

Tips on Paper 4

Picking the Question

1. Pick something you're passionate about! You can't just be mildly interested in the topic. Ideally, you'll already have a pretty strong opinion on the topic you pick; that way, even your own beliefs can be challenged during the research and writing process. If you're not extremely passionate about what you're writing, you won't be motivated to do this paper. You want your paper to be compelling and argumentative, not simply an array of facts that you have on the subject.
2. Start early!! This is **extremely** important to do. You have a long time to complete this paper. We all know this. It seems easy enough, but you need to start early enough that you don't fall behind or rush the process. The amount of critical thinking, reflection, and evaluation needed in this paper can't and won't happen overnight. You need to have already started thinking about your topic before school even starts, at least. You don't necessarily need to go into hardcore research mode at this time, but start thinking of certain areas or subjects that you'd like to explore. The topic of your paper is completely up to you; it doesn't even have to be global! The earlier you start thinking about and doing basic level research on your topic, the easier writing the paper will be.
3. Make sure your question is workable – don't make it too broad and don't make it too specific. A question that's too broad is extremely difficult to research because you don't know where to start and you don't know where you're going. If you do want a broad, potentially vague question, make sure you include a sub-question, or at least explain what you mean, in the introduction of your paper. A narrow question is also tricky; you don't want to limit yourself during the research process. Make sure you know exactly what you're going for and what you truly want to explore in your essay before committing to a question.

Research

1. Research is **crucial** for this paper!! Even though this isn't strictly a research paper, you **need** to be able to support your argument with specific references and examples. The more research you do during those first few months, the better. You don't want to have to do research in the middle of actually writing the paper. You have to set aside time to research, especially out of class. It's extremely difficult (and rare) to actually get sufficient research in one class period 5 times a week. This is an independent study class; you need to be prepared to do most of this on your own. You *can* do it, you just have to be vigilant and completely honest with yourself.
2. You have to have multiple sources. You need to be able to show how much research you've done through the references page alone. Having 2-4 sources to support one specific area of your topic makes it so much easier to convince the reader that what you're saying is the right way to think. If you only use the same few sources throughout your paper, your overall argument is weakened because it shows that you either aren't supporting yourself well or were too lazy to look up supporting sources. If you really can't find anything else to support what you're trying to say, perhaps you need to reconsider whether or not to include that portion of research into your paper.

Logs

1. Logs are annoying. We all know this. They're time consuming and it's easy to get behind. Despite that, you **need** to keep track of what you're doing. This is such an easy way to get points for your paper, and many kids don't get the full amount of points they could because the logs aren't what they should be.
2. You need to log every day, or at least every other day. If you don't have the time or energy to type out every single thing you did or thought during that particular day, at least put down a sentence or two to get you started. Even pasting a quote that you found during research will help you! You'll be able to go back when you do have the time and express your thoughts on that quote.
3. There are 4 things that you get points for in the logs. If they aren't there, you won't get the easy points. The four categories you need are:
 - a. SIMPL – very limited and simplistic personal comment
 - b. RES – refers to research done
 - c. SPEC – reflection is specific to this research
 - d. GEN – reflection might apply to any research on any topic

Methodology

1. Okay, so methodology is weird. It's kind of difficult to understand, or even explain properly, in the beginning. That being said, methodology is extremely important in this paper. It's not just the structure of your paper.
2. Here are some things to consider when establishing your methodology:
 - a. What kind of research have you done? Case studies? Literature? Interviews? All of the above?
 - b. The structure of your paper. This is completely up to you – you can structure this paper in any way you want. You can use AS level as a guide, find a different method that works, or even create your own personal structure. This is simply another instance of the vast amount of freedom you have in this class.
 - c. How are you coming to your conclusion(s)? What kind of value are you putting on certain things?

Helping AS Students

1. This is a tricky part for this particular class. It's difficult to help AS students, especially when you're more concerned about your own paper. The first few months, they're going to need your help quite often. They really don't know what they're doing, and it's part of your job in this class to help them understand what to do.
2. Helping AS students is time-consuming. They'll have way too many questions and you'll have to correct a lot of mistakes and grade many papers. This cuts into a lot of your class time to work on your paper. The first few months, you'll most likely get incredibly discouraged. If you don't take time out of class to work on this paper, you'll feel like you're falling too far behind.

- Once they know what they're doing and are competent enough to do it on their own, you won't be needed as much. As long as you get through the first quarter or so with them, you'll be completely capable of working on your paper during the class time.

Before You Write

- Make sure you have enough research. This is crucial before you even thinking about writing the paper. If you don't have enough research, you won't have the ability to back up your arguments or prove your points as well as you want. Without enough evidence, your paper will not be as strong as it needs to be. You **need** to have multiple pages of research in your back pocket for this paper. There's never going to be enough evidence or examples to prove your point – this is where editing will come in. It's better to overwrite than to underwrite, and this applies to everything in your paper, not just the research and examples. If you end up needing to take an example or two out of your paper during the editing process, that's fine. What's not fine is not having enough information to even have a well-supported, sustained argument.
- Do a scaffolding!!! Outlining your paper is extremely beneficial to you. Scaffolding may seem tedious and unnecessary, but they ultimately prove to be really helpful. Not only is this a great way to get a firm handle on the structure of your paper, it will ultimately show you if you did enough research for your paper. Even getting the basic set up for structure, quotes, validations, analysis and evaluation can be helpful to you. Doing a scaffolding or outline of some sort allows you to gather all your thoughts into one cohesive document. It also makes writing the actual paper easier, as you won't be going in blind or unsure how to start.
- Figure out where you think your paper is going. What do you ultimately want to show or prove in your paper before you start writing. Why should anyone care about this topic? What exactly are looking to get from this process? All of this is relevant information to think about and eventually put in your introduction.

Writing the Paper

- It's time to start writing your paper! 5,000 words seems quite intimidating, but if you've done everything right you won't have any problems reaching and surpassing this number.
- Doing an outline or scaffolding isn't necessarily a requirement, but it will definitely help you at this time.
- The first thing you need is an introduction. There are a few questions you need to answer in some way or another during the intro:
 - Why did you come up with that question? What's the significance of it?
 - How do you expect to answer it? How might someone else approach it?
 - What did you want to achieve? Why did you structure it the way you did?
 - What are your own opinions? How will you justify your conclusion?
 - What is your thesis and concession?
 - What is your methodology?
 - Why did you choose this? How does it help the reader understand your objectives?
- Are there any key terms you want to define? (keep them to a minimum – only do the broadest/most important ones)

4. Now that you've written your introduction, you're ready to dive into the actual content of the paper. Remember that you have plenty of time to do this paper; there should be no need to rush if you planned it out properly. A good thing to do would be to take the paper sections at a time. In other words, plan to have certain parts of your paper finished on certain dates. Work on it every day – no matter how much you actually get done, it's good to consistently go back to writing your paper.

Analysis and Evaluation

1. This is arguably the most important element of your paper. Analysis and evaluation count for 20 points each for Paper 4 – that's 40 out of 75 points you can get. Without these two things, you most likely will not do well on this paper.
2. Analysis should almost be second nature at this point, especially after taking AS Global Perspectives. Nevertheless, you need to know how to do it and be prepared to do a lot of it. A good way to make sure you're doing it (and enough of it) is to analyze as you find. During the research process, you're going to be finding a lot of potential quotes to use in your paper. You'll more than likely have an immediate reaction or opinion to it – write it down. Better yet, you could put the quote – along with your initial thoughts on it – in your log. This will not only get you points in the research and/or reflection part of your log, but will also serve as a great thing to come back to when you're ready to sit down and write.
3. Evaluation is always going to be a little bit trickier than analysis. Analysis is taking an idea or quote apart, while evaluation is taking all of that and creating a new idea or thought. It's extremely difficult to reach evaluation when you haven't done enough research on the topic. This is another area in which the amount of research you have is immensely important. Without enough knowledge on the subject, you won't be able to effectively reach evaluation. Again, evaluation is worth 20 out of the 75 points possible in this paper, so you need to be able to do it at least somewhat well. The evaluation should naturally stem from your analysis. What do you want your reader to take away from this? What are you trying to say? Why is this subject so important – both within your paper and in the real world – and why should we care?
 - a. Remember that your source validation counts under evaluation! If you know you're never going to be the best at evaluation, make sure your source validations are really strong to give yourself some points in the area.
4. These two things should be the absolute last thing you cut down on during editing. They're worth so many points that you can't afford to cut these out.

Comments the Graders Will Make

1. Throughout your paper, there are certain things the grader is going to be looking for and marking down. Some of them are negative, so you need to make sure that your paper will have a significant more amount of the good comments. Looking at these may seem irrelevant, but knowing what they'll be looking for will ensure that you're aware of what to put in your paper and execute it properly.
2. Argument (same as analysis)
 - a. IRR – irrelevant material
 - b. DES – merely describing factual material

- c. SOME ARG – some relevant argument
 - d. GOOD ARG – good argument
 - e. EX ARG – excellent argument (particularly effective and well supported)
 - f. NOT CLEAR – the point being made isn't easy to follow
 - g. ASS – assertion (just stating an unsupported view)
 - h. WELL SUPP – view is well backed-up
3. Evidence (same as evaluation)
- a. S – source (only reference)
 - b. S USED – a source is used uncritically to support a point/argument
 - c. SOME EVAL – some critical comment but not very strong or developed
 - d. GOOD EVAL – supported and developed evaluation
 - e. EX EVAL – excellent evaluation (particularly effective and well supported)
 - f. NOT REF – no reference or footnote
4. Conclusion
- a. CONC FOLLOWS – conclusion follows directly from the arguments
 - b. NOT SHOWN EARLIER – new material introduced without any reference to earlier argument
 - c. IRR – conclusion deals with material outside the scope of the question
5. Reflection (log)
- a. SIMPL – very limited and simplistic personal comment
 - b. RES – refers to research done
 - c. SPEC – reflection is specific to this research
 - d. GEN – reflection might apply to any research on any topic

Peers

1. Your peers are going to be extremely useful to you – they're there, so why not use them to your advantage? While this is an independent study and you won't have the same amount of help from your teacher that you're used to, your peers will be able to help you if you're struggling.
2. Bounce ideas off each other! Coming up with different ideas or ways to approach your question may be a little difficult to do on your own. Someone else may provide insight on something that you hadn't thought of yet or had thought of in a different way. This can be a helpful step during the beginning stages of this course.
3. If you're stuck at any point during this process, ask someone for help. If you can't find any research on a certain area, ask someone to sit down and help you try to come up with different ways to search for it.
4. Peer reviewing is vital. The comments you can provide to another person can help turn their paper from good to great. Don't make simple comments like "good" or "reword." Ask questions! When they do something good, tell them why/how it's good. In areas they need to approve, suggest ways they could do so. Be critical, but don't be disrespectful.
5. When someone else reviews your paper, don't be dismissive right away. There's no need to get upset or angry when someone is simply trying to help you improve your paper. Instead of

- dismissing what they have to say, think about where they're coming from. Does what they say hold any merit? Could you change what they're looking at to make it even better?
6. This can be extremely helpful to everyone. Peer reviewing – in addition to simply having conversations with peers about your respective papers – can be a phenomenal way to improve your paper. Take advantage of having people around you who are going through the same process as you.

Concluding Your Paper

1. The conclusion of your paper is another element that's particularly important – this is your last chance to convince the person reading your paper of what you're trying to argue. It's a chance to collect all your thoughts and reflection in one, cohesive space.
2. The conclusion should be at least half a page – preferably an entire page. It's crucial to finish your paper strong; it can't just be a simple summary of what you've already stated. Of course, you can summarize a little to properly conclude your thoughts, but you need more. Show your reader where you've been going during your entire process – what point have you been trying to make the entire time?
3. One strategy to help you reach a sound conclusion would be to look back at your evaluation and what you were trying to say at each point. How do you want to answer your question? Do you want to provide a straight forward answer, or a more open-ended one? How did you reach your particular answer?
4. This is a good place to include your own personal reflection. How did your journey shape your conclusion? Did the process change your own opinion at all, and why? Discussing your own opinion or beliefs helps add a more realistic aspect to your paper; it's not simply a research paper, it's a topic that's important to the real world.

Editing

1. Editing your paper takes just as long (and is just as important) as actually writing the paper. It may seem annoying, but good editing can take your paper from an okay paper to an excellent paper. It's extremely likely that you're over the 5,000-word count; this is a good thing! There are certain areas where you should begin your editing first, as well as certain areas where editing should be your last resort.
2. Introduction – while the intro can get you a few points for simply being there, it's the easiest and most obvious place to start the editing process. At first, your introduction will probably be a page long, but you can cut it down to one paragraph easily. Take out things that you don't think are entirely necessary to your paper – this could be too much explanation of a topic. An introduction isn't really a necessity, so this is where up to hundreds of words can be cut.
3. Quotes – long quotes are common, especially in this paper. You want to make sure that every single piece of information you want to analyze and evaluate is in your paper, which is fine. However, there's surely phrases or at least a few words that can be taken out of all your quotes. This is another area where editing can be beneficial in getting the word count where it needs to be.

4. Explanation/Description – you want this paper to be extremely analytical and evaluative. However, some level of explanation or description is necessary at times. This is fine, but definitely an area where infrequency is a good thing. When you come upon across an area of description in your paper, you need to think about what you want to do with it. You could shorten it down, turn it into something more analytical, or cut it out entirely. It really depends on how necessary it is to your paper and to what extent you’re using it.
5. Analysis + Evaluation – this should be your **last resort!!!** To reiterate how important these are: 40 out of 75 points come from analysis and evaluation. You don’t want to cut any of this unless you absolutely have to.

Oral Defense

1. This is where you can get some points back from your instructor. You’ll spend 45 minutes to an hour talking about your paper in any number of ways. You’ll talk about things you put in your paper, things you left out, specific points in your paper, the class, the process, and more.
2. This is **not** supposed to be something that causes you stress! These is an easy, one-on-one conversation between you and your teacher.
3. You’ll need to grade your paper before your oral defense. You’ll give yourself points based on analysis, evaluation, research, communication, and reflection. Remember not to be too hard on yourself, but don’t be too easy on yourself.
4. After you finish your oral defense, you’ll be done with A Level Global Perspectives! Congratulations!