



RESEARCH WRITING TIPS

MLA: Modern Language Association

ROGERIAN METHOD

- Mention the OTHER SIDE of the Issue

- *fully, fairly, and objectively*

- in the Intro

- after the Intro & before your side

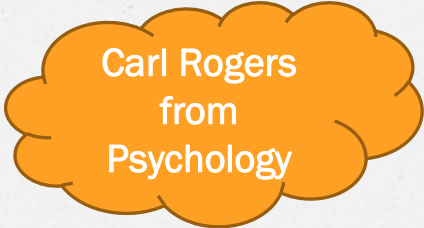
- in the Body, as a segue to your side

- this helps your **ETHOS**

- your *credibility* as a writer

- as it demonstrates your *objectivity* and *fair-mindedness*

- and that you have *fully* investigated this issue



Carl Rogers
from
Psychology

TOULMIN METHOD

- Claims, Grounds, Warrants

- CLAIMS:

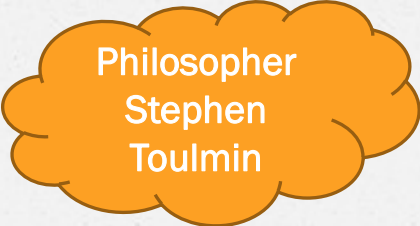
- points, arguments
- *thesis statements & topic sentences*

- GROUND:

- *proof, support, reasons*
- these support the Claim
 - evidence must be **relevant, germane**
 - **credible, reliable, timely, on-point**

- WARRANTS:

- if the Grounds support the Claim
- if the Grounds are *pertinent, appropriate, relevant, germane*
- if the Grounds come from *trusted* and *dependable* sources
- then they are “warranted”



Philosopher
Stephen
Toulmin

TOULMIN METHOD

- Use the Toulmin Method in YOUR own writing
- to **organize your argument**
 - specifically, the Body paragraphs –
 - “**name**” your Claim in the *Topic Sentence*
 - “**illustrate**” your Claim with Grounds – *Research*
 - “**reiterate**” and warrant your Grounds in the *Clincher Sentence*

TOULMIN METHOD

- Use the Toulmin Method in YOUR own writing
- to **follow-up borrowed material** (*research, quotes*) with **Warrant Statements** –
 - **justify and relate** that material to your Claim
 - see “**ownership of material**” below in #5

CREDIBILITY

- Build your **ETHOS** – your *credibility, reliability, integrity* as writer
 - Strive to be **taken seriously** as a mature and conscientious member of society with **something valuable, constructive to contribute** to the **ongoing cultural dialogue**
- By being mindful of your *tone, diction, and grammar*

CREDIBILITY

- A. TONE:

- *don't* be sarcastic, snarky, snobbish
- remember that this is *not about you*
 - (but the greater good)
- remain **objective**

| <u>SUBJECTIVE</u> | <u>OBJECTIVE</u> |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• personal opinion, evaluation• personal feelings, attitudes, beliefs• critique, criticism• opinionated, biased, slanted, skewed, one-sided | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• impersonal, impartial, independent• neutral, unbiased, dispassionate, detached• fair, fair-minded, even-handed, unprejudiced, just (just the facts) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• can be a blend of <u>BOTH</u> → | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• personal interpretation supported by objective• objective supported by personal experience |

CREDIBILITY

- B. DICTION:

- rely on the tenets of **Formal Academic Writing**
- don't write as you talk with friends

FORMAL ACADEMIC WRITING

NO:

- text-messaging characters
- slang, clichés, pat expressions
- “well” or “we all” or “I believe”

NO:

- “you” (POV shifts)
- abbreviations, contractions
- rhetorical questions

CREDIBILITY

- C. GRAMMAR:

- *Proofread!!!*

- by the standards of **Formal Academic Writing**

- How can you be taken seriously if you don't bother to check your grammar?!

- the quality of argument is often reflected in the quality of writing

Quality of Argument = Quality of Writing

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(1) COMMON RESEARCH PROBLEMS to AVOID:

DON'T

- RELY on a SINGLE SOURCE

- *“overworking the data”*

- If you use only ONE source to support your claim

- Then when we discredit that source

- Your ENTIRE argument gets flushed

- (putting all your eggs in 1 basket)

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(1) COMMON RESEARCH PROBLEMS to AVOID:

DON'T

- STRING QUOTES TOGETHER

- *“string of pearls”*

- copy & paste quotes & block quotes

- this is YOUR essay, so we have to hear from YOU

- take **ownership of the material**

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(1) COMMON RESEARCH PROBLEMS to AVOID:

DON'T

- NOT PERFORM ANY RESEARCH

- *“under-researched research paper”*

- which makes it basically an *opinion* paper

- instead, support each point with **at least 1 bit** of borrowed data

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(1) COMMON RESEARCH PROBLEMS to AVOID:

DON'T

- PLAGIARIZE

- *“plagiarism”*

- borrow info without proper attribution & citation
- instead, **every** time you borrow, you **cite**

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(2) CRITICAL EVALUATION of SOURCES:

- Another way to build your **ETHOS**
- is to utilize appropriate sources:

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(2) CRITICAL EVALUATION of SOURCES:

- reliable, credible, trustworthy, accurate

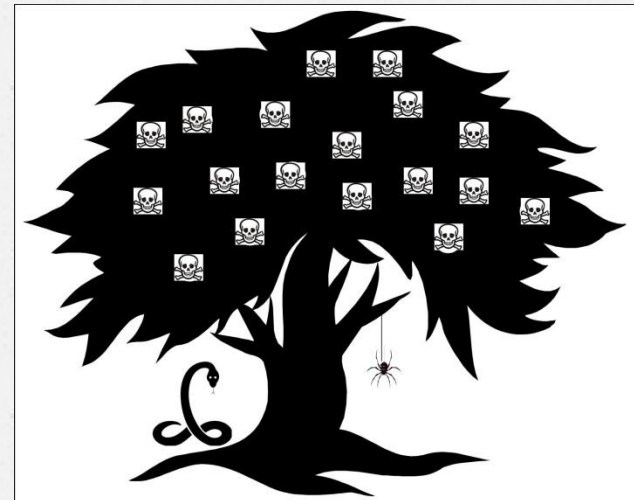
good research = *the foundation* of good argument



DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(2) CRITICAL EVALUATION of SOURCES:

- reliable, credible, trustworthy, accurate
 - house on sand or stone
 - *fruit of the poisonous tree*
 - NO WIKIPEDIA



DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(2) CRITICAL EVALUATION of SOURCES:

- appraise the source's
 - author (**credentials*)
 - publication, publisher
 - date of publication
 - **coverage/depth of the issue*
 - tone
 - intended audience
 - point-of-view
 - its sources

Would you shop
on this site with
your credit
card?!



DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(3) INTRODUCTION OF THE SOURCES:

- LEAD-IN EXPRESSIONS

- *full name of author*
- *full name of article (“ ”)*
- **author's (or medium's) credentials**
 - builds your **ETHOS** as a writer
 - established credibility of your source
 - Why should we care what s/he says? Who is s/he?
- lead-in verbs:
 - alleges, asserts, claims, contends,
 - proposes, suggests, warns, writes

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(3) INTRODUCTION OF THE SOURCES:

- ATTRIBUTION

- attribute a point to an author
 - (a person, human being)
- do not attribute to an article
 - (an inanimate object that “says” or “claims” nothing)
- if no author is given, attribute to the “*anonymous*” or “*unknown*” or “*unnamed*” author

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(3) INTRODUCTION OF THE SOURCES:

- “LITERARY PRESENT”

- when referring to a point made in an article,
- use **present tense verbs** to lead into a quote or paraphrasing

- In the Internet article “Ego,” Dr. Smith **asserts**, “I know I’m right” (par.9).
- *not* “asserted”

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(4) PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS:

- should not be too obtrusive
 - should not interfere with the essay
 - just enough data to get the reader to the Works Cited page
 - “stepping stones”:
 - *from* the essay *to* the parenthetical
 - *to* the Works Cited *to* the original source

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(4) PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS:

- 2 fundamental parts -
 - (1) WHATEVER IS (correctly) 1st on WC PAGE = 1st in CITATION
 - AUTHOR'S LAST NAME
 - *if no author is given:* "ARTICLE TITLE"
 - (2) PAGE REFERENT
 - where in the source can readers find this material – its *context*
 - PAGE NUMBER (*only* if numbers appear on the computer screen – disregard printer numbers)
 - *if no page numbers:* 'SUBHEADINGS'
 - *if no page numbers of subheadings:* PARAGRAPH NUMBERS
 - **if all these are non-applicable, then think:* table title, column heading, block #, bullet #, ...

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(4) PARENTHETICAL CITATIONS:

- WHEN:

- **every** time you borrow info/ideas → **cite**
 - *after every sentence of borrowed material –*
 - *“exact words” or paraphrased ideas*
- **Changing a few words DOES NOT change your obligation to document!!!**
- **When in doubt ... CITE!!!**

- (Smith 15).
- (Smith ‘History’).
- (Smith par.6).
- (“Abortion” 15).
- (“Abortion” ‘History’).
- (“Abortion” par. 6).

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(5) ANALYSIS:

- “own” the material, make it yours
 - *not* by stealing
 - *but* by incorporating it into your argument
 - relate the borrowed material to your point
 - perhaps summarize it
 - definitely “warrant” it
 - use **LEAD-IN Expressions & WARRANT Statements**

DOCUMENTATION & SOURCES

(5) ANALYSIS:

- do not end a paragraph with another's words or ideas
 - *your* paper = *your* analysis of the data
 - “thus”
 - “therefore”
 - Warrant Statement
 - Clincher Sentence