

## MURPHY BI-WEEKLY WRITING TIP

Dear Murphy Institute Students,

Research is hard - especially when you consider how much information is out there now, scattered throughout the internet. Research papers are hard, too – especially when your topic is too broad.

One suggestion to make the research process easier is to *write a central research problem / question* to be at the heart of your project: having this will focus your research and filter the information you can ignore. To help you find and focus your central problem / question, try using a TQS template.

### *TQS Template*

The Topic-Question-Significance (TQS) Template can help focus your research.

**Topic:** *I am working on the topic of* \_\_\_\_\_

E.g. I am working on the topic of *NYC's Water Quality in the last decade*

- Try to be specific with your topic – consider: Who? What? When? Where?
- Students sometimes stop here and research anything they can, but that risks a “data dump” – where your paper sounds like an unfocused list of facts

**Question:** *because I want to find out* \_\_\_\_\_

E.g. because I want to find out *How MTA construction projects in the last ten years have impacted NYC's water quality.*

- Now the writer can focus her efforts only on sources that help her better answer this question: “How have MTA construction projects in the last ten years impacted NYC’s water quality?”
- The answer to this question will be the first part of your *thesis*:
  - *The MTA's capital project plans these last ten years have done considerable damage to NYC's water quality because...*

**Significance:** *so that I can help others understand* \_\_\_\_\_

E.g. so that I can help others understand *the impact certain projects have on our quality of life and what we could do to improve it*

- Ask yourself: is the significance *personal, communal, national, global, environmental*, etc.?
- Once you consider what is significant about your problem (why others should care about it), then you will have material for your introduction and conclusion!

All together: I am working on the topic of *NYC's Water Quality in the last decade* because I want to find out *how MTA construction projects in the last ten years have impacted NYC's water quality* so that I can help others understand *the impact certain projects have on our quality of life and what we could do to improve it.*

If you have questions or want to put this into practice, feel free to contact me! ☺

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1. Visit <https://murphy.mywconline.net/>
2. [Register for an account](#)
3. Log in and select the “Murphy Queens Writing Center” calendar.
4. Choose any of the available white rectangles.
5. Fill out the form with your assignment info.

Sign up to attend the Writing Improvement Workshops, Please [RSVP](#) Here.

I look forward to working with you soon!

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