Narrow Your Topic

Have you ever picked a topic, did some research, and realized:

- the information you found had a vague general quality;
- you were overwhelmed by the amount of information you found;
- you got frustrated and you didn’t know which direction to go!

It was probably because the topic was **TOO BROAD.**

Use the following questions to narrow your topic and guide your research. For example, here are some ways you could narrow the broad topic *EDUCATION:*

**WHO** are the people/groups you want to focus on?
⇒ College students, minorities, grade school (K-12), teachers...

**WHAT** aspect of the topic interests you?
⇒ Study habits, education reform, desegregation, cost of education...

**WHICH** point-of-view/approach will you take?
⇒ Legal, ethical, psychological, scientific, historical, political...

**WHEN** did important events occur?
⇒ Today, 1950s, future ten years, President Reagan years...

**WHERE** do you want to focus, geographically?
⇒ Alabama, Finland, China, The United States...

*Examples:*
1. college-students > student loans > political > today > United States
2. K-12 > education reform > president Reagan > United States
3. minorities > desegregation > legal > 1950s > Alabama
Narrow Your Topic Worksheet

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