

Term papers: Finding a topic



- 1** Read the excerpt from a course handout and then listen to students in a coffee shop discussing the assignment. Jot down their suggestions for topics.



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Econ 101: Introduction to Economics

Assignments

To fulfill the course requirement, every student is expected to submit a term paper of 10–15 pages on a topic relating to this course. I would like to remind you that a good topic is:

- appropriate to the course
- neither too broad nor too narrow
- supported by scholarly research material

Please submit a proposal for your term paper by the end of next week. This should include your topic, an outline and a working thesis statement.

- 2** Which of the ideas mentioned do you consider good topics? Why or why not?

- 3** Take those topics which are too broad and make them more specific.



- 4** Listen again and decide if the following statements are *true* or *false*.

true

false

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

- 1 Once you have chosen your topic, you should formulate a thesis statement.
- 2 The body of the paper provides evidence proving the thesis statement.
- 3 The thesis statement cannot be changed once you have begun to write.
- 4 A thesis may take the form of a title.
- 5 A thesis never takes the form of a question.
- 6 The thesis statement is the same as the topic of a paper.

- 5** Explain why each of the following is not a thesis statement.

- 1 Adam Smith was the greatest economist in history.
- 2 Globalization has both negative and positive consequences for the people of developing countries.
- 3 *Enron* and creative accounting: the impact of *Enron*'s financial practices on American business
- 4 How will social media change business?

Academic Skills

6 Now rewrite the weak thesis statements from exercise 5 to make them strong ones. Use the key words given below and add verbs, prepositions and articles as required.

- 1 Even though • Adam Smith • 250 years ago • analysis • human behavior • the marketplace • surprising relevance • global economy • we live.
- 2 While • removal of barriers • international trade • improved living standards • some people • developing countries • globalization • also • new challenges • increasing inequality • environmental degradation.
- 3 corporate fraud • *Enron's* accountants • confidence • American public • business • and • more lasting effect • American economy • than • terrorist attacks • 9/11.
- 4 Social media • profound influence • way • businesses • produce, market • sell • goods and services.



Thesis statements

Weak thesis statements are statements that are too general, biased or contain more than one main idea, e.g.:

There are many arguments against the minimum wage. (too general)

Strong thesis statements are specific, take a (sometimes controversial) position and/or point out the significance of a topic, e.g.:

Setting a minimum wage raises the cost of labor and therefore hampers economic growth.

Term papers: Developing a paragraph



Paragraph structure

An academic paper is subdivided into paragraphs, each of which is devoted to one point or argument. Grouping your ideas in this way helps your readers to follow them.

Each paragraph consists of three parts:

- The topic sentence:** This contains the core point of the paragraph and usually comes at the beginning.
- Supporting sentences:** These sentences develop the topic sentence by providing evidence, data or examples. They form the body of the paragraph.
- Closing sentence:** This rounds off the paragraph. It may refer back to the topic sentence or set up a transition to the next paragraph. This is also a good place to express a personal opinion.

Look at the following sentences and decide if each would be a good **topic (T)**, **supporting (S)** or **closing (C)** sentence. Then put the sentences in order so that they create a good paragraph.

- ☐ ☐ Yunus' system has served as a model for other microlending schemes throughout the world.
- ☐ ☐ Because the interest rates were now reasonable, the poor were also able to escape being exploited by the moneylenders.
- ☐ ☐ Believing that credit is a basic human right, Yunus founded *Grameen Bank*, which gave the poor access to collateral-free loans.
- ☐ ☐ The system of microcredit, first conceived by the Bangladeshi economist Muhammad Yunus in 1976, has done much to better the conditions of the poor in his native country.
- ☐ ☐ People who had previously been denied finance thus became able to launch their own small businesses.
- ☐ ☐ The system has done much to empower poor women, who thanks to the loans they receive have acquired more personal autonomy.



Writing paragraphs: Creating cohesion



Making sentences flow

When writing a paragraph, you create a sense of flow by using connecting devices. These can be conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs or prepositions, e.g.:

Conjunctions:	although, as, as long as, because, but, if, in order that, provided that, since
Conjunctive adverbs:	as a result, consequently, for example, hence, however, in fact, in short, likewise, moreover, namely, on the contrary, so, therefore, thus
Prepositional phrases:	as a result of, due to, in spite of, on account of

1 Read the following paragraph and underline the connectors.

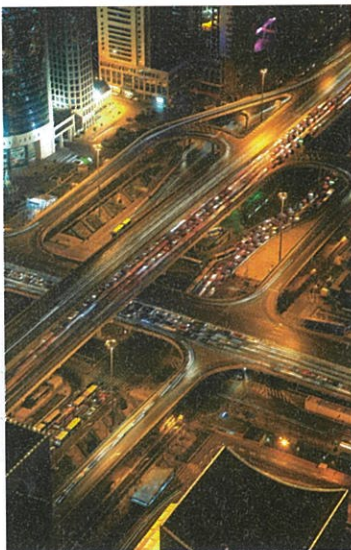
While many people have the impression that the stock market and the bond market are essentially the same, there are in fact significant differences which every investor should be aware of. For instance, when investors buy shares, they are actually buying partial ownership in the companies in which they are investing. Since they share some of the owners' rights and responsibilities, investors will benefit from a company's profits as well as suffer from its losses. Accordingly, an investor risks losing a significant amount of money if it is invested in stocks. On the other hand, purchasing a bond merely means that an investor has lent money to a company and has thus become more like a creditor than an owner. Furthermore, the bondholder is entitled to a fixed percentage as a return, which is paid annually. We can say that on the whole, bonds are a more secure investment, but in the final analysis the choice of stocks or bonds will depend on the risk tolerance of the investor.

2 Find the connecting phrases in the text that have the following functions:

- Expressing addition:
- Expressing alternatives:
- Expressing contrast:
- Expressing generalization:
- Expressing a result:
- Giving an example:

3 Use the connectors in the box to complete the text.

consequently • due to • in particular • nonetheless



China's automobile market has now become the largest in the world, surpassing even that of the United States. China's entry into the World Trade Organization in December 2001 has had a significant influence on its attractiveness for investors. China's accession, the Chinese car market has become more transparent and more similar to other car markets in WTO member countries., legislation and regulations have become more internationalized., foreign manufacturers have been investing heavily. Consumer demand, especially for foreign cars, has been booming., experts maintain that there is still enormous untapped potential.