

Note Cards for Research Writing

Common errors leading to plagiarism:

- Highlighting your articles (After you highlight what is important, it is difficult, if not impossible, to translate the sentence into your own words.)
- Using words on your note cards when you don't know their meaning (Use a dictionary or ask someone to help you if you don't understand what a word means.)
- Using a thesaurus to only change one or two words in the sentence. You must rewrite a sentence in your own words. Using this note card method will help you to do this.

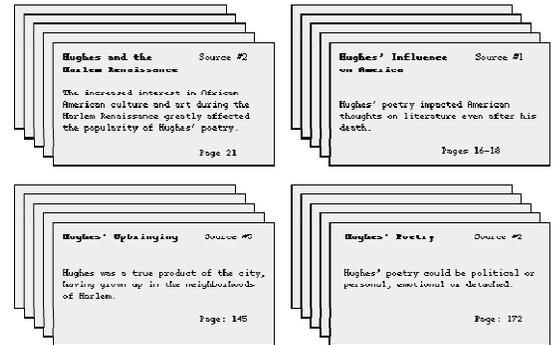


Note cards should:

- use only nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs
- don't include unnecessary words (articles, prepositions, etc.)
- USE YOUR OWN WORDS
- use the fewest number of words possible DO NOT WRITE IN SENTENCES!
- use symbols when possible

For each note card:

- Write the source number in the upper right corner
- Limit each note card to one idea (Later on you will then be able to organize your note cards into piles centered on different topics.)
- If it is an article with a page number, place that number in the bottom right corner of the note card. (i.e., p. 8)
- Write the word quote on the card if it is a direct quotation. (Remember that you will not be able to use very many of these, so don't make a lot of note cards for direct quotations; it will be a waste of your time.)



Don't make your research writing assignment more difficult; start with making good note cards.



1. Choose a topic and consider good “searching” words
2. Log in to a database:
[N:\GHS Media Center\Research Databases\How to login to databases off campus.docx](#)
3. Find key words that bring up potentially good results (e.g. mine was “plagiarism”)
4. Put articles in order of date if an option so you have the newest articles listed first
5. Quickly skim likely titles- if potential for use:
 - a. Print
 - b. Copy citation into to a blank Word document (e.g. “Works Cited Broyles”) if it provides you ideas for formatting
 - c. Save document to your student folder
 - d. Repeat “print” and “copy citation” for each article
6. Number your sources on paper and in Word
7. Put sources in order of what looks most interesting
8. Begin to read- makes notes in margins, but do not highlight
9. Separate sources into 2-3 piles
 - a. Almost positive I want to use- star them (or something)
 - b. Maybe want to use
 - c. Probably worthless (but don’t throw them away yet! Just in case...)
10. Begin taking notes on the articles in the “almost positive I want to use”- make sure your notecards have the same number on them as your source article
11. Continue taking notes on all source materials until you begin to feel knowledgeable about your topic- that you could probably write a paper with the information that you have (you can always add more info later if needed)
12. Sort your notecards into piles with similar topics (e.g. history of the issue, current theories, proposed solutions, examples, whatever is pertinent...)
13. Make your outline if required. Start writing/typing your paper if no outline required.
 - a. Too short- find more info, take more notes, add to paper
 - b. Can’t get your intro started? Begin with your first body paragraph. I usually write my intro paragraph just before my conclusion- helps me to make sure they match and now I know what is in my paper.
14. **Make sure to include your source number in () before you end every sentence that contains info from one of your notecards!**
15. Find and replace all your (source #) information with the correct parenthetical information.
16. Fix your works cited page using only those sources actually used in your paper.