

Activity: Generate Potential Research Questions

Directions: Use *what, why, when, where, who, how, would, could, or should* as prompts to draft your research question. In this activity, you can phrase your research question in different ways, then review the questions you've drafted and select the one that best fits your research writing project.

<p>What Questions ... focus your attention on a particular aspect of a topic by asking questions about facts, such as, what is the cause of a particular problem or what caused something to occur. For instance, a research question about professional wrestling might ask: What are the effects of watching professional wrestling on aggressive behavior among young teenage boys?</p>	<p>Potential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
<p>Why Questions ... focus your attention on a particular aspect of a topic by asking for an explanation of something, such as why something happened or why it did not happen, or why one thing is better than another. For instance, a research question about professional wrestling might ask: Why is professional wrestling so popular among young teenage boys?</p>	<p>Potential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
<p>When Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to timing or history. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: When did professional wrestling first become popular? When is the best time to start training to become a professional wrestler?</p>	<p>Potential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•
<p>Where Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to location, geographic or otherwise. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: Where in the United States and Canada is professional wrestling most popular? Where can I learn about becoming a professional wrestler?</p>	<p>Potential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•

<p>Who Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to people or personalities. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: Who are the most popular professional wrestlers? Who benefits most from the popularity of professional wrestling? Who is the driving force behind the growing popularity of professional wrestling?</p>	<p>Potential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>How Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to process or origins. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: How can I become a professional wrestler? How do professional wrestlers avoid injury? How is professional wrestling marketed in the United States and Canada?</p>	<p>Potential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>Would and Could Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to possibilities. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: Would we be better off if professional wrestling were more popular than it is now? Could professional wrestlers make good politicians?</p>	<p>Potential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>Should Questions ... focus your attention on aspects of a topic related to the appropriateness of a particular action, policy, procedure, or decision. For instance, research questions about professional wrestling might ask: Should professional wrestling become an Olympic sport? Should professional wrestling be regulated by the Federal government?</p>	<p>Potential Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •