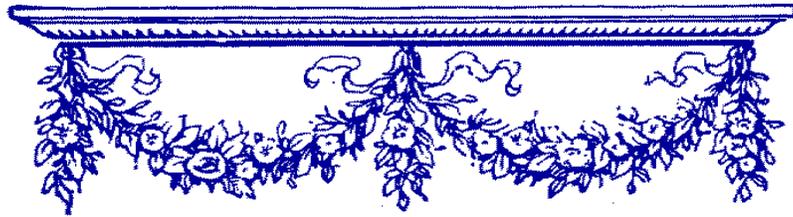


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**A RESEARCH PROJECT**  
**IN TEN LESSONS**

by

ROBERT W. WATSON

\$14.95 IN USA



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**A Research Project in Ten Lessons by Robert W. Watson**

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# A Research Project in Ten Lessons

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# A Research Project in Ten Lessons

## Introduction

“WHY in the world do I have to write a research paper?” I asked myself this question when I was a senior in high school in 1969. Of course now I realize that the only reason I had to write a research paper was because the educational bureaucrats in the state of Ohio said I had to write one. But surely there is a better reason than just the mere whims of social planners. At the time, I really thought I was being educated, so I assumed that this was the stuff that educated people knew. I do not recall getting any instruction on how to do the research paper. I do remember being nervous about having to write one. I do recall having to find enough words to meet the required minimum. I also remember my frantic last minute effort to type the paper on an old manual typewriter. I have wished many times that I had a copy of that first research paper. I am sure it would be good for a laugh, since I am certain that the paper said nothing of any importance. But it would be fun to read anyway. Then again....

After I graduated from high school, I spent nine years in the U.S. Navy. Not once did I have to write a research paper while I was “keeping the world safe for democracy.” I then went to college where I wrote a total of two research papers, one during my freshman year and one in my senior year. That was all. It was not until I took graduate courses in literature, education, and philosophy that the research paper became the primary determiner of grades.

If this is so, if the research paper is not applicable for the most part until a student goes to graduate school, then why should a high school student have to do a research project? After all, every college introduces the freshman to research, which for many students is their last research paper for their lifetime.

If you think education is merely to help you to get a good job, then a research project will be a colossal waste of time. Learn a little mathematics and science, and you will be set for life earning money. On the other hand, if you believe education is for enriching yourself so that you can enrich others, then the research project will have many benefits. The skills that you will develop during this project will include using the library and internet, critically reading of books and articles, improving your writing style, improving your keyboarding, making the difficult simple, and understanding yourself.

I developed this project by remembering my experience with the research paper while I was in high school. I have tried to recall those trying times and to cover all the major areas in the simplest way possible. The lessons in this booklet are the same lessons that I used in high school and college classrooms. The key is to take each step one at a time. If you follow the suggested schedule, then you will have plenty of time to complete this project. If you have trouble with any of the lessons in this booklet and need additional help, feel free to contact me at [editor@smarrpublishers.com](mailto:editor@smarrpublishers.com) with your questions.

ROBERT W. WATSON

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

### Suggested Schedule

#### Timing is everything

Nothing is more pitiful than seeing a student in a library staring at a random selection of books on his table. Whenever I ask the bewildered student what he is doing, the answer is usually, “I don’t know.” Frankly, I know. He is wasting time, because he neither has a plan nor a goal. The following chart should help to pace you through the task ahead. The amount of hours is only a recommendation and can be changed to meet specific needs as the project progresses. The two hardest tasks will be to narrow a suitable topic with a research question and to finish writing note cards in order to begin writing the paper. Try not to spend more time than is necessary for these two tasks. This project estimates that ninety hours will be required to complete the project, or about three hours a day for 30 days. Some tasks can be completed quickly; other tasks, longer. For an example, if you already know what topic you want to research, you will not need nearly three hours for the task.

Required Task	Number of hours
1. Choose a topic	3
2. Preliminary reading and outline	6
3. Prepare bibliography cards	1
4. Find secondary sources	11
5. Seek primary resources	6
6. Complete note cards	30
7. Write first draft	9
8. Revising the draft	9
9. Final draft	12
10. Proofreading and correcting	3

Many of these tasks will occur concurrently. For an example, while you are writing the first draft, you may discover that you need to spend more time at the library, because you found a weakness in one of your subtopics. On the next page is the suggested schedule for this project. It is assumed that you will spend approximately three hours a day, five days a week, in order to complete the research paper. You may not have to spend quite that much time every day. However, there may be some days where you will need to use longer blocks of time, especially when you do research at the library.

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

Table of Assignments

On days when lessons are listed, you are to read the material in this booklet pertaining to that lesson. Please remember—this is a suggested schedule only. You may have to modify it for your particular project. I do strongly recommend that you ensure uninterrupted blocks of time when you begin taking notes and when you write the first draft. These are two important tasks that require some continuity.

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
Week 1	<b>Introduction Lesson 1</b> Research topic	<b>Lesson 2</b> General reading	General reading	<b>Lesson 3</b> Biblio cards	<b>Lesson 4</b> Find secondary sources
Week 2	<b>Lesson 5</b> Seek primary sources	Find sources	Find sources	<b>Lesson 6</b> Note cards	Note cards
Week 3	Note cards	Note cards	Note cards	Note cards	Note cards
Week 4	Note cards	Note cards	<b>Lesson 7</b> First draft	First draft	First draft
Week 5	Day off 	Day off 	<b>Lesson 8</b> Revise draft	Revise draft	Revise draft
Week 6	<b>Lesson 9</b> Prepare final manuscript	Prepare final manuscript	Prepare final manuscript	<b>Lesson 10</b> Proofread manuscript	Submit final manuscript

# A Research Project in Ten Lessons

## Lesson One

### Choose the Research Topic

#### Tasks for Lesson One (Time required—3 hours)

1. You will choose a topic by applying the suggested aids and criteria in this lesson.
2. You will pose a preliminary research question based on your chosen topic. For examples of questions, see the section, “Some Suggestions,” below.

#### What is research?

Even though it may have an ominous sound to it, a *research project* should not cause any more concern than an argumentative paper. By this time in your academic career, you should have had plenty of experience with writing arguments. The research project is similar to the argumentative paper. The difference is just a matter of scope, because not only will you be using your own ideas, but you will be expected to use the ideas of others as well. This use of the opinions and findings of others is the distinguishing feature that separates the research paper from other writing assignments. Otherwise, the familiar thesis statement with topic sentences is still the foundation of the research project, just like all critical writing.

Ever since you were a small child, you have been a researcher. All of us have a natural inquisitiveness that compels us to discover the “why” behind the facts. Even something as simple as properly using a baseball bat may lead a young boy to ask how is hitting done, what is the best way to stand at the plate, and the proper way to grip the bat. This inquiry is often directed to several experienced “experts” (the *big kids*), and their suggestions are appreciated, even when some of the advice is contradictory. True learning is getting behind the mere facts and discovering as much as possible about a person, an event, or a process. This constant digging for and linking of information is called education. It happens innocently enough, often beginning with an obscure reference in a book that causes the reader to become curious. Soon other resources and books are read, studied, and compared in order to discover as much about this strange desire to know as much as possible about the topic. The result of this “research” has made you an “expert” on the topic.

If you have never attempted a formal research project before, you may feel overwhelmed at first. Where and how to start are generally the first questions. Just like any other writing assignment, you need a strategy. Fortunately, even long, difficult tasks can be accomplished if you proceed in a systematic, step-by-step procedure. Whether eating an elephant or writing a research paper, the process is just one bite at a time. The ten lessons in this book will guide you along the way. You may be tempted to waste time when finding materials and evaluating various sources. Nevertheless, after awhile you will develop the necessary skills to be a good researcher. But for the time being, the most important thing that you need right now is an inquiring mind and a good attitude. Approach this assignment with enthusiasm and inquisitiveness. A little bit of genuine curiosity goes a long way to help you towards the goal of a successful research paper.

#### Understand your assignment

Apart from your comprehending the details of your assignment, you must understand the commitments that will be required of you. First, you must be prepared to spend a lot of time on the research project. For this reason, this course sets aside all other studies in literature and vocabulary for six weeks in order to allow you to concentrate solely on the project, which will require approximately ninety hours to complete. Unfortunately, some students underestimate the time required to write a good research paper. The difference between the

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

novice and the experienced writer is that the experienced writer knows that his paper will have to be revised many times before an acceptable manuscript can be submitted. Do not allow yourself only one week to write a research paper. You will be sorry. Be prepared to spend many hours in the library or on the internet. Refer to the chart with the suggested schedule in order to keep yourself focused and to avoid becoming bewildered.

Second, you must be prepared to commit yourself to every task in earnest. There are no shortcuts. If you wish to produce a successful research project, each task must be accomplished well. Each task will be explained and sufficient time will be given for you to complete what is required. As each task is completed, the creation of the final manuscript will be easily accomplished.

And third, you must be prepared to make the research project *your* project. Research something that you are keenly interested in. Perhaps you are already aware of this, but teachers do not like reading dull, insipid, unimaginative stuff. No truer maxim has ever been spoken than “a teacher who suffers will ensure that the cause of the suffering will be rewarded according to its merit.” A paper cannot be interesting if you are not interested in the topic or if you cannot enthusiastically support the thesis. Always write in such a way that if the U.S. Congress were to consider it, you have the confidence that the paper offers to your fellow citizens your solution to a specific problem that has vexed mankind for centuries. Make this project your own personal crusade.

### The assignment

Your assignment is to choose a social problem and to provide a solution to that problem. In other words, your research will center on ethics and politics, even though other subjects like history and literature are useful also. In addition to this, you must earnestly discover the Biblical principles involved in your quest for a solution. If it seems that the “experts” are divided on an issue, it is usually due to the exercising of their human reason without any reliance on the Scriptures. Do not neglect the use of the Bible in your paper. When all is said and done, the Bible is the only source that will provide the answer to any social, legal, or political problem in the world. Your final manuscript should be eight to ten pages of text, double spaced. Final considerations about format will be offered in a later lesson.

### What makes a good topic?

**Biblical:** The topic ought to lend itself to Biblical analysis. While the Bible has direct commands that are applicable to believers, the Scriptures also have broad principles and precepts that are relevant to all mankind, believers or not. For an example, the Bible states that stealing is wrong. Indeed, theft is wrong whether accomplished by one person or by a group of people. Since this is true, then whenever civil government takes money (called taxes) from the citizens without their approval, the government becomes a mob of common thieves, regardless if we call these thieves by a lofty title such as *king*, *Congressman*, or *revenue agent*. The task for the Godly citizen then is to discover ways that a civil government can finance itself apart from stealing in order to bring the authorities back under God’s law. Any topic that deals with ethics, politics, and government, whether church, civil, or familial, can be analyzed from a scriptural viewpoint. You should begin appreciating the Bible not only as the guide for reconciliation with God, but also as the only manual that is objective enough to correctly govern our human relationships.

**Manageability:** A good topic will have sufficient sources to fulfil the scope of the assignment. If you have to skim hundreds of books and articles in order to get enough information, then the chosen topic is not a good one, because the topic is too narrow or too trivial. For an example, if your topic is about the electoral college, a paper on how it

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functions will be too narrow and trivial, because as a set process, every source will say exactly the same thing about how the electoral college operates. On the other hand, if you chose to write about how the electoral college has decided controversial presidential elections, then the topic could be too broad, since there will be too much material. A better topic would be the result of the Hayes-Tilden election in 1876 when the American political process took a beating. An even better topic will be to discuss the importance of the continuance of the electoral college due to the popular vote being concentrated in only a few large cities.

**Originality:** Some topics are overused. Abortion is one of those topics that has been written about sufficiently. Pro-choice and pro-life advocates will never convince their opponents, because the one group uses human reason for their arguments and the other uses revealed law, the Bible. There is no compromise between the two positions. Likewise, certain famous men and events have also been thoroughly researched. Be especially careful not to merely recite facts. Every research project is based on facts, but there must be an independent evaluation of those facts. The best way to avoid a fact-laden paper is to determine whether the topic can be written as a question. How you use the facts in order to draw viable and relevant conclusions will be the measure of your originality.

**Relevancy:** To merely give the history of some social problem will be of little value. The outline of the major events during the Southern Reconstruction is only valuable if the history and the lessons learned can be applied to your community today. Oftentimes a student makes the mistake by asserting an assumption that needs to be established first. If a student wants to write on how to reform the governmental system of education, the assumption is that the government should be involved in education. But is this a valid assumption? If it is not, then any proposed reform of an illegitimate function is meaningless. Always keep the following question before you: What does this paper have to do with helping people to live Godly and to enjoy the good life today?

**Interest:** Perhaps the most important requirement for a good topic is whether the topic is interesting. Since you will be working with this topic for several weeks, it only makes sense to choose a topic that is not only interesting to those who will read the paper, but to you as well. The task will go much smoother if you possess a genuine interest in the subject at hand.

### Choosing a topic

Your assignment is rather broad, and the topics are limitless. So you will need to settle on a topic before you do anything else. Where do you find a topic? The following suggestions should get you started.

**Newspapers and magazines:** Some topics are too recent to have enough sources to write a credible paper. However, there are some issues that are recurring for years, indeed for centuries. Issues such as implementing a just society, the abuse of standing armies, and the necessity for imperialism are topics that have never been settled. Likewise, juvenile crime, prison reform, and the drug war require deep thinking, but will also have a lot of material to use for your research. Do not overlook your county newspaper if you have one. Your research paper about a community social issue may even be published locally.

**Specialty encyclopedias:** At libraries, you will find encyclopedias that specialize in law, philosophy, medicine, education, religion, and other subjects. Just browse through these resources until a topic captures your interest.

**Academic readings:** During the course of the year, you will have undoubtedly read material that has piqued your curiosity in history, literature, or even science. Now will be a

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good time to explore one of these issues. Skimming through tables of content in your textbooks will help with broad topics. Even the *belles-lettres* can provide interesting topics. Novelists like Charles Dickens and Mark Twain addressed social issues, as did poets like Gerard Manley Hopkins and William Blake.

**The internet:** The various search engines on the internet provide a valuable resource for locating information, both general and specific, for a limitless number of topics. If you have access to the internet, be sure to log on to [www.researchpaper.com](http://www.researchpaper.com), a website dedicated to the research paper. This site offers many good tips as well as topics.

**Some suggestions:** When all else fails, look down this list and choose a topic that interests you.

1. Does controlling guns control crime?
2. Does “Hate Crime” legislation violate the right to free speech?
3. Is the grand jury necessary in the U.S. legal system?
4. Should juveniles who commit murder be tried as adults?
5. Should the practice of law be taken out of the free market, and all lawyer made employees of the civil government?
6. Should plea-bargaining be allowed in the U.S. legal system?
7. Were the American colonies justified to secede from England?
8. Did the Southern states in 1861 have the right to self-determination?
9. Is the United States of America an empire or a nation?
10. Is the Confederate flag a symbol of racism?
11. Did President Roosevelt have prior knowledge about the bombing of Pearl Harbor?
12. Was the war in Vietnam a just war?
13. Should citizens be drafted into the military?
14. Should women serve in combat units?
15. Should the United States continue being a member of the United Nations?
16. Should the United States intervene in other countries’ conflicts?
17. Should NASA be eliminated?
18. Do illegal immigrants harm America?
19. Should religion and politics be separate?
20. Is the two-party political system in the United States effective?
21. Are third parties in politics useful?
22. Is industrialism harmful to families?
23. Can terrorism ever be justified?
24. Should the use of illegal drugs be made legal?
25. What policies should be adopted for HIV testing?
26. How should mental illness be defined?
27. What ethics should guide organ donations?
28. Do individuals for the right to die?
29. Should the government regulate tobacco and smoking?
30. Is AIDS a serious health threat to the United States?
31. Is euthanasia ethical?
32. Is the genetic engineering of humans ethical?
33. Should there be a national health plan?
34. Should social security be eliminated?
35. Should the central government forbid same-sex unions, or should each state determine whether to permit these unions?
36. Can people work their way out of poverty?

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37. Should government get out of education?
38. Is racism to blame for Afro-Americans' supposed lack of success?
39. Has affirmative action succeeded?
40. What should be the response to genocide and crimes against humanity?

### **Checklist for choosing a topic**

1. The topic is interesting, especially to me.
2. The topic is narrowed sufficiently and not too broad.
3. The topic is not too technical for me.
4. The topic seems to have sufficient sources and is not too subjective.
5. The topic is worthwhile in that it will benefit my readers and will add to overall knowledge.
6. The topic is related to principles that are expressed in the Bible.
7. The topic lends itself to independent evaluation and not merely a reciting of facts.
8. The topic will allow me to write an original paper.
9. I have expressed the topic as a question.

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## Lesson Two

### Initial Considerations

#### Tasks for Lesson Two (Time required—6 hours)

1. You will read at least **ten** general reference works about your topic, preferably in a library.
2. You will write down questions that come to your mind about your topic as you are doing your readings.
3. You will develop a preliminary working outline.

#### Preliminary reading

By this time, you should have a topic and a preliminary research question. If the question is a good one, you should be able to find support and opposition to the question. For an example, if your topic is “Black Americans in the Confederate army,” then your preliminary research question could be, “How significant was participation of black soldiers in the armies of the Confederacy?” Clearly, this is not your thesis, which can only be formulated after you have done some initial research, which is focused by the research question.

Always start by reading general references. In reality, you are not engaging in research at this point. The sources that you will be using should not be put on bibliography cards nor should you take any notes at this time. However, while you are not writing down notes, you should jot down various questions that come to your mind as you read. These questions will help you to formulate a working outline later. With this general reading, you are only acquainting yourself with background information about your topic. Your reading should give you an overall view of the topic and the possible positions advocated, which will allow for more focused research as you begin reading the main sources. You may discover some possible sources in the bibliographical entries of the articles in the general references.

For preliminary reading, the general reference section of the library is where you will spend your time. Start with encyclopedias, reading from as many as possible. The contributors to encyclopedias always write from a particular perspective and may offer a lopsided view. One encyclopedia states in its article about “Evolution,” that it is “the only scientific explanation for the origin of life.” In the same publication, under the heading of “Creation,” the writer says that this word refers to the “myth” about the origin of the earth and cosmos. Always filter any information through the Bible. Even the “experts” get it wrong at times.

There are also specialized encyclopedias, almanacs, and dictionaries that will help you. In addition to these resources, do not neglect general textbooks. If your question concerns a point of history, then a history textbook will be helpful. But be careful. Like the articles in the encyclopedia, be sure to read several textbooks to ensure that you are not getting a biased view. If your question concerns a literary work, then *Master Plots* will be helpful by giving you not only a synopsis of the work, but some critical analysis as well. Most college libraries will have this valuable series. You should read at least ten references for your preliminary reading.

At this point in your readings, do not spend your time looking up information on the internet. If you subscribe to any on-line encyclopedias, then you may want to look at the entries concerning your topic. Otherwise, plan to stay in the library for several hours. It will be easy to start “chasing rabbits” during this initial reading. You will discover some articles that are interesting, but are not related at all to your topic. Write the article down to read later, and then concentrate on the task at hand. By all means, ask the librarians for help. That is why they are there.

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

### The working outline

From your list of questions you should be able to put together a working outline. The purpose of the outline is to allow you to concentrate on specific items to research. This outline is not a final one and will be changed as you progress. But right now, you need to have something to guide you and to ensure effective use of your limited time. To help you to understand this task, I will use a personal example of the process that I used to write a chapter in one of my books.

My general topic was “education,” and my research question was “What is the purpose for education?” I figured that whatever was the purpose of life, then education has to be connected with achieving that purpose. I looked in several encyclopedias, especially the ones that specialized in education. I learned that there were several definitions and views about both the term “education” and its purpose. I created the following list of questions:

1. What is the most important thing about life?
2. Is there an objective standard to base one’s education?
3. Is “success in life” the same as the “good life”?
4. Is knowledge and ideas the same?
5. Is training and education the same?
6. Are manners a part of education?
7. What role does philosophy have in life?
8. What are the limitations of philosophy?
9. What role does religion have in life?
10. Does faith conflict with philosophy and science?
11. What does educating the “whole student” mean?
12. How did transcendentalism influence New England schools?
13. Why is science emphasized today in almost every school?
14. What are the limitations of science?
15. How can I reconcile the different views of knowledge?

From my general reading, I noticed that the terms *knowledge* and *education* seemed to be used interchangeably. I was not so sure that a solid connection could be made. Also, there seemed to be an inordinate emphasis on preparing the student for “success in life.” What this *success* was depended on the article that I read. Most of my preliminary reading was from secular sources.

At this point, I searched the Bible for passages that concerned education. What struck me was the two great commandments that the Lord Jesus Christ expressed. I have known for quite some time that the great end of man is to glorify God and to love his neighbor. But I did not think of this end to be also the end of education. I “discovered” that education was linked directly to the proper exercising of faith. Now the outline came together.

- I. Definition of faith
  - A. Substance (loving God) (questions 1 and 2)
  - B. Evidence (loving neighbors) (questions 1 and 2)
- II. Justification of faith
  - A. Philosophy
    1. Concerns the mind (question 7)
    2. Limitations (question 8)
  - B. Religion
    1. Concerns the heart (question 9)
    2. Limitations

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- C. Transcendentalism
    - 1. Concerns the soul (question 12)
    - 2. Limitations
  - D. Science
    - 1. Concerns the physical (body and strength) (question 13)
    - 2. Limitations (question 14)
- III. Enrichment of faith
- A. Curriculum
    - 1. Reaches all four human faculties (questions 10, 11 and 15)
    - 2. Humane, not vocational training (questions 3, 4, and 5)
  - B. Manners (question 6)

Notice that the above outline is not written with complete sentences, but with broad topics. Remember that the working outline is not set in stone. You might (and should) change the outline as you read more material, research each subject more thoroughly, and can articulate a definite position on the topic.

The most difficult task in this lesson will be to write the working outline. Do not just stare at the computer screen or paper. Write something. Rearrange your questions under different broad topics, and add more questions if you must. If you have to play mind games with yourself, then set a time limit to write the outline within thirty minutes. The point is simple: Get started now. The outline can be changed later.

### **Checklist for initial considerations**

1. I have read at least ten general reference works about my topic.
2. I have organized my questions into a working outline.
3. The outline attempts to include most of the questions that I raised during my readings.

## **A Research Project in Ten Lessons**

### Lesson Three

#### Prepare Bibliography Cards

##### **Tasks for Lesson Three (Time required—1 hour)**

- You will learn the proper format for bibliography cards.

##### **The importance of the bibliography card**

After completing your preliminary reading and developing a working outline, you will now be ready to start the research. But first, you should learn to prepare the bibliography card. Using the proper format for these cards is important. By taking your time to properly write a bibliography card will save you time later when creating your Works Cited page and note cards. Literally, at your fingertips will be necessary information to help you towards a successful paper.

##### **Some guidelines**

1. Use 3" x 5" cards for your bibliography cards.
2. For each source, use a different card. Separate cards will aid in your producing the working bibliography and Works Cited page later.
3. Use separate lines on the card for each piece of datum. Ensure that you include all necessary information on the card concerning the source. This is where taking your time is important. Fewer things in life is more frustrating than discovering that you have overlooked vital information about a book after you have returned it to the library.
4. Titles ought to be separated from the subtitles of the work. Separate the title and subtitle with a colon.
5. Note the name of the library and call letter on the card. If you have to return to the library in order to do more research, you will save time by not having to find the information in the card catalog. If you use more than one library, it is always good to know which library the book belongs.
6. If the source has an interesting feature, note this information at the bottom of the card. This is especially true if the source has an extensive bibliographical section.
7. Assign a number to each of your cards, and circle this number. Put this number in the upper right corner of the card. The cards do not have to be numbered in any particular order. This number will be used on your note cards and will act as a code for the source without having to write the name of the source every time on each of the note cards.

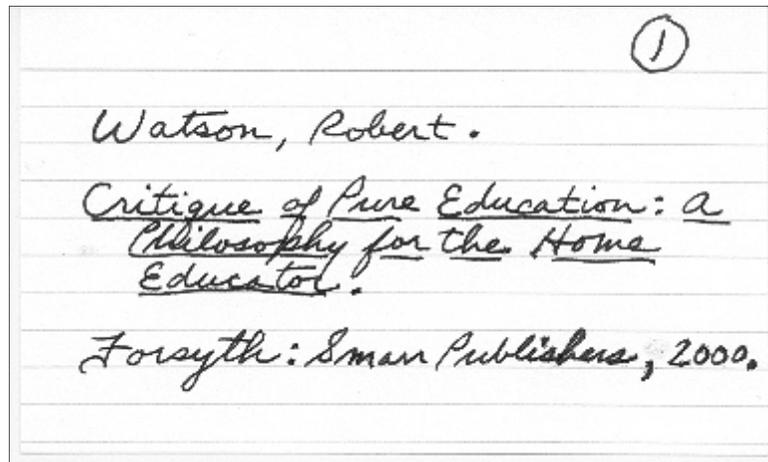
## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

### Common Formats

The type of source will determine the format of the bibliographical entry on the card. Appendix A has an extended list of the most common formats. Develop a good habit by completing a bibliography card as the first thing you do whenever you begin to seriously look at the book as a source for your research—the *very first thing!*

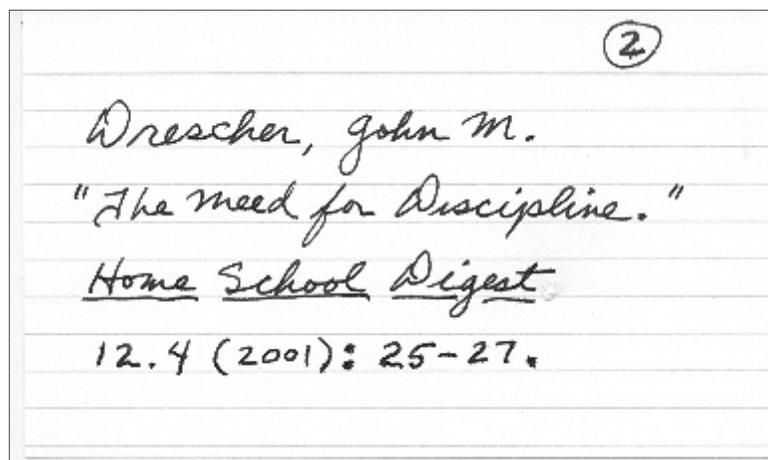
### Books

1. Author or editor.
2. Title of book (underlined).
3. Place of publication (city only): publishers, date of publication.



### Journal articles

1. Author.
2. Title of article (in quotations).
3. Title of journal (underlined) [no period]
4. Volume number . issue number (date): consecutive pages.



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### Internet sources

1. Author.
2. Title of article (in quotations).
3. Name of online service (underlined) date of article.
4. Date of access <URL>.

③
Watson, Robert.
"Towards a Southern Religion."
<u>Monroe County Agrarian</u> 1 Dec. 2001.
15 Dec. 2001 < <a href="http://www.smarrpublishers.com/agrarian01-36.html">http://www.smarrpublishers.com/agrarian01-36.html</a> >.

### Checklist for preparing bibliography cards

1. I have assigned a number to the card in the upper right corner of the card.
2. I have followed the given formats in this lesson and Appendix A for books, periodicals, and on-line sources.
3. If a book is from a library, I have entered the call number and library name in the lower left corner of the card.

# A Research Project in Ten Lessons

## Lesson Four

### Find Secondary Sources

#### **Tasks for Lesson Four (Time required—11 hours)**

1. You will learn to use the card or computer catalog at your library.
2. You will become familiar with the classification system used by your library.
3. You will search for information by using indexes in your potential sources.
4. You will learn to use the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature.
5. You will learn to use the internet to find information.
6. You will complete a bibliography card for every source that you intend to use after your initial screening.

#### **What is a secondary source?**

You could be using two kinds of sources: primary and secondary. Every research paper uses secondary sources, but it is not required that primary sources be used. In this lesson, you will learn to locate secondary sources, while the next lesson will explain the use of primary sources. A primary source is any contemporary material regarding your topic. These materials include books, letters, diaries, or interviews. Secondary sources are works that are written about your topic at a later date in time. For an example, if you were to research the destruction of Columbia, South Carolina, during the War for Southern Independence, then the primary sources could include the dairies and letters written during the time like those of William Gilmore Simms, who had his 10,000-volume library burned by Sherman's troops during the holocaust. Your secondary sources would be any account of the sacking written by later historians. Also, if you were to conduct your own survey or interview with someone, then your materials become a primary source. If anyone uses your materials later, then your primary source becomes his secondary source.

#### **Preparing to go to the library**

By now you should have your working outline completed. This outline will be your guide and therefore always take it with you to the library. In addition to your outline, ensure that you have several note cards and pens to write your bibliography cards. Also, take this guide so that you have a ready source for correct bibliographical entries. When you do go to the library, be prepared to spend several hours completing this phase of the project. It is better to concentrate on research in large blocks of time, rather than in short segments of an hour or two. Be sure to dress comfortably. My experience with libraries tells me that these facilities are always too cold. Take a sweater, because it is hard to concentrate whenever you are feeling uncomfortably cool.

#### **Looking for materials**

Every library has three major sections: general reference and two "stacks" that house books on the one hand and periodicals on the other. You should already be familiar with the general reference section, since you had to use it in order to get a preliminary overview of your topic. Do not use encyclopedias as sources for your paper. In fact, few of the general references will be suitable for a research paper, with one notable exception. The various abstracts and almanacs can be very useful, since these works contain statistics and other facts. Almanacs are published annually.

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

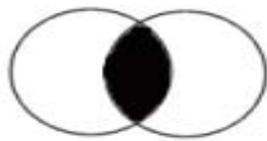
### Finding suitable books

More than likely, most of your secondary sources will come from books. To complicate things a bit, depending on the library, there are two different classification systems. The one used primarily by high schools and smaller public libraries is the Dewey Decimal System. The system used by universities and other large libraries is the Library of Congress System. Whereas the Dewey Decimal System uses numbers 000–900 for the primary divisions, the Library of Congress System uses the letters of the alphabet to divide the subjects. Do not waste your time memorizing the different major headings under the two systems. There will be charts everywhere on the walls and stacks that list the subjects. What is important is learning to use the card catalog.

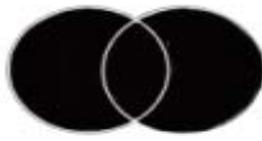
Every library has a physical card catalog that is often a beautiful, oak cabinet with many drawers that hold, oddly enough, cards. The drawers contains three entries for every book, which is listed by general topic, author, and title of the book. However, seldom is this piece of antiquity used any longer. Most card catalogs are now computerized. The first step that you need to do is to ask a librarian how to use the computer catalog. Do not be timid. The librarian's duties include instructing the novice about the mysteries of searching for books.

What is good about online catalogs is the “keyword” search. By typing in a keyword like *reconstruction*, you will get an instant list of books that are about this topic. If you use a word that shows no books under the heading, try a different word. For an example, if you use WAR BETWEEN THE STATES with no results, you might try CIVIL WAR or even UNITED STATES HISTORY instead. Searching for authors may require putting the last name first. Be sure to check with the librarian if you have trouble finding sources for your topic.

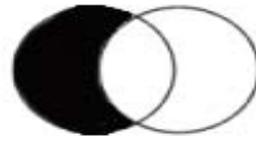
More than likely, however, you will have an unmanageable list of sources. In this case, you will need to limit the search with a Boolean search by using the operators AND, OR, and NOT. By using these words, you will be refining the search. If your topic is the influence of Donald Davidson with the journal called *The Fugitive*, you will get several sources that are not relevant to the topic if you type just FUGITIVE. On the other hand, if you enter FUGITIVE AND DAVIDSON, you will get a more precise list of sources. Obviously, a college library will have more potential sources than a small community library. However, most libraries do have a inter-library loan program. Some programs are free services, while others may charge a nominal fee. Ask your librarian to get you books that are not available at your particular library.



fugitive AND davidson



fugitive OR davidson



fugitive NOT davidson

From the list of sources that the computer had generated, write down the call letters of the most promising books. The entries will tell you whether the book is available or checked out. Even if a potential book is checked out, write down the call letters of the source, and notify the librarian that you wish to be put on the waiting list to read this book. With your list in hand, you now head for the stacks to find the books. If you cannot find the book in its designated location, look around in the general area, since books are often returned to the wrong place.

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After you have gathered up all of your books on your list, go to a table to sit down. Open the books to the index. By using your working outline, search for topics in the index that may be suitable for your paper. If the book does not have an index, set it aside and ignore it. You will be wasting your time trying to find anything you can use. However, take your time in the index. Like using the card catalog, you may have to look under different headings in order to find appropriate material for your paper. Also, look carefully at the bibliography if the book has one. You might be able to find additional sources listed. If the book looks promising after this initial consideration, write a bibliography card for the book. It is better to complete a card even if you are not absolutely sure that you can use the book. At least you will have the information to find the book later if you must do so.

### **Finding suitable articles from magazines and journals**

The major source for finding articles on your topic will be the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*. But also, there are numerous indexes for just about every major field of endeavor including the *Education Index*, the *Social Science Index*, and the *Humanities Index*. These guides have a listing of topics with the titles of articles about the topic that appeared during that year. In fact, the *Readers' Guide* has updates every two months. Regarding magazine articles, the most recent writings are better. However, articles from scholarly journals do not tend to become easily dated. Therefore, even old articles can be used to your advantage.

Like the use of the card catalog, ask your librarian to help you when using the *Readers' Guide* or other indexes. Some libraries even have various indexes on their computers. So much the better, since the search function on the computer will save a lot of time. Magazines and journals are stored in the periodical stacks, arranged alphabetically by the title of the magazine and volume. Usually, magazines and journals cannot be checked out. You will need to take your notes in the library if you use these articles. But for the time being, glance at the articles to see if they are relevant to your topic. If you think they will be useful, then make a bibliography card for the article.

### **Finding suitable material from the internet**

If you have internet access, you are no doubt already familiar with the different "search engines," which help you to find various topics on the worldwide web. Finding information is not difficult. What is challenging is determining whether the information is going to help your paper. You should use the following guidelines:

Be suspicious of information that is not signed or that is not sponsored. Oftentimes a page is published but there is no author's name or there is no home page that is linked to the page. It will be better to ignore anything that you cannot determine the source of the information. I sometimes even get a phone call from a student to ask me how to document information written by me on Smarr Publishers' website. It is always good to determine the credentials of an author for any source, but especially for those who have just a presence on the internet.

Like any other information, ensure that the material has relevancy to your topic. I have clicked on some very promising titles on the search engine page only to find material that was not at all useful. If this happens to you, just ignore it and go to the next potential link.

If the source has a homepage, look at the pages with links and frequently asked questions (FAQ). These pages will reveal some interesting and relevant information. These secondary links will introduce you to other websites. Be careful not to become too fascinated with web pages that are not on topic. Stay focused with the topic at hand. Once again, if a particular web page offers promise, then by all means write the bibliographical information on a card.

## **A Research Project in Ten Lessons**

In addition to the bibliography card, you should “bookmark” the page in order that you can easily return to the page in the future. In order to learn how to bookmark a page, refer to your documentation about your web browser.

### **The working bibliography**

While a working bibliography may seem redundant, a sheet with all of the sources listed in alphabetical order helps you by seeing the sources and authors at a glance. Take your stack of bibliography cards and arrange them in alphabetical order by author. Either write or word-process a bibliography page using the correct bibliographical format found in Appendix A of this booklet. This sheet will become your working bibliography. It is important to understand that this bibliography is not a final Works Cited page, but is to help you in your research.

This initial search for secondary materials will be concentrated at first, requiring a lot of time. However, as you begin to write the paper, you will discover that you have gaps in your research. At this point, you will need to find additional sources; however, the search will not require as much time. Always be your best critic. As you progress with this project, always look for gaps, whether in logic, material, or authority.

### **Checklist for finding secondary sources**

1. I have checked the almanacs and abstracts that pertain to my topic.
2. If necessary, I have asked the librarian how to use the computer catalog, the periodical indexes, and the search engines for the internet.
3. I have requested an inter-library loan or to be placed on a waiting list for a particular book.
4. I have evaluated the sources for relevancy to my topic and for credibility of the author.
5. I have reviewed the bibliographical entries in the books that have them and have made cards on the listed books that I may want to add to my possible sources.
6. I have completed bibliography cards for every source that I intend to use.
7. I have created a working bibliography by following the guidelines in Appendix A.

# A Research Project in Ten Lessons

## Lesson Five

### Seek Primary Sources

#### Tasks for Lesson Five (Time required—6 hours)

1. You will consider the use of a survey for your project.
2. You will consider the use of an interview for your project.

While you are gathering secondary materials, you should also consider seeking primary sources at the same time. The book written by an author is a primary source. A book written about the primary source is a secondary source. Also, a primary source is anything that you have created personally like a book, a poem, or a table of data. You have probably participated in primary research whenever you did a science fair project. The experiments, the observations, and recording of the progress of your research composed the primary materials for the project. In like manner, primary research can be beneficial to your research project, especially if your topic concerns a social problem in your community. Even though your paper does not require any primary resources, the gathering of data and information through primary research can add vitality and a great sense of purpose than researching books and articles. Take a few moments to consider at least the possibility of using such research. I will mention only two primary resources that may be appropriate for your topic.

#### The survey

A survey helps to gather relevant data for your research. It would be ideal to question the entire population to get an opinion on a particular issue, but this is impossible. Therefore, the researcher will have a “sample” population that is chosen at random. This random selection is important, since the results may be skewed otherwise. Also, make certain that the sample population is relevant. If your topic is about the satisfaction of home school students, then giving a survey to a student in the public schools will provide no meaningful information.

The best way to gather information is by the completion of a questionnaire. The most difficult part of the questionnaire is the creation of good questions. Questions must be well written, and the participant must be able to understand the question. Questions that are closed (true-false and multiple choice) will provide plenty of data, but open-ended questions (short answer and essay) could provide more insight. Clearly, the closed question is easier to tabulate. Be careful to word questions so that there are no ambiguities. For an example, the question, “Have you stopped beating your wife,” suggests that all men beat their wives at some point in their marriages. Also, a question that asks, “Should crime be dealt with harshly,” is misleading, because everyone will agree (except criminals). But *how* should crime be dealt with? What do you mean by *harshly*? Does this include soldiers patrolling the streets? Shooting suspects on sight? Be specific with your questions.

You can send your survey to several people, but this may cost some money. If you do randomly send people a questionnaire (perhaps names out of the phonebook), be sure to have a cover letter with the questionnaire that explains the purpose of your survey. Another way to gather information for a survey is by standing in front of a large store and ask folks who are entering the store about their opinions. Always trouble people when they enter the store, since they will not have bags in their hands like they do when they leave. Like the cover letter, explain what the purpose of the questions is. Ask the questions and mark the responses as quickly as possible. Also, it is a good idea to limit the number of questions to no more than ten. Ask yourself, would you be willing to answer fifty questions in the hot sun or cold winter wind?

## **A Research Project in Ten Lessons**

### **The interview**

If your topic concerns a recent event, like the Viet Nam war, you might consider using the interview, where you personally talk with an individual who fought in the conflict. The interview should be used only if the individual is able to give you some information that cannot be found in the secondary sources. Of course, you have greater flexibility and the use of questions upon which the interviewee can elaborate. As a courtesy, always provide the questions to the person whom you will question in advance of the day of the interview. In order to write intelligent questions, you must have done some reading on the subject. Your preliminary reading and working outline should provide enough information for questions. But you should also read sufficiently from your secondary sources to prepare yourself for the interview. In addition to this, ask permission to use a tape recorder. Do not assume that it will be okay to use it.

On the day of the interview, dress nicely and arrive on time. Remember, you are a guest who is invading the privacy of the person. Again, ask if it will be okay to use the tape recorder, and where would be a convenient place to set it up.

Your job is to listen, not talk. Think carefully what is being said. While the tape recorder should get the conversation, take good notes during the interview and jot down a few notes to remind yourself about follow up questions. You just never know when Murphy's law will kick in (recorder does not work, tape is eaten by the machine, kid brother tapes over the conversation, etc.) Try not to interrupt the interviewee after you have asked your question. If the responses are not clear, politely ask the interviewee to restate his position. Listen for new subtopics that you may have overlooked and add these to your outline. Before leaving the interviewee, briefly go over your notes, ensure that you understand the answers correctly, and thank the person for his valuable time.

Send a letter of appreciation to the interviewee, and after your paper is written, it would be proper to send him a copy of it.

### **Checklist for primary sources**

1. I have carefully considered the use of primary sources for my paper.
2. If using a survey, I have created questions that are relevant to my topic, my questions are objective and clear, and my results are tabulated fairly.
3. If using an interview, I have scheduled an interview, provided the individual with a list of questions ahead of time, received permission to use a tape recorder, and conducted the interview in a gracious and timely way.

# A Research Project in Ten Lessons

## Lesson Six

### Complete Note Cards

#### Tasks for Lesson Six (Time required—30 hours)

1. You will formulate your thesis statement.
2. You will understand what is plagiarism, and how to avoid it.
3. You will learn the importance of recording accurately the information for documentation.
4. You will learn to take a variety of notes, to ensure accuracy, and to properly format the note cards.

#### The thesis statement

All writing has purpose. Therefore, you are solely responsible to ensure that the reader knows your purpose for writing. Without a predetermined direction, you will be without a goal and will become a lost wanderer.

The very first sentence that you must compose for your paper is the **thesis statement**. I cannot over emphasize the importance of the thesis statement, because this is the sentence that gives your paper direction and purpose. The thesis statement is a direct statement—not a question—that asserts a bold claim, that is debatable, and that demands to be proven with facts, reasons, and other evidence. A well-written thesis provides the reader the incentive to continue reading.

Do not confuse the thesis statement with the subject or the topic of your paper, or even the research question. The topic of your paper may be Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*. Your research question could be "Is Billy Budd a type of Christ?" Notice that the topic and the research question are not statements. A suitable thesis statement for the above topic and question is "In Melville's *Billy Budd*, the Handsome Sailor represents the qualities of a Christ figure."

A good thesis statement meets at least four requirements. First, the thesis statement will be **related to the subject** of the paper. If your thesis asserts, "During the War for Southern Independence, Northern prisoner-of-war camps were worse than the camps established in the South," then the reader will be surprised—and disappointed—to read a paper about the use of railroads to transport prisoners during the war.

Second, the thesis **provides the reason** for the paper. The thesis sets the stage for your persuading the reader to agree with your argument. Thus, if your thesis is "The state capitol of Georgia ought to move from Atlanta back to the original site in Milledgeville," then you have shown at least why you took the time to write a paper. Hopefully, you will marshal sufficient evidence to persuade your reader to agree with you.

Third, the thesis **provides the focus** for the paper. The best paper will have a focused topic, and not a broad one. For a successful paper, you must narrow your subject. Notice that the thesis, "In his 'Fall of the House of Usher,' Poe uses many symbols," is very expansive and sounds dull; whereas, "In Poe's 'Fall of the House of Usher,' the house symbolizes the decay of Puritanism" is focused, is manageable, and captures the reader's curiosity.

Finally, the thesis **uses concrete, specific language**. You should avoid vague and ambiguous expressions. The thesis "While finding its justification in Western philosophical thinking, Feminism is a form of suicide, since it actively undermines Western ideals" is better than "A certain modern movement among some women is suicidal." Of course, the consequence for using concrete language is that no one will misunderstand what you are

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

saying. Therefore, you will need to defend your position well. Remember that intelligent writing is responsible writing. Concrete language forces you to be responsible.

A good thesis statement should take more than a few mindless minutes to compose. You will be doing yourself a favor by taking plenty of time with writing and rewriting your thesis statement. A good thesis statement will help you to organize your paper effectively and efficiently. However, your thesis statement is not set in concrete. You may discover your purpose and position changing as you write. Do not be alarmed, because this process is normal. If you find yourself refining any decisions that you made early in the planning stage of writing, then by all means change the thesis.

Keep your thesis statement before you as you continue doing your research. Remember, the goal is to *prove* your thesis and to *persuade* your readers to adopt your position on the subject.

### The mystery of note taking

With your thesis statement now in mind and written down, it is time to start taking notes. More than likely, the taking of notes is the most mysterious part of the research project. Many students are successful with narrowing a topic, with learning to use the library, finding appropriate sources, and even formulating a thesis statement. But with the note-taking phase, these same students begin to feel overwhelmed. In fact, many students tend to waste a lot of time when taking notes and begin to feel the pressure of producing a successful research paper. However, just take one step at a time. I will provide a step-by-step procedure for writing notes properly, saving yourself time and effort. Take plenty of time to record your notes properly and to document the information, and you will be well on your way with successfully completing the project.

### The sin of plagiarism

Whenever research papers are required, the subject of plagiarism is eventually discussed. The reason is that plagiarism is committed only when you use other authors' and writers' ideas and words. You cannot commit plagiarism when writing an argumentative paper, because the only ideas used are your own. No doubt, the greatest fear for students is the commission of plagiarism. Penalties for plagiarism can span the spectrum from a zero on the paper to expulsion from college. In Georgia, if you are expelled from a state-funded college for plagiarism, you will not be permitted to enroll in another state school. In other words, plagiarism is serious business, and you better become aware of what it is and how to avoid it.

Simply put, plagiarism is stealing. No one likes a thief, even a thief. However, for some reason, the taking of another writer's ideas and words without giving the author due credit seems to be acceptable to many students. Regardless, it is stealing, and it is a serious breach of honor and integrity that must be avoided with much care. Fortunately, as long as you carefully document your sources and ensure that you have not misrepresented the author, you will do fine. The only way to avoid plagiarism is by being very conscientious about taking careful notes.

You do not have to have malice aforethought to plagiarize. Unintentional plagiarism is just as bad as fully intending to use another writer's product by claiming the ideas to be your own. Whether intentional or unintentional, plagiarism can be classified by two categories. First, **substantial plagiarism** is committed whenever the writer fails to document the borrowing of someone else's ideas. Two exceptions follow from this statement. Common knowledge and your own ideas do not need to be documented. As an educated person, you have a certain body of knowledge that is shared with most people. For an example, most

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

people know that William Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet*. To document this fact is unnecessary. On the other hand, many people may not know that Shakespeare used the plot for his play from a similar story found in Mateo Bandello's *Novelle*. This knowledge would have to be documented if you learned this fact during your research. If you are not sure whether something is in the realm of common knowledge, you would be wise to document. Always err on the side of over-documenting. You can commit plagiarism unintentionally by just forgetting to document the source. However, there is no excuse for being careless. I repeat, take your time and think about what you are doing.

In your paper, many sentences will necessarily be your own work. Your own ideas will consist of the thesis statement, comments on the observations of others, and transitional sentences. The thesis statement is especially important and must reflect your own thinking and ideas. Be very careful that you do not take the main idea of a source and use this idea as a thesis. To do so is also plagiarism. In addition to this, your analysis of primary sources such as letters and diaries should show the line or page number on which the criticized portion can be found.

**Verbal plagiarism** is committed whenever the writer fails to quote the source correctly or merely rearranges the syntax and uses synonyms for a paraphrase. If you quote a source, ensure that the quotation marks are correctly used. Even if you document properly, you have plagiarized if you fail to use quotation marks. To merely rearrange words or to change a few words here and there is dishonest. This kind of plagiarism is the most common committed by students.

So long as you are careful with paraphrasing and quoting information completely and by keeping accurate documentation, you can avoid plagiarism. The key is with taking careful, thorough notes.

### Getting ready to take notes

You have been reading from one of your sources, and you have found several passages that you think are applicable to your paper. But before you start writing, there are some preliminary tasks you need to accomplish first.

Be certain that all of your bibliography cards have been numbered in the upper right corner. Then, get a ready supply of note cards. The best size card for taking your notes is the 4" x 6" index card. There is plenty of room to write, yet do not feel compelled to fill the entire card with writing. Use one side of the card only, and never write on the back. If you find yourself completely filling up one side of the card, you are probably quoting too much material. You need to paraphrase or summarize more. Always write your notes in ink. Finally, write only one thought for each card. Like your bibliography cards, you will want to be able to shuffle and reshuffle the cards easily.

### Before you write a single jot or tittle

Taking an extra moment to reflect will save yourself a lot of time. Before writing anything, read the passage carefully. Then ask yourself the following questions:

1. Does the passage support one of the topics on my working outline?
2. If not, can I create a new topic that will be relevant on my outline?

If you answer NO for each of the above questions, then do not write a note about the information. Move on to the next passage. It is a lot easier to think than to write. **THINK** before you start writing.

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

### Taking the note

You decide that the note is relevant. Now, *the very first thing* to write on your note card is the source and page numbers of the passage in the upper right corner of the card. Make this a habit; indeed, make it a religious habit that it will be the first thing you do for every note card. For an example, if your source is *Recovering the Lost Tools of Learning* by Douglas Wilson, the number that you assigned on the bibliography card is “9,” and the passage is found on page 102, then the entry on your note card will be “9, 102.” You can see that writing “9” saves time when not having to write the title out for each note card. If the passage spans over more than one page, be sure to include all pages, such as “9, 102–03.”

The second thing to write on your note card is the *slug*, which is placed in the upper left corner of the card. The slug is a few words, identifying the topic of the card. The identifying slug should come from your outline; however, as you progress with your research, you will find your outline changing, and so your slugs may change as well. Keep the slugs simple.

### Kinds of notes—the paraphrase

The paraphrase is the note that should be the dominate one in your paper. Indeed, most students erroneously think the direct quotation is the primary note. However, you will want to avoid the direct quotation for reasons that I will offer later. The paraphrase is high on the list of skills that students either have been misinformed or have a great deal of fear. The fear is perhaps natural, because many students commit plagiarism when paraphrasing. But oftentimes the plagiarism results from carelessness and from being instructed poorly about how to paraphrase. You have **not** paraphrased a passage adequately if:

- you merely change the syntax of the passage. Example: original—*Once it rejected the Lord and His word, the United States of America sentenced itself to destruction*; poor paraphrase—*The United States of America sentenced itself to destruction once it rejected the Lord and His word*. Regardless whether you document this passage, you will commit plagiarism by changing the syntax.
- you merely substitute synonyms for the words in the passage. Example: original—*The cat ran quickly across the street*; poor paraphrase—*The pet moved swiftly across the road*. Again, even if you document the source, you will commit plagiarism if you do this sort of writing. Paraphrasing is not merely the substitution of an author’s words with synonyms. It is taking an author’s idea and casting that idea into your own words.
- you include words and phrases from the original. Example: original—*The workings of the human mind are impenetrable and are understood by the Creator alone*; poor paraphrase—*Only God uncovers the workings of the human mind*. This paraphrase is plagiarism, because you are telling the reader that *the workings of the human mind* are your own words. If you use words or phrases from the original, then place quotation marks around them. Valid paraphrase—*Only God uncovers the psyche of man*. Or *Only God uncovers the “workings of the human mind.”*
- you misrepresent the thought of the author. Example: original—*Thou shalt surely die* (the LORD God); *Ye shall not surely die* (the serpent).

### Successful paraphrasing

You should make a concentrated effort to develop your skills in paraphrasing. You will improve your critical reading as a result of carefully understanding the meaning of the author. The legitimate paraphrase will have the following characteristics.

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

- **Shorter length.** The legitimate paraphrase will be a bit shorter than the original passage. It should be shorter, because all writers are guilty of wordiness as times, especially those who write articles for educational and scholarly journals. Oftentimes, professional jargon can be condensed with simple, concrete words. For an example, *those who teach their children at home* can be replaced with *home educators*.
- **Less complex.** Many writers use a very complex sentence structure that requires a great deal of “unpacking” in order to understand the meaning. Your challenge will be to make difficult ideas understandable for the readers of your paper.
- **Simpler vocabulary.** Nearly every thought can be simplified by using simpler words; therefore, the paraphrase will use language that is your own vocabulary, i.e., your own words. I can always tell when a student did not use his own vocabulary. When words like *soporific*, *exigent*, and *puissant* appear in a research paper, I am fairly certain that these words came from the original sources. A good paraphrase will be a product that uses your own words to express someone else’s idea. I repeat—if you do use the author’s words, put them in quotation marks.

The strength of the paraphrase is that you have taken the time already to express the idea in your own words. If you take your time by doing a thoughtful job of paraphrasing, you will make the task of composing your paper easier. When the writing of the paper begins, you can simply transfer the information directly from the note card to the paper without losing any sleep.

### **Kinds of notes—the summary**

Unlike the paraphrase, the summary condenses the material a lot. Use the summary whenever the extended passage, while important, is not very compelling to spend time paraphrasing. I caution you, however, to avoid the use of words and phrases that the author uses. In other words, the same rules apply with the summary as with the paraphrase.

### **Kinds of notes—the direct quotation**

Avoid the direct quotation as much as possible. First of all, copying direct quotations takes up a lot of time. You must be extremely accurate. Every word, punctuation mark, and even misspellings must be quoted exactly as it appears in the source. If you so much as leave out a comma, you are guilty of plagiarism. Also, if you routinely use direct quotations, your paper will lack continuity, because every writer has a different style of writing. This research paper is your paper, which ought to be written in your style, and not your attempt to create a verbal quilt of mismatched sentences. Save yourself some time and headaches by paraphrasing the material as much as possible.

However, this advice to you does not mean that an *occasional* direct quotation is bad. Indeed, it can be helpful. You ought to consider the use of the direct quotation when the author is an authority in his field and his opinion is respected. Anything that Robert E. Lee would say about being a Christian gentleman will have a lot of weight. Also, if rewording the author’s thought would lessen the impact of the words, then by all means, use the idea as a direct quotation. Try paraphrasing, “These are the times that try men’s souls,” to see if you can improve the impact of Thomas Paine’s words. You probably will fail.

The point here is that the direct quotation should be used sparingly and not routinely. Reserve these quotations for special uses in your paper.

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

### Special rules for direct quotations

- Always enclose the quoted material with quotation marks.
- If the passage has a misspelling or grammatical error, follow the word with [sic], which means *thus*. This indicates that the error is not yours (a case for plagiarism), but the author's. Example: "Unaware that each lunch bag were [sic] meant for a specific child, Mr. Adams gave Sams [sic] lunch to James."

### Kinds of notes—the partial quotation

You will use the partial quotation frequently, because some phrases will defy paraphrasing. Your note will be mostly paraphrased material with a short, partial quotation. The same precautions with the direct quotation are also applicable with the partial quotation. Ensure accuracy with words, spelling, and punctuation.

### Special rules for partial quotations

- Always enclose the quoted material with quotation marks.
- The use of [sic] applies with indirect quotations.
- Use ellipsis points whenever you omit words from the original. The ellipsis is three periods separated by a space between each period (...). With Microsoft Word, the key stroke is ALT+0133. Under MLA rules, the ellipsis points are enclosed in brackets [...]. As an accepted convention, the ellipsis is not placed at the beginning of or at the end of quoted material. Example: original—*The place of John Donne in the history of Elizabethan poetry has never been fully settled.* Note card—According to Professor Pattee, John Donne's "place[...]in the history of Elizabethan poetry" is still being debated.
- If you end a sentence with quoted material that has been omitted, then you must end the sentence with ellipsis points and a period. Example: original—*The lines are violently end-stopped; the movement is heavy; the characters are mere figures.* Note card—According to Professor Pattee, *Titus Andronicus* is "inferior" as drama, because "the movement is heavy[...]."
- Use brackets whenever you substitute the original words with your own. The bracketed word helps to make the sentence clearer or grammatically correct. Example: original—*Educational in the broadest sense must anything be which is inspirational; for to interest the child in literature, to make him enter into it as into a charming heritage, is more truly to educate him than would be any pedantic or formal instruction whatever.* Note card—Professor Bates remarks that education belongs to the "inspirational," and helping youngsters to enjoy literature "is more truly to educate [students] than would be any pedantic or formal instruction whatever."

### Take your time with note taking

How you take your notes will determine for the most part the success or failure of your paper. Follow the guidelines in this lesson and you will be take accurate, relevant notes. By paraphrasing the larger portion of your paper, your own style of writing will emerge, making it truly your paper. The most important objective in this lesson is for you to take the extra time to write notes, being thoughtful about the way you record the information. You will be rewarded with an easier task of composition if you use a slower pace and employ careful writing now.

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

### Checklist for completing note cards

1. I read and understand the passage in the source, and it is relevant to my paper.
2. I wrote the source number (from the bibliography card) and page number in the upper right corner of the note card.
3. I created a slug and wrote it in the upper left corner of the card.
4. I have only one idea on the card.
5. I have written on one side of the card only.
6. I have summarized and paraphrased most of the material, using direct quotations sparingly.
7. I have double-checked the direct and partial quotations when I put them on note cards.
8. I included the quotation marks to indicate the author's exact words, using the accepted conventions for [sic], [...], and [ ].

## **A Research Project in Ten Lessons**

### Lesson Seven

#### Write the First Draft

##### **Tasks for Lesson Seven (Time required—9 hours)**

1. You will write your final outline.
2. You will write the first draft with an introduction, a conclusion and a title.
3. You will internally document the sources by using the appropriate format for documentation.

##### **The final outline**

Hopefully, by this time in your academic career, you realize that the outline is not created after you write a paper, but rather it is to be used as a map to guide you while you write your paper. Your working outline has accomplished its purpose for directing you towards specific sources and for keeping you focused on the task. Now, after you have written many note cards, your working outline has been undoubtedly changed and modified to reflect your research. At this point, you should rewrite your outline, allowing it to provide you with a skeleton for your paper. With the outline as the frame, you will add meat to the bones with the information recorded on the note cards.

Your outline should have complete sentences for your thesis statement and topic sentences (those divisions using Roman numerals). Do not outline the introduction or the conclusion. What is outlined is the body of the paper. Divisions below the topic sentences should represent the slugs found on your note cards. Write your thesis statement above the outline. Critically look at the thesis statement and ensure that your topic sentences are reasons that prove the thesis. Also, attempt to compose your topic sentences in parallel structure.

The outline will reveal weaknesses or poor logic in your research. Arrange your note cards according to slugs on the outline. In some cases, you may have an abundance of cards under a particular slug, few if any cards for some slugs, and some cards with slugs not on the outline. What should concern you are the slugs with a few cards. You may have to find some other sources to support the topic. However, in the case of a lot of note cards, do not feel that you have to use every one of them. Also, the orphaned note cards with unusual slugs should be either changed to a slug to match a topic on the outline, or add another topic, if you can do so without destroying your unity. Regardless whether you use the note card or not, do not—I repeat—do not throw any note cards away.

##### **The first draft**

Frankly, the hard work is done. If you have carefully followed the advice in this booklet up to this point, then the creating of the first draft will not affect your mental health. While some teachers instruct their students to set aside a block of time to complete the first draft in one sitting, this is unnecessary. However, you should follow this recommended sequence when writing the draft. Of course, when I refer to writing, I also mean word processing. Double-space your writing, whether doing it by longhand or by keyboard.

Do not try to write the introduction at this point. First, write down the first topic sentence from your outline. Then you can start transposing the notes from the cards to your paper. By starting with the first topic, you avoid writer's block. Be certain that you copy the direct and partial quotations as they appear exactly on the cards. You must assume that you were very careful whenever you recorded the information in the first place. As you write, do not be too concerned about mechanics and spelling at this point (except for the quotations). The goal is

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

to get the first draft done. Follow your outline and use your note cards. Soon the task will be completed.

You should have about eight pages (word processed). If your paper falls way below this, then you need some more support. Look at the topics and determine which ones are weak, that is, with little or no support. This is a common problem. You will never be finished researching until the final paper is submitted. So understand that at any point during the project, you could be reading, thinking, taking additional notes, and revising the outline. You may have to return to the library or surf the internet some more. If you exceeded the number of pages by a large amount, you may have too broad a topic, or you may need to eliminate some of the material found in the over-supported topics. You will not want more than ten pages. Remember, you still have an introduction and a conclusion to include with the body.

### Documentation within the text

Whenever you use another writer's idea or words in your paper, you must give the writer credit for his ideas. On your note cards, you placed the number of the source and the page number in the upper right corner. Use this information to document. To document a source, you simply put at the end of the sentence in parentheses the author's last name and the page on which the information is found. For an example, suppose the following paraphrase is on a note card with "3, 158" on it. The "3" represents the bibliography card for *Reason and Justice* by Richard D. Winfield. The information is transposed into the paper as follows:

Freedom is realized if, and only if, the will interacts with other free wills (Winfield 158).

Notice that there is only a space after the author's name and page number, no comma. Do not put a *p.* or *page* in front of the number.

Now suppose that in your paper, you used two books by the same author. In this case, you will need to provide an abbreviated title in addition the author's last name like the following:

Freedom is realized if, and only if, the will interacts with other free wills (Winfield, *Reason* 158).

Another variation for internal documentation is when you use the author's name within the text. In this case only the page number is required.

According to Professor Richard D. Winfield in *Reason and Justice*, freedom is realized if, and only if, the will interacts with other free wills (158).

One last consideration needs to be mentioned here. It will not be unusual for you to have two or more references from the same source which appear consecutively in your paper. With the very first reference, you must include the author's name and page number. Each subsequent reference needs to be identified only by the page number on the note card, as long as the references are consecutive. The reader will assume that documentation with only a page number refers to the previous full citation.

### The introduction

Even though the introduction is reserved after completing the body of the paper, this does not mean that your opening remarks are unimportant. On the contrary, the introduction is very important. A good introduction will capture the attention of the reader immediately. The introduction is not the place to write a string of obvious generalizations and trite expressions. When readers see only common, insipid generalizations, they will think that

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your paper will offer nothing fresh for the imagination and intellect. The introduction and conclusion are the two sections in the paper that will require some creativity. In addition to avoiding dullness by being creative, shun the natural tendency to hedge or to apologize for the position that you have taken in the paper. You may think that being apologetic is a way to show humility. However, there is a time to be humble and a time to be bold. When standing for what you believe to be the truth, be bold. Do not say, “I am sorry to say this, but...” Finally, leave out of your introduction any worn out expressions such as *in today’s society*, *one of the most important subjects of today*, and *since the beginning of time*.

The last sentence of your introduction is the thesis statement. The introduction may be one or two paragraphs. Apart from your thesis statement, your introduction should have an “attention grabber.” You can get the reader’s attention by using any of the following ideas:

- Provide background information on the topic or issue. A little history about the problem may be interesting.
- Pose a question. However, ensure that your question is thought-provoking. Do not use a question as your thesis statement.
- Tell a brief story or a short anecdote. This is perhaps the best way to introduce a subject. Make certain that the story is relevant to your topic.
- Offer an apt quotation from a notable person. Using a quotation from a famous person who is well-known and respected is an excellent way to begin your paper.
- Present some humor. With humor, however, be careful. Mark Twain remarked that poorly presented humor “is very depressing, and makes one want to renounce joking and lead a better life.”

### The conclusion

Concluding the research paper well will offer you another creative challenge. Arguably, the final thoughts are the most important section in the paper, because readers remember usually that which they read last. Therefore, you need to reinforce your argument and thesis in the conclusion. Basically, you will want to summarize the main points that you have discussed in the topic sentences.

While the introductory paragraph begins broadly and ends with the thesis, the conclusion should begin with a restatement of your thesis statement and end broadly. The concluding paragraph ends your paper logically. Good conclusions are like good thesis statements because both do not need any introduction. Therefore, do not use the phrase *in conclusion* when beginning the final paragraph.

As the introduction needs an attention grabber, the conclusion needs a “clincher.” Use the same strategies with the conclusion as with the introduction. You should consider using an anecdote, or an apt quotation. Perhaps your using a striking example of the argument can be effective to finish the paper. In addition to these strategies, your final words can be a call to action or to some awareness. Be careful of the temptation to end your paper with a question. Shelley can ask, “O Wind, / If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?” and get away with it because poets are supposed to be vague. With the research paper, you cannot afford this poetic license.

The conclusion is to provide closure to the paper. For the sake of your grade, do **not** introduce new issues or offer any new support in the conclusion. All issues must be discussed in the topic paragraphs. Like the introduction, avoid any apologizing for your position.

## **A Research Project in Ten Lessons**

### **Compose a good title**

A title to your paper should not be an afterthought or just an insipid tag. Nevertheless, while you are encouraged to use originality and imagination, your title should not be cute nor inappropriate. A good title will not leave the reader guessing as what is the topic of the paper. In order to achieve this, you must create a title that suggests the topic, represents the message, and reflects the tone of the paper.

### **Final thoughts about the first draft**

You have now completed your final outline and written your first draft with an introduction and a conclusion. Now, set the work aside for two or three days. Not only do you deserve a break, but ideas will have time to germinate while you are not too close to the project. Let the project lay dormant for a short while. The next step in the project will be to revise the draft.

### **Checklist for writing the first draft**

1. I have placed my thesis statement at the top of my “final” outline.
2. I have composed my main topics as complete sentences and used a parallel structure.
3. My outline is relevant to my thesis statement.
4. My outline shows a logical progression of the topic and I have located weaknesses in some of the subtopics that may require more research.
5. I have stacked my note cards according to the slugs on the card and arranged them according to the outline.
6. I double-spaced my draft.
7. I have accurately transposed my notes to my draft, double checking direct and partial quotations.
8. I have used proper internal documentation in the text of my paper.
9. My introduction has an attention-grabber and the thesis statement is the last sentence in the introduction.
10. My conclusion restates the thesis, has a clincher, and a call to action, if applicable.
11. I promise myself not to look at the paper for at least two days.

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### Lesson Eight

#### Revise the Draft

##### **Tasks for Lesson Eight (Time required—9 hours)**

1. You will understand that revising is a critical process, requiring thinking, objectivity, and good judgment.
2. You will revise your paper at least three times within a three-day period.
3. Your revising will include examining content within the text and the style of your writing.

##### **What is revising?**

Due to acquired bad habits, many students have a woeful misunderstanding about what it means to revise their writing. Students have a vague idea that revision has something to do with not turning in the first written product. However, whatever revising is, it is not merely copying your first draft with a neater handwriting or producing a hardcopy from the computer. Revising a draft is the systematic process for critically evaluating the content and style of the paper. At this point of the project, you are the critic, and only you can decide whether the writing is good or is needing some additional attention. If you use a word processor, print a hard copy of the paper and use it to make changes. Then you can revise the screen version later.

##### **Revising content in the body of the paper**

First, ask yourself the question: “Does this paper prove my thesis statement?” Read the paper with this question in mind. Forget about the spelling errors and other sins against the King’s English. Determine whether the paper answers the research question, which is embodied in the thesis statement. The answer should be YES, since you should have allowed your working outline to narrow the kinds of material you researched, and the final outline to direct your writing of notes. If you are certain that the thesis is not proven, however, then you need to determine why. If your paper proves the opposite of the thesis, then merely change the thesis to reflect this fact. Otherwise, look carefully at your topic sentences. These ought to be reasons why the thesis is true. If the topics are not good reasons, then here is the weakness, and you need to reword the topic sentences and strengthen the topics with the support that you have researched.

If your outline had a logical structure, then your paper will also be logical. Apart from ensuring a logical structure, check to see if your attitude is constant throughout the paper. In other words, your approach should be one of objectivity, with little if any sarcasm and ridicule. Very few writers successfully use humor as the tone of a paper. Unless you can write like Washington Irving or Mark Twain, avoid humor.

If you used too many direct quotations, try paraphrasing the quotations. I suggest that the percentage of direct and indirect quotations should be no more than 15–20 percent of your paper. In other words, if you were to write all of the quotations in order, you would not have no more than two pages for a ten-page research paper. Your paper should be between nine to twelve pages, not including the Works Cited page. If you fall short, then you need more material. If you are over, then you have too much material, you will need to do some judicious pruning.

Now, look at each paragraph. Every paragraph should have its own structure and its own place in the paper. The paragraphs should follow a logical progression. If some paragraphs seem out of place, determine why. If the paragraph is irrelevant to the thesis, eliminate it. If

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the paragraph is merely misplaced, move it to the proper position. Make sure that the paragraphs are logical. Internally, the paragraph needs to stand alone. The first sentence of every paragraph should have a statement that introduces the paragraph's topic. The support in the paragraph should be facts, figures, and examples in order to justify the topic sentence. You must take the place of the reader, and ask yourself whether you are convinced that the material is sufficient to persuade to agree with the writer, in this case, you. If the answer is NO, then you must get additional material or better material that is more authoritative. In addition to adequate support, a paragraph maintains unity if keywords are repeated often in the paragraph. Determine what these key words or phrases are and, if possible, use them as the subject of the sentences within the paragraph.

### Use of transitions

One of the traits of mature writing is the use of transitions, whether these are single words, phrases, or sentences. Transitions connect the sentences and paragraphs in such a way that the reader can shift easily from one thought to another. Look for places to include transitions. Below is a list of the more common transitions.

- **To add:** *and, in addition to, furthermore*
- **To compare:** *likewise, in like manner, similarly*
- **To conclude:** *in short, in other words, thus*
- **To contrast:** *however, in contrast, nevertheless, but, yet, on the one hand/on the other hand*
- **To exemplify:** *for an example, specifically, that is (i.e.)*
- **To emphasize:** *indeed, in fact, even*
- **To generalize:** *generally, in general, for the most part*
- **To show effect:** *therefore, consequently, as a result, for this reason*

If you do not have a transition between your paragraphs, consider composing a final sentence that will lead into the next paragraph.

### Sentence structure

Your sentence structure should not be a string of simple sentences. While transitions will break the monotony of these elementary sentences, it will be better to use mostly complex sentences that use the dependent clause as a transition. In other words, vary your sentence structure by using simple, compound, and complex sentences.

### Internal documentation

Double check that your documentation is accurate. You may have changed the location of different paragraphs and sentences, which could affect the proper format of the documentation. Ensure that the entries are correct with each revision of the paper.

### Style of writing

You have developed your own style of writing over the past few years. Nevertheless, there are some things that you should avoid. If these following weaknesses are found in your paper, correct them immediately.

- Do not use contractions, like *isn't, it's, and don't*. Spell out all words. Especially avoid *&* for *and*.

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- Do not use slang. This is a formal paper; therefore, you need to use an elevated vocabulary.
- Do not use the first person or the second person point of view. Write in the third person, and keep yourself in the background.
- Never use pronouns for subjects and seldom for objects. Every sentence should provide perfect understanding if it is isolated from the context of the paragraph.

### **Mechanics and spelling**

Finally, use a critical eye to discover misspelled words. Do not trust your spell checker, which is known to make errors. Also, ensure that you have used punctuation correctly. For an example, if you are not sure about the rules for using the ellipsis, then by all means, review the rules. Any of your previous grammar guides should be of help to you now.

### **How many revisions?**

You ought to go through the above process at least three times. After revising the paper once, set the paper aside and forget about it until the next day. Then revise it again. After the second revision, you should have a fellow student or someone else to look at your paper. Discuss the paper with the reader, and more than likely, the reader will find some errors in thinking, support, or grammar. Sometimes, the reader might even offer praise and encouragement. Accept any criticism graciously, consider the worth of the comments, and act accordingly as you look at the paper one more time. After revising the paper, set it aside and get yourself a bowl of ice cream. You deserve it.

### **Checklist for revising the draft**

1. My paper proves the thesis statement to my satisfaction.
2. I can defend the arrangement of the paragraphs in the paper.
3. I used my outline as a guide for revision.
4. I evaluated my paragraphs and determined that they are varied in complexity, that they have sufficient transitions between thoughts, and that they are logical.
5. I used transitions between paragraphs.
6. I ensured that I properly used grammar and mechanics.
7. I ensured that words were spelled correctly.
8. I have double checked my internal documentation to ensure accuracy and proper format.
9. I have discussed my paper with at least one other individual, who has read the paper.
10. I have used the revision process at least three times on three different days.

# A Research Project in Ten Lessons

## Lesson Nine

### Produce the Final Manuscript

#### Tasks for Lesson Nine (Time required—12 hours)

1. If you have word processed your paper already, you will not need 12 hours to complete this task. This time will be required for students who must type their papers.
2. You will learn the proper format for submitting your research paper.
3. You will create your Works Cited page using the proper format.

#### Form of the manuscript

While you may have written your many drafts by hand, the final manuscript of your paper must be typewritten or word processed. The following form applies to the research paper.

1. Use 8-1/2" x 11" twenty-pound bond, white paper. Use only one side of the paper only.
2. If you word process, use Times New Roman 12 font for the entire paper, including the title.
3. Double space your text, including the Works Cited page. All four margins are to be 1".
4. Do **not** justify the right margin or use the hyphenation function with your word processor.
5. Do **not** use a title page. However, ensure that the following information appears in the upper left corner on the first page of the final manuscript: your name, your teachers name, course title, and date of submission. Double space below the date and center the title of your paper. Regarding the title, do **not** use fancy fonts for the title, quotation marks, or underline.
6. In the upper right corner of every page, include your last name and page number. For an example, Watson 1 will appear on the first page, Watson 2 on the second, and so on. On your word processor, click on the menu VIEW | HEADER AND FOOTER. Type in your last name, click on INSERT PAGE NUMBER from the tool bar, and align right. When your paper is printed, the page numbers will be automatically numbered.
7. The Works Cited page will be the final sheet to the research paper.
8. Do not include a copy of your outline. However, you should keep all materials including the outline, drafts, and note cards. Keep these items in a large envelop and store away.
9. Staple all sheets together with one staple in the upper right corner. Do **not** place the research paper in a folder or binder.

#### The Works Cited page

The Works Cited page is not the same as your working bibliography. The purpose of this page is to identify the sources that you actually used in your research paper. In other words, only the sources that have been documented within the paper itself are to be listed on the Works Cited page. Follow these guidelines.

1. Arrange the bibliography cards for the sources that you used in alphabetical order by author.
2. Center *Works Cited* at the top margin of the page.
3. Double space all entries.

## **A Research Project in Ten Lessons**

4. By using your stack of cards, list the bibliographical entries on the Works Cited page alphabetically according to author. Ensure that you use the correct bibliographical format for each entry.
5. The first line of the entry starts at the left margin, but if you need more than one line, you need to have a hanging indentation of 1/4". See the Works Cited page with the example research paper.

### **Checklist for producing the final manuscript**

1. I have used the proper kind of paper for the manuscript.
2. I have double spaced the entire paper, including the Works Cited page.
3. I have an 1-inch margin for all four sides of my paper.
4. I have provided my identification information on the front page.
5. I have placed my last name and page number of every page, including the first page.
6. I have formatted the Works Cited page correctly and have attached it to the back of the paper.

# A Research Project in Ten Lessons

## Lesson Ten

### Proofread the Final Manuscript

#### Tasks for Lesson Ten (Time required—3 hours)

1. You will learn to proofread your paper in a systematic way.
2. You will submit your paper to your teacher.

#### Not quite done yet

You now have the final manuscript. No doubt, you are anxious to submit the work to your teacher, but you have one more step before your teacher sees the paper. It is time to make one more check to ensure the paper is as flawless as it can be. Regardless of how many times you read a document, there will be something wrong with it. The purpose of this lesson is to acquaint you with the technique of proofreading your research paper.

#### Carefully read your paper

Start at the beginning of your paper and force yourself to read slowly, looking at every word. The best way to do this is by reading out loud. As you read, watch for the following things:

- Misspelled words. If you are unsure of the spelling, find the word in the dictionary.
- Incorrect punctuation. Be especially careful with commas. Make sure that dependent clause are set apart with a comma and that independent clauses are not separated by a comma, but by a semicolon.
- Grammar errors. The more common errors will be subject-verb agreement and pronoun-antecedent problems. Watch closely for these destroyers of grades. If you avoided the use of pronouns as subjects, you will not have too much trouble. However, where you do use a pronoun, check it carefully that it agrees with its antecedent.
- Internal documentation. Ensure that the citations are in the correct format and that every citation is identified. Check to see if every citation is represented on the Works Cited page.
- Works Cited page. Read this page practically word for word, letter for letter, mark for mark. If you have any doubt about the format, look up the proper format.
- Direct quotations. One more time, take your cards and make sure that the quotations are exactly as you have them written on your cards. This advice goes for your partial quotations also.

#### Yikes, I found a mistake

If you have time, make the corrections with your word processor and print a new copy of the paper. However, if you do not have time to use the word processor, then is it perfectly acceptable to neatly draw a line through the mistake, and write in the correction. This is only applicable for small errors. Do not attempt to include or eliminate complete sentences.

#### Submitting the paper

This is easy. Just place the paper in your teacher's hand.

#### Checklist for proofreading the final manuscript

1. I have followed the procedure according to the guidelines in this lesson.
2. I have made minor corrections, if necessary.
3. I have submitted my paper to my teacher.

## A Research Project in Ten Lessons

Girl 1

Ima Georgia Girl

Mrs. Home Educator

English 12

Today's Date

### The Freedmen's Bureau: Creating Governmental Addicts

In his book, *Up from Slavery*, Booker T. Washington realized even in his young life that something was fundamentally wrong with the Congressional reconstruction of the South. After he states that the policy “was in a large measure on a false foundation,” Washington explains that “the ignorance of [his] race was being used as a tool with which to help white men into office, and that there was an element in the North which wanted to punish the Southern white men by forcing the Negro into positions over the heads of the Southern whites.” Washington concludes that blacks would be sure to suffer from this stratagem (Washington 40). With their emancipation, nearly four million ex-slaves expected the Union government to provide for them as “wards of the nation” (Hicks, Mowry, and Burke 10). Since this was a just expectation, the United States Congress created the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, or popularly known as the Freedmen's Bureau. While the expressed mission of the Bureau was the management of “all abandoned lands, and the control of all subjects relating to refugees and freedmen from rebel states,” the tacit goal was to ensure that the ex-slaves remained in the South with as little migration to the North as possible. The Freedmen's Bureau successfully fulfilled Congress's will by distributing rations, establishing hospitals, managing land, approving labor contracts, and supporting schools for the freedmen.

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The Freedmen's Bureau was the brainchild of Lyman Trumbull. While he lived in Georgia, Trumbull taught school and studied law. However, at the age of 24, Trumbull moved to Illinois, participated in politics, and later became a U.S. senator (Rhodes 51). Trumbull's creation incorporates a bit of both Thaddeus Stevens's "conquered provinces" theory and Charles Sumner's "state suicide" theory. The Freedmen's Bureau was organized under the Department of War on March 3, 1865, about three weeks before Lee surrendered his forces in Virginia. The act was modified significantly in 1866, and Congress extended the Bureau's existence several times until 1872, even though the Radical Republicans wanted to extend the law indefinitely (Rhodes 57).

The Bureau consisted of a commissioner, who was appointed by the president, eventually twelve assistant commissioners, who were assigned to a "district," which were the "rebel" states, and a herd of agents and clerks. At first, military officers and enlisted troops were the Bureau's agents, but later the positions were filled by revenueurs, self-styled reformers, and Yankee schoolmarms (Stephenson and Coulter 71). Even some Northern newspapers responded negatively to the Bureau. In the February 17, 1866 edition of the *New York Herald*, the editor stated the bill would be better entitled, "an act to establish a gigantic and corrupt political machine for the benefit of the radical faction and a swarm of office holders" (Cox and Cox 32). The editor felt honest dealings from the agents were too much to expect and that the South should institute its own solution to the freedmen problem. According to the same paper, "[Southerners] understand the negroes [sic] better than any other people do, and, as a class, are more kindly disposed toward them" (33). Yet Southerners for the most part were unable to hold positions in the Bureau, because every agent had to take the "ironclad oath," which the office holder swore that he never

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voluntarily helped the Confederacy in any capacity whatsoever. With the appointment of the commissioner's office going to General Oliver O. Howard, who participated in Sherman's march through Georgia, the Bureau went into action.

First, the immediate task of the Bureau was to provide for hungry people. When Congress established the Freedmen's Bureau, the war was still raging in many parts of the South. However, Union troops occupied much Southern territory, and blacks in the occupied territory were released, of course, from slavery. Once freed from their masters, the ex-slaves naturally became camp followers of the Union soldiers, begging for food and other comforts from their Northern deliverers. But many freedmen soon realized that the Northern troops were unwilling to provide food, shelter, and protection for them; thus a large number of freedmen returned to their former masters like the prodigal son (Hicks et al. 8). Even Washington mentions this propensity of the ex-slaves, particularly the elderly, to return to their previous homes after having a taste of "freedom" (Washington 12).

Yet, the former masters had little to give their ex-slaves. With the defeat of the South, the land was ravished, the railroads were destroyed, currency and bonds were worthless, and the South's pool of labor was idle. For the freedmen, which represented forty percent of the Southern population, freedom meant the right to indulge in idleness (Hicks et al. 9). In order to encourage the freedmen to find gainful employment, the extended law included a section defining the meaning of "destitute," "suffering," and "dependent upon the Government for support." Able-bodied workers were not considered to be destitute or suffering if they could get work, but refused to labor.

In all fairness, the Bureau must be credited for providing some relief for alleviating the hunger of many refugees and freedmen. The term *refugee* referred to loyal whites, who soon

felt that they were the unwanted wards of the government and that the needs and wants of the freedmen were paramount to their own. One thing is for certain, *refugee* never meant a plantation owner, who was considered disloyal *per se*, regardless of his political, financial, or physical condition. Yet, even though the Union government freed the slaves, former masters, not the Freedmen's Bureau, were obligated to provide food, shelter, and medical attention for their very young or very old ex-slaves who were unable to work any longer (Thompson 37). Because of the bond that existed between masters and slaves, most of the landowners would have been willing to oblige themselves to this act of charity, which was a normal expectation of the slave owner in the antebellum South. However, in that the occupational government demanded this care as a duty, landowners became resentful. This was an odd duty indeed when the very means for the landowners' support was gone. The freed laborers left the land in droves to enjoy their homeless freedom accompanied by starvation and disease as their constant companions.

This obligation placed upon the landowner arose from the Bureau's agents' obvious inability to go to every place where a shortage of food existed. In order to meet the need, the commissioners decided to distribute food only in major Southern cities. Since these cities were the distribution points for food, thousands of freedmen migrated to the cities to receive the rations. Even though nearly 22 million rations were distributed during the span of the Bureau, hundreds of whites and blacks starved to death, because Southern crops were destroyed by the Union army's waging "total war" against both military troops and civilians. For an example, in spite of the fact that the Bureau distributed nearly 675,000 meals during the years of 1865 and 1866 to freedmen throughout Georgia, in December of 1865, five hundred freedmen died in Macon alone due to hunger and sickness (Conway 82).

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The Freedmen's Bureau was also tasked with providing medical care for loyal whites and freedmen. Section 5 of the extended law specifically authorized the Secretary of War to "issue such medical stores or other supplies and transportation and afford such medical or other aid as here may be needful." The Bureau successfully established forty-five hospitals throughout the South, and the medical staffs were competent. Reportedly, Atlanta and Columbus had very good hospitals. However, the Columbus facility had difficulty with getting sufficient help since the pay for field hands was much higher than the wages of orderlies (82). Some historians lament the fact that such a medical program failed to capture the imagination of the politicians as a model for socialized medicine on a nationwide scale (Stephenson 72). However, with the demise of the Freedmen's Bureau along with its appropriations, the medical social experiment disappeared.

Perhaps the most misunderstood task of the Freedman's Bureau relates to the management of abandoned and confiscated land in the South. Congress authorized the Bureau to subdivide such land into tracts not more than forty acres. These tracts were to be rented to freedmen for three years with an option to buy the land after this period. However, the rumor spread throughout the South that all freedmen were to be given forty acres of land free of charge, an equally free mule, and according to some sources, "a white man to do the work" (Stephenson 76). Even as recent as 1966, this rumor has been kept alive by black militants in their manifesto, which states, "We believe that this racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules... promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of black people" (Ploski and Williams 167). Apparently, the Black Panthers' demand for an extra

mule represents either the accumulated interest on the fabled promise or a substitution for a white man.

Nevertheless, because of this rumor, the freedmen believed that doing nothing was the better part of virtue and waited for the day of jubilee. This false expectation prompted the Congress more than any other reason to amend the law with the provision enacted in section 5, which was a warning to the ex-slaves that either they would work or starve. But to the recently ex-slave's thinking, freedom was doing no work (Thompson 33). No doubt, when the master and his sons were seen doing very little on the plantation, the slaves naturally would think that leisure was the apex of liberty. The *Macon Telegraph* reported that the problem with the vagrancy plaguing that city suggested the necessity for "all negroes coming into the city to register." If any freedman failed to find work, then he should be forced to labor in the fields or for the railroads (35).

However, even if the freedmen were under no delusions, the hope that the freedmen would be able to purchase their own land was the quixotic dream of Northern do-gooders. The land was cheap enough; however, the freedman seemed incapable for the most part to save his money. This failure to save centered on the freedman's belief that money was to be spent, not saved. Washington illustrates the freedmen's desire to spend money on useless luxuries like sewing machines, clocks, and musical instruments:

I remember that on one occasion when I went into one of these cabins for dinner, when I sat down to the table for meal with the four members of the family, I noticed that, while there were five of us at the table, there was but one fork for the five of us to use. Naturally there was an awkward pause on my part. In the opposite corner of that same cabin was an organ for which the

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people told me they were paying sixty dollars in monthly instalments. One fork, and a sixty-dollar organ! (Washington 54).

What was sad about this situation was that no one in the household knew how to play the organ. Sixty dollars would have bought forty acres of land at \$1.50 per acre, but the freedmen were easily enticed into buying unnecessary luxuries or in signing installment contracts.

The Freedmen's Bureau never did have a lot of land with which to apportion to freedmen. At one time, the Bureau did manage 800,000 acres of land in the South. Some of this land was indeed abandoned; yet, agents confiscated property oftentimes for failure to pay direct taxes to the Union government, as in the case of the home of Robert E. Lee. Reports were made of law libraries and artwork in homes being taken by agents of the Bureau; yet later, visitors of Northern homes would find the books filling a Unionist's bookshelf, or the painting gracing a Yankee's wall. Often when a landowner would take a short vacation, he would discover upon his return that his primary residence had been declared "abandoned" and his property unhappily managed by the Freedmen's Bureau (Stephenson 73).

However, with the presidential pardons issued by President Johnson, Southern landowners were entitled to all of their land, which was confiscated or declared abandoned. Even though the Constitution at this time had become a fiction, many of the politicians believed that the seizure of the lands could be challenged as unconstitutional. In article III, section 3, the U.S. Constitution states, "Congress shall have Power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attainted." The dilemma was apparent. While many Northerners insisted that the Southerners were traitors and the confiscation of their

lands was lawful, nevertheless all such land would revert back to the heirs after the death of any traitor. On the other hand, if the Southerners were merely erring brothers, then the seizures of land were clearly without due process. Because of the questions of constitutionality and Johnson's pardons, the extended law included provisions for the return of the lands to the former owners, even after the land was rented to freedmen. In short, while he might have had the right to vote by this time, the freedman lacked skills and land in order to make an independent living. As for making a living, the freedmen had to rely upon white landowners, not Northern industrialists, for work.

The truth of the matter is that the freedman was unwanted in the North. Thousands of Irishmen came to the United States in order to enlist in the Union army with the promise of money and citizenship. Of course, after the war, the troops were mustered out, and the mercenaries began looking for peacetime work in the North. Now that "peace" prevailed, factories supporting the army with munitions or supplies either dismissed most of their employees or closed their businesses all together. Since jobs were always scarce in the North, fights often broke out between whites and blacks (Adams 120).

Not as well known as a function of the Freedmen's Bureau was the authorization of labor contracts between landowners and freedmen. The Bureau encouraged the use of contracts, and many printers in the South issued boilerplate documents that only required the filling in the blanks by the parties to the contract. Since most of the ex-slaves could not read or write, the Bureau ensured that the landowner failed to take advantage of the freedman by having an agent sign the document. At first, because money was nonexistent in the South after the war, the contracts were quite simple with the employer promising to provide the employee's food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and care for the employee's minor and elderly

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dependents (Stephenson 77). What is ironic about this arrangement is that this contract is precisely what the slave owners provided for their slaves before the war! Thus, instead of being a victim of “involuntary servitude,” the freedman could now enter into voluntary servitude with the blessings of the agents of the occupational government. However, the major benefit that the freedmen lost was their retirement plans. When the slave became too old to work, the master was obliged under state law to provide continuous care for his servant. According to Nehemiah Adams, a Boston abolitionist and preacher, Southern slaves enjoyed a higher standard of living due to the provision that masters gave to them than Northerner workers, who did similar work, but had to pay for all of their necessities out of their wages. If the slave received money for side jobs, like sewing or woodworking, the slave was permitted to keep fifty percent of what he earned, funds that often were used to purchase his freedom. (51).

Later, when landowners were able, the contracts provided not only the necessities of life but a share of the crops or cash as well, representing payments of \$8.00 to \$15.00 per month. However, once paid, the freedman believed that he was released from working until his money was gone. Only after the wages were spent completely, did freedmen report back to work. Many Northerners who came South to take advantage of the cheap land complained the loudest about the unreliability of black labor (Stephenson 78). To the black laborer, who did not have a tradition of obliging himself to the sacredness of keeping one’s word, contracts were a restriction on his freedom. Whenever they had the urge, freedmen would leave their employers for months, only to return later expecting their wages in full according to the contract. Whenever a labor dispute arose between the landowner and his employee, a special Bureau court would decide the conflict and enforce the contract.

The final task of the Freedmen's Bureau was to support any effort for educating the freedmen. Of course, section 13 of the extended law meant cooperation with Northern educational efforts, not Southern ones. Indeed, a paramount concern of the North was its fear that the freedmen would receive their education from Southerners, and thus, the Republicans would lose the chance to make the freedman their political ally (Stephenson and Coulter 80). Even though the shooting was over, the war was not. The South was to be remade in the image of the North. This regeneration was due to the North's opinion that white Southerners were barbaric and uncouth, which was believed by both James Russell Lowell and William Lloyd Garrison. The Northern-controlled Atlanta *Christian Index* stated in its March 22, 1866 issue that the South must learn "line upon line, precept upon precept, by military garrisons, by Bureau courts, by Congregational churches, by Northern settlers, by constitutional amendments, by Christian missionaries, by free schools, lectures, newspapers, and reading rooms, what be the first principles of social order, political eminence, moral worth and industrial success" (80). The Northern arrogance is clear: military occupation, not self-determination; Congregational churches, not Baptist or Methodist churches; government schools, not liberal arts academies; industrialism, not agrarianism.

The South wanted to educate the freedmen, but not with Yankee teachers. Yet the Northern teachers came by the hundreds, who were generally "pious young females of the Puritan persuasion who...dangled before the Negroes the educational Utopia" (Conway 86). Many of these teachers came South because they were rejected even by Northerners for their teaching radical beliefs, such as interracial marriage (93). The schoolmarms had a hatred for the Southern whites; therefore, white communities refused the teachers who

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were forced to stay with black families, thus increasing the Southern ostracism. In the September 5, 1867 issue of Atlanta's *Daily Opinion*, the editor suggested that the only purpose of the Northern teachers was "to stir up strife and sow the tares of hate and evil in the minds of their pupils" (Stephenson and Coulter 81). In his book, *Northern Teacher in the South*, Swint reported that one schoolmarm wrote in a letter to a friend, "I am just at this time feeling as if it would be pleasant, had I the power, and an iron heel strong enough, to grind every one of the Secessionists deep into the earth" (63).

However, setting aside the teachers' malicious purpose, the New England system of schooling was wrong for the freedmen. This opinion was offered by General Samuel C. Armstrong, who not only was with the Freeman's Bureau for a short time, but also founded the Hampton Institute in Virginia. After seeing the freedmen in their refugee camps, Armstrong was convinced that what the ex-slaves needed was technical training and social skills. Built with the money of Christian aid societies, the Hampton Institute attracted black students from several states. Perhaps the most famous student to attend this institute was Booker T. Washington. While a student, Washington stated that he learned not only "book learning," but also how to take a bath, to use a napkin, and to use a toothbrush, which in his opinion, is the most distinguishing mark of a civilized human being (Washington 28). While he talks favorably about the "unselfish class of men and women" who taught in the black schools, Washington does agree with Armstrong that the New England system of learning was disastrous for the freedmen. After arriving at Tuskegee, Alabama, in order to establish a school, Washington visited with several black families in the community for nearly a month. After much reflection, Washington concludes that the best school for the freedmen

in central Alabama would be a technical school with practical and Biblical training patterned after the Hampton Institute.

Of one thing I felt more strongly convinced than ever, after spending this month in seeing the actual life of the coloured people, and that was that, in order to lift them up, something must be done more than merely to imitate New England education as it then existed. I saw more clearly than ever the wisdom of the system which General Armstrong had inaugurated at Hampton. To take the children of such people as I had been among for a month, and each day give them a few hours of mere book education, I felt would be almost a waste of time (57).

Washington was gratified that the white citizens of Tuskegee did all they could to help the new school and that they proudly considered the school to be a vital part of their community. Thus, at least from Washington's perspective, Southern whites were eager to help the freedmen with educational goals. On the other hand, the Northern schoolmarm arguably did not wish "to lift" the freedmen, but rather to enslave them with an indoctrination of hate for the Southern white man, and to instill a constant loving obedience for their so-called saviors, the Republican party.

Not surprisingly, the Bureau was filled with dishonesty and corruption. Although he was eventually acquitted, even Commissioner Howard was accused of mismanagement of governmental funds. One of the worst abuses of power centered on several scams where agents would convince freedmen to go on strike. The agent would then promise the employers that he could get the workers back on the job for a fee of twenty dollars per worker. The "fees" were paid to the agents, and the workers went back to work. However,

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the freedmen went back on the job not only without an increase in their wages, but also with a loss of wages for the days they were on strike. (Stephenson and Coulter 87).

Since the freedman was unwanted in the North primarily because he would have created a surplus pool of labor and because he would likely become a burden to the Northern states, Congress created the Freedmen's Bureau to ensure that the ex-slaves remained in the Southern states. The scheme deprived nearly four million freedmen of sympathetic help from Southerners for necessary skills, proper education, and protection under law. In short, the freedmen became dependent upon the central government for his food, his education, and his protection. The campaign to keep blacks in the South worked very well in that by 1940, while there were twelve million black Americans in the United States, nine million of these citizens were in the South. The use of black Americans in order to enrich the white elite in the central government continues to be the sad policy even to this day. Indeed, the Freedmen's Bureau set the central government's standard for being the "friend of the Negro." In the 1865 edition of the *Southern Cultivator*, the editor referred to Job who suffered misunderstanding and persecution by his "friends": "Lucky Job!...He was merely tried by the officious advise and interference of only three intermeddling friends, while we, poor devils at the South, as penniless as he, are annoyed with more that three million just such intermeddlers" (88). Of course these "intermeddlers" represented all of the North, whose collective will possessed the Freedmen's Bureau, proving to be a pestilence for both black and white Southerners. All that Southerners ever wanted was to be left alone to determine their own destiny among the nations of the world. Apparently, such a desire is too much to ask in a sin-cursed world, because even today the intermeddling continues.

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### Appendix B

#### Modern Language Association Bibliographical Forms

#### **BOOK BY ONE AUTHOR**

Rushdoony, Rousas J. *The Nature of the American System*. Fairfax: Thoburn Press, 1965.

#### **BOOK BY TWO OR THREE AUTHORS**

Fisher, Gene, and Glen Chambers. *The Revolution Myth*. Greenville SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1981.

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#### **TWO OR MORE BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR**

Rushdoony, Rousas J. *Intellectual Schizophrenia*. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1961.

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Shakespeare, William. *The Comedy of Errors*. Ed. Harry Levin. New York: New American Library, 1965.

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Josephus, Flavius. *The Works of Josephus*. Trans. William Whiston. Lynn MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1981.

#### **ANTHOLOGY**

Ellmann, Richard, and Robert O'Clair, eds. *The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry*, 2nd ed. New York: Norton & Co., 1988.

#### **WORK IN SEVERAL VOLUMES (WHEN CITING FROM ONE VOLUME ONLY)**

Jones, Bob. *Historical Books*. Greenville SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1973. Vol. 2 of *Old Testament Sermons*. 4 vols.

[Arabic numerals should be used even though the publisher may have used Roman numerals; that is, "IV" is changed to 4.]

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Jones, Bob. *Old Testament Sermons*. 4 vols. Greenville SC: Bob Jones University Press, 1973.

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Holt, Robert R. "Freud, Sigmund." *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. Ed. David L. Sills. 18 vols. New York: Macmillan, 1968.

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Pope, Alexander. "An Essay on Criticism." *English Literature: A College Anthology*. Eds. Donald B. Clark, et al. New York: Macmillan Co., 1960. 353 - 355.

[Do not forget to add the page numbers after the publication data. If the work has four or more authors or editors, then you will cite only the first individual followed by "et al."]

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Anderson, Virgil A. *Training the Speaking Voice*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.

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Toufexis, Anastasia. "Dining with Invisible Danger." *Time* 27 March 1989: 28.

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[The "4" after the title of the journal is the volume number].

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Watson, Robert W. *Smarr Publishers*. 15 Dec. 2001 <<http://www.smarrpublishers.com>>.

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