

## Unit 5 Lecture

### ENG102: Developing a Research Plan



Writing a research paper is better stated as *creating* a research paper. The research is a document that has to be, in actuality, created. There are a number of stages that we must go through to craft the best possible research paper. As we embark on these discussions, you will begin to explore issues that not only matter to you but that have more global connections and concerns—issues where you as writer can be engaged in conversations with others who may have the same view as you do or with others who completely oppose. Last week, you learned that there are middle grounds, so you know that there are those who will be part of the conversation that are neither right

nor left. Your role in the research process is to present your take, explore what others are saying, and decide if you will be filling a hole, presenting new views, or possibly offering solutions.

This unit **chapters 3 and 6**—Developing a Research Plan and Negotiating Opposition allow students to think about devising strategies for their final paper, mapping the course for the research journey, giving serious consideration to the importance of the opposition—view and style. This unit's discussions also take us into implementing specific strategies to craft and chisel students' writing.

The library visit is to orient students to the various avenues available to today's research student. The visit's focus is on finding and selecting the best Primary and Secondary sources accessible on line and in-person. Students become much more aware of using the varied forms of evidence discussed in earlier units. Varied sources/evidence include historical perspectives (usually found in books), statistics, opposing views, world almanacs, recent and archived periodicals, scholarly journals multi-media of local and global issues, and the internet. Students learn to streamline terms for more focused searches.

The internet can be deceiving as well as enlightening. Students decipher and evaluate internet sites in an effort to create the most valid and reliable sources. Library orientation is intense and students are expected to exercise most things learned on their own time. The library's vast virtual environment is made more efficient at this virtual library visit—accessing library databases, exploring e-books, selecting the best reference material, and exploring the internet.

The end-of-semester research paper is a culmination of the elements of the argumentative essay. One of the major aspects of the argument learned this semester was understanding and recognizing the power of the opposition. Negotiating opposition is probably one of the main elements of arguing fairly. A solid argument is represented fairly, contains reliable and valid diverse evidence, and acknowledges and respects those strong points held the opposition. During the research process, students must focus on the points made by the opposition. Summarizing various views allows for a condensed view of others' take on the same issue. The many avenues explored at the library are heightened at this time. Browsing periodicals and video clippings both locally and globally permit for a broader understanding of the topic. Summarizing issues for what they are is crucial, especially when viewing the opposition's points.



Acknowledging other views allows for a broad picture of the issue and ultimately makes it easier to incorporate findings or discover loopholes in presented arguments. Putting on blinders only creates an unreasonable argument and eventually is a sure road to lose an audience. The most important audience member is often, initially, in full disagreement with your point. Meeting the opposition on neutral grounds (gained from your researched knowledge of their views and tactics) permits for a stronger presentation of a claim.

**Using the opposition wisely is a great benefit to any argument.**

Writing that argument well is as important as

locating the right information to justify a claim. This unit moves us through rewriting. The most important aspect of any writing project is rewriting; rewriting becomes more effective when done with passion.

Composition I focused on understanding and, hopefully, mastering modes of development and the five-plus paragraph essay. Grammar and punctuation mastery were intricate parts of the writing process. The idea now is to sharpen writing to its simplest form without the extra clouds that overshadow the writings' true meaning. Revisiting previously written essays, reading out loud, listening to and finding rhythm and voice are some aspects of rewriting with *reason* that lead readers to the solidity of the argument and not the writing itself. As writers, it is important to work toward clarity. William Zinsser, *Writing Well*, says:



"Clear thinking becomes clear writing; one can't exist without the other.

It's impossible for a muddy thinker to write good English. He may get

Away with it for a paragraph or two, but soon the reader will be lost, and

There's no sin so grave, for the reader will not easily be lured back. (8)"

By this unit's end students will have a stronghold on the claims they wish to explore in their research papers; they will feel more comfortable with the terms used to narrow and focus internet and database searches. Additionally, students will come to realize that proper grammar and punctuation, coherence and unity are all a part of the writing process and that it is their responsibility as writers to write and rewrite.

