Researching, Writing, Referencing and Study Guide

Taroom P-10 State School
Using the Internet Wisely

The internet – World Wide Web – is a vast source of information on every topic imaginable. Unfortunately though it is open to everyone to submit information, and with few regulations, at times the information given may be inaccurate and opinion based.

However, the internet should not be disregarded when conducting research. It is a major source for current news, books, credible magazines, general information and other relevant content. It is important that you are able to determine a good site source from a bad source.

Here are a few tips to help you efficiently conduct online research and find quality information for your needs.

1. Reliable Sites to Use

Many reliable statistics, articles and other information can be found on government and educational websites. These websites are easily identified because their domain names end in \textit{.edu} or \textit{.gov}. Non-profit organizations use \textit{.org} and business sites use \textit{.com}.

2. How to determine a reliable site

There are a number of questions you should ask about a website before using it as a research resource. These questions focus on 2 areas: \textbf{authority} (author/editor and publisher details) and the \textbf{content}.

	extbf{Questions to ask regarding authority:}

- What type of domain does the website come from?
- Who "published" the website?
- Is it a personal website?
- Can you tell who (person or institution) created the website?
- Are the author's credentials listed on the website?
  - Look at the very top or bottom of the web page for a \textit{name, email address,} or \textit{"About Us" or Contact Us"} link to determine who created the site.
  - The name between \texttt{http://} and the first / usually indicates which organisation owns the server the website is housed on. Learning about the organisation that hosts a site can give you important information about the site's credibility.
  - If you can't find author details on a website, try typing the author's name into a search engine such as \texttt{Google} to obtain biographical information.

	extbf{Questions to ask regarding the content:}

- What is the stated or implied purpose of the website?
- Does the website address a topic from a certain timeframe and/or geographic area?
- Does the website have a "hidden" purpose Eg: are there signs of bias in the website?
- Why was the website created?
Who is the intended audience?
- Websites that inform, explain, or supply facts and data may be useful whereas websites that promote, sell, disclose, entice or rant need close scrutiny.
- Some websites might seem that they intend to inform the public, but actually try to sway opinion. Be on the lookout for hidden agendas!
- Check for the presence of opposing or one-sided viewpoints, emotional language, prejudice, stereotypes, deception, or manipulation. Are there possible biases stemming from when or where the website was created? What cultural points of view might be present?

What other sources does the website refer to, cite, or link to?

When was the website created? Last updated?
- To determine when a website was created, look for the copyright date at the bottom of the webpage.
- The last update date is usually at the very top or bottom of the page. Websites that are not updated regularly may be "abandoned" and therefore the information they contain is not reliable.

3. Narrow your research topic before logging on

The Internet allows access to so much information that you can easily be overwhelmed. Before you start your search think about what you're looking for, and if possible, formulate some very specific questions to direct and limit your search.

- Always use keywords, not a sentence or a question.
- Use the words and, or and not to create relationships among search terms and allow you to narrow your search.
- As you conduct your research, take note of synonyms, alternate spellings and related keywords of your topic. For example, if you're looking for information on dogs, you may also want to search puppies, canines and pets.
- Use "" (quotations) around phrases such as "Wild Bill".
- * (asterisk) is a wildcard e.g. nurs* will search for nursing, nurses, nursed etc...
- In Google, - (minus) will exclude a certain word (-university).
- In a Google search, use ~ (tilde) to search for similar words (~college will also find university).

4. Use different Search Engines

Each Search Engine uses different methods for finding information and therefore results will differ.

Websites used to create this source:
Plagiarising, Paraphrasing and Summarising

Plagiarising is using the words or ideas of others and passing them off as your own. Plagiarism is intellectual theft.

Plagiarism can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement. Consequently, whenever you use the words or ideas of another person in your work, you must acknowledge where they came from.

For direct referencing see the section – Referencing Guide. Writing information in your own words is an acceptable way to include the ideas of other people in your writing. You can do this through paraphrasing or summarising, which will allow you to avoid plagiarising other peoples’ work.

To Summarise Information
When you summarise information you are giving an overview of the original text. The key ideas are extracted from the text, creating a shorter version of the original.

- The MEANING remains the same – but you are giving a broad overview of the topic
- The summary keeps the degree of certainty of the writer
- You use a mix of your own words and the main points from the original text
- It is a shorter version of the original text
- The source/s are correctly referenced

Steps for summarising:
1. Skim read the material, noting the important factors. These are usually found in the introduction, paragraph top sentences, the conclusion and in any sub-headings given.
2. Re-read the text in full, making sure you understand every word (a dictionary may be helpful).
3. Re-read the text in sections creating notes in point form – keep key words and ideas.
4. Create your summary using your notes – not the original text.
5. Re-read your summary with the original to ensure you have not missed any important ideas.
6. Use in-text referencing when needed and correctly reference any direct quotes in your reference section.
To Paraphrase Information

When paraphrasing you are rewriting the original text without changing the original meaning – you are putting the text “in your own words”. Paraphrases usually do not use direct quotations.

- The MEANING remains the same
- Most of the words have been changed
- The sentences are restructured
- The paraphrased information is similar in length to the original
- The source/s are correctly referenced

Steps for paraphrasing:
1. Skim read the material, noting the important subject specific content.
2. Rewrite each sentence in your own word. REMEMBER TO KEEP THE MEANING.
3. Simplify the sentence structure and vocabulary.
4. Use synonyms (similar in meaning) words for the subject specific words.
5. Create your version of the text using your notes – not the original text.
6. Revise what you have written, comparing it to the original.
7. Use in-text referencing when needed and correctly reference the source in your reference the section.

Sourced From:
Mrs Hay’s Turning Research Notes into Paragraphs Guide

1. Create a table to list the important facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic One</th>
<th>Topic Two</th>
<th>Topic Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. READ the text and identify the main topics. These become the HEADINGS in your table and will be the paragraphs in your summary. This will keep your draft essay organised.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic One</th>
<th>Topic Two</th>
<th>Topic Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country Facts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. READ the text and identify the important facts. Place them in the table in the relevant columns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic One</th>
<th>Topic Two</th>
<th>Topic Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locates in Western Africa (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorest country (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually one of the lowest ranked countries on the UNHDI- ranked 186th out of 186 in 2012 (4)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population-13.1 million (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Climate (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not many government services and insufficient money to develop a resource base (3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landlocked country (1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of NT (2)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. CROSS-OUT: Reread the notes on your planning sheet. Cross out any details that you decide not to include or move them to more relevant boxes.

5. CONNECT relevant pieces of information.

6. NUMBER the notes in a logical order.

7. WRITE: Turn the notes into complete sentences and write the paragraph.

8. EDIT: Revise and proof read your paragraph……and start on the next one!!

Completed Paragraph:

Niger is a landlocked country in Western Africa and is one of the hottest countries in the world. With a population of over 13.1 million people, Niger covers an area approximately the same size as the Northern Territory. It one of the poorest countries in the world with minimal government services and insufficient funds to develop its resource base. Niger is consistently one of the lowest-ranked countries on the United Nations Human Development Index, it was ranked last out of 186 countries in 2012.
Referencing Guide

This guide will help you to present referencing information consistently and correctly in your assignments. (The APA referencing system, used in universities, has been used to collate this guide.)

Most referencing will consist of the same components:

- **Author (Surname, First Name [or initials])** *WHO*
- **Date / Year of publication** *WHEN*
- **Title (and Edition number if relevant)** *WHAT*
- **Place of publication** *WHERE*
- **Publisher’s name**
- **And Specific punctuation is used within each reference**

There are two steps in referencing:

- Referencing within the actual text content
- Referencing in a Bibliography at the end of the written work

Within the Bibliography the references are listed in alphabetical order of the author (or first author if multiple authors)

**Referencing an Author of a Book**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Single Author</th>
<th>In Text</th>
<th>The idea of progress is much overrated (Addington, 1994). Addington (1994) states that . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Two Authors</th>
<th>In Text</th>
<th>Holper and Torok (2008) claim . . . Climate change will affect all lives on this planet (Holper &amp; Torok, 2008).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Note** Use ‘and’ between authors, but use an ‘&’ when in brackets and in References.

|------------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|

**Note** Name all authors in your first in text reference, but use first author and ‘et al’ after this

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors with the same name</th>
<th>In Text</th>
<th>Scollon, Scollon and Jones (2011) argue that . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Referencing from an Internet Site

| Author unknown – use organisation | In Text | The NSW Board of Studies (2006) advocates an . . . |
| Author unknown – use title of work | In Text | Vaccine efficiency is six times more efficient . . . ("New Child Vaccine", 2001). |

### Referencing from Journal / Newspaper articles

| Note | Write the Journal name, volume and page number/s in italics after the article name |
| **Article in a journal** | In Text | Reid and Sand (1987) comment that . . . An earlier study (Reid & Sand, 1987) suggests that . . . |
| **Article in an electronic journal (internet)** | In Text | Collins (2010) argues that opposition to . . . The development of the rule of law occurred first within bureaucratic states (Collins, 2010). |
| **Newspaper article – known author** | In Text | Target funding is not being met (Leech, 2002). Leech (2002) suggests that . . . |
| **Newspaper article – author unknown** | In Text | Debt levels have fallen ("Computer Industry Blamed", 1997) . . . |

### Other Reference Sources

| Encyclopedia | In Text | AC/DC, formed in 1973, became one of Australia’s best known rock groups (McFarlane, 1999). |
## Other Reference Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dictionary – known author</th>
<th>In Text</th>
<th>A primary verb is one of the three verb types (Chaulker &amp; Weiner, 1998).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dictionary – author unknown</th>
<th>In Text</th>
<th>Tmesis involves separating syllables of a word with other intervening words, for example, fan-damn-tastic (“Tmesis”, 2013).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

|-----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table / Data</th>
<th>In Text</th>
<th>As shown in Figure 6, daily extremes in temperature in Australia ...(in your writing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note: Tables, graphs, images, maps, etc can be used to highlight your text. Refer to the items in your paragraph, then place your item directly below the text, label in and then add the text reference, starting with Note:


Sourced from:

Top Study Tips

Study isn't just for the night before an assignment's due or the night before an exam. It's never too early - or too late - to develop good study habits. The sooner you get into a good study groove, the easier everything will be and the more your chances of getting good marks will improve.

Here are some top tips for getting the most out of study.
1. Pick a place and time
2. Study every day
3. Plan your time
4. Discover your learning style
5. Review and revise
6. Take breaks
7. Ask for help
8. Look after yourself

1. Pick a place and time
Decide on the best location that allows you to study – your bedroom, quiet room in the house, the town/school library. Your study space should be quiet, comfortable and distraction-free. It should make you feel happy and inspired.

Find your best time - Some people work better in the morning. Others work better at night. Work out which time suits you and plan to study then. Don't study much later than your usual bedtime - pushing yourself late at night can make you too tired to study properly.

2. Study every day
If you study a little bit every day you'll be continually reviewing things in your mind. This helps you understand things. It also helps you avoid the stress of last-minute cramming.

Early in the year an hour or two a night might be enough to stay on top of things. Closer to exams you might need to study more each day.

3. Plan your time
It helps to have some plans in motion so you can make the most of your study time.
- Use your school diary – Make sure you list your homework needs and assessment dates in your school diary.
- Create a timetable – Use a timetable to indicate which days of the week you will study particular subjects. This way you are spreading your study time over a whole week instead of trying to do every subject every day. This allows for variety.
- Identify key dates – Mark (and display) a calendar with important dates, like exams and assignment due dates.
- Make to-do lists - Lists break tasks down into manageable chunks. At the start of the week, make a list of the things that you need to have done by the end of the week.
4. Discover your learning style
Most of us have a preferred way of learning. Get to know your learning style and study in the ways you learn best.
- Auditory learners learn by listening. If you're an auditory learner you could try reading your notes aloud and discussing them with other people. You might like to record key points and play them back.
- Visual learners learn by seeing. If you're a visual learner you could use colours in your notes and draw diagrams to help represent key points. You could try to remember some ideas as images.
- Tactile/kinesthetic learners learn by doing. If you're a tactile/kinesthetic learner you could use methods like role-playing or building models to revise key points.

5. Review and revise
At least once a week you should go back over the things you've studied in class. Reviewing work can help you to understand the concepts and help you remember when you need them the most.
- Quiz yourself - Get a friend or family member to quiz you on key concepts. Offer to help your friends with their work too.
- Make your own study materials - Think up some practice exam questions or create your own flash cards to help you study. This way you learn it all twice: once when you make the study materials and once when you use them to revise.

6. Take breaks
It's important to take breaks while you're studying, especially if you're feeling tired or frustrated. Working too long on a task can actually decrease your performance. When you take a break, make sure you get away from your desk or study space. A bit of physical activity - even just a walk around the block - can sometimes help you to look at a problem in a different way and could even help you to solve it.

7. Ask for help
If you're stuck on something, or something just doesn't seem to make sense, you can always ask for help. Talk to your teachers about the things you don't understand. Talk to your friends and fellow students too.

8. Look after yourself
You'll study better if you take care of yourself. Make sure you eat well and get enough sleep and physical exercise. Don't reward yourself with too many sugary or fatty snacks or push yourself to study late into the night. It's also a good idea to make sure you drink lots of water when you're studying.

Sourced from:
Top 8 Exam Tips

Exams are inevitable for students, but they don't have to be painful. These tips can help you get ready for and get through your exams. They can also help you prepare for tests and class presentations, and tackle in-class assignments.

1. Find out about the exam
2. Ask for help
3. Sort out your subject material
4. Don't cram
5. Keep calm
6. Use your perusal time
7. Break the questions down
8. Review your answers

1. Find out about the exam
Know your enemy - find out as much as you can about the exam. Questions to ask your teacher before the exam include:
- How much is the exam worth to your overall mark in the subject?
- What type of exam is it (for example, multiple choice, essay, open book, take-home)?
- Will there be a choice of questions or tasks?

2. Ask for help
Don’t feel bad if you need to ask for help. People you can talk to about exams include:
- Teachers
- Family members
- Friends and fellow students

3. Sort out your subject material
Before starting to review a subject it helps to:
- Check you have all of the handouts
- Put your notes in order
- Read over any course outline or subject guide
- Write your own summaries of each textbook chapter or section of the subject guide.
Getting all your gear together makes it easier to find what you need while you’re studying.

4. Don’t cram
Staying up all night to cram will only stress you out. It's better to just review what you've already studied and get an early night. That way you'll be as refreshed as you can be on the day of your exam. If you want to do some preparation the night before, keep it simple:
- Get all your materials together
- Read over your notes
- Test yourself on key concepts
5. Keep calm
Fronting up to an exam can be nerve-wracking, but here are some tips for staying calm:
- Don’t talk too much to other students before the exam
- Try to get there with time to spare so you don’t arrive all rushed
- Make sure you have everything you need to take with you (for example, calculator, pencil, ruler)
- Make sure you have a decent breakfast

6. Use your perusal time
The way you use your perusal time can really help you make the most of your exam time. Here are some ways to use your reading time well:
- Read all of the instructions very carefully
- Scan the whole exam paper
- Check how many pages there are
- Plan which questions to answer first (consider starting with questions you’re confident about)
- Plan how much time you’ll spend on each answer or section
- Start thinking about your answers

7. Break the questions down
A great tip for any exam is to break the questions down to make sure you really understand what you’re being asked. Look for the key parts of the question. These can give you clues on how to answer it.

For example, for the question, “Explain the difference between study and revision”, you could split this question into four parts:
1. Explain - give reasons to show how or why something is the way it is
2. The difference - what are the distinguishing factors between study and revision?
3. Study - what is study?
4. Revision - what is revision?

8. Review your answers (if you can)
If you finish the exam before the time is up it’s a good idea to go back and review everything, even answers you’re confident you got right. Try to:
- Review as many answers as you can
- Start with the questions you’re least confident about
- Make sure you’ve answered every question
- Make sure you’ve answered every part of every question (some questions might have multiple parts)

Sourced from: