**Topic Finding Ideas**

* Read the Newspaper
* Read Current Issues of Magazines on Subjects that interest you.
* Watch the TV and News
* Talk to friends, teachers, parents or relatives
* Browse Online Databases
* Browse Your Textbooks (use Table of Contents or Index)
* Browse General or Subject Specific Encyclopedias for Topic Ideas.   
  (For example: [Encyclopedia Britannica](http://www.brittanica.com) Online or [Bartleby](http://www.bartleby.com/107/s0.html))

*Databases and the subject encyclopedias are tremendous resources to generate research ideas.*

*Choose a broad subject to begin with, investigate topic and narrow it down.*

**Tips on Choosing A Topic**

* Choose a Topic You Care About! This is the most important criteria when selecting a topic for a research paper. Does it relate to your prior experience/background or knowledge or interest?
* Choose something for which information exists! Is the amount and kind of information needed available?
* Avoid topics on which too much has already been written. This will bore your teacher and put your paper up against previous papers as comparison.
* Read Selectively and Critique!
* Write down ideas you come up with, keep a log!
* Do preliminary research (This will help you figure out which topics really interest you)
* Will the topic allow you to meet the requirements assigned by the teacher?
* Will the topic interest anyone else?
* Does your topic create an image in your mind? Can you visualize parts of the paper?
* Formulate your Topic into a Question?

**What Makes a Good Topic?**

* Am I interested in this topic?  
  You'll do a better job - and enjoy the process more - if you're interested in your topic.
* Is the topic large or broad enough?  
  Your topic needs to be substantive enough so you can write a 10 to 15 page paper.
* Is the topic specific enough?  
  Your topic needs to be specific (or narrow) enough so you can cover it adequately in your research paper; a topic suitable for a 100-page paper would be too much to cover in a   
  10-15 page paper.
* Do I have anything to say about this topic?  
  If you don't have a point to make about your topic, it will be hard to write about it.
* Will I be able to adequately research the topic?  
  Do you have access to the types of resources you will need, and can you do the research in the time you have?
* KWH Exercise:

Selecting two of your more promising topic ideas, respond to the following questions:

* What do You Think You Know about this Topic?
* What Would You Like to Know?
* How does this Topic Impact Society Nationally or Internationally?