

Planning Ahead: A Worksheet

Directions: Use the items below to plan your research.

1. Narrow your topic: Focus on an interesting, worthwhile aspect of your subject. Your questions and answers on past handouts will suggest many possibilities. Record five or six possibilities here.
2. Write tentative statements of purpose. Begin with some of the following phrases:

To trace	To analyze	To demonstrate that
To compare	To define	To prove
3. Write a tentative thesis statement—one sentence that expresses the main message about the topic.
4. Create a general organizational plan showing the subtopics and tentative order. Do not worry about detail at early research stages; think in terms of general subject matter.
 - Analysis: Summarize what you will do.
 - Comparison: Summarize what you will do.
 - Evaluation: Summarize what you will do (Hint: Use the phrase “I will show to what extent” as a way of making sure you are doing an evaluation.)
5. Predict the availability of informative books, articles, and other materials on your specific topic. What have you been able to find thus far?

Creating an Organizational Plan

Directions: Complete a summary of your organizational plan, and submit it to your instructor.

1. Limited topic _____
2. Purpose
3. Tentative thesis statement
4. Tentative organizational plan
5. Types or titles of possible sources