

Guide to Write Your Research Paper

Introduction:

A research paper introduction is:

- a very important part of the entire paper.
- where you as the writer can catch the attention of the reader
- introduces the topic, gives a brief description of the whole essay and produces the thesis statement.
- is the first impression that the reader will get of you as the writer.

You may start a research paper introduction in the following ways:

1. a question relevant to the theme of the paper will make a good start.
2. an idea or opinion in contrary to your stand in the research essay can make the writing more appealing.
3. You can start with a paradox to make it interesting
4. a quotation at the beginning could make way for an impressive opening. However the quotation should be relevant to the topic at hand and not something out of the way, beyond the realms of the theme just for the sake of putting up a show stopper.
5. A definition or an explanation of one the terms that has an important influence or bearing on the theme is also another good way to start.
6. You may also start with a short narrative, an interesting fact, or an analogy that has a direct bearing on the chosen topic.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is taking someone else's words and/or ideas without giving that person credit. It is essential that all work handed in is your own writing, and that ideas, facts, or language which you "borrowed" from a source be properly identified. Failure to give credit to any source other than you is plagiarism, and plagiarism is an Honor Code violation.

Example of Plagiarism

This paragraph is copied exactly from another source. WARNING! PLAGARISM!!!

News of the fighting at Lexington and Concord had already reached the city of Philadelphia when delegates gathered for the Second Continental Congress in May 1775. Soon after the meeting began, John Adams urged other delegates to quickly create an American army. He said that the members of the Massachusetts militia camped outside of Boston were ready to be the first soldiers in that army.

This paragraph is restated in the writer's own words; it is not plagiarized.

Delegates to the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia in May 1775. The American colonists and the British had already fought in Lexington and Concord, and it seemed likely that there would be more battles between the two. The delegates were strongly encouraged to form an American army as soon as possible.

Internet Resources

When choosing internet sources, keep in mind that anyone may publish a web page. This means not all information on the internet is true or correct. As a researcher, it is your responsibility to evaluate the web site to determine whether the information is useful, accurate, current, and objective. Using the checklist below will help you evaluate internet resources.

1. Is the information relevant to my paper?
2. Who created the page?
3. What organization is the person affiliated with?
4. Has the site been reviewed online by an online reviewing agency?
5. Does the domain (i.e. edu, com, gov) of the page influence your evaluation of the site?

6. Are you positive that the information is true?
7. What can you do to prove that it is true?
8. When was the site created?
9. Is there a date for the last update of the site?
10. Is the information presented in an objective (fair, unbiased) manner?

Before you write the final paper

Reread, evaluate, and revise carefully. You may need to prepare several revisions before the completion of the final paper. As you reread and evaluate, remember to do the following:

- ◆ Write the material in your own words.
- ◆ Write the research paper using past tense.
- ◆ Do not use first person or second person when writing the paper. Write only in third person.
- ◆ Quotations are used only to emphasize important points or as proof of your conclusions. The research paper should never be an informal essay.
- ◆ Give proper credit when you use someone else's words.
- ◆ The first paragraph directly states the focus and intent of the paper.
- ◆ The concluding paragraph restates the major themes of the paper.

Final Copy:

Proofread your paper one more time and make any necessary corrections. While reading, ask yourself the following questions:

- ◆ Does the first paragraph directly state the focus and intent of the paper?
- ◆ Did you avoid the use of first person (I and we)?
- ◆ Do the paragraphs lead logically and clearly into each other?
- ◆ Did you use transition words and phrases to show the progression of logical ideas? (Examples: after, first, later, soon, meanwhile, finally, following, at first, primarily, as a result, for that reason, therefore, consequently, however, in the same way, on the other hand, for instance, indeed, of course, moreover)
- ◆ Did you keep your purpose and audience in mind?
- ◆ Spell Check is not proofreading! Nonetheless, use Spell-Check and Grammar-Check, in addition to your proofreading, before turning in a paper.