

# Essay #2 Topic Sheet

## Personal Inquiry Project Over a Topic of Interest from *World Without Mind*

The *World Without Mind* discusses a topic we all have a close connection with—the internet and technology! Most of us use at least one of these Google, Amazon, or Facebook daily. For this project, you will pick some topic **generated from your reading of the book** which you found interesting and want to know more about. The more you have a personal “felt need” to know regarding this inquiry project the better. Learning about this topic will benefit you in some way personally. This isn’t a project to support what you already know but to investigate and discover something you don’t already know.

For this project, you will pick your own research topic. Then you will research it through library and web sources, and perhaps from field research where you talk to people or experts. The goal will be to find answers to whatever you set for your “Research Question.”

This essay is not a large research project—you aren’t writing a Dissertation or Report for Congress. The research paper you will write will be a 4-6 page paper that uses a minimum of five research sources. Your final project will be accompanied by an Appendix in which you evaluate the sources you used and why you selected to use them.

### Our Research Project will have the following phases:

1. WK2-7 Reading the Book—prospecting for possible topics
2. WK 7-8 Proposing Research Topics—deciding on a topic
3. WK 8-11 The Quiet Phase of Researching—thinking about and informally investigating
4. WK 11-12 Active Research—searching and gathering information, finding an answer to the research question
5. WK 13-14 Writing Up the Research Results—drafting our paper

### Our Final Paper Will Have These Part

- I. Introduction  
—set up personal connection to topic and research question and one sentence summary of findings (serves as thesis).
- II. The Story of Your Research Process  
—describe what you did to research so we can gauge your research results and appreciate them
- III. The Results of Your Research  
—here you will detail what you found out, the answer(s) you found out to your research question
- IV. My Thoughts on My Research Process and My Research Results  
—what have you learned from this project about researching and about your topic of interest.
- V. Conclusion
- VI. Appendix

### Essay Requirements:

The research paper will be 1000-1500 words and incorporate information from at least five research sources in addition to the Foer book (= six total sources). You will likely still quote Foer’s book. In addition to Foer’s book, you must have one other book and one peer-reviewed academic article in your mix of sources.

The final draft will be presented in MLA Documentation format with a Works Cited page and an Appendix in which you evaluate each of your sources according to the 5Ws Method for Evaluating Sources Test.

--see [Essay Criteria for evaluation](#)



## Essay #4 Outline

Below is an outline of the parts of the essay and likely paragraphing you will have in your essay:

Part I: Introduction	1 paragraph
Part II: Story of Research Process	1 (maybe two) paragraph
Part III: Finding #1	1 paragraph
Finding #2	1 paragraph
Finding #3	1 paragraph
Finding #4	1 paragraph
Part IV: Reflection/Self-Evaluation of Research Process and Results	1 paragraph (maybe two)
Part V: Conclusion	1 (short) paragraph
Appendix: Authorizing Sources	(listed in alphabetic order)

ALL of this needs to fit within 4-6 pages (1000-1500 words). Please keep within this range!

## Special Guidance for Each Part of the Essay--[See this Example Essay #4](#)

### Drafting the Introduction (Part I)

As a short 4-6 page paper, your introduction should be all in ONE paragraph. Following our [guide on introductions](#), you should do these three things:

#### **Connect with the reader**

--seek to craft an attention-getting opener that connects your audience to the topic and to you.

#### **Clarify the Issue or Question**

--provide background about your personal connection to the topic and why you chose it for your inquiry project.

--Then state your Research Question

(The background information you provide should not be too long, but it should naturally set up the presentation of your Research Question.)

#### **Present Your Point**

--present a one-sentence version of the answer to your Research Question. This condensed sentence sums up what you found out from your research.

(You may not be able to write this thesis in your first draft.)

### Drafting Section II: The Story of Your Research Process

You started this project picking a topic you knew little or nothing about, and now you are at a point where you know something about your topic.

Knew Nothing ←----- → Know Something

For this section you will recount WHAT YOU DID TO RESEARCH and WHAT YOU FOUND ALONG THE WAY (how your ideas and understanding grew).

#### **Here is the important point:**

You don't have to retell every little thing you did to research!

As you brainstorm on how to tell this story of your research process, start with your end point—your results and findings (what you have discovered). Then backtrack to follow the steps and things you did to



get to this finding or answer to your research question. When you write your draft, retell this trajectory from the start of the project to the end, highlighting the significant route you took to get to the end results.

It is this “narrative of discovery” you want to tell, detailing what you did to get to this discovery. You should also recount the twists, turns, and missteps in your understanding along the way. The ultimate purpose of this section is so that the reader can understand where your results came from. The credibility of your results will be in proportion to the quality of your research process.

--This section might be multiple paragraphs and 1 to 1.5 pages.

WARNING: Be careful not to let this section get too long. Again, you don't have to retell everything you did.

### **Special Help for Parts II and IV: Use the Language of Researching**

In both Part II you describe your research process and then in Part IV self-evaluate it. As you do this description and evaluation of YOUR researching process, please try to use the language of research to talk about what you have done. NAME the activities you have done using this language.

What is this language of research, you ask???

--see the chapters 43-50 in SFH on Researching

--Also, skim these three guides on the research process and notice language it uses to describe and label the "steps" or "phases" or activities of researching: [site 1](#) | [site 2](#) | [site 3](#)

--Seek to be detailed in your description and evaluation.

### **Drafting the Results of Your Research (Part III)**

As you researched your Research Question, you found out many things that have helped you answer your Research Question. This section will consist of multiple paragraphs, and in it you will present the TWO to FOUR key findings from your research related to your Research Question.

Structure this section of the paper following the principle of “dividing up the proof” by presenting ONE FINDING per Body paragraph. As you compose these paragraphs, you should structure each one in this way:

Transition Sentence

--present a transition sentence setting up the particular finding that this paragraph will focus on

Explain and Detail What You Found Out

--Use quotes and possibly some paraphrasing from your multiple research sources to explain and detail what you found out and what this information means in terms of your Research Question.

Each body paragraph should present at least three bits of information from research—two of which (at least) need to be quotes. The other citation(s) could be a paraphrase, and you certainly can include more than three supports from research.

### **Signposting Your Way Through the Paper**

Just as in Essay #3 where we talked about "signposting" our argument, you will want to create clear signals to your reader as you move from one main part of your paper to the next. These are transition sentences to start paragraphs that communicate to the reader what the next paragraph will be about and how it fits into the overall plan for your paper. --review the [guide on signposting arguments from E3](#)

Signpost as you shift to discuss your research process when you start Section II and IV

Definitely signpost as you shift to discuss your Findings and as you move from Finding to Finding:

--The first thing I discovered from research is that \_\_\_\_\_

--The second finding from my research is that \_\_\_\_\_



## Drafting Section IV: My Thoughts on My Research Process and My Research Results

If Section II was descriptive, Section IV is evaluative: in Part II you described and narrated the story of your research process, but in Part IV you will discuss what went well and what didn't go well. You need to self-evaluate your research process and reflect upon it. What went well and easy? What was hard and didn't go so well? Did you make any mistakes?

Talk about what you have learned about researching and about yourself as a researcher.

You and your research process produced the Research Results you came up with—what do you think of these results? Make connections between your research process and your results if you can.

--While this section might be multiple paragraphs, I recommend you squeeze it into one paragraph (but no more than two). Length should be .5 to 1 pages.

## Drafting Section V: Conclusion

In this last section of your paper, return to your RESEARCH QUESTION and why it is important to you. Present what you found out in a clear, single statement one more time. Then follow with two to four sentences about the implications of what you found out—what does it mean? What does it all add up to?

**NOTE:** You still need a Works Cited page! The Works Cited page will go **BEFORE** the Appendix (on its own separate page).

## Drafting Section VI: The Appendix

In the Evaluating Sources Exercise, you evaluated at least three of the sources you researched. Use the 5Ws Method of Evaluating Sources for all the research sources you cite information from in your paper.

For the Appendix section of Essay #4, you need to include two things about each source:

1. The MLA citation of the source (properly formatted)
2. The Explanation of what makes this source credible, according to the 5Ws criteria.  
--the explanation should identify the key factors that make this a good source to use and be  
--each explanation should be 100-150 words

### Guidance on the Appendix

--[What the Appendix should be and should look like](#)

--[5Ws Method of Evaluating Sources](#)

--similar example from [what an Annotated Bibliography looks like](#)

### What Does an Example Essay Look Like

The following example essay illustrates a writer who had done a good job in each of the parts of this essay. Study this model to see each of the separate sections of the essay and what they do.

[See this Example Essay #4](#)

