

**MESA COLLEGE LIBRARY**  
**THE RESEARCH PAPER MADE EASY - 9 STEPS**

**PART I: PLANNING THE RESEARCH**

**Step 1. Select a subject**

- determine what interests you
- understand the limits/requirements of your assignment
- understand the limits of your resources
  - consult the library's catalog and databases

**Step 2. Narrow the subject into a topic**

**Step 3. State the objective**

- a question to be answered or argued
- a thesis statement

**PART II: DOING THE RESEARCH**

**Step 4. Write a preliminary bibliography**

- a list of materials you plan to examine
  - consult the library's catalog and databases
  - look at other library catalogs
  - check the Internet (but not as your first source)
- evaluate what you find

**Step 5. Prepare a working outline**

- a plan for investigating the materials

**Step 6. Take notes**

- note cards listing the important ideas discovered in research
- include source information

**PART III: WRITING THE PAPER**

**Step 7. Outline the paper**

- introduction, body, conclusion

**Step 8. Write the draft**

- write the introduction
  - present the idea to be discussed
  - capture reader interest
  - state the thesis
- write the body
  - develop your main ideas . . support them with details
- write the conclusion
  - summarize your main points . . restate your thesis
- revise your draft(s)
  - check content and organization
  - check transitions

**Step 9. Prepare the final paper**

- document sources in the required format (e.g. MLA, APA)