The Scholarly Paper

The scholarly paper is a research-based *argumentative* essay. During this unit you will learn many practical, valuable skills that will help you to be successful in other classes, college courses, and careers. Among the skills addressed will be:

- Scholarly research
- Evaluating sources, perspectives and information
- MLA format and documentation
- How to develop a research question
- How to select and narrow a topic
- How to develop and support a <u>powerful</u> <u>thesis statement</u>
- Essay structure and organization
- How to conduct effective searches
- How to use online databases, catalogs and library resources
- How to plan, draft and revise a research paper
- Logic, reasoning, and avoiding logical fallacies
- Techniques of rhetoric, argumentation & persuasion
- How to summarize, critique and synthesize informational texts

Standards Addressed
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.1
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.3
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.5
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.6
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.7
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.8
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.9
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.10

Criteria:

4-6-pages in length
4 Sources (minimum)
Clear thesis & structure
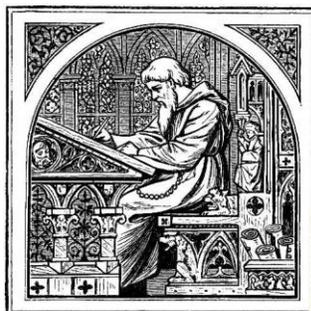MLA Format

What do I research?

Select a topic of your choice. Use the following guidelines to help you select a topic:

1. <u>Choose a topic you're passionate about or interested in learning about</u>. You're required to find at least six sources, so you'll be spending a lot of time on it—make sure it's something you're interested in. This topic should ignite a spark of interest and curiosity within you. It should be interesting and meaningful to you.
2. <u>Researchable</u>: Several topics you may be interested in are not so researchable . . . Chevy vs. Ford, for example, is fun to debate with friends, but not a serious academic subject or social issue.
   a. Focus on topics that you can be *persuasive* on
   b. You'll be happier if you have a topic or issue that is somewhat complex. Next, we'll create research questions for the topics—research questions with multiple possible answers are best.
3. <u>Plenty of reliable sources available</u>: Again, you are required to have six sources, so you'll want a topic that you can find at least a dozen sources for; it's better to have too much research than not enough.

Subjects/Topics

There are countless topics out there for you to explore and write your Scholarly Paper on. The following are examples of acceptable research *subjects*. Note the difference between a *subject* and a *topic*: a subject is a broad area of study, while a topic is a more focused, specialized examination of one aspect or issue within a subject area. Once you have selected a subject that interests you, your next task will be to narrow it down so that you can achieve a focused, well developed research discussion in 4-6 pages.

acid rain	defense spending	right of Privacy	organic farming
acupuncture	diet fads	school Violence	litter
adoption rights	discrimination	sex Education	lotteries
aerosol cans	divorce	fast food & health	pesticide use
affirmative action	dream analysis	FEMA: disaster preparedness	philosophy
afterlife	dropouts	First Amendment	plagiarism
age discrimination	drug testing	Food production monopolies	pollution
aging	domestic spying / wiretapping	foreign policy	prison reform
alternative fuels	diversity	gambling	prostitution
Alzheimer's disease	media and politics	gangs	prisoners of war
amnesty	medical costs	garbage disposal	robotics
animal abuse	military spending	gays in the military	salaries of athletes
animal research	minimum wage	genetic engineering	school busing
apartheid	missing children	geothermal energy	school prayer
artificial intelligence	domestic spying—Patriot Act	parapsychology	same-sex marriage
asbestos	domestic violence	comparative mythology	school choice
athletes and academics	drinking age/laws/health	Greenpeace	school vouchers
autism	drug issues	gender issues	seat belts/air bags
automobile safety	stem cells	Globalization	self-esteem
adoption	DWI laws	hate crimes	sex discrimination
affirmative action	drug abuse	health insurance	Seed patents(Monsanto)
AIDS	drug traffic	health care reform	sex offender laws
alcoholism	drugs and athletes	hemp	peer pressure
animal experimentation	eating disorders	HMOs	police brutality
animal rights	education	hazardous wastes	polygamy
assisted suicide	elderly care	holistic medicine	polygraphs
agriculture & farming	emigration and immigration	Holocaust	population control
alternative fuels/energy sources	employment	home schooling	pornography
alternative medicine	endangered species	human experimentation	sexual abuse
space exploration	environmental policy	human rights	shock therapy
speed limit	environmentalism	hypnosis	smoking in public
America and over consumption	family	Homeland Security	Social Security
antitrust laws	global economy	homelessness	smoking / tobaccoi
balance of trade	feminism	human trafficking	socialized healthcare
balanced budget	gambling	identity theft	radon
beauty pageants	gangs	illegal aliens	recycling
behavior modification	genetic engineering	in vitro fertilization	refugees
Bermuda Triangle	genocide	inclusion/mainstreaming	reincarnation
big bang theory	Global Warming	infanticide	reproductive technologies
Bigfoot	gun control	insanity defense	solar energy
bioethics	education funding	Illegal Immigrants	space exploration
biofeedback	Integral education	Internet	Space Shuttle disasters
bionics	educational reform	Iraq	suicide
biorhythms	emission controls	Islamic fundamentalism	surrogate motherhood
birth defects	ESP	juvenile offenders	tax laws
body language	euthanasia	marijuana	technologies of the future
brain research	education funding	integral psychology	United Nations
brainwashing	teacher competency tests	Internet Issues	teen sexual behavior
big oil & politics	teenage pregnancy	job stress and burnout	terraforming
biodiversity	teenage sexuality	joint custody of children	terrorism
biobiological weapons	television, effects of	judicial reform	UFOs
birth control	television evangelists	juvenile justice	unemployment
capital punishment	terrorism	kidnapping by parents	growth management
censorship	electoral college	Ku Klux Klan	utopias
chemical weapons	evolution	latch-key children	the achievement gap in schools
church And State	faith healing	lawsuits (amount of)	the digital divide
campaign finance	medical Care	learning disabilities	United States foreign relations
cancer research	medical Ethics	literacy	violence
capital punishment	mental Disorders	mass transit	war crimes
Marine resources conservation	mental health	media bias / sensationalism	water pollution
Capitalism	Middle East	Media monopolies & democracy	welfare reform
censorship	narcotics control	national debt	women's health
CIA interrogation / abilities	narcotics legalization	natural New Age religions	Wal Mart & China
cigarette advertising	national security	noise pollution	war on terror
civil rights	nuclear weapons	nuclear accidents	women's rights
civil rights	nutrition	nuclear energy	working women
cloning	oceans	nuclear weapons	fiber optics
crime	political corruption	nutrition and cancer	food additives
corn fed beef	pollution	Obesity/child obesity	Integral theory
corporate lobbying	population growth	obscenity	renewable energy
cryogenics	poverty	offshore drilling	religious extremist groups
cults	prisons	Olympics	
affordable housing	public assistance	organ transplants	
chemical warfare	race relations	organized crime	
child abuse	racism	overpopulation	
family violence	rape	online predators	
fetal tissue research	religion	organ cloning	

Explore Your Topic

By taking the time to reflect on your efforts to explore your topic, you can begin to understand it more clearly—and potentially reduce the amount of time it can take to explore. This activity asks a series of questions that can help you review what you've learned about your topic by talking with others, observing, searching, and browsing.

Use the following questions to keep track of your topic exploration in your research log.

1. What is my topic?

   What do I find most interesting about my topic?

2. Have I discussed my topic with others? If so, what have I learned? If not, who are likely candidates for interviews—such as teachers, librarians, parents, professionals, members of the community, and persons involved with or affected by my topic—and what questions should I ask them? Find these people and ask them a couple of questions about your topic. Record their responses in the spaces below.

Person #1: _____

Question: _____

Response:
_____

_____

Person #2: _____

Question: _____

Response:
_____

_____

Person #3: _____

Question: _____

Response:

_____

_____

3. Are there any preliminary observations or interviews I should conduct? Any T.V. programs or documentaries I should view? List these below.

_____

_____

—

4. Have I found and reviewed sources? Have I searched the library catalog and browsed the shelves? Have I searched databases and the Web? Have I skimmed, marked, annotated, and taken brief notes on the sources I've found? What have I learned about my topic?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. What are my next steps?

_____

_____

Developing and Refining My Research Question

Complete the following activity in your research log to help you develop and refine your preliminary research question.

1. To develop potential research questions, identify the issue you are focusing on and write ten questions related to the conversation you have decided to join. Complete the following table by beginning each question with one of the following words: what, why, when, where, who, how, would/could, should.

What Questions ... focus your attention on a particular aspect of a topic by asking questions about **facts**, such as, what is the cause of a particular problem or what caused something to occur. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: What are the effects of watching professional wrestling on aggressive behavior among young teenage boys? What is the driving force behind the growing popularity of professional wrestling?	Potential Questions: • What ...
Why Questions ... focus your attention on a particular aspect of a topic by asking for an **explanation** of something, such as why something happened or why it did not happen, or why one thing is better than another. For instance, a research question about professional wrestling might ask: Why is professional wrestling so popular among young teenage boys?	Potential Questions: • Why ...
When Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to **timing** or **history**. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: When did professional wrestling first become popular? When is the best time to start training to become a professional wrestler?	Potential Questions: • When ...
Where Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to **location**, geographic or otherwise. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: Where in the United States and Canada is professional wrestling most popular? Where can I learn about becoming a professional wrestler?	Potential Questions: • Where ...
Who Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to **people** or **personalities**. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: Who are the most popular professional wrestlers? Who benefits most from the popularity of professional wrestling?	Potential Questions: • Who ...

How Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to **process** or **origins**. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: How can I become a professional wrestler? How do professional wrestlers avoid injury? How is professional wrestling marketed in the United States and Canada?	Potential Questions: • How …
Would and Could Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to **possibilities**. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: Would professional wrestling be more popular if the media paid more attention to the sport? Could professional wrestlers make good politicians?	Potential Questions: • Would … • Could …
Should Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to the **appropriateness** of a particular action, policy, procedure, or decision. For instance, a research question about professional wrestling might ask: Should professional wrestling be regulated by the federal government?	Potential Questions: • Should …

2. Consider your audience's purposes, interests, values, and beliefs. What kinds of background knowledge and information will they need prior to your discussion?

3. What questions or objections might your audience have?

4. Choose the research question that best meets the needs of your writing situation. Refine your working research question by replacing vague words and phrases with more specific words and phrases.

5. Test your refined research question by conducting preliminary Internet searches.

English   Name:_____

Scholarly Research Paper Proposal

Topic: _____

Why did you choose this particular topic? How does it interest you?
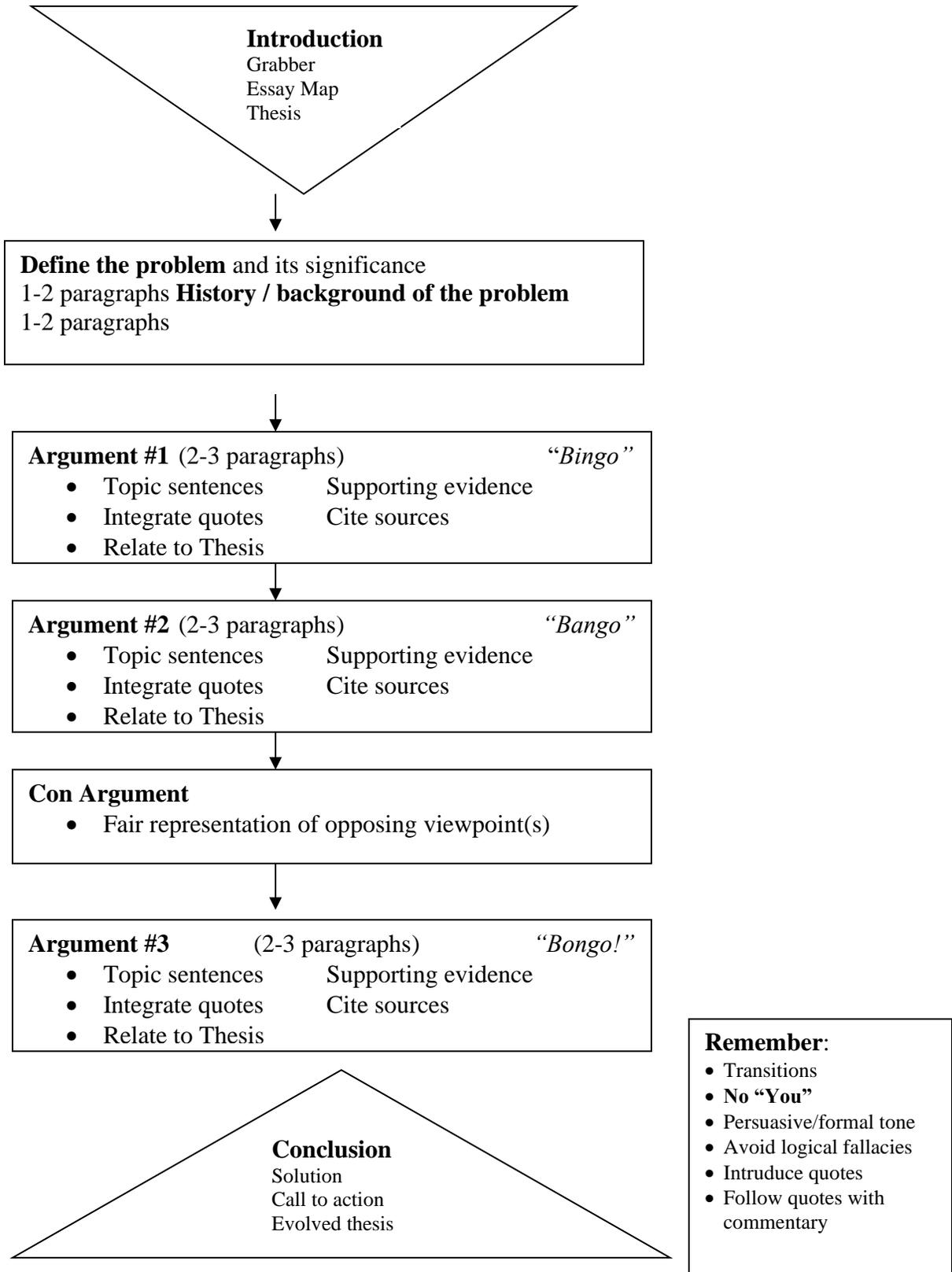
_____

_____

_____

Research Question:

_____

_____

Thesis:

_____

_____

What do you intend to demonstrate or persuade the reader of in your research paper?

_____

_____

_____

How is your topic sufficiently narrowed and focused so that you can *fully* develop your ideas? How might you narrow your topic even further?

_____

_____

_____

Describe the kind of sources you are looking for and what you have found so far. Which seems to be the most helpful?

_____

_____

_____

Scholarly Paper Structure

Introduction
Grabber
Essay Map
Thesis

Define the problem and its significance
1-2 paragraphs **History / background of the problem**
1-2 paragraphs

Argument #1 (2-3 paragraphs)   *"Bingo"*
- Topic sentences   Supporting evidence
- Integrate quotes   Cite sources
- Relate to Thesis

Argument #2 (2-3 paragraphs)   *"Bango"*
- Topic sentences   Supporting evidence
- Integrate quotes   Cite sources
- Relate to Thesis

Con Argument
- Fair representation of opposing viewpoint(s)

Argument #3   (2-3 paragraphs)   *"Bongo!"*
- Topic sentences   Supporting evidence
- Integrate quotes   Cite sources
- Relate to Thesis

Conclusion
Solution
Call to action
Evolved thesis

Remember:
- Transitions
- **No "You"**
- Persuasive/formal tone
- Avoid logical fallacies
- Intruduce quotes
- Follow quotes with commentary

SOURCE EVALUATION	Source #1	Source #2	Source #3
Title, type of source			
Author, publication, date, etc.			
Summary of source. List thesis/purpose and major sections or stages of thought.			
What makes this source credible? - What are the author's credentials? - Documentation of original sources? - Bias?			
Why is this source valuable? - How does it support your thesis? - Where will this source fit best in your argument?			
SOURCE EVALUATION	Source #4	Source #5	Source #6
Title, type of source			
Author, publication, date, etc.			
Summary of source. List thesis/purpose and major sections or stages of thought.			

What makes this source credible? - What are the author's credentials? - Documentation of original sources? - Bias?			
Why is this source valuable? - How does it support your thesis? - Where will this source fit best in your argument?			

Scholarly Paper: Defense Day Notes

My topic & why I chose it:

_____

My research question:

_____

My thesis:

_____

3 arguments in support of my thesis (plus one opposing argument):

Argument 1	
Argument 2	
Argument 3	
Opposing Argument(s)	

3 useful sources:

Source (Author, Title, Publication)	Description/Summary
Source 1	
Source 2	
Source 3	

Successes:

_____

Challenges:

_____

Peterson's Scholarly Paper Assessment Rubric

Student: _____   **This paper was** ❑ **At Standard on** _____ **or** ❑ **NOT At Standard on** ____

Topic _____ **Research Question** _____

Thesis _____

Requirements:	Requirement Met	Requirement Not Met	Requirements:	Requirement Met	Requirement Not Met
4-6 Pages, Typed, Double	❑	❑	At least 4 sources	❑	❑
12-point, Times New Roman	❑	❑	Of the total sources, no more than half are web	❑	❑
MLA Format	❑	❑	All sources are evaluated	❑	❑
Process shown (drafts &	❑	❑	All sources are cited correctly in the text of the	❑	❑
Scholarly Papers will not be assessed unless all requirements are met.					

	√	**ABOVE**	√	AT STANDARD	√	**BELOW**	**Comments**
Organization		▪ Introduction has a strong hook that smoothly leads into a clear understanding of the thesis		▪ **Includes an introduction that leads to an understanding of the thesis statement**		▪ No attempt to hook the reader ▪ Little or no transition to thesis	
		▪ Transitions are smooth, thoughtful, and varied		▪ **Links arguments throughout the text in a logical manner with smooth transitions**		▪ Connections between ideas are confusing or missing ▪ Sequencing is haphazard	
		▪ Conclusion provides a strong sense of closure ▪ Leaves reader thinking about the issue long after they finish reading		▪ **Provides a conclusion that is consistent with the thesis and the evidence presented**		▪ Conclusion missing or does not effectively reach closure ▪ Conclusion does not relate to thesis	

		Style				
Style		▪ Word choice enhances content of the paper		▪ **Employs word choice which is precise, engaging, varied and well-suited to the topic and audience**	▪ Ordinary and predictable vocabulary may not be appropriate for audience and topic ▪ Uses slang or clichés	
		▪ Sentence fluency is flawless. Paper reads smoothly and enjoyably		▪ **Writes clear, complete sentences that vary in length and structure**	▪ Writes incomplete or awkward sentences ▪ Too many choppy, rambling, fragmented or run-on sentences	
	√	**ABOVE**	√	AT STANDARD	√	**BELOW**	**Comments**
Content		▪ Contains a focused and clearly stated thesis that is arguable based on research		▪ **Contains a focused and clearly stated thesis statement that is arguable based on research**	▪ Confusing, vague, too broad ▪ Not arguable, does not have at least 2 sides ▪ Thesis based on fact, rather than opinion	
		▪ Integrates a wide range of relevant facts, details, and examples that support the thesis statement ▪ Evidence is timely and varied		▪ **Integrates relevant facts, details, and examples that support the thesis statement**	▪ Facts details and examples do not relate to thesis ▪ Extraneous or loosely-related material detracts from the purpose of the paper	
		▪ Commentary analyzes the importance of evidence through insightful interpretation		▪ **Includes commentary that analyzes how the evidence supports the thesis statement**	▪ Too many facts, not enough commentary ▪ Commentary fails to connect facts to thesis	

	- Addresses both sides - Uses opposing viewpoints to own advantage		**Addresses and responds effectively to other points of view**		- Does not address opposing viewpoints - Does not refute opposing viewpoints
	- Arrives at reasonable deductions and logical conclusions - The commentary and concrete detail clearly support the conclusion		**Attempts to arrive at reasonable deductions and logical conclusions**		- Makes generalizations or other logical fallacies - Facts presented do not support conclusions drawn
Conven-tions	Makes no errors in grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and appearance		**Makes few errors in grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, punctuation and appearance**		- Errors seriously affect meaning - Essay requires re-reading due to conventions' errors - Errors in grammar and usage are noticeable / distracting

Additional Comments: