

Research Papers for Social Studies Classes

Requirements

The student will choose the topic, within their area of study, subject to the teacher's approval. Classes have the following requirements:

World Geography: at least an 8 page paper.

US History 9: at least a 10 page paper.

US History 10: at least a 12 page paper.

Schedule/Due Dates

Topic and thesis statement -	09/15/11
Bibliography -	10/07/11
Note cards -	11/02/11
Outline (sentence) -	12/15/11
First draft -	01/27/12
Final paper -	03/16/12

Format

- MLA format (graded): Margins - 1" sides, top, and bottom; Font - Times New Roman, size 11 or 12; double spaced; parenthetical documentation; works cited/bibliography page; last name and page numbers at the top right of the page. Examples are shown on the next few pages. See the MLA Handbook, 7th Edition.

Research Paper Topic and Thesis

Topic: Include the subject you've chosen and why you chose it. "Because it interests me" is **not** satisfactory. Tell me why it interests you.

Thesis Statement: Answer these questions - What purpose will you try to achieve in the paper? Do you want to describe something, explain something, argue for a certain point of view, or persuade your reader to think or do something? Your statement may change as you work on the paper but should be set before writing the final draft. It must be part of your opening paragraph. The statement provides a guide, keeping you on track with your topic. It also helps you limit the topic. For example: The Battle of Midway may be suitable for a ten to twelve page paper while all of World War II is much too large to cover in ten or twelve pages. See the samples on the next page:

Ima Student

Mr. Maurais

Pennsylvania History

September 3, 2007

The Battle of Midway

Topic:

I chose the Battle of Midway because WW II is one of my favorite subjects. Midway was a very important battle and my grandfather was in the Navy, stationed on the aircraft carrier USS Hornet at Midway.

Thesis Statement:

The Battle of Midway was the turning point of the war against the Japanese in World War II. This paper will describe the planning, strategies, events, outcome, and eventual impact of this pivotal engagement.”

Taking Research Notes

1. Its Time to Read! Now that you've finished your bibliography, its time to read the materials and gather information, quotes, and ideas to use in your paper. Here's some helpful hints to follow while reading those carefully selected sources:

- a. Take notes as you read; don't trust yourself to "jot it down later."
- b. Ask yourself questions.
- c. Write down significant phrases.
- d. Note those places your sources disagree on your subject.
- e. Record facts that seem to interest one source but not another.
- f. Write down your opinions and thoughts also. Ideas may pop into your head while reading, even ideas as good or better than some of your sources.

2. Notes, Note Cards, and More Notes. People take notes in different ways. Some people use 3 x 5 cards, putting a different thought on every card. Others write their notes in a notebook of some sort. Either method is appropriate for our classes.

- a. If you are using a notebook, use that notebook only for your research paper until the paper is done. Your notes will be neater, less confusing, and easier to find.
- b. Review your notes daily. You'll be able to find them more easily when needed and rereading them will stir up thoughts that will contribute to the final paper.
- c. What to include in your notes:
 1. A short statement in your words telling you what the thought means.
 2. Always include the bibliographic references (the same information you needed in your bibliographies).
 3. The page number where you obtained the quote or idea (you'll need it later).

4. A one word description of your note, such as: Quote, Fact, Idea, etc.
- d. Neatness and readability are **important** and graded.
- e. There is a minimum of two notes required per research paper page.

World Geography: 8 pages = 16 notes.

US History 9: 10 pages = 20 notes.

US History 10: 12 pages = 24 notes.

Ima Student

Mr. Maurais

U.S. History

September 3, 2002

The Sentence Outline in MLA Format

I.

A.

1.

a.

(1)

(a)

(b)

(2)

b.

2.

B.

II.

Notes:

1. Double-space every line. Have one inch margins all around. Center the title of your paper.
2. If there is an *A*, common sense tells us there must be a *B*; if a *I*, there must be a *2*; etc. Use a double dash (--) if there is no subsequent number or letter.
3. Write out your outline using short phrases first, then turn them into sentences. The process will be quicker and less painful that way. Use your topic/thesis statement as your introductory

sentence. It will help you focus on what you are writing about.

4. If possible, put those facts, quotations, and ideas that you developed from your sources (and put on your note cards) into the outline where you think they will go. Use the outline as a tool to organize the structure of the paper. Include parenthetical documentation (optional but a good idea).

5. The outline will be graded for format and complete sentences (objective grade). There is no specific required length; though it should be extensive enough to support the length of paper you are writing (subjective grade). Make an honest effort; all the work you put into this will pay off when you write the paper.