

Planning the Paper: Doing Research

Doing some research allows you to discover the dominant ideas, theories, concepts, and debates that are presented in the literature. In other words, research reveals what has already been said on your topic. Develop good research habits in order to avoid plagiarism: record the bibliographic information of all the sources that you have consulted, and write down the page number of all the quotations that you have noted in your reading journal.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming helps to collect information and organize ideas at each step of the writing process. As you do research, use key terms that are related to the thesis in order to facilitate the study of the phenomenon, situation or problem that interests you. Develop an information management system in which you can gather information on your topic and make notes about your sources. Try the following strategies:

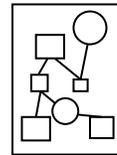
Bulleted Lists



Highlighted Words



Mind Maps



Sticky Notes



Evaluating Source Material

Since many sources of information are at your disposal, you must do some active reading and evaluate the ideas presented in the literature in order to select only the sources that contain accurate, reliable, and relevant information among the material that you have gathered. Think of this as a filter!

Primary sources are original documents that were created during the studied period of time. They vary from one field of study to another. Among other things, they include case notes or observations, interviews, newspapers, novels, period artifacts, raw data sets or results, statistics, testimonies, and videos.

Secondary sources (also called *academic sources* or *scientific sources*) are analytical documents that interpret primary sources. Among other things, they include books, electronic resources, memoirs, monographs, peer-reviewed articles, and theses.

Tertiary sources are descriptive documents that compile or index primary and secondary sources. Among other things, they include bibliographies, encyclopaedic articles, indexes and registers, library catalogues, and specialized databases.

Use critical thinking to find sources that are related to your thesis.

- Is the source recent? Is its content up to date? (Accurate)
- Is the author an expert on the topic? Does he consider opposing ideas? (Reliable)
- Is the information related to the thesis of the paper or to a broader topic? (Relevant)

To know more, see the *Purdue OWL*, *SPARK*, *Infosphère*, or similar writing centre websites.

Keeping a Reading Journal

- Thesis:** Will technology rewire its maker over time?
- Reference:** Barr, N., Pennycook, G., Stolz, J. A., & Fugelsang, J. A. (2015). The brain in your pocket: Evidence that Smartphones are used to supplant thinking. *Computers in Human Behavior, 48*, 473-480. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2015.02.029
- Summary:** Results of three studies that explore the effect of Smartphone use on "cognitive style measures" (i.e. *tasks that cue incorrect intuitive responses*) and "cognitive ability measures" (i.e. *tasks that assess specific abilities such as numeracy and verbal intelligence*) indicate that people who are more intuitive than analytical are more likely to rely on technology for information.
- Important definition(s):** Cognitive miserliness refers to the fact that "people typically forego effortful analytical thinking in lieu of fast and easy intuition" (p. 473).
"The extended mind—the notion that the mind goes beyond grey matter—is an idea that allows an understanding of human cognition as acting in a coupled system with the environment" (p. 473).
- Relevant quotation(s):** "Acknowledging the impending integration of man and machine will result in a broader understanding of human experience and cognition, though the work has only just begun. Given the frenetic pace of such technological advances, we believe it imperative that more researchers consider reliance on Smartphones as a new kind of thinking, as our collective psychology may change alongside the technological advances" (p. 479).
- Personal comments:** Interesting article; helpful reference list (Carr, 2010; Clark, 2008; Clark & Chalmers, 1998; Hong et al., 2012; Jacobsen & Forste, 2011; Lane & Manner, 2011; McLuhan, 1964; Miller, 2012; Sparrow et al., 2011; Yen et al., 2009).

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