How to Write a Thesis-Based Research Paper
Rough Draft Guide

Directions: *As you create your full rough draft, actively ponder how clearly and fully you are communicating your thinking. Your reader won't know or understand a concept unless you fully and carefully explain it.*

Read your paper out loud and ask others to read it to you. If you find that you stop reading to explain what you mean, then you must add more to the page. You cannot travel with your paper. Your ideas must speak for themselves.

A full rough draft incorporates all of the following listed below.

Introductory paragraphs *(yes, there can be more than one)* **include:**
- Lead (This can be personal and include the "I" voice.)
- Thesis
- Listing of Supports

Paragraphs for Supports include:
- Transition which can include either a re-statement of thesis or a reminder of the focus
- Detailed explanation of how/why this support proves thesis.
- Specific passages and direct references from research which help prove thesis

A research paper can have any number of supports although three supports are traditional. Supports can include images and charts. Supports should be rich in detail and include passages from research sources. This is where the writer gets to share interesting things he/she discovered in his/her research process.

When a writer crafts supporting paragraphs, he/she should be focused on the reader. The goal is to guide the reader through the argument. Writers need to help readers understand each new idea and see how one idea leads to the next and how these ideas support the thesis.

Concluding paragraphs – options open to the writer include:
- restatement of thesis
- echo of elements presented in lead
- personal thoughts related to the argument.

What makes an effective conclusion? After exploring the many ways the writer has supported an argument, the writer offers some final thoughts to sum everything up for the reader. The conclusion usually includes a restatement of a thesis.

Works Cited Page: Directly tied to the parenthetical citations in your paper, this page will allow you to credit others for their work (thereby avoiding plagiarism). It will also provide your readers with information so that they can validate your thesis and/or begin their own research on a topic you presented.