


Module 9: Defining Your Path
Topic 1 Content: Gathering and Organizing Information from Sources

Introduction

Gathering and Organizing Information from Sources

Introduction

In this interactivity activity, click each of the numbers or use the previous and next buttons to learn the steps in gathering and organizing information from the sources of your research paper.



1 2 3 4

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Find Relevant Information

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Once you have found the sources you want to use for a research paper, study them to find what information seems the most relevant to your topic. When choosing which statements to cite from your sources, you may want to consider the following questions:

- What information is most beneficial to your readers?
- What information highlights the skills or education required for the career?
- What are facts and statistics about the career you are interested in?



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Organize the Information


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Organize the Information

To begin, write down, in your own words, three to four strong ideas about the career you are interested in. How will you organize your information? What information about your career will you present to your audience? This is the same information you will need to gather. You might want to make three body paragraphs on the following:

- Pay/Benefits
- Required Skills
- Education Needed

As you are researching these three aspects of any career, jot down the facts from each source you plan to use as supporting evidence. Also, write down the page number and author of that source. Remember, some sources, such as websites, may not have page numbers or authors. Instead, use the names of the websites. Your list may look something like this:



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Body Paragraph #1: bullet relevant facts with the source's author and page numbers (if applicable)

Body Paragraph #2: bullet relevant facts with the source's author and page numbers (if applicable)

Body Paragraph #3: bullet relevant facts with the source's author and page numbers (if applicable)

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You have now done two things:

1. Written a very rough bulleted outline of the facts you will use.
2. Organized what facts you will need from your sources.


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Gather Information for Works Cited Page

Gathering and Organizing Information from Sources

Gather Information for Works Cited Page



Next, you should look at what information you will need from your sources for a Works Cited page. Go through your sources and write down all the necessary source information. Use only one document per source. It might be helpful to put these sources physically on index cards. These documents will be called *source sheets*. The best way to keep this information is to denote a page (either physically or electronically) for each source on which you will write all source information and facts you plan to use from the source.

Publication information for books is generally on the first few pages, but publication information for periodicals and websites may be harder to find. The following is the basic information that you will need to record for each of the sources you will list on your Works Cited page:

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- Title of book, reference series, anthology, periodical, or website
- Author's name (or editor's name if there are no authors listed)
- Title of section, article, or webpage (if applicable)
- Publication information: where published, when, and by whom
- Volume number and date (if applicable)
- Page numbers where information was used
- Sponsoring organization
- Date accessed (for web resources)
- Date updated (for web resources)

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- URL (for web resources)

Documentaries and interviews need a different set of information, including:


- Who is being interviewed?
- Who is interviewing?
- Date of the interview
- Source information if viewed via another source: name of the program, when/where it aired, and any copyright dates or information

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Create a Works Cited Page

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Create a Works Cited Page



Once you have recorded the necessary information from your sources, create your Works Cited page. For information on Modern Language Style (MLA), American Psychological Association (APA), and creating a Works Cited page, consult the *MLA Handbook*, the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, or visit the Developmental Module.

Remember, any fact that you will use (statistics, graphs, explanations, scientific notations, and etc.) that is not general knowledge, must have a source that is cited in the paper. Also, any opinions or anecdotes provided by a professional must be cited.

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