use. At home you will need passwords to sign in.



Step2 & 3: HCPL

☞ The Howard County Public Library has significantly more databases available online and all you need is your library card number to search and access these sources. They also provide online help 24 hours a day.

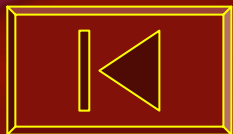


Step2 & 3: Websites

- ☞ If you choose to use a website that is not from a database or is not recommended by your teacher, you need to evaluate the webpage to make sure it is an accurate source. You need to ask questions about the site before you accept it as a source
- ☞ Use common sense. If it doesn't have the credibility to back it up, play it safe and don't use it.



1. Who published the page?
2. What is the purpose of the site?
3. Who is the author associated with?
4. Is there a point of bias or is it objectively written?
5. Is it a primary or a secondary source? Or is it just a summary of a source that would be a better choice than this site?
6. Is it possible it is ironic? Satire, parody, humor related?
7. What is the creation date on the page?



Step 4: Use of Information

☞ What you need to know:

☞ - How will you take notes?

☞ - What is plagiarism?

☞ - What is a source/note card?



Step 4: Plagiarism

- ☞ The use of another writer's words or ideas without giving credit. Taking an author's words, copy/paste and then reorganizing the words is still plagiarism. You must write down what you know completely in your own words. The best way to prepare for writing is to take notes on source cards and note cards.



Step 4: Source Cards:

☞ A card that records the source that you used which includes:

- ☞ . Author
- ☞ . Editor(s) or translators(s) if any
- ☞ . Title
- ☞ . Edition
- ☞ . Place published
- ☞ . Publisher
- ☞ . Page numbers



Step 4: Source Cards

- ☞ This can be done electronically in a product HCPSS has purchased called NoodleTools or you can follow format given to you by your teacher and hand write on index cards.



Step 4: Note Cards:

- ☞ There are three types of note cards
- ☞ 1. **Paraphrase:** A restatement of information in your own words
- ☞ 2. **Summary:** A brief synthesis of a long passage containing only main ideas and key supporting information.
- ☞ 3. **Direct Quotation:** The exact wording of a source, set off with quotation marks



Step 4: Note Cards

☞ Each card should have:

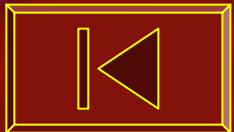
☞ . A label at the top that identifies the source

☞ . Information from that source – one idea per card

☞ . Source information – author's last name and page numbers

☞ . Writing only on one side of the card

☞ . Legible writing



Step 5: Synthesis – Putting it all together to write your paper

- ☞ What you need to do:
- ☞ . Organize your note cards, eliminate any unnecessary notes
- ☞ . Create an outline of your paper using your note cards
- ☞ . Analyze the notes
- ☞ . Complete the task: project



Step 5: Your Outline and Paper

☞ Introductory Paragraph:

- ☞ . Attention grabbing topic ideas
- ☞ . A clearly stated thesis – what your essay will prove
- ☞ . Supporting information, background information
- ☞ . Why it supports your thesis
- ☞ . Transition into next evidence
- ☞ . State why this evidence supports your thesis



Step 5: Body of Project - Contains Several Paragraphs:

- ☞. A topic sentence – Describes the evidence you will present in this paragraph
- ☞. Quote or evidence from a source
- ☞. Transition – relate the above source to the next
- ☞. Quote or evidence from a source



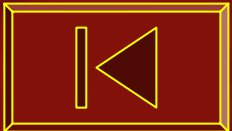
Step 5: Body of Project

- ☞ Transition – relate the above source to the next
- ☞ . Quote or evidence from a source
- ☞ . Transition – relate the above source to the next
- ☞ . Concluding sentence or sentences – wraps up your ideas within this paragraph



Step 5: Conclusion – final paragraph

- ☞ . Restate the thesis
- ☞ . Summarize your main points, at least one from each paragraph
- ☞ . Direct your audience to act or make a change in the world
- ☞ . Wrap up your paper with a final thought, leave your audience thinking beyond your paper.



Step 6: Evaluation

☞ This is a reflection about your paper before you turn it in. Here are some questions you can ask yourself:

- ☞ . Did I follow all directions?
- ☞ . What did you learn from the process?
- ☞ . Did you explain your thesis completely?



Step 6: Evaluation

- ☞ . What would you change about your project?
- ☞ . What did you like/dislike about this project?
- ☞ . What grade do you think you deserve?
- ☞ . What did you do well on in this project?
- ☞ . What could you improve for your next project?



Big 6 Research Method

☞ The End

