

I-Search Paper Guide / Frame

Directions: Use this guide to help you with your paper

1. As you go through the paper, read the instructions highlighted in yellow. Once you are done with a section feel free to delete the yellow instructions.
2. Use the normal text as a model for your paper.
3. Insert your topic and information in the bracketed light blue highlighted sections. Delete these bracketed, highlighted sections when you are done.
4. Work through each of the sections until you are finished.
5. Double check spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
6. Read your paper aloud to your friends, parents, or guardians.

Useful Academic Vocabulary: use these words as sentence starters or for transitions.

| | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| For this reason | Mainly | Nevertheless |
| First | Just as | In comparison to |
| Finally | Although | Before this |
| However | In spite of | A trend |
| Still | On the other hand | As time passed |
| Some might say | Therefore | The impact |
| In addition to | To begin with | As a result of |
| Yet | Based on the evidence | Unlike [region / person] |
| According to [author] | In contrast | It was believed that |

Advice:

- Don't forget to *italicize your questions* and **bold your thesis statements**.
- Middle Ages and medieval
- Don't wait until the last minute to work on your paper!

A Walk Through the Middle Ages

[Insert topic / paper title here]



[Your Name]
[Date]
[Period]
[teacher Name]

Part One

[Paragraph One: Write a paragraph explaining why you chose your topic and also include in this paragraph the topics of your group members.]

My I-Search paper is on Viking Mythology during the Middle Ages. I chose this topic because...My group members each have a topic on Vikings. [Name] has [topic], [name] picked [topic], and finally [name] chose to cover [topic]

[Paragraph Two: Write a paragraph about everything you know about your topic (this could be a short or long paragraph depending on your prior knowledge)]

Although I am not an expert at Viking mythology, I do know a few facts about the gods and goddesses. I know that the supreme god of the Norse is called Odin...[insert several more things that you know about your topic. If you don't know anything, use an encyclopedia]

Part Two

[Imagine a funnel: your questions should go from broad to more detailed or narrow]

[Question #1 – This first question of your I-Search paper should contain general information about the society in which your topic is located and how your topic fits into that society. This first question will provide the background information needed to set the stage for when you ask more specific questions in questions 2, 3, and 4. If you need to see an example, check your textbook for the “Setting the Stage” sections. Italicize your questions]

The topic for my I-search paper is Viking mythology. I have four questions about my topic. My first questions: *What was life like during the Middle Ages in northern Europe [setting the stage]? Who were the Vikings and why were they so important [broad question about your topic]?* These questions are important because they will provide a foundation for my research, which I will build upon in later questions [reason why question is important].

Questions #2 - #3 – The rest of your questions should deal with such things as:

- Impact on society*
- Change over time*
- Comparison to other topics that are similar*
- Different points of view*
- Cause and effect*

My second question: [insert question that narrows focus to topic]. This question is important because...[reason why question is important].

My third question: [insert question that covers one of the criteria listed above]. This question is important because...[reason why question is important].

[All of your questions should cover the depth and complexity of your topic. They should not be able to be answered in one word or sentence]

Part Three

[Introduction (at least one paragraph)

- *State and briefly describe your topic*
- ***Tell again what you already knew, thought you knew, and what you guessed about your topic before you began researching in the library (A review of Part 1.)***

My research topic is on Viking mythology. Before I started working in the library, I knew that Vikings...[insert what you knew about your topic]. Because I only knew a little bit about Vikings, I was still curious about several aspects of their society and their way of life. I guessed that...[insert guesses about your topic].

[Body (multiple paragraphs for each question)

- *Organize your information in order by question (notes)*
- *Review what information you found for each question and turn each question into a thesis statement.*
- *Once you write your thesis statements for each question, begin writing part 3 in the order of your questions in essay format.*
- *You should strive to have multiple paragraphs for each question. Remember that your information (research) should support your thesis statement.*
- *You must have at least two sources per question.*
- *You must include at least two quotations throughout Part 3. Format: (Smith, p 28)]*

The first question about my topic provides the background information about medieval society. I asked: *What was life like during the Middle Ages in northern Europe? Who were the Vikings and why were they so important?* **After collecting information on medieval society and the Vikings, I can conclude that...**[insert your thesis statement here. **This is your claim based on what you found out while researching your answer to question #1]**

There are several key pieces of evidence that back up my claim about Vikings. First of all, I found out that...[insert evidence that backs up your thesis].

Second, this author stated that life in the Middle Ages was...[more evidence for your first thesis].

Finally, several of my sources explained that...[evidence for thesis]

[Your second, third, and fourth questions and answers should follow this guideline. You might be able to answer some of your questions using less / more evidence or paragraphs]

[Conclusion (at least one paragraph)

□ *Strive to answer this question: Why do you think this topic is important to our understanding of world history? What is the big idea of your topic?]*

In conclusion, my research on Viking mythology taught me a lot about how these tough warriors lived and what they worshipped. Viking mythology is an important topic in world history because...[insert reason why your topic is important to our understanding of world history]. Overall, Viking mythology reflects the Viking people—strong, brave, and often brutal. Viking mythology lives with us today as a collection of amazing stories that still stir the imagination [big idea of topic].

Part Four

Introduction (At least two paragraphs)

- In your introduction you should write about and explain the answers to the following questions:
 - How well did you pay attention to instructions given in class/library?
 - How much time did you spend writing your questions (part two)?
 - Do you feel you gave adequate time and energy into the formulation of your questions?
 - Thinking back, do you feel you asked four good strong questions
 - Were there any questions you wish you had changed or asked differently?
- When you were stuck and could not find an answer or resource for one of your questions, did you ask for help? Why or why not?
- What work did you do during class time, and what did you do outside of class?]

I used a lot of different methods for finding my research. While in the library I was attentive to Mrs. Marten and my teacher's instructions. I spent at least a week writing my part two at home and refining my question in school through peer review. I feel like I gave enough time and energy to the formulation of my questions, though I could have used a bit more time making sure I narrowed my questions properly. Thinking back, I believe I wrote four strong questions. All of my questions were complex and were only able to be answered in several paragraphs. I wish I had modified my third question to be more clear.

When I was stuck I spent a lot of time looking online for the answer. After struggling, I would finally ask my teacher, the librarian, or my parents for help. I wanted to try and find the answers myself, but sometimes that was too difficult. In class I mostly worked on using library books to take notes. At home I finished the back page of my note sheets and did further internet research.

Body (multiple paragraphs)

- Describe the process of finding the answers to each of your four questions
- Organize this section by question, starting with question #1
- Name your sources for each question (books, internet, etc.
- You must have at least two sources per question]

I answered question one by using several books I found in the school library. I spent at least ten minutes the first day trying to find the right books. After wandering around, I finally asked Mr. Miller for help. He pointed me to a book in the Europe section of the library called Life in the Middle Ages by Sam George. After reading that book for general information, I needed to find a book that focused in on my topic. To find out more about Vikings, I needed a book that covered all aspects of their society. Mrs. Marten showed me a book called The Vikings, by Bill Atkinson. These two sources were helpful for answering my first question.

[Insert how you answered question 2]

[Insert how you answered question 3]

[Conclusion (at least two paragraphs)

□ *In your conclusion you should write about and explain the answers to the following questions:*

- *How would you rate your research skills on a scale of one to ten?*
- *How well did you manage your time during the process?*
- *Did you type your paper in small parts as you went along or did you wait and do all of the typing during the last few days?*
- *If you were to begin your research again today, what would you do differently and why?*
- *What are two or three adjustments you would make if you were to write another I-Search paper?]*

I would rate my research skills seven out of ten. I admit that I didn't work one hundred percent of the time in the library during the first week. Once I felt the pressure of the first draft deadline, I worked much harder. I typed the majority of my paper as we went along. During the first week I was able to finish my part one and part two. I knew that if I waited until the last minute I would have trouble. I think if I were to start my research again, I would work harder during the first week in the library. If I were to write another I-search paper, I would make these adjustments...[insert three adjustments].