

# HOW TO WRITE A GOOD RESEARCH PAPER



Research  
Paper  
Writing



**Ouahid A. Z. & Mohammed C.A.**  
El-Oued University (2021/2022)

# OUTLINE

1. Introduction
2. What is a research paper?
3. What do teachers use a research paper for?
4. How easy research paper writing is?
5. Steps of writing a research paper
6. Summary of steps

# I. Introduction

A research paper is not just an **assignment**, but a **commitment** to a continual **dialogue** between **teachers** and **students**.

## 2. What is a research paper?

- A research paper is a piece of **academic** writing based on its author's **original** research (**investigation**) on a particular **topic**, and the **analysis** and **interpretation** of the research **findings**.
- It can be a **term paper**, a **master's thesis**, or a **doctoral dissertation**.
- It requires generous reading in various **sources** and gathering **information**.

### 3. What do teachers use a research paper for?

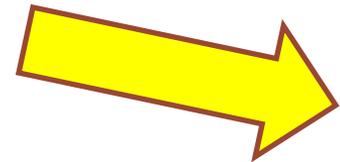
- Teachers as research paper **coaches** can:
  - ✓ **explore** their students' understanding, interpretation, and synthesis of their reading,
  - ✓ **discuss** their choice of sources and note taking strategies,
  - ✓ **evaluate** their work gradually, and
  - ✓ **model** ethical paraphrasing and summary skills.

## 4. How easy research paper writing is ?

- Research paper writing is a **skill** like other study skills: acquired via practice.
- At the **beginning**, it may seem **daunting** to write a research paper, but with good **organisation, focus** of mind and **rehearsal**, you can make the process easier on yourself.

# 5. Steps for writing a research paper

- Writing a research paper involves all the **steps** for writing an **essay**, plus some additional ones.
- Research paper writing is presented in the following **eight** steps:



# Step one:

## Choose a topic

- Choose an **original** topic which **interests** and **challenges** you, then try to narrow it down.
- Avoid topics that have a **limited** range of source materials.
- Ask for **advice** from your supervisor, teachers or classmates (inspiration).

# Step two:

## Find information

- Find **books** in the library.
- Check out **eLibraries** and **indexes** to **Periodicals** and **Newspapers**.
- Find encyclopedias, magazines and journals...etc.
- Use **academic databases** (ask your institution's librarian for a full list of the academic databases they subscribe to, as well as the passwords for each).

## Step two: (cont)

- Look **online**: opt for **websites** which end with **.edu**, **.gov**, or **.org**. These websites contain credible information because they belong to schools, governments, or organizations dealing with your topic.
- Use a **minimum** of **five sources** to vary your information; **never** rely on only **one** or **two** sources.

# Remember!

- As you collect data , you must record full ***bibliographical information*** (author, title, place of publication, publisher , date of publication, page number, URLs, creation or modification dates on Web pages, and your date of access).
- An article without bibliographical information is useless since you cannot cite it.

## Step three:

### Read and take notes

- **Read** through your sources, take **notes** on what you think is important, and **highlight** key facts and phrases. Write directly on **copies** you have made, or use **slips** of paper tucked into pages to mark places of importance.
- **Organize** your notes by **collecting** all of your highlighted **phrases** and **ideas** into **sections** and **categories** based on topic.
- The **more** information, the **better**. **Discard** any **unnecessary** or **irrelevant** information.

## Step four:

### State your thesis

- Do some critical thinking and write down your ***thesis statement***.
- The thesis statement is a **1-2-sentence** statement at the ***beginning*** (introduction) of your paper that states the **problematic** of your paper.
- An easy way to develop your **thesis** is to make it into a **question** that your research paper will try to answer.

# Step five:

## Make an outline

- The purpose of the **outline** is to help you **think** through your topic carefully and **organise** it logically before you start writing.
- Include in your outline an **Introduction**, a **Body** and a **Conclusion**.
- Use the following **guide**.

## a- Introduction

- State your **thesis** and the **purpose** of your research paper very clearly.
- State the chief **reason** you are writing the paper for, and how you plan to **approach** your topic.
- Is your paper a **report**, a **book review**, a **comparison**, an **analysis of a problem**, etc.?
- **Explain** briefly the major **points** you plan to cover in your paper and why **readers** should be **interested** in your topic.

## **b- Body:**

- It can be broken down in further sections, depending on the nature of research:
  - ✓ Materials and Methods
  - ✓ Results (what are the results obtained)
  - ✓ Discussion and Conclusion, etc.
- Present your ***arguments*** to ***support*** your thesis statement and answer the questions.

## c- Conclusion:

- **Restate** your thesis.
- **Summarize** your arguments.
- **Explain** why you have come to this particular **conclusion**.

### Remember!

Write your **body** paragraphs first, move to the **conclusion**, then finish up with the **introduction**.

## The outline must also include the following elements:

- **Title (front) Page** (including the title, the author's name, the supervisor's name, the name of the institution, and the publication date);
- **Abstract** (brief summary of the paper – 250 words or less with **key words**);
- **References;**
- **Tables, figures, and appendices (optional).**

# Sample outline

## Contents

### **Abstract**

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>2. Research Methodology</b> .....	3
2.1. Research Design and Research Approach.....	6
2.2. Participants and Sampling.....	10
2.3. Research Methods.....	13
2.3.1. Questionnaire.....	14
2.3.2. Interview.....	17
<b>3. Data collection procedures</b> .....	19
3.1. Piloting the Questionnaire.....	20
3.2. Distribution of the Questionnaire.....	22
<b>4. Data Analysis Methods</b> .....	23
4.1. Quantitative Data Analysis.....	25
4.2. Qualitative Data Analysis.....	27
<b>5. Conclusion</b> .....	30
<b>References</b> .....	31
<b>Appendices</b> .....	35

## Step Six:

### Write your first draft

- **Read** all the relevant **notes** you have gathered and with the **outline** before you, **start** writing the paper taking into consideration **cohesion** (syntactic) and **coherence** (semantic).

# Step Seven:

## Revise your outline and draft

- **Read** your paper for any **content** errors.
- **Double check** the facts and figures.
- **Arrange** and **rearrange** ideas to follow your outline.
- **Reorganize** your **outline** if necessary, but always keep the **purpose** of your paper and your **readers** in mind.
- The following **questions** may keep you on the **track**.

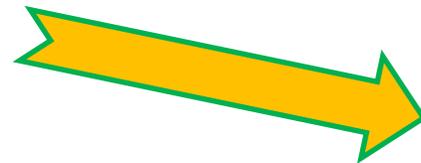
# Questions?

- Is my thesis statement concise and clear?
- Did I follow the outline? Did I miss anything?
- Are all the sources properly cited ?
- Have I proved my thesis with strong supporting arguments?

## Step Eight:

### Type your final draft

- **Proofread** your final paper carefully for spelling, punctuation, grammar, missing or duplicated words.
- Make sure that your final paper is **clean, neat and attractive**.
- Let at least **two** people **edit** your paper.
- **Read** your paper one **more** time and **fix** all mistakes.
- Keep **consistent**.



# A word on consistency!

- Adjust the **font** (12-Times New Roman), **line spacing** (doubled), and **margins** (2 cm-four sides).
- Ask your supervisor for the **requirements** set by your **institution**.
- Use the **documentation style** (**APA, MLA, Chicago**, etc.) required by your supervisor or institution to determine the ways **in-text citations, footnotes** or **endnotes** are used.

## 6. Summary of steps

- 1) Choose a topic
- 2) Find information
- 3) Read and take notes
- 4) State your thesis
- 5) Make an outline
- 6) Write your first draft
- 7) Revise your outline and draft
- 8) Type your final draft

Thank You!

