

Analyze/Evaluate

- **Evaluate my information sources.**
 - Have I examined the information for relevance, accuracy, bias, currency, and authority?
- **Take notes related to my information needs.**
 - Have I kept good point-form notes?
 - Have I included information from different viewpoints?
 - Have I recorded my own thoughts, ideas, and questions?
 - Do I have enough information?
- **Use information honestly.**
 - Have I carefully recorded all sources of information and page numbers?
 - Have I acknowledged my sources of quotations and ideas?
 - Have I avoided plagiarism?

Test Ideas

- **Test ideas to adjust research and strategies.**
 - Does my information relate to my topic and focus/thesis?
 - Do I need to adjust my focus or research plan?
 - Have I checked my ideas with others?

Synthesize Findings

- **Make connections.**
 - Did I find relationships among the data?
 - Did I discover trends and patterns in information I found?
 - Can I make generalizations?
- **Formulate conclusions.**
 - Have I been able to form my own opinion about the information?
 - Can I justify my perspective with supporting evidence?
 - Have I formulated an arguable thesis?
 - Have I developed convincing arguments to support my thesis?
 - Have I developed an outline to organize my information?






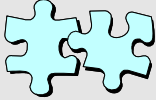

Sort Information

- **Use organizers and subtopics to classify and record.**
 - Have I made use of visual organizers to organize my information and look for patterns and relationships?
 - Have I used visual organizers to analyze my gathered data?
 - Have I used graphic applications, such as a spreadsheet, chart, or database, to organize and analyze my information?

Evaluating Information Sources

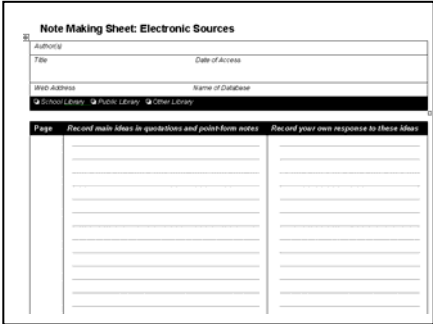
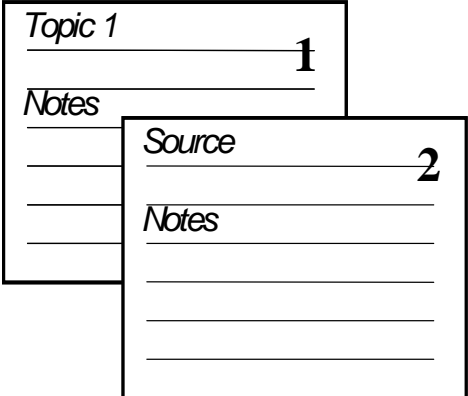
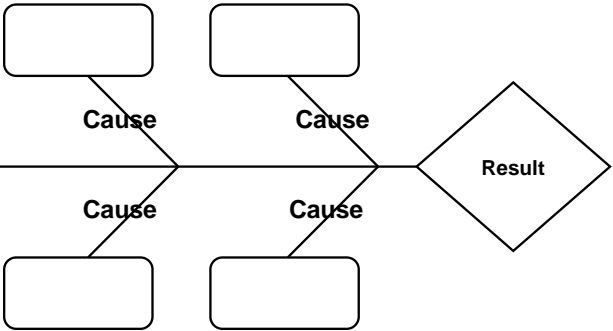
Information comes in different formats—print, electronic, and media. However, you can use similar criteria to evaluate any source for quality and usefulness.

Format	<input type="radio"/> Book	<input type="radio"/> Periodical Article	<input type="radio"/> Software	<input type="radio"/> Audiotape	<input type="radio"/> Film/Video
Author					
Title					
Publication Date		Overall Rating: <input type="radio"/> Excellent <input type="radio"/> Good <input type="radio"/> Fair <input type="radio"/> Poor			

Criteria	Consider These Key Questions
AUTHORITY 	Can you trust the author? What are his or her credentials to create this particular work?
OBJECTIVITY 	Is the author's purpose and intended audience clearly stated? Does the work provide factual information, opinion, or propaganda? Does the author have a biased point of view? Does the author stereotype some people?
ACCURACY 	Are the author's facts correct? Are the opinions supported with data? Is there evidence of good research and documentation?
COMPLETENESS 	How completely and deeply does the work cover the topic? Does the work answer the question completely?
CURRENCY 	Is the date of publication given? Is the information current enough for your topic or task?
RELEVANCY 	Does the source contain the information you need? Does it provide information that is relevant to your topic?
FORMAT 	Does the format of the source present the information in an attractive and clear way? Are there special visual features to aid understanding and pleasure?

Note-Making Techniques

These note-making techniques will encourage you to make your own sense of the information you find, and thereby help you avoid plagiarizing your sources. The following techniques can also be used with word-processing and other software programs that organize information.

<h3>Note-Making Organizers</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ See sample organizers in this book (pp. 42-43). ❑ Make sure you record all required data about the source. ❑ Use subheadings to separate information. ❑ Summarize or paraphrase. ❑ Use point form (not full sentences) and abbreviations where possible. 	
	<h3>Cutting and Pasting</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Separate each subtopic (using graphic organizer templates or note-making software). ❑ Save as meaningfulfilename.doc ❑ Create a document tracking file for all resources (it will become your “works cited” list). ❑ Store all note files in appropriately named folders.
<h3>Visual Representation</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Create webs, concept maps, and sketches that appeal to visual learners. ❑ Explore concept-mapping software that represents relationships between ideas. ❑ Use visual organizers to make notes while viewing a video. ❑ See pages 42 and 43 for information on visual organizers. 	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>Use highlighting with caution, as it is easy to mindlessly highlight everything. Highlight only photocopied information, not books. Skim and highlight key words and ideas. Use different-coloured highlighters for different subtopics.</p> <p>Make comments in the margins or use sticky notes to make connections.</p> </div>	<h3>Highlighting</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Use with caution, as it is easy to mindlessly highlight everything. ❑ Highlight only photocopied information, NOT BOOKS. ❑ Skim and highlight key words/ideas. ❑ Use different-coloured highlighters for different subtopics. ❑ Make comments in the margins or use sticky notes to make connections.

PRINT REFERENCE SOURCE	
Author(s), if given	Cassandra Keane
Title of Article	Acid Rain
Title of Reference Source	Science Encyclopedia
Edition No.	Copyright Date 2004
Volume No. 1	Page(s) Used 27-35
<input checked="" type="radio"/> School Library <input type="radio"/> Public Library <input type="radio"/> Other Library	

ELECTRONIC REFERENCE SOURCE	
Author(s), if given	
Title of Article	
Title of Reference Source	
Edition No.	Copyright Date:
Date of Access	Web Address
<input type="radio"/> School Library <input type="radio"/> Public Library <input type="radio"/> Other Library	

Page	Record main ideas in quotations and point-form notes	Record your own response to these ideas
27	<p>Summarizing: - article outlines causes, effects, occurrences of acid rain</p> <p>Paraphrasing: - Causes: car, factories, power plants give off chemical compounds such as sulfur dioxide & nitrogen oxides into air - acids pollute rain, snow, sleet, etc., to produce acid rain - acidic gases and particles fall to earth when not raining</p>	<p>- how does this relate directly to Great Lakes?</p> <p>- what specific companies in Ontario emit sulphur dioxide?</p> <p>- what is most affected by snow and rain in Toronto?</p>
28	<p>Effects: - pollution of lakes, rivers, etc., killing fish & wildlife - damage to buildings, vegetation, & soil</p>	<p>- how can you see damage? what does it look like on buildings?</p>
30	<p>Treatment: - devices are available to remove sulphur & nitrogen compounds from factory smoke - lime added to lakes to neutralize the acids</p>	<p>- what devices? how do the devices work? (I need more research here)</p>
34	<p>Quotation: "Scientists use the term acid deposition to refer to both wet and dry pollution that falls to the earth"</p>	

Visual Organizers to Process Information

Visual organizers are grids, webs, and other diagrams that represent knowledge in a visible format. They can help you process the information you have gathered, make connections, and structure your thinking.

Visual organizers can be drawn by hand or created electronically in word-processing, presentation, or concept-mapping applications.

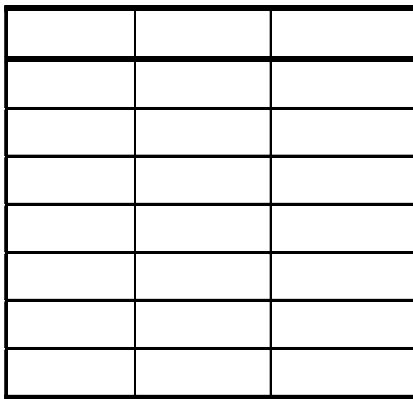


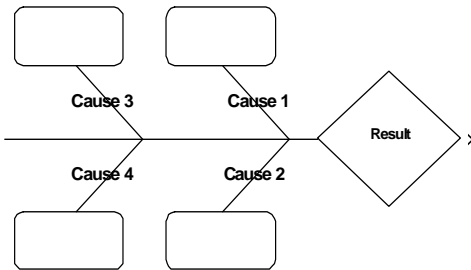
TABLE or GRID

The **table** or **grid** organizes information under categories and subcategories, using columns and rows.

The columns and rows of tables or grids created in word-processing, spreadsheet, and database programs can be sorted alphabetically or numerically.

Purposes of Visual Organizers	
ACTION	OBJECT
Analyze	conflicting information
Break down	whole into its components
Compare	similar information
Construct	personal knowledge
Contrast	different information
Determine	relationships and connections
Display	a sequence of events or procedures
Distinguish	fact and opinion
Identify	cause and effect
Plan	the parts of a task
Sort	facts into categories and subcategories

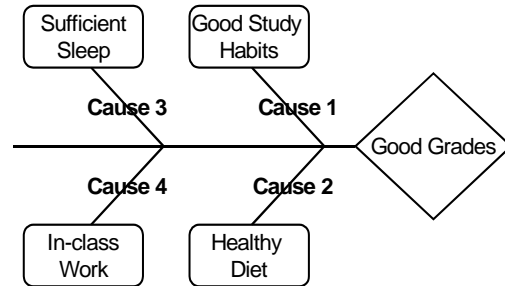
Table or Grid



FISHBONE

The **fishbone** organizes information in lines and boxes to explore cause and effect, and to explain elements leading to a result.

Keep main ideas (causes) simple and branch off them to record details.

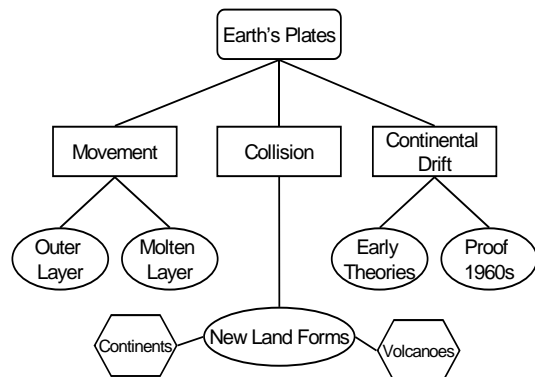
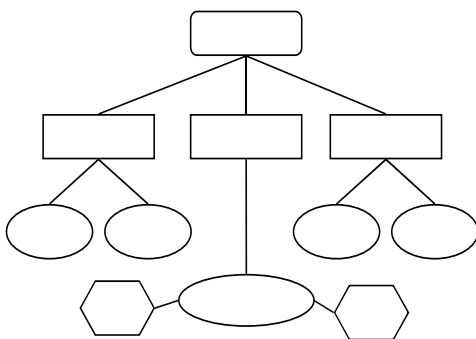


Fishbone

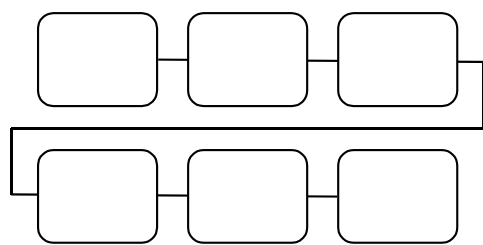
DIAGRAMMING/ MAPPING

Diagramming or **mapping** organizes information in boxes and lines to show how one thing leads to, arises from, or relates to another.

Use the diagram or map to activate your prior knowledge, clarify your focus, identify where more detail is needed, and summarize information.



Diagramming/Mapping

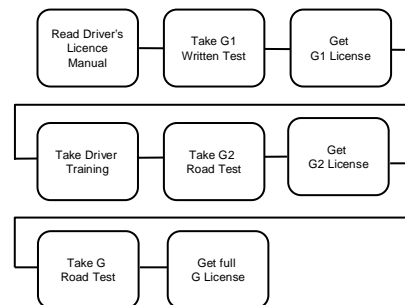


Sequence Chart

SEQUENCE CHART

The **sequence chart** organizes information into steps to follow, using boxes connected together by a directional line.

Use the sequence chart to order a set of actions chronologically, break down a complex sequence, or plan your workflow.



Sequence Chart

Topic: _____

STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

AGREE/DISAGREE or PRO/CON CHART

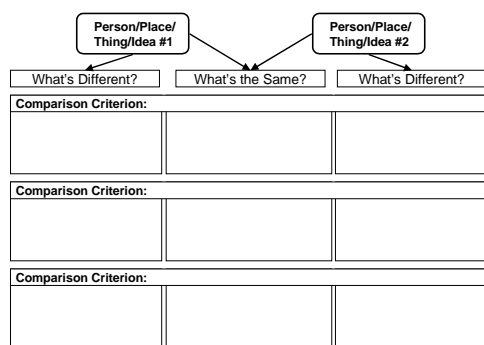
Agree/disagree or pro/con or charts organize information into a table that contrasts positions taken about an issue.

Use the agree/disagree chart to examine points of view and analyze possible bias. Use the pro/con variation to organize data to support a thesis.

Topic: Hockey Violence

STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE
1. Violence is natural in hockey.	Hockey is always an emotional game when played with intensity.	Professionals teach violence to young players.
2. Hockey is best played with body contact.	The fans expect a hard-hitting game with lots of checking.	The fans prefer a game of good passing and shooting.
3. To play to win justifies a bit of violence.	To win the Stanley Cup, a team must be prepared to "dish it out."	The Stanley Cup is not the point. To play for fun is a higher goal.
4. No hockey player can afford to be soft.	A good player must be able to stand up for himself or herself.	Women's hockey is great to watch without the "macho."
5. Violence is part of hockey's history.	The fans remember the big hitters and tough players.	International hockey has a long history of less violent play.

Agree/Disagree or Pro/Con Chart



COMPARISON CHART WITH CRITERIA

The **comparison chart with criteria** organizes information into a table that shows how people, places, things, or ideas are similar to and different from one another.

Use the comparison chart with criteria to clarify your understanding and deepen your analysis.

Hamlet		Macbeth
What's Different?	What's the Same?	What's Different?
Dilemma		
Hesitant to take control	Power	Eager to become king
Tragic Flaw		
Man of thought	A sensitive soul	Man of action
Death		
Betrayed by treachery?	Embraced possibility of death	Betrayed by fate?

Comparison Chart with Criteria

There are many other visual organizers available to help you in your research. Review some of the organizers used throughout this *Guide* such as brainstorming webs (p. 10), concept maps (p. 11), and K-N-R charts (p. 12).

Tip: Be imaginative with visual organizers. Use colour and pictures to highlight your ideas.

Forming a Focus Statement or Thesis Statement



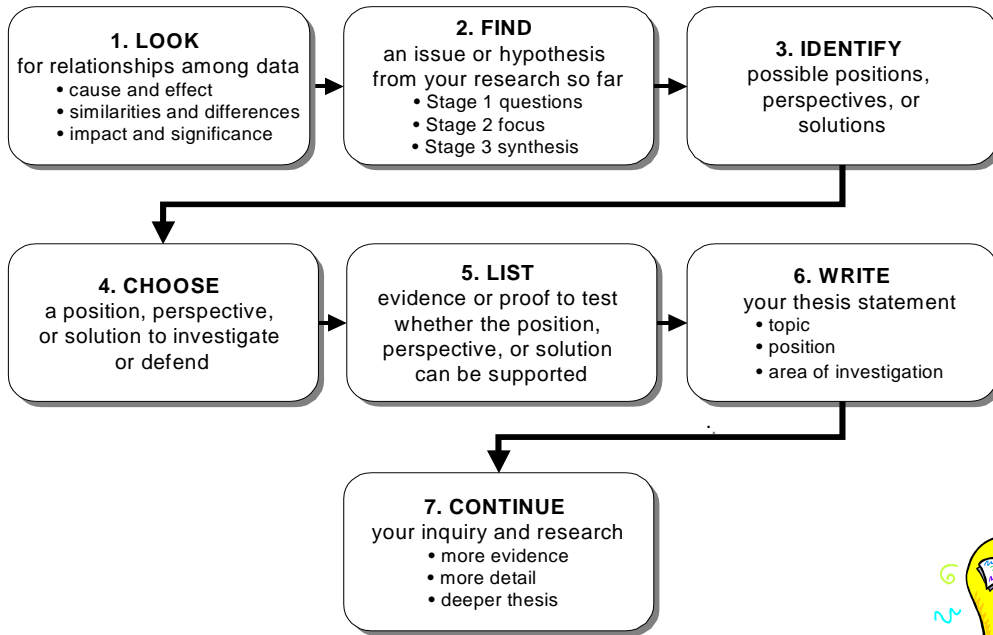
Whether you are writing a report, writing an essay, or doing a presentation, your introduction will include a focus of some sort. In a report, it will be a **focus statement**, and in an essay, it will be a **thesis statement**. This statement will guide and shape your writing.

	Report	Essay
Purpose	<p>In a report, you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ describe and explain ○ provide the audience with clear, factual, relevant, and accurate information in order to understand an issue or topic 	<p>In an essay, you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ argue and persuade ○ provide the audience with a perspective and position in order to make a judgment about an issue or topic
Focus	<p>The focus of a report is called the Focus Statement. It:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ states what you are describing and explaining in the report ○ tells the reader why this information is important <p>A focus statement must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>clear</i> (Am I helping the audience understand?) ○ <i>factual</i> (Am I objective and unbiased?) ○ <i>accurate</i> (Am I precise and truthful?) ○ <i>relevant</i> (Am I sticking to my topic?) 	<p>The focus of an essay is called the Thesis Statement. It:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ states a position or argument ○ identifies relationships between ideas and the evidence that supports the ideas ○ makes a promise to the reader about the scope, purpose, and direction of the paper <p>A thesis statement must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>provable and arguable</i> (Are there enough details and evidence to support my position?) ○ <i>researchable</i> (Are there enough resources to support my position?) ○ <i>worth proving</i> (Is this issue or topic interesting, significant, novel, or controversial enough to spend the time examining it?)
Examples	<p>Example 1 This report will describe the influence of the political and legal systems of ancient Greece on our Canadian form of democratic government.</p> <p>Example 2 This report will outline how wind power can be used to provide energy to our cities and how effectively wind power is utilized in Toronto.</p>	<p>Example 1 Canada is no longer a democracy for many of the democratic ideals of ancient Greece have been tarnished by recent political and legal events.</p> <p>Example 2 Wind power is a reasonable way to provide long-term power solutions to our cities, and so Toronto must lead by example and embrace the turbine.</p>

Tip: Your focus statement or thesis statement guides the report or essay toward a **synthesis** that brings together ideas in order to create new ideas.

Crafting a Thesis Statement

Based on your resources, notes, and readings, craft a clear, well-reasoned thesis statement.



Examples of Thesis Statements	Your Thesis Statement
1. Researching the variety of Canadian occupations (topic) is a practical preparation (position) for career planning after high school (area of investigation). 2. Minority government (topic) provides the best form of government (position) in the Canadian federal system (area of investigation). 3. Inadequate early childhood parenting (topic) produces irreparable damage (position) in adults' psychological health (area of investigation).	Topic:
	Position:
	Area of Investigation:
	Thesis Statement in a Complete Sentence:

Criteria for a Strong Thesis

Thesis	Comment
<i>Does deforestation threaten the environment?</i>	This is a good <i>question</i> that might lead to a thesis, but it is not a thesis.
<i>Deforestation is a concern.</i>	A statement of fact is a weak thesis. Take a stand that is arguable.
<i>Something must be done about deforestation.</i>	This is a weak and vague thesis. What must be done? Take a stand that is specific and arguable.
<i>Deforestation will have a long-term impact on the biodiversity of forests.</i>	This is a good thesis. It has a topic, a clear position, and the area of investigation included in one sentence.

Does your thesis statement do more than restate the topic or question?

- a) **Less effective:** *simply declares an intention*
This essay will examine the effects of technology on society.
- b) **More effective:** *indicates the result of research*
There is no evidence that the use of computers in primary school substantially improves learning.



Is your thesis statement written clearly so that it states the central argument precisely?

- a) **Less effective:** *too vague*
Pirating music from the Internet may hurt the music industry.
- b) **More effective:** *precisely indicates the author's argument*
Because pirating music will decrease the sales of music, new laws should be established to protect the rights of the artists.



Does your thesis statement present a position that can be proven?

- a) **Less effective:** *too broad to be proven in a single paper*
Margaret Atwood's science-fiction novels paint a bleak picture of the future.
- b) **More effective:** *manageable because one aspect is addressed*
The Handmaid's Tale, in depicting a future where a central authority controls fertility, suggests that our society will have a similar fate.



A. Introduction	
<p>The opening paragraph contains sentences that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. peak the interest of the audience with a question or startling fact 2. provide brief, factual background information 3. give the thesis statement with: Topic, Position, and Area of Investigation (1 or 2 sentences) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
B. Body (sequence from least to most important idea)	
<p>Main idea #1 paragraph:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. begins with a topic sentence that provides transition* and link, and states the <i>first</i> idea supporting the thesis 2. explains and analyzes this idea 3. provides examples, illustrations, and/or quotations 4. ends with a concluding sentence that reinforces the first main idea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • • •
<p>Main idea #2 paragraph:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. begins with a topic sentence that provides transition and link, and states the <i>second</i> idea supporting the thesis 2. explains and analyzes this idea 3. provides examples, illustrations, and/or quotations 4. ends with a concluding sentence that reinforces the second main idea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
<p>Main idea #3 paragraph:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. begins with a topic sentence that provides transition and link, and states the <i>third</i> idea supporting the thesis 2. explains and analyzes the this idea 3. provides examples, illustrations, and/or quotations 4. ends with a concluding sentence that reinforces the third main idea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • • •
C. Conclusion	
<p>The conclusion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. restates thesis in ways that emphasize its significance 2. provides a synthesis of main ideas presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • •

Tip: The Body of the essay can include as many paragraphs as you need to develop the thesis.

Tip: Transition* words help the reader move to your new idea. These words include: *first, secondly, however, meanwhile, therefore, as a result, to conclude, for example, chiefly, in short, and in other words.*

