

9th Grade World History I CP - Research Paper Turning Points in History

Just when you thought World History could not get any better- it is time for you to shine! You are each going to write a research paper exploring a topic of your choice that examines a major turning point in world history. One of the most important skills you will learn about in 9th grade is how to write a research paper. This may be your first argumentative research paper, but it will not be your last! Writing an argumentative history paper is different from writing in other subjects. It is not simply a report or a summary. You are responsible for crafting an argument and finding evidence (primary and secondary sources) to support your argument. We will be working on our research papers in class from now until February break. The process is broken down into several steps. You will be graded on the research process (making the deadlines for each checkpoint), in addition to the paper itself. Please see me ASAP if you find yourself falling behind.

What is a “turning point” in history?

Perhaps the first question you are asking yourself is, what exactly is a turning point in history? The dictionary defines “turning point” as a point at which a decisive change takes place. So, a turning point in history is more than just an important event that happened a long time ago. It is an idea, event, or action that directly, and sometimes indirectly, caused change. This change could be social or cultural, affecting a society’s way of thinking or way of acting. It could be political, leading to new legislation or to a new government taking charge. It could be economic, affecting how goods are produced, bought and sold, or how much or how little a society has to spend on such items.

Okay, you say, but how do I know what changes my topic has caused? Ah, good question! This is where you begin to dig for information about the time period in which it occurred, where it happened, the people involved, and what else was going on in the area at that time. In other words, you are studying the context of your topic. This is one of the most important aspects of historical research. Events do not just happen all by themselves – there are always factors involving time, place, and people that influence the causes and effects. Don’t just think about how you understand the topic but also how people at the time thought about what was happening. It is important to examine the historical context of your topic so that you see your topic more clearly, understanding the “big picture”.

Now that you have a better idea of the historical context of your topic, you can narrow in on the turning point more precisely. What act, idea, or event caused a change in how people thought or what they did? How about the effects: new ideas, new laws, new technologies, new cultural standards? And how did these develop over time? What was the end result? Your answers to these questions will provide the historical evidence you need to form a conclusion about the event’s significance in history and the impact that it had. Speaking of significance in history, don’t forget the very important “in history” part of the theme. To fit the theme, your topic must truly be historical and not just a current event or recent idea.

As you can see, the theme *Turning Points in History* has exciting possibilities for choosing a research topic. Think about the sorts of things you are interested in and then think about how they have changed the course of history. The most important part is picking a topic that you like, but also one that has a lot of information available to you.

- DUE:** February 16, 2018 (Day 2 BCDGF)
- VALUE:** 160 points (100 for paper and 60 for process)
- LENGTH:** 3-5 pages pages
12 point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins & double spaced
- CITATIONS:** Please use in-text parenthetical citations using MLA Citation style guidelines.
All facts, ideas, or paraphrased material must be cited.
Plagiarism is not tolerated and will result in a zero.
- WORKS CITED:** Bibliography is required; divide sources into primary & secondary sources. Write 2-3 sentence explanation of each source (which makes it an annotated bibliography). Only include sources actually cited in your paper.
- SOURCES:**
- 3 primary sources (minimum)
 - 4 secondary sources (minimum)
 - One book (WHS library!)
 - Your textbook is NOT a source
 - Databases including ABC Clio & Gale (can be accessed through the WHS library web page) are a great place to look for sources.
However, not all of your sources should come from these databases.
 - Web sources are permitted (evaluate!)
 - Wiki sources are not allowed.
- DRAFTS:** You will not be required to hand in a rough draft. If you would like me to review your rough draft you **MUST** get it to me by February 13th. (Earlier is better- you can email it to me)
- STRUCTURE:** Your paper should both make an argument and tell a story. To do this it must include the following:
- Introduction paragraph including a strong thesis statement
 - Background information on your specific topic (put it in context)
 - At least three supporting reasons that back up your thesis. Each of these reasons should include

- Basic facts and context (who, what , where, when and how/why)
 - Causes (motivation, why?)
 - Consequences, effects (both short and long-term)
- Conclusion

SKILLS:

- ✓ Writing for history vs. other subjects – what’s the goal?
- ✓ Choosing a topic
- ✓ Importance of research question (but given to them)
- ✓ Introduction to resources – providing them but also guiding them to useful sources
- ✓ Databases
- ✓ Set up with NoodleTools account and introduce to its resources
- ✓ Finding and using a primary source
- ✓ Thesis statement – strong vs. weak
- ✓ Outlining / how to structure an essay
- ✓ Intros & conclusions
- ✓ MLA citations – in-text and bibliography
- ✓ Editing

TOPIC CHOICES: The following is a list of potential topics to choose from. Pick wisely! You should be genuinely interested in the topic. If you would like to explore a topic that is not on this list, please set aside a time to meet with me so we can discuss your idea and make sure that there are enough sources.

- ✓ The Black Death
- ✓ The Printing Press
- ✓ Invention of Gunpowder
- ✓ Pax Mongolica
- ✓ Joan of Arc and the Battle of Orleans
- ✓ Crusades (effects on Europe/Middle East)
- ✓ Protestant Reformation (Martin Luther or Henry Tudor)
- ✓ Tudor Monarchs of England (Henry VIII, Queen Elizabeth I, etc.)
- ✓ Galileo/Heliocentric Theory
- ✓ Renaissance Art & Artists

RESEARCH PROCESS:

This assignment will focus on key steps in the research process, with assignments and check-ins throughout in order to help you stay focused and on track. Please note that a significant portion of your Q3 grade is based on the research paper AND on completing the steps of this process well and in a timely manner. Do not procrastinate!

1. **Select a topic** (you may use your textbook and Wikipedia for this step only!)
2. **Explore the focus** (reference and database sources)
3. **Formulate a research question**
4. **Collect information to answer the question** (scholarly books and websites, primary sources)
5. **Organize the information**
6. **Assess the process**

TIMELINE:

Date	Item (s) Due	Done
A block 1/24 D block 1/23	Pre-Research Activity Briefly explore 3 topics of interest before picking one. (5 points)	
Thursday 1/25	Topic Proposal Form & 2 articles from database <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fill out the topic proposal form that is provided - Find 2 articles (general) on your topic on ABC Clio and/or Gale database. PRINT and bring to class (10 points) 	
Fri 1/26	Set up NoodleTools account	
Mon 1/29	Explore the focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dive into your sources (books, articles, etc.) Read them & take notes. Familiarize yourself with the topic - Minimum 10 notecards, 3 different sources (10 pts) - These notecards will be organized on NoodleTools 	
Wed 1/31	- Draft and share thesis (10 points)	
Ongoing	Ongoing note and source card check. (20 pts) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annotated bibliography draft 	
Fri 2/9	You must have a thesis, 2 body paragraphs and a detailed outline / graphic organizer, typed (10 pts)	
Fri 2/16	<u>Final Copy Due</u> – late papers will be deducted one full letter grade per <u>day</u> (100 pts)	

