

To find a topic:

- Check out previous papers
- Look at the catalogs prof. has sent us. ABCFM -> in papers (choose a topic from repeating names)

Primary sources: *find the definition off the internet* (sounds like a quiz question!)

After we've chosen a topic, we look for primary sources for that topic. However, if we haven't found something, we should check library and ABCFM for other topics!

Note that, topics range from family to institution to case studies (murder, celebration, ...) to diplomatic issues and relationships, and more.

While checking the ABCFM sources, check the information on the cover

Check the content (repeating names of locations or individuals or etc.) [page analysis]

Check whether it has been studied before

Now that we've chosen a topic, we expand our research, that is to say, we'll be looking for other primary sources (e.g. other archives, other university libraries, national library, and ...)

Do not assume every primary source is a primary source. Some maybe be barely related to the subject matter, or has meager information hidden in some chapter of the source.

COMPARE THE SOURCES (e.g. compare the content of the, say, personal paper written by someone with newspapers about him/her/them [also seek for information from autobiography of that person if there is any])

After primary sources, comes secondary sources. Secondary sources further expand our research maybe by having quotations from other primary sources!

WRITING A HISTORY RESEARCH PAPER

The difference between history paper (or more generally social science papers) and science papers is their difference in METHODOLOGIES (*search for it) and TECHNIQUES (*search for it) they use during their search.

Topic

Thesis statement: [if there's ambiguity in thesis, pages following thesis will have weak foundation]

Analysis: We should be analytic while examining a source. We should ask why, when, who, for whom, in what circumstance etc. (*remember the French revolution example prof. gave!)

[newspapers and sources may be rigged so we should be critical and compare sources to extrapolate the real event (for that matter we also should question the author of a paper or a book!)]

Clarity: We should write clean, be precise, and our paper should be easy to understand (because we write for people or general public). Also avoid generalizations, exaggerations, ambiguity, ...

Cause and Effect

Chronology: e.g. Do not jump from era to era.

Using primary sources: primary sources are not constrained by written sources, they also include clothes, governmental sources, furniture etc.

avoid
useless
resources

see contents
of paper
find repetition

new primary
sources
gold!

scientific
original
ideas to
portray
something

Scholarly second sources: Avoid "standard" websites (check who wrote the paper you've found in the website), *Better off not using Wikipedia (because content can be changed by anybody)*, seek for credible, prestigious, and good publishers (*Cambridge university publication example, remember that one?)

No excessive quotation: paraphrase, make your own sentences, use quotation in context, that is to say, do not quote haphazardly just to reach word limit, or avoid vague references to the subject matter.

Do not be judgmental toward characters lived in past (put yourself into that time period) => Anachronistic (look it up) sentences should be avoided.

Strong conclusion: Do Not Summarize, include sentences which contribute to the whole paper, and frankly, should be eye opening (just like the other paragraphs)

Style: Chicago style, do not repeat, avoid long sentences (be short and precise), avoid passive voice, do not use slang, do not generalize, avoid filling phrases, be simple, do not combine sentences (you're writing a history paper so you should be factual and precise), tenses are important (use mostly past tense [and its variations] but when referring to authors (alive) or in some exceptional circumstances use simple tense)

write something that's different from paper and matters.

William Khan