
GBT0002

— Week 7 Choosing a Topic for Project —
Week 8: Group Project

Objectives:

1. 5 guidelines for choosing a topic (week 7)
2. 6 barriers of effective decision making (week 7)
3. 5 steps: Research Process Overview (week 7)
4. Group project discussion (week 8)

Guidelines for Choosing a Topic

5 Guidelines for Choosing a Topic

1. **Choose a topic that's appropriate to the length of your paper.**

Example:

You are required to write a 5-page-paper on Women's right

Don't: write on the history of women's rights

Do: write one incident in the history of women's right

- Narrow topic leads to close observation; broad topic leads to overgeneralization.
- So determine the length required, before working on your project.

5 Guidelines for Choosing a Topic

2. Avoid a topic that will tempt you to summarize rather than to discuss or analyze.

Example:

You are required to write about Macbeth

Don't: write the plot of Macbeth

Do: write the final scene of Macbeth that helps illustrate the play's theme

- When considering a topic, ask yourself if it can lead to a reasonable thesis.

5 Guidelines for Choosing a Topic

3. Choose a topic that interests you

Don't: Choose a topic that you are not interested in

Do : Something that interest you, something that you care about.

Example: You don't care about limiting cigarette advertising, don't select it as a topic for a persuasive essay.

- When you write something that you care about, you will have more to say, and you'll write better.
- When you find the topic is interesting to you, then your reader will find it interesting too, based on what you have written and share.

5 Guidelines for Choosing a Topic

4. If your assignment requires research, choose a topic on which you can find material.

- Ensure you work on a topic that you can get the necessary information

5. After you have picked a topic, don't be afraid to change it if it isn't working out.

- Instructors would rather you write a good paper than paper that is lack convincing and details.

6 Barriers of Effective Decision-Making

6 Barriers of Effective Decision-Making

1. Insufficient Information

- Without sufficient information, it is like you are making a decision without any basis (evidence, proof)
- Solutions:
 - Take some time to gather the necessary information to inform your decision
 - If necessary, prioritise your information-gathering by identifying whichever information is the most important, if time is tight.

6 Barriers of Effective Decision-Making

2. Too much information

- Having too much information especially conflicting information,, on the other hand, make it hard to see “the wood for the trees.”
- It is also known as analysis paralysis- a tactic to delay organizational decision-making
- Solutions:
 - Get everyone together to decide what information is really important and why
 - Set a clear timescale for decision-making, including an information-gathering stage.

6 Barriers of Effective Decision-Making

3. Too many people

- Decision making by committee is difficult.
- Different people have different views, and values.
- Solution:
 - One person is responsible for making a decision
 - Key: any decision is better than none

6 Barriers of Effective Decision-Making

4. Vested Interests

- Vested interests can be a crucial blockage.
- As it is not overtly expressed, it might be difficult to identify them and address them.
- Solution:
 - Explore with someone outside the process, but in a similar position

6 Barriers of Effective Decision-Making

5. Emotional Attachments

- People are very attached to the status quo.
- Decisions tend to involve the prospect of change and it might be difficult for many.
- Solutions:
 - Change management
 - <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/lead/change-management.html>
 - Deciding not to decide-might be a decision

6 Barriers of Effective Decision-Making

6. No emotional attachment

- You just don't care one way or the other
- Solutions:
 - A structured decision-making process: to identify some very real pros and cons of a particular actions, which you might not have thought about before
- Structured decision-making process helps:
 - Reduce more complicated decisions down to simpler steps;
 - See how any decisions are arrived at; and
 - Plan decision making to meet deadlines

5 Steps: Research Process Overview

Step 1: Develop a Topic

- Select a topic
- Develop research questions
- Identify keywords
- Find background information
- Redefine a topic

Step 1: Develop a Topic

1. Select a topic

- Before selecting a topic or starting your research, make sure you understand your assignment.
- Consider:
 - Have you been assigned a topic or can you pick your own?
 - How many pages/words do you need to write? How long is your presentation?
 - Do you need to include specific types of sources (e.g. scholarly journal, book, etc.)?
 - When is the assignment due? How much time do you have to research?

Step 1: Develop a Topic

2. Develop research questions

- Once you have selected a topic, the next step is to develop research questions.
 - Write down what you already know or don't know about the topic.
 - Use that information to develop questions.
 - Use probing questions. (why? what if?)
 - Avoid "yes" and "no" questions.

Step 1: Develop a Topic

3. Identifying keywords

- The keywords you use can have a profound impact on the results of your research. Using the “right” words will speed up the research process, while the “wrong” words can bring to it to a halt.
- Before you can begin searching for information, you need to identify keywords related to your topic. Key terminology can be easily be found by scanning:
 - Your research questions
 - Articles found from background research magnifying glass
 - Bibliographies found at the end of books and articles
- If you are still struggling:
 - Use a thesaurus to identify synonyms.
 - Find pictures related to your topic, then describe them.
 - Brainstorm keywords with a librarian, your instructor, or a friend.

Step 1: Develop a Topic

4. Find background information

- Background information can be found in:
 - Textbooks
 - Dictionaries
 - general encyclopedias
 - subject-specific encyclopedias
 - article databases

Step 1: Develop a Topic

5. Redefine a topic

- Is your topic too broad or too narrow?
- If you are finding too much information, your research topic may be too BROAD.
- Consider narrowing it to a more specific
- If you are finding too little information, your topic may be too NARROW, specialized, or current.

Step 1: Develop a Topic

5. Redefine a topic (too broad)

Time	Civil War, Iron Age, 1920's, 18th Century
Location	Europe, U.S., New York state, urban, eastern
Population	age, race, gender, nationality, ethnic group, occupation
Event or Aspect	<i>government regulations</i> related to cloning, <i>Battle of the Bulge</i> in WWII
Person or Group	college students, Democrats, Republicans

Broad Topic: Global warming

Narrower Topic: How will climate change impact sea levels and the coastal United States?

Step 1: Develop a Topic

5. Redefine a topic (too narrow)

Generalize	Generalize your topic. If your topic is the economic effects of fracking on Troy, PA, broaden your topic to all Pennsylvania communities or the United States.
Currency	If your topic is very current, there may not be books or journal articles available yet. Choose an alternative topic that is not so recent.
Database Choice	Use other databases in your subject area or consider databases in a related subject area which might cover the topic from a different perspective.
Synonyms	Use a thesaurus to find synonyms for your topic. When reading background information, note the terminology that is used.
Related	Explore related issues.
Expand / Remove	Expand or remove: location, time period, aspect, event, population, person/group.

Example of a Narrow Topic: Does cartoon viewing cause aggression in children under age five?

Broader: What are the negative effects of TV on children and adolescents?

Step 2: Locate information

- Use search strategies
 - https://libguides.elmira.edu/research/search_strategies
- Books
- Ebooks
- Articles
- Videos and images
- Databases
- Websites

Step 3: Evaluate and analyze information

1. Evaluate sources

- Apply the criteria in the CRAAP Test table or download the C.A.R.S. Website Evaluation Checklist to help assess the credibility of information found on a website.

Step 3: Evaluate and analyze information

1. Evaluate sources

- CRAAP test

Criteria	Questions to Ask
C urrency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When was the source written and published?• Has the information been updated recently?• Is currency pertinent to your research?
R elevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the source cover your research topic comprehensively or only cover one aspect?• To what extent does the source answer your research question?• Is the source considered popular or scholarly?• Is the terminology and language used easy to understand?• Does the source meet the requirements of your research assignment?
A uthority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who is the author (person, company, or organization)?• Does the source provide any information that leads you to believe the author is credible or an expert on the topic?• Can you describe the author's background (experience, education, knowledge)?• Does the author provide citations? Do you think they are reputable?
A ccuracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Can facts or statistics be verified through another source?• Based on your knowledge, does the information seem accurate? Does it match the information found in other sources?• Are there spelling or grammatical errors?
P urpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the purpose or motive for the source (educational, commercial, entertainment, promotional, etc.)?• Who is the intended audience?• Is the author pretending to be objective, but really trying to persuade, promote or sell something?• Does the source seem biased?

Website Evaluation Checklist		
Title of the website:		
URL:		
Credibility: A source that is created by a person or group who knows the subject and who cares about how it is presented. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the creator/author name listed? • Does the creator list information telling you that they are experts in that information? • Does the website have an .edu, .org, or .gov ending in its URL? 	Yes _____ _____ _____	No _____ _____ _____
Accuracy: A source with information that is current, complete, and correct. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the reading you have already done on the subject does the information on the site seem accurate? • Is the website free of spelling errors, grammatical errors, dead links, or other problems? 	_____ _____	_____ _____
Reasonableness: a source that is truthful and unbiased. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the website avoid advertising that does not seem appropriate? • Does it present both sides of an issue, or is it one opinion only? • Do you trust the author that has created the website? 	_____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____
Support: A source with verifiable sources of information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a bibliography or sources listed? 	_____	_____

Step 3: Evaluate and analyze information

2. Primary vs Secondary sources

Source Type	Examples
Primary A first-person account by someone who experienced or witnessed an event. The original document has not been previously published or interpreted by anyone else.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First-person account of an event• First publication of a scientific study• Speech or lecture• Original artwork• Handwritten manuscript• Letters between two people• A diary• Historical documents, e.g. Bill of Rights
Secondary One step removed from the primary original source. The author is reexamining, interpreting and forming conclusions based on the information conveyed in the primary source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Newspaper reporting on a scientific study• Review of a music CD or art show• Biography
Tertiary Further removed from a primary source. It leads the researcher to a secondary source, rather than to the primary source.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bibliography• Index to articles• Library catalog

Step 4: Write, Organize, and Communicate Information

1. Take note of your research citations.

- Use the following tips when creating a master document for your notes, sources, and ideas.
 - As you add sources, put them in the format you're using (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.).
 - Group sources by publication type (i.e., book, article, website).
 - Number each source within the publication type group.
 - For websites, include the URL information and the date you accessed each site.
 - Next to each idea, include the source number from the Works Cited file and the page number from the source. See the examples below. Note that #A5 and #B2 refer to article source 5 and book source 2 from the Works Cited file.
 - #A5 p.35: 76.69% of the hyperlinks selected from homepage are for articles and the catalog
 - #B2 p.76: online library guides evolved from the paper pathfinders of the 1960s

Step 4: Write, Organize, and Communicate Information

- When done taking notes, assign keywords or sub-topic headings to each idea, quote or summary.
- Use the copy and paste feature to group keywords or sub-topic ideas together.
- Remember to paraphrase, summarize and quote accordingly.

For a Book:

author → Brown, Samuel

title of Book → Money is the Name of the Game

place of publication → Chicago: Bullet Publishers, 1998. ← copyright date

↑ publishing company

CRLS Library ← location of source

source number → 5

Number of card. 1A*
Heading: subject of note and context of information (EX: Deer population--problems with overpopulation in cities)
Write your one note here. If it is a direct quotation, use quotation marks to show that it is. Be sure you only have one note, one main idea, one quote, one summary, or one paraphrase per card. Use ellipses (...) if you are leaving part of the quote out.
(p. 112) page number of information in book, magazine, etc.

Step 4: Write, Organize, and Communicate Information

2. Outline the paper

- Outline provides a means of organizing your information in an hierarchical or logical order.
- Outline can also help you keep track of large amount of information
- To create an outline:
 - Place your thesis statement at the beginning.
 - List the major points that support your thesis. Label them in Roman numerals (I, II, III, etc.).
 - List supporting ideas or arguments for each major point. Label them in capital letters (A, B, C, etc.).
 - If applicable, continue to sub-divide each supporting idea until your outline is fully developed. Label them 1, 2, 3, etc., and then a, b, c, etc.
 - NOTE: **EasyBib** has a function that will help you create a clear and effective outline.

Step 4: Write, Organize, and Communicate Information

3. Incorporate source material

- a. Quote from a source
- b. Summarize or paraphrase

- (a) **Quote** when you
 - want the reputation of the author to lend authority and credibility to your point.
 - find memorable or historically significant language.
 - don't want the author's meaning to be lost or changed if you paraphrased or summarized.
 - find the author's language so clear and concise you wouldn't be able to effectively make the same point in your own words.

Step 4: Write, Organize, and Communicate Information

3. Incorporate source material

(b) Summarize or paraphrase when you

- can express in fewer words the main points of a source.
- want the ideas presented in the source, but not the specific language used to express it.

Step 5: Cite Sources

- Identify the citation styles required
- Example: MLA, APA, Chicago style.

Assessment 3 (40%, week 14)

Please go to Spectrum to get more details related to assessment 3

https://spectrum.um.edu.my/pluginfile.php/1189864/mod_resource/content/1/Assessment%203.pdf

Assessment 3 GUIDELINES (to be discussed on week 8)

- In groups consisting of 4 or 5 students, identify an **economic/social/community/personal related problem that has arisen during the COVID-19 pandemic.**
- Then brainstorm all the **possible solutions to address the problem.**
- Finally, come up with a **viable suggested solution to address the problem.**
- The word length of your project report should **not be more than 3000 words**(Excluding references), typed using Times New Roman font 12, double spacing on A4 paper.
- On the cover page, please make sure you write the semester, session, course code, course title, name of lecturer, names of team members with their matric numbers and the title of your project.
- Your project must have a Table of Contents page too.
- Please use the evaluation sheet as a guide.
- Your project is due on Friday 27 January 2023, 9.00pm Malaysian Time (Week 14).