

# THE RESEARCH PROCESS: HOW TO START WRITING

THE WRITING CENTER 2018

## CHOOSE YOUR WRITING FOCUS

As you navigate the research process, focus on your purpose in writing this paper. Be aware of what kind of argument you are making so that you can select pieces of evidence that effectively support your claims. You would likely use different sources to support an argument about education policy than you would to support an argument about the evolution of dolphins.

## THE CORE OF AN ARGUMENT: CLAIM + REASONS + EVIDENCE

Your research should provide answers to these four questions in order to support your argument:

### 1. Claim: What's the answer to your question?

Since your research centers around a question, your reader will want to hear your answer to the question. Your answer thus forms the overarching claim you support in your paper.

### 2. Reasons: Why should I believe that?

Your claim should not be obvious to the reader at first-otherwise there would be no reason to read your paper! So, you will have to convince your reader that your claim is convincing by demonstrating reasons for believing your argument.

### 3. Evidence: How do I know that?

You should always assume that your reader will not accept your claims as true simply because you claim them. Your paper will need to provide evidence that supports your claims through factual evidence and expert scholarship.

### 4. Acknowledgement and Response: But what about this other view?

Try not to shy away from arguments that challenge your own. Your readers will have different opinions than you, so try to be cooperative in your research process. By considering and answering disagreeing claims you can strengthen your own argument.

## HELPFUL HINTS

For more information on developing an argument, see Turabian pgs 18-19.

Keep in mind that each source should serve a specific function so that your argument develops throughout your paper. Each piece of evidence should support a forward-moving claim in your paper.

Need additional writing help?

The Writing Center is open: Sunday-Thursday 7:00-11:00pm on the ground floor of the library.