

Purpose:

The purpose of this research paper is to enhance your abilities as a research, writer, editor, student and future professional. You will be required to choose a historical topic and demonstrate what you have learned in your tenure as a student.

Instructions

You are required to write an analytical paper on a historical topic of your choice. You are required to choose a topic within the confines of the course. 1600-1865. Topics should not be too broad, such as the American Revolution or the Civil War. You will be graded on your analytical and organization abilities, as well as your writing and grammar.

Minimum Requirements:

Your paper must meet or exceed these minimum requirements.

- Minimum of approximately 1,500 words. (I will be checking.) You will lose ten points for every 100 words below the minimum limit.
- Your work needs to be cited in Chicago format with footnotes. There will be no excuse for not having proper citations. There are plenty of materials on my website and the internet on how to do this. No Citations = No Grade
- A minimum of three primary sources and four secondary sources
 - The secondary sources must be journal articles. (i.e. Jstor)
- Paper must be submitted to Turnitin.com by the time class begins. No Submission = No Grade
- Using Quotes – You may only use two direct quotes in your paper. You will be deducted 5 points for each quote over two.

Selecting a Topic -

Selecting a topic for your paper is an important part of the research process. Select a topic that is both interesting to you and that there are enough available resources available. First, the topic must be interesting to you because you will find the paper more difficult to complete if you quickly lose interest. Secondly, you want to choose a topic that has enough available information, for example writing about pre-Columbian Native American societies, you may run into the problem of a lack of primary sources.

If you wish to discuss a topic with me you need to visit me during tutoring or my office hours by appointment.

Requirements for Topic Selection:

- Topic must be between the years of 1600-1865
- Topic must not be a simple biography or summary of an event
- Topic must be analytical
- Topic must be about US history.

Things to consider when selecting a topic:

- Do not choose a broad topic like the American Revolution or the Civil War. These are much too broad to write a short paper on.
- Sometimes it is easier to find sources first then narrow your topic from there.
- Use the time available to do some surface research do not wait until the last minute.

Developing an Outline:

At some point before you begin to write your paper you will need to organize your thoughts and information you have collected. A poorly organized paper, is confusing and will leave the reader wondering what the purpose of the paper is.

Categorize information

Organize the information you have collected into major themes you wish to discuss. You will need to distinguish between your main arguments, secondary arguments and supporting evidence.

Example of preliminary paper outline:

Topic: Why did some women in Germany support the Nazi party?

Introduction:

- basic information: what, where, when (i.e.: To what extent did women support the Nazi party?)
- importance of the topic: (i.e.: contribution to the rise of Hitler to power?)
- main question to be answered

I. How did the economic situation in Weimar Germany affect women?

- Movement towards economic rationalization
- Inflation
- Unemployment
 - campaign against “double-earner” households
 - cuts to social services and call to women to “take up the slack”

II. How did the Nazi Party address the difficulties faced by women?

- What was the Party program towards women?
 - emphasis on family and motherhood
 - natality policy
- Were there efforts to specifically organize women?
 - housewives' organizations
 - League of German Girls
 - others?...
- Did these organizations respond to the needs of women?
 - Which women were attracted into these groups, and why?

III. Women's support for Party?

- involvement in local organizations?
- results of 1932 and 1933 elections?
- other evidence?

Conclusion: answer to your question

Obviously, as you proceed with your research, you will come up with more questions that you can work into your outline, and some of your original questions might change. You might discover that your original topic was too broad, and that you can write an entire paper just on the housewives' associations, or just on middle-class women. Likewise, the organization of your outline will change as you learn more. You might decide, for instance, to first discuss the 1932 and 1933 election results. What is important in the end is that your main arguments proceed logically, that each section is clearly related to your main question, and that you have provided sufficient convincing supporting evidence for your argument.