

Developing your Research Question

- Use journalistic questions to brainstorm researchable questions.
- Search your question(s) in Google - what are some potential answers to your question? Use these “answers” to focus your topic and guide your research.

Who	<p>... benefits from this?</p> <p>... is this harmful to?</p> <p>... makes decisions about this?</p> <p>... is most directly affected?</p>	<p>... have you also heard discuss this?</p> <p>... would be the best person to consult?</p> <p>... will be the key people in this?</p> <p>... deserves recognition for this?</p>
What	<p>... are the strengths/weaknesses?</p> <p>... is another perspective?</p> <p>... is another alternative?</p> <p>... would be a counter-argument?</p>	<p>... is the best/worst case scenario?</p> <p>... is most/least important?</p> <p>... can we do to make a positive change?</p> <p>... is getting in the way of our action?</p>
Where	<p>... would we see this in the real world?</p> <p>... are there similar concepts/situations?</p> <p>... is there the most need for this?</p> <p>... in the world would this be a problem?</p>	<p>... can we get more information?</p> <p>... do we go for help with this?</p> <p>... will this idea take us?</p> <p>... are the areas for improvement?</p>
When	<p>... is this acceptable/unacceptable?</p> <p>... would this benefit our society?</p> <p>... would this cause a problem?</p> <p>... is the best time to take action?</p>	<p>... will we know we've succeeded?</p> <p>... has this played a part in our history?</p> <p>... can we expect this to change?</p> <p>... should we ask for help with this?</p>
Why	<p>... is this a problem/challenge?</p> <p>... is it relevant to me/others?</p> <p>... is this the best/worst scenario?</p> <p>... are people influenced by this?</p>	<p>... should people know about this?</p> <p>... has it been this way for so long?</p> <p>... have we allowed this to happen?</p> <p>... is there a need for this today?</p>
How	<p>... is this similar to _____?</p> <p>... does this disrupt things?</p> <p>... do we know the truth about this?</p> <p>... will we approach this safely?</p>	<p>... does this benefit us/others?</p> <p>... does this harm us/others?</p> <p>... do we see this in the future?</p> <p>... can we change this for our good?</p>

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Do Your Sources Pass the CRAAP Test?

Evaluate your sources according to five criteria.

Currency - the timeliness of the information

- When was the information published or last updated?
- Have newer articles been published on your topic?
- Is your topic in an area that changes rapidly, like technology, health, science or popular culture?

Relevance - the importance of the information for your needs

- Does the information help answer your research question?
- Does the information meet the requirements of your assignment?
- Is the information too technical? Too simplified?
- Does the source add something new to your knowledge of your topic?

Accuracy - the reliability and correctness of the information

- Are there statements you know to be false?
- Was the information reviewed by editors or subject experts before it was published?
- What citations or references support the author's claims?
- What do other people say about the topic?

Authority - the source of the information

- Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor of the source?
- What are the author's credentials or organizational affiliations?
- Is the author qualified to write on the topic?

Purpose - the reason the information exists

- Is the purpose of the source to sell, persuade, entertain or inform?
- Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional or personal biases?
- Are alternative points of view presented?
- Does the author use strong or emotional language?

The CRAAP Test isn't a checklist - instead you should be able to defend your source against each of these criteria.

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