

### What Makes a Good Research Topic?

- When you “Think Like a Researcher” you are focused on a research **question** rather than a research **topic**.
- You must also be able to **articulate the problem** that underlies the question.
- This problem must have **social significance**.
- The solution you argue for in your proposal must be **arguable** and **feasible** based on reliable evidence.

### Examples

	<b>Issue (Broad)</b> What is the issue or overall topic that interests you?	<b>Research Question (Narrower)</b> What is a specific research question you want to investigate?	<b>Underlying Problem(s)</b> What is the problem that makes your question worth investigating? Is this an actual problem or an assumed problem?	<b>Social Significance</b> Does your problem have social significance?	<b>Proposal/Solution</b> What is your proposal for addressing this problem? Is your proposal <u>both</u> arguable & feasible?
1	Organic Farming	Are fruits and vegetables grown on organic farms healthier than those grown on conventional farms?	Conventional farming may produce vegetables with pesticide residues leaving individuals susceptible to preventable diseases.	Human health Environment	Consumers should choose fruits and vegetables grown organically, especially those fruits and vegetables that are most susceptible to pesticide residue.
2	Rising Cost of a College Education	Is a college education worth the investment for students in the social sciences?	Many students are emerging from 4-year degree programs with staggering student debt and no job prospects.	Debt Unemployment Value of Education	Colleges should focus on critical thinking and data analysis skills in the social sciences curriculum.
3	Law Enforcement Practices	How do local police units allocate funding and prioritize protection for all of its community members?			

	Issue (Broad)	Research Question (Narrower)	Underlying Problem(s)	Social Significance	Proposal/Solution
4	Campus Safety	Does under-age alcohol use contribute to a higher incidence of date rape on college campuses?			
5	Violence in the Media	Do violent video games contribute to school shootings and other mass murders?			
6	Violence in the Media	How do first-person shooter games affect the psychology of their players?			

**What ideas do you have for a research question?**

	Issue (Broad)	Research Question (Narrower)	Underlying Problem(s)	Social Significance	Proposal/Solution
A					
B					
C					