

Developing Your Questions

When you have chosen a broad topic, the next step is to do a little research into the topic so you know enough to create a research question. Your question can be modified and even replaced as you learn more about the topic. The most workable research questions usually start with “Why?”, “How?”, “Which”, “Should”, or “What if?”

Try working with these sample questions by filling in some appropriate words to explore for possible research.

Why did China _____ during the ___ time period?

Why did _____ (Wall Street, law makers, scientists, doctors, the military or others) respond as they did during _____?

How would you have solved _____?

How does hindsight help us understand _____?

How did _____ influence _____?

How have efforts of reform impacted _____?

How significant were the efforts of groups or organizations in _____?

How would you have advised the president to act during _____?

Which were the three best or three worst: _____?

Which were the most important _____?

Which time period would you choose to _____?

What if _____ had _____?

Should Congress _____?

Should the Supreme Court _____?

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