

## Creating Your Research Question Worksheet (Sample)

**Note:** This topic and research question serves as an example and therefore **cannot** be selected for research in the course. Read the **orange** textboxes to learn more about how this student has successfully completed the components of the assignment.

**Purpose:** Use this worksheet to develop your [research question](#), which will be used for your [annotated bibliography](#) in Week Five. Refer to this week's textbook readings for more information on the elements and purpose of a research question. Hover over words underlined and in blue font to access a definition and the glossary of terms (also located at the end of this document). Items with a blue asterisk require completion (\*).

**Link to Concept Map\* (from Part 1):** <http://www.text2mindmap.com/vthmnw>

✓ This student has included the full link or URL to the concept map. This way the Instructor will be able to access the student's work.

### Example of Research Question Development

The table below illustrates how a research question develops from a broad topic to a focused question. Follow the four examples down each column to see how the questions develop.

BROAD TOPIC	RESTRICTED TOPIC	NARROWED TOPIC	RESEARCH QUESTION
Pollution	Acid Rain	Acid Rain in the United States	What can we do in the United States to prevent acid rain?
Fishing	Commercial Fishing	Fishing regulations and New England	What impact do fishing regulations have on commercial fishing in New England?
Censorship	Internet	Internet and China	How will China's effort to censor the Internet affect its citizens?
Education	Distance Education	Distance Education and High School Students	How does distance education impact the social skills of high school students?

## Develop Your Research Question

Now try out your topic ideas below using the information from your concept map. Try out several variations of your topic idea to see how it could be improved or amended.

✓ This student has explored several paths in the process of narrowing the research topic from his or her concept map and has developed several research questions. This will help the student in selecting the best research question for their research in this course.

### Research Question Development Table\*

The table will expand as you enter content into the columns.

BROAD TOPIC	RESTRICTED TOPIC	NARROWED TOPIC	RESEARCH QUESTION
Vegetarianism	Health benefits	Nutritional Benefits	What nutritional benefits are there to vegetarianism?
Vegetarianism	Ethical Reasons	Ethics of killing animals for food in today's society	Is it ethical for humans to kill animals for food in today's society?
Vegetarianism	History of vegetarianism	Contemporary increase in popularity	What factors have led to the increased popularity of vegetarianism in the United States?
Vegetarianism	Environmental implications	Environmental benefits	What would be the environmental benefits if people no longer ate meat?

Of the possible research questions you came up with above, highlight the question that you would ultimately like to use for your annotated bibliography.\*

Check to be sure that the research question meets these criteria:

- ✓ It is open-ended (cannot be answered with simple yes or no).
- ✓ It addresses an issue or controversy and/or solves a problem.
- ✓ It is something on which you can take a stand.

✓ This student has carefully selected and highlighted his or her research question for the course. The question meets all of the criteria and will serve as the focus for the student's research in the course.

### Reflection\* (200-300 words)

In the space below, explain what you learned about this process as you conducted background research and refined your topic. What was the most difficult part of the process? What might

you do differently next time? How does the process you just used relate to the information literacy concepts we have explored in your textbook and discussions this week?

✓ **A reflection is a very personal way to assess challenges, successes, and overall progress as a learner. No two students' reflections will be alike. In a reflection, one would expect to see a student carefully considering his or her experience during the process of narrowing the research topic/question.**

**No doubt, there were aspects of this process that were challenging and by reflecting on that, you can identify ways to improve the experience next time. You will also connect the concepts learned in the textbook to this process, showing that you have a firm grasp of how this assignment relates to information literacy. Remember to include specific, concrete examples that relate to the process you went through here. Avoid using general statements that do not reflect your actual experience.**

Once complete, save your completed worksheet and return to the online classroom to submit this document through the “Assignment Submission” button below the assignment instructions.

## Glossary of Terms:

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**Annotated bibliography:** A list of citations with descriptions and a brief summary or critical statement about each one.

**Research question:** The starting point for your research. This question should contain key terms or concepts (ideas) related to your research topic (Soloman, Wilson, and Taylor, 2012).