Research: Gathering and analyzing a body of information or data and extracting new meaning from it or developing unique solutions to problems or cases.

TQR it! – Developing a research question

Topic: I am studying ____________________.

Question: ... because I want to find out who/how/why ____________________.

Rationale: ... in order to understand how/why/what ____________________.

Battle of the Alamo

Topic: I am studying differences among nineteenth-century versions of the story of the Alamo...

Question: ... because I want to find out how politicians used stories of great events to shape public opinion,

Rationale: ... in order to show how politicians use elements of popular culture to advance their political goals.

Still having trouble? Finding too much information? Too little?

A question that is too narrow or specific may not retrieve enough information. If this happens, broaden the question.

INSTEAD OF: Should Makah whaling rituals be permitted despite endangered species laws?

TRY: Should Native Americans practice religious and social customs that violate local and Federal laws?

A question that is too broad may retrieve too much information. Here are some strategies for narrowing the scope of a question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context/Focus</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Are you focusing on a specific period of time? Do you need to provide a historical overview of your topic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Does your topic connect your research to a particular region? If so, do you need to consider or address local social norms &amp; values, economic &amp; political systems, or languages?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Does your topic focus on a particular population or demographic? Examples: age, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, species...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viewpoint</td>
<td>Do you plan to approach your topic through a particular lens? Examples: legal, medical, ethical, biological, psychological, economic, political, educational...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Now what?

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