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**INTRODUCTION TO EPQ 2020**

**Research Handbook**

**Student Name: (Official version please)**

**Candidate number: (Last 4 digits of your student number)**

**Centre Name: Godalming College**

**Centre Number: 64395**

**Mentor: (Your Mentor or Mentors name(s))**

**Begin by downloading the following from the EPQ site on Godalming Online:**

(You can access this through All Courses)

* An electronic copy of this booklet – you will need it for future reference
* Project Log
* Initial Project Proposal Form
* Full Project Proposal Form

Save them onto your user area **with your name added**.

\*Please ensure that you keep back-up copies of everything.\*

Fill in your name – **official exam entry version only**.

Where there are choices, leave **only** the route and route number that you are doing.

**Project Log:**

It is important that you document what you do each week during your EPQ and it should start from the beginning i.e. now! Weekly entries are all that is required. They should include what you hope to do, what you actually did – don’t forget to record going to mentor sessions – and what your next target is. It is perfectly permissible to write that you did nothing for weeks you were ill/on a holiday **provided** that you state why you were unable to work on it. If you do not keep a good **detailed** log you will lose a lot of marks. See the notes in the official Exam Board form on Godalming Online. DO NOT FORGET TO LINK YOUR LOG BACK TO THE TIME PLAN YOU PRODUCE AND TO THE MILESTONES WITH ENTRIES THAT SPECIFICALLY STATE WHETHER YOU HAVE MET THESE DEADLINES OR NOT. Keeping to the plan is not as important as noting whether you are on track, explaining why any deadlines are not met and rewriting the plan if it turns out to be wholly unrealistic. If you do not link the two then you limit the marks available for showing that you were keeping track of your progress in relation to your time plan. You should set aside time each week to write that week’s log entry.

**Initial Project Proposal Form**

When you have thought about your proposed topic for your EPQ, you will fill in an Initial Project Proposal Form and get approval from your mentor.

**Full Project Proposal Form**

Once you have a viable research area you will then fill in the Full Project Proposal Form. It is important to do this well if you want a good mark. In it you will need to produce a time plan for your project. It needs to contain all the main tasks involved in producing **all** the parts of the project, with an estimate of how long each will take and a projected end date for that task. You need to consider not only problems that may arise in carrying out your research but also the possible impact of UCAS applications/coursework deadlines for other courses. If you realise that your initial plans were unrealistic or need modifying in some way then produce a new time plan **without** deleting the original one – it helps get you marks!

There are a number of default milestones on the Full Project Proposal Form which are fixed. Others are agreed between you and your mentor.

Whichever EPQ route you intend to follow, you will be conducting research and writing about it. For this you need to have the necessary tools to write effectively and to credit other people’s work properly. It is very important that all writing and all images are referenced correctly.

**What is Research?**

**RESEARCH – “**t**h**e systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions” (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/research)

**“Research** comprises ‘creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humans, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.’ It is used to establish or confirm facts, reaffirm the results of previous work, solve new or existing problems, support theorems, or develop new theories. A research project may also be an expansion on past work in the field” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Research)

ACADEMIC – relating to education and scholarship (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/academic)

PERSONAL – belonging to or affecting a particular person rather than anyone else; done or made by a particular person; Of or concerning one’s private life, relationships, and emotions rather than one’s career or public life (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/personal)

What do you think the main differences between **ACADEMIC** and **PERSONAL** research are therefore?

**Thinking Toolbox:**

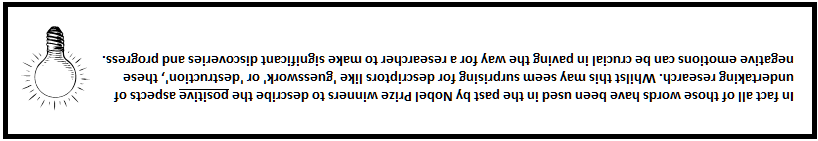
Circle **five** words from the list below that you believe are the most beneficial thinking skills when undertaking research:

**TIME REBELLION DOUBT REASON RULES ANGER COMPETITION STRUCTURE GUESSWORK PLAY FEAR SURROUNDINGS FREEDOM DEAD ENDS IGNORANCE UNCERTAINTY IMAGINATION DESTRUCTION DISAGREEMENT OPPOSITION CONVERSATION**

Explain why you think these skills would be beneficial to your research:

Now circle **five** words from the list above in a different colour that you believe are the most detrimental thinking skills when undertaking research:

Explain why you think these skills would be detrimental to your research:

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**Types of research:**

List **five** types of research that you think may be useful to you in your EPQ (using a library, conducting a survey, laboratory experiments, field experiments, observations, questionnaires, interviews, looking up reports, meta-analysis……. etc.):

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the way one of these different research methods identified are carried out (their methodology) and state an example of when it might be appropriate to use such a method in your EPQ:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name of method: | |
| For what might it be appropriate to use this method in your EPQ? | |
| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|  |  |

**Research Methods – Primary and Secondary Research**

What is meant by primary and secondary research?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PRIMARY** | **SECONDARY** |
| Primary research is something that you gather first hand... usually through interviews, covert/overt observation, questionnaires...  Its strengths are that:   * You can focus on both qualitative and quantitative measures * You can look at specific issues * You have a high level of control   Its weaknesses are:   * It can be expensive and time consuming to carry out * The scope of your research may be limited * You might get a low response rate | Secondary research analyses information from other sources, for example government statistics, academic journals etc.  Its strengths are that:   * It is easy for you to access * It does not cost much to do * It can help to clarify your own primary research * It may highlight difficulties in collecting primary research   Its weaknesses are:   * How reliable and valid your source is * What you can find is not specific to your needs * The information may be incomplete * The information may be dated |

For the following types of research, decide whether they are **PRIMARY (P)** or **SECONDARY (S)** and tick those that are likely to be useful for your EPQ.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Research Type | Primary or Secondary? | Useful for your EPQ? |
| GOVERNMENT STATISTICS |  |  |
| JOURNALS |  |  |
| EXPERIMENTS |  |  |
| QUESTIONNAIRE |  |  |
| MARKET RESEARCH |  |  |
| TEXT BOOK |  |  |
| INTERVIEWS |  |  |
| NEWSPAPER |  |  |
| ONLINE ARTICLES |  |  |
| WEBSITES |  |  |

**Research Methods – Qualitative and Quantitative Research**

Outline the main differences between qualitative and quantitative research.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **QUALITATIVE** | **QUANTITATIVE** |
| Qualitative research gathers information that is not in numerical form. For example, diary accounts, open-ended questionnaires, unstructured interviews and unstructured observations. Qualitative data is typically descriptive data.  Its strengths are that:   * Issues can be examined in detail * The questions are not restricted * The direction of research can be revised as new information emerges * It can focus on human experience   Its weaknesses are:   * It can be influenced by your bias * It is more difficult to maintain rigour * The type of data can make it difficult for you to analyse * Your presence can affect the responses | Quantitative research gathers data in numerical form which can be put into categories, or in rank order, or measured in units of measurement.  Its strengths are that:   * It is easy to analyse data and draw conclusions * It is less influenced by bias * It is easy to replicate * You can obtain larger sample sizes   Its weaknesses are:   * Statistical reports can be difficult to interpret * It ignores the ‘human’ aspects that are difficult to capture in numbers |

For the following types of research decide whether they are **QUALITATIVE (Qual)** or **QUANTITATIVE (Quan) or could be both (Both)** and tick those that are likely to be useful for your EPQ.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Research | Qualitative or Quantitative? | Useful for your EPQ? |
| STATISTICS |  |  |
| INTERVIEWS |  |  |
| EXPERIMENT RESULTS |  |  |
| FOCUS GROUP |  |  |
| PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION |  |  |
| PERCENTAGES |  |  |
| SALES FIGURES |  |  |
| MARKET RESEARCH |  |  |

**FACT, OPINION AND BIAS**

**When conducting research it is important to work out whether that piece of information is FACT or OPINION. You must critically evaluate whether the research contains bias.**

FACT – “a thing that is known or proved to be true” (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/fact)

For example: ‘The Earth orbits the Sun’

Give an example of three other FACTS:

1)

2)

3)

OPINION – “a view or judgement formed about something, not necessarily based on fact or knowledge” (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/opinion)

For example: ‘All non-vocational courses are pointless’

Give three other examples of OPINIONS:

1)

2)

3)

BIAS – “the inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair” (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/bias)

For example: ‘In an article for today's paper, the government's transport adviser firmly rejects claims of an unfair bias in favour of London and the south-east.’

Give three other examples of BIAS:

1)

2)

3)

**RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

RELIABLE – “consistently good in quality or performance; able to be trusted” (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/reliable)

If something is dependable and consistent then it has reliability. If the findings in an experiment or survey are replicated consistently, then the outcome can be said to be reliable.

VALIDITY – “the quality of being logically or factually sound; soundness or cogency” (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/validity)

**C:\Users\robert.walton\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\G0MJQKIG\MC900292594[1].wmf**

**When conducting a research project in order to evaluate the reliability and validity of a source consider the W’s.**

* What?
* Which?
* Who?
* When?
* Where?
* Why?

WHAT is the piece of information about? Does it actually fit your research aims?

WHICH line of my argument will it contribute to and how does it do so?

WHO has written it? Do they have any academic credentials?

WHEN was it published? Is it recent or outdated?

WHERE was it published? Was it a reputable source or not? Can this source be freely edited by anyone?

WHY was it written? What was the writer’s intention? Is the author likely to be biased and is there any evidence of bias?

You MUST show consideration of these things for every source you use and cite in your research project. Remember to cite all your sources or you will be guilty of plagiarism (see later)!

The following two articles both deal with the topic of NHS funding.

**TEXT ONE**

**NHS faces ‘significant cuts’ without more funding**

NHS faces “financial crisis” within a year due to funding reforms that are bringing significant cuts to services, warns King’s Fund report. More money must be ploughed into the NHS or there could be “significant cuts to services”, a health charity has warned. The King’s fund said the next government will need to find more funds for the health service or accept the cuts. The warning comes after its latest report on NHS finances, which paints a bleak picture for the future.

A poll of 74 NHS trust finance directors and 47 clinical commissioning group (CCG) finance leads found that only two in five hospital financial bosses are confident their organisation will achieve financial balance in 2014/15 and only 16% believe this will be achieved in 2015/16. Meanwhile only a third of finance leads for CCGs are sure they will balance the books in 2015/16, according to the health care charity’s latest report.

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/10766269/NHS-faces-significant-cuts-without-more-funding.html 15/04/14 accessed 15/05/14

**Evaluate the reliability and validity of TEXT ONE**

**WHAT** is the piece of information about?

**WHO** has written it? Do they have any academic credentials?

**WHEN** was it published? Is it recent or outdated?

**WHERE** was it published? Was it a reputable source? Can this source be freely edited by anyone?

**WHY** was it written? What was the writer’s intention? Is the author likely to be biased and is there any evidence of bias?

**TEXT TWO:**

**Exclusive: NHS faces financial disaster in 2015 as politicians urged to find radical solution**

Two finance directors in three fear their hospital will go into deficit next year as next government must choose between cuts and extra spending, say experts.

The NHS faces a “financial crisis” next year as a budget freeze imposed by the Coalition risks pushing most hospital trusts into deficit, a leading think-tank has warned. In a grim message to all three major parties, the King’s Fund said that whoever wins next May’s general election will need to find more funding for the NHS or face up to the reality of “significant cuts to services”. The future of the health service is at risk unless politicians come up with radical solutions to the crisis in the coming months, it warns.

In its quarterly monitoring report, the health policy think-tank said it had encountered deep and widespread gloom among finance directors of NHS hospital trusts and clinical commissioning groups in England. Two-thirds of NHS trust finance directors were concerned that their hospital would go into deficit in 2015-16. Another 20 per cent said they were uncertain about the future, leaving a small minority confident that they could balance the books. The NHS in England has in effect had no real rise in spending since the Coalition Government came to power in 2010, and 65 trusts are already in deficit.

Although George Osborne has consistently protected the NHS budget from cuts, the realities of the UK’s ageing population, coupled with the rising cost of medicines and new health technologies, have increased financial demands on the service. This means keeping the budget steady amounts to a real-terms cut. The health service’s budget, which is well in excess of £100bn, will go up by only 0.1 per cent in 2014-15. NHS trusts have already been forced to make significant savings, in preparation for a projected budget deficit of £30bn by 2020.

However, the political impact of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Trust scandal has led to an expensive reinvestment in staff to meet Department of Health edicts on care standards. In 2015-16, the NHS will have to withstand another financial blow, as £3.8bn is transferred from the health budget to local authorities, to expand their work in caring for the elderly and disabled in the community.

A Department of Health spokesperson said: “We recognize the scale of the financial challenge that trusts are facing and are taking action to address deficits, including putting recovery plans in place. “We are clear that NHS trusts must meet their statutory duty to balance the books, and we remain confident that the NHS will have a balanced budget at the end of this financial year.”

http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/exclusive-nhs-faces-financial-disaster-in-2015-as-politicians-urged-to-find-radical-solution-9259915.html?origin=internalSearch accessed 15/04/16

**Evaluate the reliability and validity of TEXT TWO**

**WHAT** is the piece of information about?

**WHO** has written it? Do they have any academic credentials?

**WHEN** was it published? Is it recent or outdated?

**WHERE** was it published? Was it a reputable source? Can this source be freely edited by anyone?

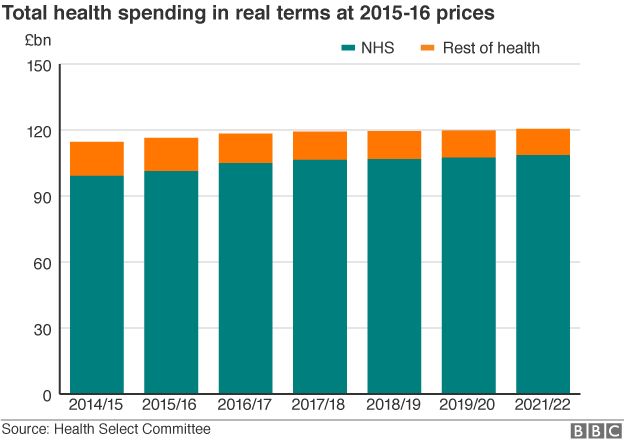
**WHY** was it written? What was the writer’s intention? Is the author likely to be biased and is there any evidence of bias?

**TEXT THREE**

# NHS funding and rationing: The debate intensifies

By Hugh Pym, Health editor, 31 October 2016

In 2014, ahead of the general election, George Osborne, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, conjured up an extra £1.9bn for the NHS in England for 2015-16, after warnings there had been an unbridgeable gap in the finances. Under the usual funding formula, this became £2.2bn across the UK, on the assumption the devolved administrations spent their allocations on health.

 [,,,] The election came and went, and it was not long into the 2015-16 financial year before hospital trust bosses were warning of mounting deficits and the sums not adding up.

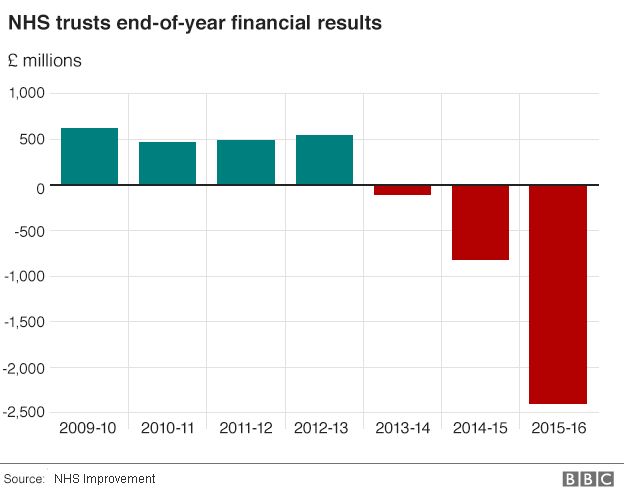
[…[ The 2015 Spending Review allocated £3.8bn above inflation to the NHS in England in 2016-17 - and annual increases beyond that, to reach £8.4bn in 2020. […] experts noting there was a significant increase in the first year of the settlement. A year on, however, and there are renewed warnings about the dire state of NHS finances.

Another Autumn Statement is approaching, with the Chancellor, now Philip Hammond, facing calls for pump-priming of the health service and social care. Conservative MP Sarah Wollaston, who chairs the Health Select Committee, has added to his postbag with a strongly worded plea for intervention. Some of the committee's demands are not new. It rejects the government's claim that it has promised an extra £10bn to the NHS. Ministers say this extra funding covers 2014-15 to 2020-21, but the committee argues the Spending Review period began a year later. The MPs also point out that the sum in question relates to NHS England and once cuts in other areas of health spending are accounted for, the overall increase is more like £4.5bn.

The tone of the cross-party letter is unmistakeable. It says that what looked like a significant increase in funding this year in England now looks rather less significant and warns that short-term pressures may become "overwhelming". It argues that "per capita funding" (that is spending per head of population) will actually fall in 2018-19. The letter is challenging the government's claim to be giving the NHS what it wants, following Mr Stevens's suggestion that he did not get all the financing he had asked for.

The government is sticking to its line that cash injections and pledges from 2014-15 onwards will add up to £10bn in real terms for the NHS in England. There is a view in Whitehall that when the money was promised, over the past two years nobody, at NHS England was arguing that it did not go far enough. [..]

NHS England is committed to finding up to £22bn of annual efficiency savings by 2020. Across 44 areas of England local health and social care, leaders have been told to come up with sustainability and transformation plans (STPs), to make better use of resources and redesign services.



A poll of local commissioning groups by Health Service Journal has shone some light on the process. Of those that responded (just under 50%), nearly half had plans to reduce hospital beds and a third intended to close or downgrade accident and emergency departments as part of their STP. The underlying problem is the same as it always has been. The NHS has a finite level of resources allocated by governments but has to cope with unlimited demand. What looks like a good settlement the year before can seem more like a sticking plaster solution as the cash gets swallowed up in the face of unpredictable increases in patient numbers.

Adapted from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-37824621 accessed 04/04/2017

**Evaluate the reliability and validity of TEXT THREE**

**WHAT** is the piece of information about?

**WHO** has written it? Do they have any academic credentials?

**WHEN** was it published? Is it recent or outdated?

**WHERE** was it published? Was it a reputable source? Can this source be freely edited by anyone?

**WHY** was it written? What was the writer’s intention? Is the author likely to be biased and is there any evidence of bias?

**Plagiarism**

PLAGIARISM - the practice of taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own: (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/plagiarism)

Plagiarism is cheating and is classed as copying the work of others without their knowledge or agreement. This could be another student but it could also be an author of a book or article in a journal. It also refers to simply downloading pages from the internet and presenting them as your own.

It is **VERY** important that you do **NOT** just ‘cut and paste’ sections from different sources together with only the odd word changed when you are writing. You need to rewrite it *in your own words*.

**What are the consequences of plagiarising work?**

As it is classed as cheating, it can mean that no marks at all are awarded for work that you submit if it is considered that it has been plagiarised and you can be disqualified from the award. Potentially you could be disqualified from all of your exams.

As a minimum, all sections of work that are plagiarised will be disregarded. All work taken directly from other sources should be referenced **as well as** put into your own words unless it is a direct quote.

**Bibliography**

This is NOT the same as the record you should keep of ALL the sources that you looked at. It is a systematic record of the sources that you actually used. It should be in alphabetical order of author and be at the end of what you have written. Each reference should include everything you need to identify the item.

**Author/creator**

This is usually the names of the person or people who created the specific item you are citing.

**Date**

This is the year, and sometimes the month and day, when the cited item was published or made available. If no date is available, use n.d. If a work is to be published in the near future, use ‘forthcoming’.

**Title/name of item**

This is the title of the specific part of a work such as part of a book with a specific subsection or an article in a journal.

**Title/name of overall work**

This is the title of any overall work in which the item you cited appeared, for example an edited book from which you used a chapter or the journal from which you used an article.

**Item type/information**

This is information about the type of item you’ve cited, for example book, webpage, ebook, Twitter post, youtube video, DVD etc.

**Publisher information**

This who the company publishing it is and where it was published. A book published in New York may not be exactly the same as the version published by the same company in London for instance.

**Location from which accessed and when it was accessed**

This is usually a URL or web address from which the item can be accessed and when it was found. You should state the date that you retrieved the information from a web page, as web pages often change with time.

**Referencing**

**How to reference materials correctly:**

**Why Reference?**

Referencing enables the reader to see where you obtained information from. It links with your Bibliography and contains enough detail for the reader to identify which source it comes from. It also means that you will not be plagiarising information. It does not mean that you can keep the original text unless it is as a direct quote and in inverted commas.

WORD has a built-in referencing system that you can use. There is a PowerPoint on on the EPQ site on Godalming Online about this. There is also a presentation on ‘Footnotes’.

Look under ‘Useful Information’ https://online.godalming.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=578

There are two standard ways to put in references, **Harvard Referencing** and **footnotes.**

**Harvard Referencing**

This uses a reference placed in line with the text as on pages 8 and 9 where there are definitions. This is the default type of referencing Word does. In-text citations enable you to indicate in your work where you have used ideas or material from other sources.

Here are some examples. If, for example, your source is a book written by Smith and published in 2009, your in-text references would follow one of these three formats:

* Further work (Smith, 2009) supports this claim
* Further work by Smith (2009) supports this claim
* ‘This theory is supported by recent work’ (Smith, 2009, p. 25).

**Footnotes**

Footnotes are what they sound like—a note (or a reference to a source of information) which appears at the foot (bottom) of a page. In a footnote referencing system, you indicate a reference by putting a small number above the line of type directly following the source material. This number is called a note identifier. It sits slightly above the line of text and should be placed at the end of a sentence and follow any punctuation marks.

It looks like this.1

You should not put these in manually but use Word to put them in. At the bottom of the page the same number will then appear. It should be followed by a citation of your source. Footnoting should be numerical and chronological. Word will automatically renumber footnotes if you add/delete text *provided* you used it to put them in in the first place.

If you use a long quotation (more than three lines of text), the note identifier should be placed at the end of the quotation.

Smith points out that a division began in the latter half of the nineteenth century with the doctrine of ‘separate spheres’.1

**At the foot of the page** the full reference is listed:

1 M Smith, ‘Intimate strangers’ in *Making a Life: a People’s History of Australia Since 1788*, V. Burgman and J. Lee (eds), Penguin, Victoria, 1988, p. 155.

When you reference a source for the first time, you must provide full bibliographic information (information about the source). You should give exact page numbers if your reference is a direct quotation, a paraphrase, an idea, or is otherwise directly drawn from the source.

Second and subsequent references to the same source don’t need to be as detailed as the first note—they just need the minimum information to clearly indicate which text is being referred to.

If the author of a source is anonymous, replace the author’s surname with the title of the work.

**Direct Quote and Paraphrasing**

When paraphrasing, use the same referencing style and conventions as you would for direct quotes, but with the material from the source put into your own words, and the inverted commas omitted. Below is a comparative example of the direct quote versus paraphrasing.

**Direct quote and paraphrasing from a source**

The DfEE suggest that each year ‘some have estimated the cost to the country of poor literacy and numeracy skills to be as high as £10 billion’1.

**OR - paraphrase**

The effect of low levels of adult numeracy and literacy skills could be costing Britain around £10 billion each year1.

1Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), (2001) *Skills for life: The national strategy for improving adult literacy and numeracy skills*, Nottingham: DfEE Publications.

**Paraphrasing** and **summarising** are very similar. Both involve taking ideas, words or phrases from a source and crafting them into new sentences within your writing. In addition, summarising includes condensing the source material into just a few lines. Whether paraphrasing or summarising, credit is always given to the author.

Below is a passage taken from Raymond S. Nickerson's "How We Know - and Sometimes Misjudge -What Others Know” *Psychological Bulletin* 125.6 (1999): p737.

“In order to communicate effectively with other people, one must have a reasonably accurate idea of what they do and do not know that is pertinent to the communication. Treating people as though they have knowledge that they do not have can result in miscommunication and perhaps embarrassment. On the other hand, a fundamental rule of conversation, at least according to a Gricean view, is that one generally does not convey to others information that one can assume they already have.”

**Here is an example of what would be considered plagiarism of this passage:**

For effective communication, it is necessary to have a fairly accurate idea of what our listeners know or do not know that is pertinent to the communication. If we assume that people know something they do not, then miscommunication and perhaps embarrassment may result (Nickerson, 1999).

The writer in this example has used too many of Nickerson's original words and phrases such as "effective communication," "accurate idea," "know or do not know," "pertinent," "miscommunication," and "embarrassment." Also note that the passage doesn't have an opening tag to indicate where use of the Nickerson's material begins. A citation at the end of a paragraph is NOT sufficient to indicate what is being credited to Nickerson.

**Here is an example that would be considered acceptable summarizing of this passage:**

Nickerson (1999) argues that clear communication hinges upon what an audience does and does not know. It is crucial to assume the audience has neither too much nor too little knowledge of the subject, or the communication may be inhibited by either confusion or offense (p. 737).

Notice that the writer both paraphrases Nickerson's ideas about effective communication and compresses them into two sentences. Like paraphrasing, summarising passages is a tricky endeavour and takes lots of practice.

**Synthesising**

When you are writing you will often be combining information from more than one source. If you simply paraphrase each source and then put them together, it will tend to be repetitive and it is often difficult to read. You need to extract the important information in each source and then write up the information in your own words.

Re-read the articles on pages 10 and 11

**Key points**

List the key points made in each article

**Summarise and synthesise**

Write a summary combining the points from all the articles (re-read pages 16- 18 on referencing and plagiarism) on the next page. Ensure that you reference figures and opinions that occur in only one of them. Do not just list the points by article - ensure you synthesise the information into a coherent whole.

**Your synthesised summary**

**YOUR PROJECT**

Comingup with a topic to investigate:

Is it relevant to you (think about University, work after college, etc.)?

Does it interest you?

Does it offer opportunity for discussion, debate and analysis?

Is there information and data available that can be accessed and used?

Is it specific?

DOES IT MEET THE SPECIFICATION CRITERIA? There are specific types of question to be asked.

**Planning your writing:**

You don’t set out on a journey without knowing where you want to go. Just because you have your title doesn’t mean you are ready to write…

**Dissertation route**

A standard dissertation would consist of these elements:

* Introduction
* Argument for
* Argument against
* Conclusion

Then you need to break down your title into sub-headings and then into different paragraphs within the subsections.

For example when writing about ‘Is Schizophrenia the result of environmental factors? ’, it could be broken down into these headings:

* Introduction – short overview of what you intend to discuss
* What are the symptoms of schizophrenia?
* What evidence is there that it is caused by biological factors?
* What are the strengths / weaknesses of biological evidence
* What evidence is there that it is caused by environmental factors?
* What are the strengths / weaknesses of the environmental research evidence?
* Conclusion – caused by an interaction of both

You will find it a lot easier to write a coherent argument if you have thought about the different areas you need to discuss first. Make sure you use headings and paragraphs in what you write!

**Investigation Route**

A standard investigation would consist of these elements:

* Introduction
* Background studies
* Your research and analysis of it
* Conclusion
* Then you need to break down your title into sub-headings and then into different paragraphs within the subsections.

**Artefact Route**

You will need to do some background research that relates to what you intend to produce and to write it up with references and a bibliography.

For example your project is to design a particular building

You could write about:

* relevant architects working in this style that inspire you and other buildings they have designed
* what the building is to be used for and how that influences the design
* building materials that would be available that fit your purpose

**Performance Route**

You will need to do some background research that relates to what you intend to produce and to write it up with references and a bibliography.

For example your project is to adapt a Shakespeare play for primary school children

You could write about:

* plays that could be suitable
* adaptions that have been done before
* ways in which you could do this drawing on other productions

**Source Review:**

A Dissertation EPQ should ideally have at least 20 research sources all of which have been reviewed. They should not all be web-based unless it is genuinely impossible to avoid this. Include at least one book! Very occasionally fewer sources are acceptable. Even if a source is found not to be useful it should be included here – it helps to show that you were selective.

**All** other types of EPQ should have more than one source!

**Research Record**

In order to have an accurate record of what you have researched and therefore an accurate reference, it is important that you write down the details of your sources as you study. **When you look up a new source, clearly record the following information for future reference and do not leave it until later.** Do this for EVERY source you find, whether or not you end up using it.

|  |
| --- |
| Source Type (Book, article, website) |
| Source Title or URL |
| Author(s) |
| Date of Publication |
| Date of access for web-based resources |
| Publisher |
| How it was found (library, link from an article, Google etc.) |
| Summary of what it is about |
| How reliable is it?  (Is the information factual, could the author be biased, can anyone edit it?) |
| How useful is it? (how relevant is it, is it too simple, too difficult, was the title misleading…..) |

You may find it useful to do this in the form of a table where you add each source as a row as in the one below. You can copy this to a document of your own (landscape orientation would be best) from the electronic version of this booklet.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type of source** | **Source Title/URL** | **Author,** | **Publisher** | **Date of Publication**  **and**  **Date of Access for web-based resources** | **How it was found (library, link from an article, Google etc.)** | **Summary notes** | **How reliable is it?** | **How useful is it?** |
| Book | Writing an EPQ | Fred Bloggs | Penguin | 2008 | Found in Fantasytown library | Very useful overview with many hints and tips on what to do to produce a high quality EPQ. | Written by an expert in the field who is a chief examiner and thus very reliable. Unbiased and as it is a book cannot be freely edited. | Very useful and relevant. |
| Webpage | www.unknown/EPQ made easy/.com | Unknown | Unknown | No publishing date  Accessed  13.04.16 | Google search | Sales page for personalised EPQ advice | Not very– no accredited author, not written for any respected academic organisation | Not useful as title was only a way to get you to pay for information. |

Make sure you use ‘bias’ and ‘biased’ correctly e.g. a writer can be biased, a source can show bias.

If you keep a record like this it will fulfil the requirement that you have investigated and evaluated your sources. If you write a Research Review essay then it is a useful basis for that.

**Preliminary Work**

Now you know all this you need to apply these skills to your own piece of research.

By the last week of the summer term you should have done the following if you expect to be enrolled onto EPQ in September.

* Completed the Initial Proposal Form
* Completed this booklet
* Produced a draft of the Full Project Proposal Form
* **Handed in the last three items on Monday July 8th between 1.00 and 2.00 p.m. in the Main Hall**

**Summer Holiday Work**

Keep your Project Log going throughout – it should begin in the Summer Term.

Over the summer holiday you will be expected to do a significant quantity of research.

(If you are writing a dissertation you will be expected to be in a position to start writing in September. You may of course begin writing if you wish but do not forget to reference!!).

You need to produce the following in your first EPQ session to stay on the course:

* A completed Full Project Proposal Form
* Physical evidence of significant research e.g. your research review/notes/sketches

**Next Academic Year**

In the autumn term you should aim to complete the main part of your project by Christmas.

After Christmas you should refine it and produce the presentation

You will need to write an evaluation of your project to hand in.

The Hand-in Deadline for the completed EPQ is 28th February 2020

Acknowledgements

Sections adapted from the Research Skills Handbook by Will Baldwin.