



PRE-WRITING TIPS

Writing Support Desk



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WHAT DO YOU DO
BEFORE YOU
WRITE?



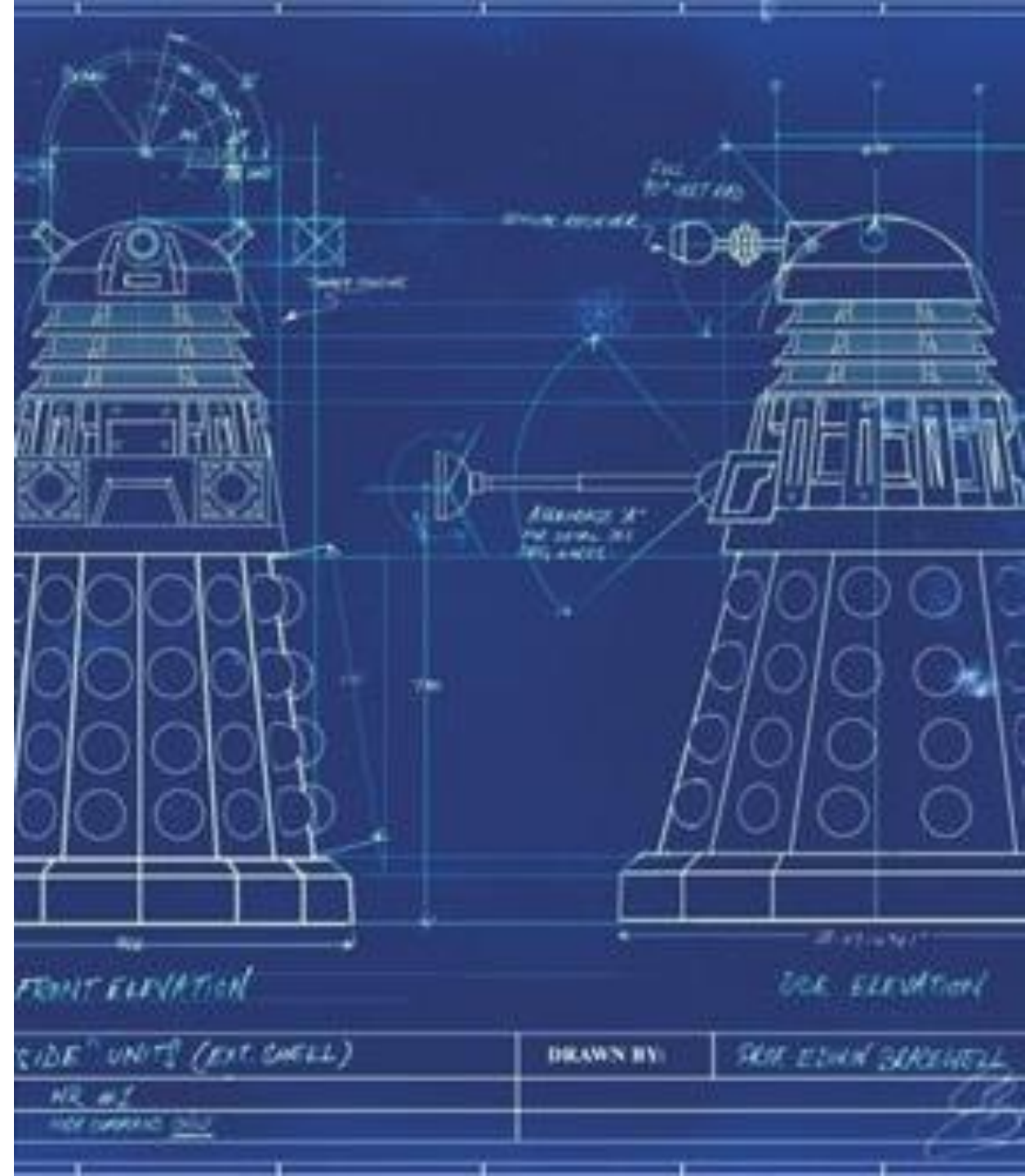
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PRE-WRITING:

WHY

BOTHER?

- Understand the prompt
- Manage time
- Develop a research strategy
- Organize ideas
- Develop a blueprint



STEP-BY-STEP



1.
**Analyze
Prompt**

2.
Research

3.
**Organize
Ideas**

STEP ONE:
ANALYZE
PROMPT



**WHAT
KIND OF
ASSIGNMENT
IS IT?**





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WHAT KIND OF ASSIGNMENT IS IT?

Research paper

Personal/Reflective response

Paper proposal

Persuasive essay

Compare and contrast

Creative project

Literature review

Annotated bibliography

Case study

Lab report



COMMON COMMAND WORDS

Define

Summarize

Compare/Contrast

Critique

Analyze

Evaluate

Reflect



OTHER REQUIREMENTS?

Page count?

Mandatory sources?

Certain number of sources?

Questions to answer?

Citation style?

Formatting?

Rubric?



PRO TIP:
MAKE A
CHECKLIST!



Define a polar covalent bond using examples from **page 29** in your text. **Compare and contrast** the features of polar covalent bonds with other types of chemical bonds. Given this information, **determine** whether Experiment X will create a polar covalent bond, a nonpolar covalent bond, or an ionic bond. **Explain.**

1. Read page 29

2. Define 'polar covalent bond'

3. Outline similarities & differences between types of bonds

4. Predict Experiment X's outcome

5. Provide reasoning for your prediction

SO...
**WHAT'S
YOUR
TOPIC?**



TOPIC

- Object, idea, or theory you are writing about
- ‘Write a paper about dogs’: dogs = topic
- ‘Write a paper about WWII’: WWII = topic
- Not the same as a research question

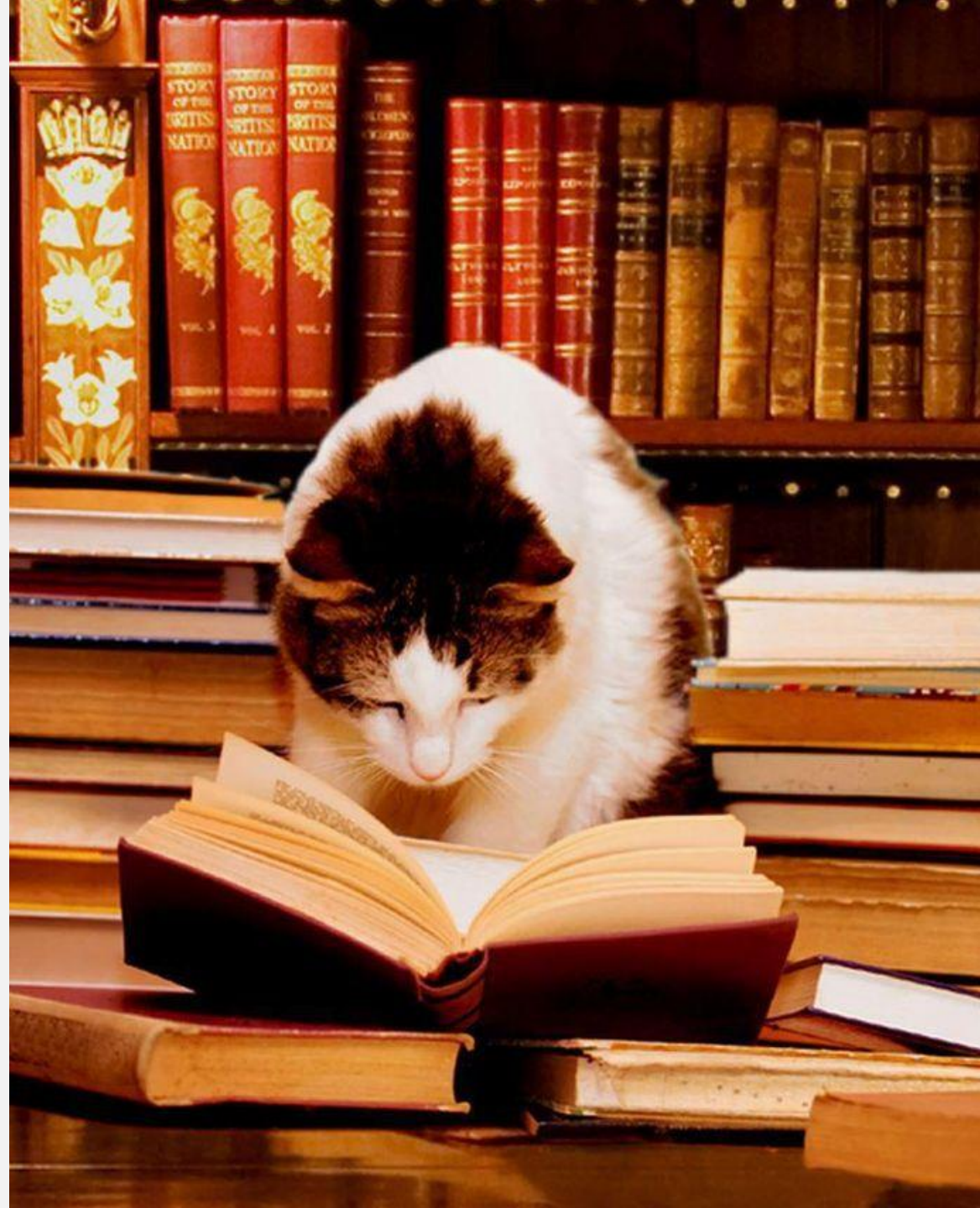


RESEARCH QUESTION

- Narrows the topic into something specific to research
- Dogs = topic
- “How does feeding schedule influence dogs’ body mass?” = research question
- WWII = topic
- “What factors influenced America’s entrance into WWII?” = research question



STEP TWO: RESEARCH



WHERE TO START?

- Pick out key words in your research question
- “How does feeding schedule influence dogs’ body mass?” = research question
- “dogs” “body mass”
“feeding” “schedule”
- Let research inform your writing (try a different question/approach!)



KINDS OF SOURCES?

- Scholarly articles & peer-reviewed articles
- Archival information
- Statistics
- Newspapers
- Websites
- Blogs

Remember to check what kinds of sources are mandatory for your assignment! If unsure, talk to your prof or GA.





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WHERE TO START FINDING INFORMATION?

- Course textbook/notes
- Google/Wikipedia (*for general info only*)
- Bibliography mining
- Leddy Library
- YOUR LIBRARIAN (each discipline has one!)
- Google Scholar
- Leddy databases/
one-stop shop



Google
Scholar



My profile



My library

Google Scholar



☒ Articles ☐ Case law

Recommended articles

[Negative Effects of "Predatory" Journals on Global Health Research](#)
DA Forero, MH Oermann, A Manca, F Deriu... - Annals of Global Health, 2018

[Predatory publishing and cybercrime targeting academics](#)
MG Umlauf, Y Mochizuki - International journal of nursing practice, 2018

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Settings

Search results

Languages

Library links

Account

Button

Collections

☒ Search articles (☒ include patents).

☐ Search case law.

Results per page

10

Google's default (10 results) provides the fastest results.

Where results open

☐ Open each selected result in a new browser window

Bibliography manager

☒ Don't show any citation import links.

☐ Show links to import citations into BibTeX

Save

Cancel

To retain settings, you must turn on [cookies](#)



Settings

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Show library access links for (choose up to five libraries):



e.g., *Harvard*

- ☒ University of Windsor - Get it at UWindsor
- ☒ Canadian National Catalogue - Find in AMICUS

Online access to library subscriptions is usually restricted to patrons of that library. You may need to login with your library password, use a campus computer, or configure your browser to use a library proxy. Please visit your library's website or ask a local librarian for assistance.

Save

Cancel

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EVALUATING SOURCES



The Currency Relevance Authority Accuracy Purpose Test



CURRENCY

- When was it first published?
- When was it updated?
- Does your project require more recent information?



RELEVANCE

- Is the source related to your topic?
- Does it fit the requirements of your assignment?
- Who is the intended audience?



AUTHORITY

- Who is the author?
- Who is the publisher?
- What are their credentials?
- What is the publication process?
Peer-review?



ACCURACY

- Where is the info from?
- Are arguments well-supported?
- Are there references?
What kind?
- Peer-reviewed?



PURPOSE

- Is it meant for education?
Entertainment?
To sell something?
- Who funds it?
- What bias is there?
- Is it fact or opinion?



KEEP TRACK AS YOU GO!

- Start a document to keep track of sources
- Save website/doi, author name, article title, and date
- Paste important quotes/info under each with page numbers
- Colour code/highlight
- Start formatting references as you go to save time later



STEP THREE: ORGANIZE

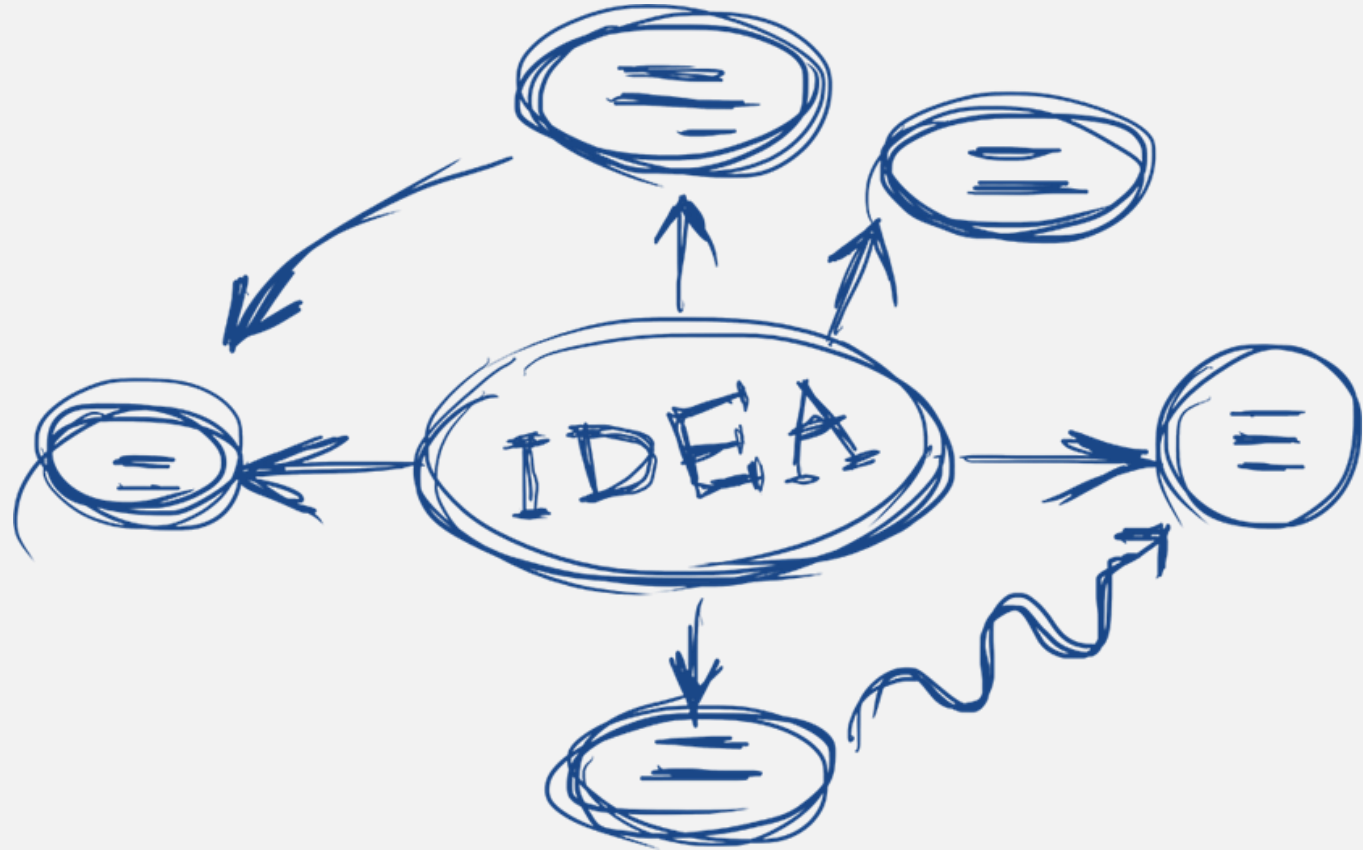




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BRAINSTORMING

- Listing
- Mind-mapping
- Collaborating
- Free writing



DOUBLE-SIDED JOURNAL

ONE SIDE SUMMARIZES RESOURCE MATERIAL

- What are the main ideas?
- What perspective does the author take?
- What types of evidence does the author use?

ONE SIDE RECORDS YOUR RESPONSE TO IT

- *Do you agree or disagree?*
- *How does it differ from your perspective?*
 - *Are there any discrepancies in the evidence?*

NARROW FOCUS

- By demographic?
Time? Place?
- By approach?
Cause/Effect?
Compare/Contrast?
Process?

*Remember, you can't cover
EVERYTHING in one paper!*



BEFORE YOU START WRITING CHECKLIST

Have you
analyzed
and
understood
the
assignment?

Do you know
enough
about the
topic to write
an informed
response?

Are your
ideas clear
to you? Can
you make
them clear
to others?

If so, you're
ready to get
started!

QUESTIONS?

Remember, this slideshow and many others are available to download via the Writing Support Brightspace page.

Students can self-enroll as 'learners' either by selecting 'Discover' from the Brightspace landing page and clicking 'Enroll' on the Writing Support organization.