

Literary Research

1. Read the piece of literature. Make sure you understand it. Ask yourself what you liked/disliked about it and why. What did it make you feel?
2. Define a topic - narrow enough for the length of the paper, but substantial enough to sustain interest.

For example:

William Shakespeare's Plays

Narrower: Hamlet

Narrower: Humor in Hamlet
Motivation in Hamlet
Indecision in Hamlet

Narrow Enough: Hamlet's use of puns to reveal his true feelings.

The use of soliloquies to give the audience insight into the thoughts and motives of the characters and add layers of meaning.

How Hamlet's beliefs in constraints on human freewill affected his ability to act, and how those beliefs changed.

3. Look for substantiating materials:
 - Reference Books
 - Books you can check out of the library
 - Books from our library
 - Books that can be gotten from other libraries
 - Journal articles
 - Full-text online - print out
 - Back issues kept by the library
 - Articles that can be gotten from other libraries
 - Online materials
4. Record all the information you will need for your bibliography. If it is a secondary source (such as *Contemporary Literary Criticism* or *Short Story Criticism*) make sure you get the citation of the original source as well as the title, volume number, place, publisher, copyright date, and page numbers from the secondary source.