The overarching goal of this workshop:

Students will develop focused research questions (or statements) for college-level research assignments using reliable background information.

How to Read this Lesson Plan Layout

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section of Lesson</th>
<th>Learning Objectives: You’ll find the learning objective(s) for this segment here. This is what you are shooting for.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructor Action, Procedure and Teaching Points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time: About how much time this section takes to complete.</td>
<td>Description of what the instructor will be doing. May include suggested teaching points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student Action:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Description of what the students will be doing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Checkpoint for Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indicates which part of the handouts corresponds with this section of the lesson. May include separate suggested activities not included on the handout or suggested discussion questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Materials and Equipment Needed:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indicates equipment or supplies needed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE LESSON

Goal: Students will develop focused research questions for college-level research assignments using reliable background information.

Measurable Objectives:

1. Analyze research assignments to determine research needs and manageable research topics.
2. Find relevant background information to increase familiarity with broad topics using Gale Virtual Reference Library or CQ Researcher.
3. Formulate focused research questions or statements.
### Developing Research Topics Workshop

#### Lesson Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction and Welcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time:</strong> 5 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Learning Objectives:** No official measurable objective here. The purpose is to make students feel welcome, get a sense of what they are working on and/or what they are hoping to get out of the session, and get them talking.

**Instructor Action, Procedure and Teaching Points**

**As students settle in,** ask them if they are working on any research assignments. If so, ask them to take out their assignments so we can use them.

Begin the session by welcoming students to the workshop and briefly describing the agenda – this workshop focuses on developing research topics, not finding books/articles.

Pass around sign-in sheet.

Explain why it’s important to develop a topic and that it can take time.

**Student Action:**

Students share information about their research assignments. (A few students.)

**Checkpoint for Understanding**

You can have students take out their assignment prompts if they have them.

**Materials and Equipment Needed:**

- Sign-in sheet.
- Student handouts.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understanding the Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Learning Objectives:** Analyze research assignments to determine research needs and manageable research topics.

**Instructor Action, Procedure and Teaching Points**

Explain why this step is important. Ideas to consider include:

**Student Action:**

Students analyze their own assignments or they use the mock

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Revised Fall 2014
Time: 5-7 min

- Research and researched writing requires an organized approach in order to succeed.
- Making sure you understand your assignment can provide direction.
- Research has shown that students feel anxiety when first given a research assignment. Analyzing the assignment and breaking it down can help you be in more control of the situation so you can tackle it instead of just worrying about it.
- If you realize that you have questions about the assignment, you can ask your professor before it’s too late.

Facilitate the activity and discussion using Part A of the handout.

**Option A:** This option is good if you have a mix of students from different classes or students don’t have assignments yet.

- Break students into small groups of two or three and direct them to the mock assignment in Part A of the student handout (“Understand the Assignment”)
- Part A of the handout is an English 1A assignment that one Mt. SAC English professor assigns. Let’s break it down. Circle all important information in this assignment prompt.
- You can project the assignment on the doc cam and discuss

**Option B:** This option is good if some or all students have assignments.

- Ask students to take out their own assignment prompts to complete the activity.
**Developing Research Topics Workshop**

**LESSON PLAN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Learning Objectives:</strong></th>
<th>Find relevant background information to increase familiarity with broad topics using <em>Gale Virtual Reference Library</em> or <em>CQ Researcher</em>.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Instructor Action, Procedure and Teaching Points** | Discuss the importance of background/reference information to research projects (3-5 mins)  
Points can include:  
- Provides a “working knowledge” (Badke, *Research*)  
  |
| **Student Action:** | Students can share which background resources that they have used in the past. |

**Background Research**

- They do not have to work in groups, but can if several students from the same class are present.
- Students who do not have an assignment can use the assignment prompt on the handout.
- Ask students to identify components of the assignment such as: what type of assignment? Need sources? If so, any guidelines on types of sources or how many? How long is the paper?
- Facilitate discussion. You can use the doc cam, the whiteboard, or just talk.

**Checkpoint for Understanding**

- Complete Part A of the handout.
- Discussion.

**Materials and Equipment Needed:**

- Student handouts.
- Doc cam and whiteboards optional.
**Strategies: Finding Your Way Through the Information Fog**

- Puts topic in context
- Provides historical and background information
- Focuses the research path
- Provides additional terms and concepts
- Often used as a pre-researching tool. Ask your professor if they are acceptable to cite as sources for your assignment.

Teach GVRL however you like to teach it, but please include: (10-12 min)

- the content and scope of GVRL
- how to use an encyclopedia article to narrow a topic (scan headings, sub-topics, identify key terms/people/events, explore list of references)
- the difference between clicking on the article title and the encyclopedia title (we have noticed students often click on the encyclopedia title and get confused when they don’t see the article).

Ask students to complete #1 in Part B of the handout.

Tell students to leave the GVRL article open because it will help with the last activity.

Teach CQ Researcher however you like to teach it, but please include: (10-12 min)

- the content and scope of the CQ Researcher
- how to use a CQ Researcher report to narrow a

Students search GVRL.

Students complete complete #1 in Part B of the handout.

Students search CQ Researcher.
### LESSON PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic (scan headings, sub-topics, identify key terms/people/events, explore list of references, etc.)</th>
<th>Students complete complete #2 in Part B of the handout.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• the way CQ displays search results – not chronologically</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• reports and updates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ask students to complete #2 in Part B of the handout.

Tell students to leave the CQ Researcher article open because it will help with the last activity.

Tell students that depending on their topic, they might be able to find background information in one source but not the other. It’s ok if they were unable to find a source in both sources.

**Troubleshooting Tip:**
If students are having trouble finding background information on their topic, they might need to move higher up in their topic hierarchy.

**Checkpoint for Understanding**

Student handout Part B.

Discussion and questions during the module.

**Materials and Equipment Needed:**

Student handout.
### Topic Development

**Time:** 25-30 min

**Learning Objectives:** Formulate focused research questions or statements.

**Instructor Action, Procedure and Teaching Points**

You can use this explanation of research if you want to. It's taken from the iCite video that we use at the Writing Center.

“Research is taking what you know and think of what others have to say and filtering it to come up with an answer to your particular question … You can think of research as a journey you take to find people who know something about a question that you want to answer… Your research paper should be a map of all of your sources that helped you answer your question.”

Therefore, developing a good research question is vital to writing a good research paper.

Saying something like this might work well in the introduction to the workshop too.

A research question
- Helps you to focus your topic
- Provides a goal
- Directs you to search terms and concepts
- (Can be used to create an outline which) guides your research

Explain the table as a tool for narrowing your topic and forming a question. Optional PowerPoint slides to use or adapt are available in the portal. If you adapt them, please share with the group by posting what you’ve created to the portal or email it to Pauline and she will post it for you.

**Student Action:**

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**Topic Development**

| Student Action: |  |
|  |  |
Note that you can post links, including links to Prezi presentations. Also note that not all librarians use Prezi, but it’s still helpful for us to see other's teaching materials.

Pauline’s note on using the table – I often show the example toward the beginning of the workshop so the students know what’s to come and what they’re working toward.

Ask students to complete Part C of the handout using the background information found earlier in GVRL and CQ Researcher. approx. 10 min

Explain how to use the topic development chart to draft research questions. Points that you can include are:

- Make sure that the question cannot be answered with a “Yes,” “No,” or a quick fact check.
- Make sure that the question isn’t too broad. Usually it should include ideas from at least two topics from the topic development chart.
- If the research question is too broad, it is most likely superficial and will only skim the surface of a topic. For most college-level research assignments, you will be expected to dig deep and focus on something specific. Focusing your topic usually makes the research and writing process easier.
- Make sure your topic isn’t too narrow. You don’t need to include an idea from each column. If you focus on a time period, make sure it’s not too

Students complete Part C of the handout using the background information found using GVRL and CQ Researcher.

Students complete Part D of the handout using the topic development chart.
Developing Research Topics Workshop

Lesson Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checkpoint for Understanding</th>
<th>Materials and Equipment Needed:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parts C and D of the student handout.</td>
<td>Student handout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You can use the doc cam to show the topic development table or you can use the example powerpoint slides available in the portal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Review and Closing

Time: 5 min

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Objectives:</th>
<th>Student Action:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Action, Procedure and Teaching Points</td>
<td>Students ask remaining questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review main points of workshop.</td>
<td>Students fill out the feedback questions at the end of the handout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invite students to get research help at the Info Desk or to attend the Finding Articles, Finding Books, or other workshops relevant to their needs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revised Fall 2014
### LESSON PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After the workshop, please:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✅ Log the attendance in SARS.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✅ Staple the SARS roster with student signatures, drop-in sheet, and completed student worksheets together and place them in the “Completed Student Work” file folder in the plastic file box.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✅ Put away any materials that you used during the activities,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✅ Turn off projectors and doc cam.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✅ Log off instructor workstation. Shut down if you are the last person teaching for the day.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✅ Erase white boards.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✅ Straighten up as needed for the next instructor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✅ Email Pauline (<a href="mailto:pswartz@mtsac.edu">pswartz@mtsac.edu</a>) if supplies for that workshop are low.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✅ Share anything that you have developed when preparing for this workshop with the group. You can send files to Pauline to post to the portal, or you can post directly to the portal. Use whichever method is easiest for you.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>