

DEVELOPING YOUR RESEARCH TOPIC

This exercise is designed to help you develop a thoughtful topic for your research assignment. Answer the following questions to help you better understand and refine your thinking about your research topic.

A WHAT IS THE TOPIC YOU WOULD LIKE TO RESEARCH?

Don't have a topic? Browse the following online library resources for inspiration: CQ Researcher, Opposing Viewpoints, or World News Digest. You can find links to these sites at <http://libguides.lmu.edu/RA-find-a-topic>

B WHY ARE YOU INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC?

C THINK ABOUT THESE ELEMENTS OF YOUR TOPIC:

WHO

Who is involved? Whom does it affect? Is there a specific population you want to focus on? Who are the primary stakeholders?

WHAT

What is the problem or issue?

WHERE

Where did it begin? Is there a geographic location you want to focus on? Where does it fall on the moral spectrum (Good/Bad/Just)?

HOW

How does one aspect of your topic affect another? How serious is the issue/problem?

D

DO BACKGROUND READING:

Search Google, Wikipedia, and the online library resources Gale Virtual Reference Library, Credo Reference, Oxford Reference, or Sage Knowledge to find basic background information about your topic and answer the questions below. Links to the online library resources mentioned above can be found here: <http://libguides.lmu.edu/FindSources>

DID YOU IDENTIFY ANY MAJOR CONCEPTS OR THEORIES RELATED TO YOUR TOPIC?

List the concepts or theories here:

DID YOU SEE ANY UNFAMILIAR TERMINOLOGY?

List the unfamiliar terminology here:

COULD YOU IDENTIFY ANY SCHOLARS OR EXPERTS WHO DO RESEARCH ON YOUR TOPIC?

List the experts/scholars here:

DID YOU FIND ANY ADDITIONAL KEYWORDS TO USE WHEN YOU SEARCH?

List new keywords here:

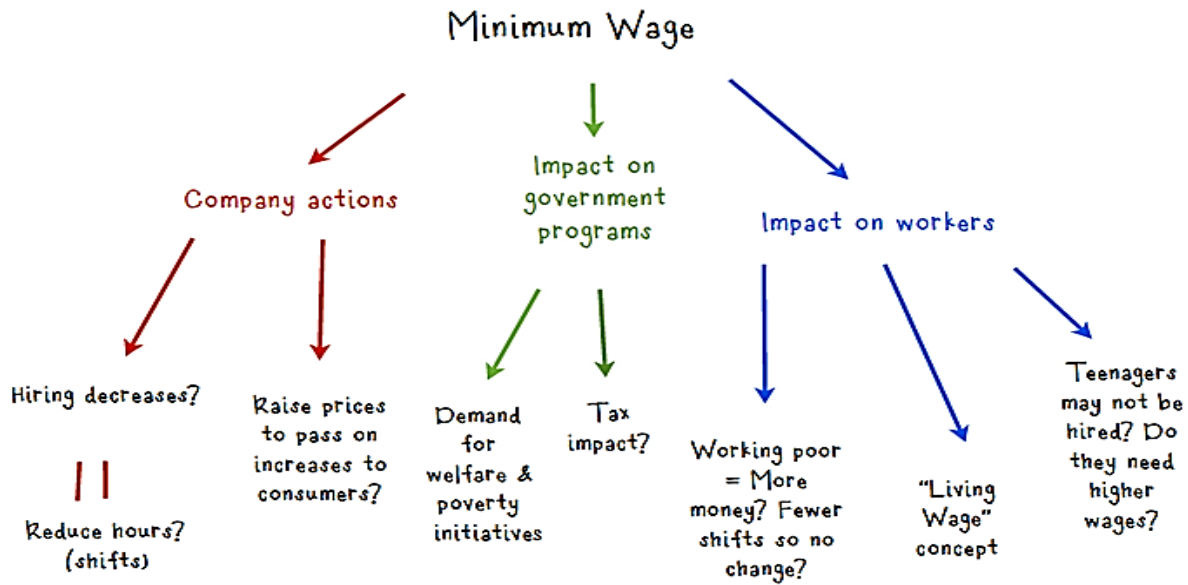
DID THE ARTICLES CITE ANY SCHOLARLY SOURCES THAT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOUR RESEARCH?

List additional sources here:

E CREATE A CONCEPT MAP FOR YOUR TOPIC

Using everything that you now know about your topic, create a concept map. To get started, look at the example concept map below. For more examples of concept maps, visit <http://libguides.lmu.edu/TopicDevelopment>

EXAMPLE CONCEPT MAP



YOUR CONCEPT MAP

F THINK ABOUT THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES

Which subject areas (disciplines) does your topic include? Circle all that apply:

General & Multidisciplinary | African American Studies | Art & Art History | Asian Pacific American Studies |
Biology | Business | Chemistry | Chicana/o Studies | Classics | Communication Studies | Computer Science
| Dance | Economics | Education | Engineering | English | Environmental Science | Film & Television |
Health & Human Sciences | History | Law | Mathematics | Modern Languages | Music | Sociology |
Philosophy | Physics | Political Science | Psychology | Theatre Arts | Theology & Religion | Women's
Studies | Other (Please List) _____

*Most library resources are arranged by subject areas (disciplines), including databases, books and even our Research Guides
<http://libguides.lmu.edu/>*

G TOPIC FEEDBACK / INSTRUCTOR APPROVAL

My Written/Oral Assignment is: _____

My research topic is: _____

Instructor Comments: