Choosing a Topic - Part Two

Generate Ideas from Library Research Guides

Web search results

You know from experience that finding good, reliable and credible sources on the web can be difficult. [image: screenshot of sample web search results for search = human evolution anthropology with 16,700,000 results]

Library home page

Fortunately, Madison College Librarians have sought out the best sources on many topics and link to them on Library Research Guides. [image: screenshot of library research guide for demographics information]

Research guides

To get started, under the Library Services section of the home page, click on ‘Research Guides’ [image: screenshot of libraries home page with Research Guides link highlighted]

Research Guide Index

Next you have your choice to browse an alphabetic list of all guides, or use the index that is arranged by category. [image: screenshot of library research guide index]
Slide 7 - choose anthropology

Let's say you have been assigned to write a paper for your human anthropology class. To get some ideas, click on the link to the anthropology research guide. [image: screenshot of library research guide index with anthropology highlighted] Choose ‘Anthropology’

Slide 8 - web resources

There is a section of the guide for journals and databases for this subject, but those will only be of help once you have selected a topic. Instead, click on the guide’s ‘Web Resources’ tab. [image: anthropology research guide screenshot with web resources tab highlighted]

Slide 9 - websites

Now you can browse among the twenty or so websites that librarians have identified as good sources for this subject. [image: screenshot of website links on the research guide for anthropology including Anthropology.net and various associations]

Slide 10 – browse. If not, move on to a different site and browse for yet another idea. Maybe you will decide to find out more about how climate change affects human evolution. Or perhaps you will examine differences among primates. Or you might choose to reexamine how humans relate to all species. If not, move on to a different site and browse for yet another idea. [image: screenshot of a Smithsonian website with a representative article highlighted]

Slide 11 – formulate. The idea is to target your preliminary web search to those sites that have a narrow focus on your topic. Once you have a topic in mind, create a handful of research questions that will guide your more in-depth research. [image: screenshot of archeological find with skeleton image]Formulate Research Questions: What evidence have researchers found that suggests our human ancestors lived during overlapping eras? How have the theories of human evolution changed with each new archaeological find?

Slide 12 - librarian help

If you find you need librarian help at any point, again, look in the Library Services section of our web page. [image: screenshot of library home page with library services highlighted]
Slide 13 - research help

The first link will take you to the Libraries’ Reference and Research Help page. [image: screenshot of library home page with reference and research help highlighted]

Slide 14 - ask us

There you can find all the ways you can contact us at Madison College Libraries. We're here to help! [image: screenshot of the Get Help! box from the reference and research help research guide listing ways to contact a librarian]