

## WORKSHEET 1: STEPS TO ORGANIZING A RESEARCH OR ESSAY PAPER

1. **Get assignment** (from class syllabus or when it's given).
2. Immediately **read the entire assignment** for clarity. If you have any questions, ask the teacher/professor.
3. Figure out the exact **steps you will need** to take in order to complete the assignment correctly and on time, using this model as a template.
4. **Calculate** approximately how long each of the steps will take.
5. **Schedule** each step and the time allowed into your master calendar. Allow **five hours** of writing time to produce a good draft of one page, exclusive of research and planning time.

**Repeat** Steps 1 through 5 for each assignment you now have in hand (even ones that are due after this assignment, because you will probably be doing early steps of later assignments at the same time you are completing an earlier assignment). Now, back to the first paper due.

6. **Choose a topic** (if it is an essay), or **find and read** the book or books (if it is an analysis). Is it a novel or popular book that you can get **on CD (or Playaway or MP3)**?
7. Find and read the **primary sources** (if it is a research paper).
8. If necessary, get the topic **approved** by teacher/professor.
9. Look at the assignment again. If there is a choice of questions, **choose one question**.
10. **Create your thesis** and write it in one sentence.
11. Write **3–5 sentences** (depending on length of final paper) that support your thesis.
12. From library or the internet, **find secondary sources**. How many will you need? Which are most appropriate?
13. Look through or **read secondary sources**, marking good quotes with a highlighter or sticky notes.
14. Begin to **write the draft**. From this point on, plan on needing **five hours** to produce **one page** of writing.
15. **Reread the assignment**. Be sure you are answering the question completely and thoroughly.
16. When draft is finished, you can **send it out to an aide or tutor** for an edit/proof.
17. **Make edits** and any changes.
18. Create a **bibliography** or works-cited page.
19. Create any **handouts**, visuals, illustrations, charts, notes for oral presentation, etc. that may be required.
20. Produce a **final draft** and turn it in early or on time.
21. **Pat yourself** on the back. Get a reward or treat!
22. Get busy on the **next paper** or project.

## WORKSHEET 2: ORGANIZING AN ESSAY OR RESEARCH PAPER (WITH REWARDS AND CHECKLIST)

1. **Get assignment** (from class syllabus or when given). Read all the syllabi on the first day of each class and put a check mark next to each writing assignment.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

2. Immediately **read the entire assignment** for clarity. If you have questions, ask the professor.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

3. Figure out the exact **steps you will need** to take in order to complete the assignment correctly and on time, using this model as a template.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

4. **Calculate** approximately how long each of the steps will take.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

5. **Schedule** each step and write down the time allowed into your master calendar. Allow **five hours** of writing time to produce a good draft of one page, excluding research and planning time.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

**Repeat** Steps 1 through 5 for each assignment you now have in hand (even ones that are due after this assignment, because you will probably be doing early steps of later assignments at the same time you are completing an earlier assignment).

6. Now, back to the first paper due.

a. **Choose a topic** (if an essay).

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

b. And/or **find the book** (if a report).

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

c. **Read** the book or books (if an analysis). Is it a novel or popular book that you can get **on CD, Playaway, or MP3**? If so, ask the library to get it for you.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

7. Find and read the **primary sources** (if research).

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

8. If necessary, get your topic **approved** by the teacher or professor.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

9. Look at the assignment again. If there is a choice of questions, **choose one question**.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

10. **Create your thesis** and write it in one sentence.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

11. Write **3–5 sentences** (depending on the length of the final paper) that support your thesis.  
How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_  
When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_  
Completed
12. From library or the internet, **find secondary sources**. How many will you need? Which are most appropriate?  
How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_  
When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_  
Completed
13. Look through or **read secondary sources**, marking good quotes with a highlighter or sticky notes.  
How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_  
When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_  
Completed
14. Begin to **write the draft**. From this point on, plan on needing **five hours** to produce **one page** of writing.  
How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_  
When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_  
Completed
15. **Reread the assignment**. *This is critical!* Be sure you are answering the question completely and thoroughly.  
How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_  
When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_  
Completed
16. When the draft is finished, you can **send it to your aide or tutor** for an edit/proof.  
How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_  
When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_  
Completed
17. **Make edits** and changes.  
How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_  
When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_  
Completed

18. Create a **bibliography** or works-cited page.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

19. Create any **handouts**, visuals, illustrations, charts, notes for oral presentation, etc. that may be required.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

20. Produce a **final draft** and turn it in early or on time.

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

21. Pat yourself on the back. **Get a reward** or treat!

How long will this take? \_\_\_\_\_ Due date for this step: \_\_\_\_\_

When will I do this step? \_\_\_\_\_ Reward points: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed

22. Get busy on the **next paper** or project.

## WORKSHEET 3: SUPER REWARD CHART FOR BOOK REPORTS

(Note: *Hamlet* is used here as an example of an assigned reading. Adapt this sample chart by filling in your own assignments and your own rewards!)

### Rewards for completing steps in writing analysis of *Hamlet*

This task	If completed by this time	# prize points
1. Annotated bibliography	9:00 pm, November 12	15 points
2. <i>Hamlet</i> Thesis plus 3–5 supporting sentences plus secondary source quotes marked with sticky notes plus one page of first draft	Noon, November 13	20 points
3. <i>Hamlet</i> pages 2-4 of first draft	9:00 pm, November 13	25 points
4. <i>Hamlet</i> page 5 of first draft	10:00 am, November 14	10 points
5. <i>Hamlet</i> page 6 of first draft	4:00 pm, November 14	10 points
6. <i>Hamlet</i> Completed first draft, submit to aide for edits	3:00 pm, November 16	40 points
7. <i>Hamlet</i> , works-cited page	3:00 pm, November 17	5 points

Rules: Task must be done in full, by time specified. **No partial points** for partial task completion. All prize points must be redeemed by November 21.

### Rewards redemption chart

Lunch at a restaurant of your choice	35 points
"Get out of weekly chores free" card	45 points
One Scrabble game	10 points
Trip to bowling alley	100 points
Movie of your choice in theater	50 points
Watch a DVD of your choice	15 points
Order in take-out food	40 points
\$20 credit at bookstore or music store	50 points

## TO DO: NOVEMBER 18

### Most important goals

- ✦ Take a walk for 45 minutes.
- ✦ Turn in Hamlet paper.
- ✦ Call Grandma to wish her a happy birthday.

### Must do

- ✦ Eat breakfast.
- ✦ Take a shower and get dressed.
- ✦ Go to school.
- ✦ Answer emails.
- ✦ Finish homework.
- ✦ My turn to cook dinner tonight.

### Should do

- ✦ Help fix Mom's computer.
- ✦ Do a load of laundry.
- ✦ Get hair cut this afternoon.
- ✦ Start on the math assignment due next week.

### Would like to do

- ✦ Take a nap.
- ✦ Watch The Simpsons at 7:30 pm.

### Next day/coming up

- ✦ Start looking for a book for next book report.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT: ARE YOU READY FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING IN THE DORM?

### Academic

- ✦ Are all current assignments completely up to date?
- ✦ Are you earning a B or better in all your classes? Do you feel you can keep up your grades on your own, without parents reminding you to do your homework or turn in papers?
- ✦ Are you keeping a calendar, with all long- and short-term assignments marked, so that you know the deadlines for papers, exams, and projects?
- ✦ On your calendar, are you designating appropriate amounts of time during the week in order to complete all assignments thoroughly and on time?
- ✦ Have you identified and engaged an appropriate source(s) of extra help (tutor, conference with teachers)?
- ✦ Have you availed yourself of the special accommodations offered in class (tutors, extra time for quizzes)?

### Personal

- ✦ Are you taking excellent care of your health, including taking any meds on time, without reminders from your parents?
- ✦ Are you bathing or showering every day?
- ✦ Are you brushing and flossing your teeth every day?
- ✦ Are you wearing clean underwear, socks, and clothes each day?
- ✦ Are you avoiding food and substances harmful to your health?
- ✦ Are you consistently making appropriate food choices, in order to maintain a normal weight?
- ✦ Have you found an *effective* method for getting eight hours of sleep every night?
- ✦ Do you wake up each morning on time, and get right to your daily routine (clean, dress, breakfast, work or class)?
- ✦ Do you have a regular exercise plan and implement it daily?
- ✦ Are your friends helpful, supportive and generally positive and healthy people?
- ✦ Do you have a regular method of stress reduction, such as meditation, prayer, or yoga?
- ✦ Do you have a method or support system or person to assist you with any emotional problems/crises?



Dear Mr./Ms./Dr./Professor \_\_\_\_\_,

I am a freshman this year and I will be taking your class, (*name of class*).

I have Nonverbal Learning Disabilities (NLD), and would greatly appreciate you reading the following information about me, so that we can have a successful semester working together.

I also respectfully request the accommodations listed below. I appreciate your consideration, and welcome any questions you may have. My email is:\_\_\_\_\_. My cell number is:\_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you very much,  
(*Your name*)

## ABOUT MY LEARNING STYLE AND DISABILITIES

I am a very literal learner. Although I am able to understand abstractions in ideas, I am not that good at inferences. It is helpful to me if assignments and instructions for papers are given in writing and are specific and concrete. The fact that you are using Blackboard [an online learning portal] is a big help to me.

Normally, I do not take many notes in class. This is not because I am not paying attention; I am. When I concentrate, I retain much of what I hear. If the material is also in the textbook or the readings, so much the better. I write very slowly (and not too legibly), so quick note-taking is too hard.

Although I am a lot better than I used to be at reading social cues, I sometimes still miss them. The main implication for your class is that I may not understand when to stop talking, especially if I am passionate about the topic at hand. It would be better for me if you are willing to say something like, "*Name*, we are going to hear from someone else now," or telling someone else, "Let's hear what *you* have to say." If you use nonverbal cues (such as turning your body away from me or looking at another student) I may not be able to understand them. Please don't worry about hurting my feelings by telling me to shut up if necessary (some teachers have worried about this). I would rather you were blunt. This will prevent me from embarrassment and possible censure from fellow students.

Because I have difficulty with executive functioning skills and sequencing, longer written assignments such as those requiring research or multiple steps take me a very long time. I have found that I need to allow one full day to produce a page. Generally this is not a problem, as most professors give such assignments well in advance. In order to produce essays in class, I need a lot of extra time both to organize my thoughts and because I write slowly. I request permission to take midterm and final exams at the Academic Advising Center.

Sample one

**Accommodations I will need**

1. Midterm and final exam at the Academic Advising Center, as noted above.
2. Extra time to produce any written work (such as quizzes) given in class.
3. To take home assignments, or tests given with sufficient lead time (at least one full day per page required).

Sample two

**Accommodations for learning:**

1. **Untimed tests** in a distraction-free environment.
2. Limited computer time—to rest my eyes **frequently** (this accommodation is necessary only if there is in-class computer use or tests are given on the computer).
3. **A time management** tutor or “buddy”—for courses with written assignments that extend over time (e.g. papers) and for courses with multiple, simultaneous, written assignments. I need help to look at all assignments, break them down into manageable parts, assign **interim due dates** to each, and report to the tutor or “buddy” as each part is complete. I can do each part without help; it’s the overall sequencing and time management that is difficult. For papers, I need some help with **final editing** for continuity and flow. Help is not usually needed for short writing assignments such as those assigned at one class and due at the next, nor for math or science assignments.
4. **Audiobooks** for novels, short stories, longer readings in social sciences. These are not needed for physical sciences or mathematics.
5. I tend to be **very literal**, and take people and things at face value. Sometimes, but not always, this can cause a difficulty in communicating.