

Narrowing a Topic Worksheet

Narrowing Chart (example):

Topic	Chocolate
Components or Subtopics	History of chocolate, making of chocolate, health aspects of chocolate, chocolate addictions, brands of chocolate (Godiva, Hershey's, Lindt, etc.), consumption of chocolate, popularity around the world, forms of chocolate
What components or subtopics are of most interest to you?	Health aspects of chocolate
What new questions do you have about your topic?	Are there health benefits to eating chocolate? Can chocolate boost your mood? Is chocolate addictive?
Formulate a topic statement	I will explore the health benefits of chocolate consumption specifically focusing on how chocolate affects moods and brain chemistry.

Fill in the chart about your topic:

Topic	
Components or Subtopics	
What components or subtopics are of most interest to you?	
What new questions do you have about your topic?	
Formulate a topic statement	

Quick Tips for Narrowing a Topic

- Look at an encyclopedia for general information on your topic and note interesting facts or ideas
- Ask yourself the following questions:
 - Who is my audience? (Choose a topic that will be interesting to your audience.)
 - Will my topic fit the assignment? Is my topic still too broad for the length of the paper, speech, etc.?
 - What kind of information do I need to fulfill the assignment? A brief summary, journal articles, books, essays, encyclopedia articles, statistics? Can I locate these types of research materials for my topic?

Using an Online Database for Narrowing a Topic

- Search your topic in Expanded Academic ASAP, on the results screen click 'Narrow by subdivision' for your topic
- In ProQuest Research Library click the 'Topic Guide' tab, enter your topic for a list of subtopics
- In Academic Search Elite click 'Subject Terms' (top green bar) and browse for your topic

For research assistance, please contact a reference librarian by phone (800-726-6500), email (refdesk@stfrancis.edu), or stop by the reference desk.