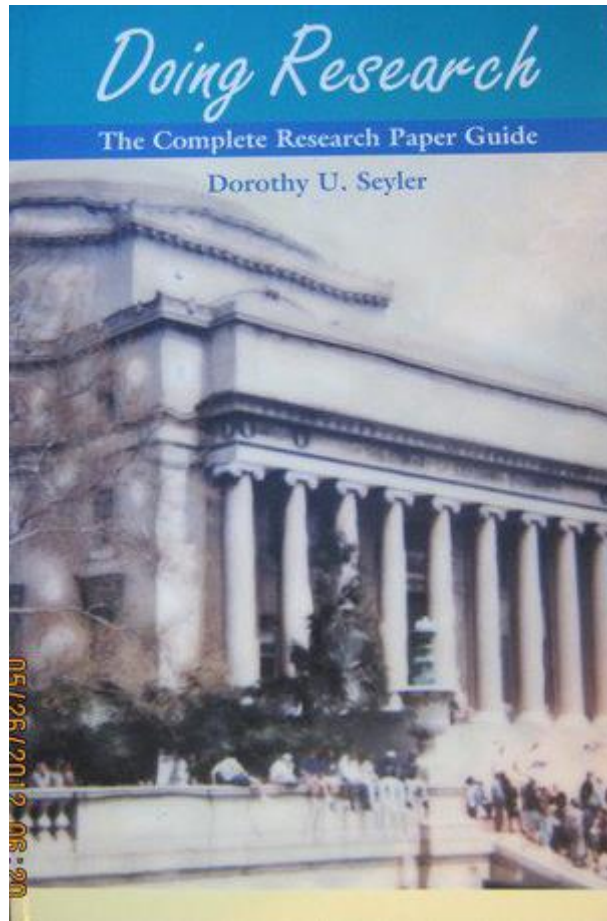


Doing Research: The Complete Research Paper Guide by
Dorothy U. Seyler - A Review

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Abstract

This paper reviews *Doing Research: The Complete Research Paper Guide* by Dorothy U. Seyler from the perspective of students and research scholars who are required to write research articles. The reviewed covers all the chapters and presents the salient features of this classic work, which is very relevant even today.

Key words: Research methods, research strategies, design of research articles, methods of analysis, *Doing Research: The Complete Research Paper Guide* by Dorothy U. Seyler.

Introduction

Doing Research: The Complete Research Paper Guide by Dorothy U. Seyler is precisely what is claimed in the sub-title. It is a complete, well organized and well written guide for writing a research paper. Dr. Seyler is Professor of English at Northern Virginia Community College and, she has written extensively on the process of writing.

Chapter One – Getting Started

Seyler begins the book by explaining the purpose and meaning of research. All of us “do” research. We seek out customer reviews and product reviews for major purchases. We research a problem or issue for a presentation or a work project. And, most of us have written research papers during our academic careers.

The larger and ultimate purpose of research is to expand available knowledge and to solve previously unsolved problems. A research paper is the documentation of this discovery. Because this work is potentially a contribution to ongoing scholarship, it must be clearly organized, carefully reasoned, and well written.

A point that the author makes repeatedly is that just gathering and recording information is not research. Research requires the advancing of human knowledge and the answering of previously unanswered questions. We don’t engage in research to satisfy a personal curiosity or even to gain an advanced degree; we do research in order to extend the boundaries of knowledge and understanding.

There are three types of research papers: expository, analytic, and persuasive. An expository paper is written to provide information. They include literature reviews, market research, and technical reports. They are often assigned in courses in order to teach the students research skills. An analytic paper involves more than the gathering of information. It requires the

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evaluation of information and the implications behind it. These papers explore cause and effect relationships, decision making processes, and other topics of analysis and evaluation. Finally, a persuasive essay seeks to convince the reader of a premise or thesis.

The author next presents those types of writing that are not actually research. We might call them “pseudo-research.” Included are a collection of quotations or the restatement of a single author’s position, a reflection paper describing personal experiences, a purely theoretical paper with no resources supporting the theory, or a paper with no documented sources.

Motivation for research and writing is very important and we must establish, from the start, why our project is significant and worth the effort. Good research is built around asking the right questions in the pursuit of new understanding. In addition, not only must we select a topic, we must limit the extent of our study in order to achieve focus and clarity.

Effective research is built upon a clear statement of purpose that establishes the direction and style of writing. One must also consider the intended audience for the report. What do we want them to learn and to do as a result of this study? A more generalized audience requires less use of specialized terms and/or the defining of important terms. Topics to avoid are those that are irrelevant to the field, that are too general, that only have one available source, or that are too technical. In this way, we are careful to limit our research to topics that are relevant and manageable.

In assessing the need for research, it is important to start with what we already know and to use this to choose a significant issue for study. A good method for starting this process is to “free write” a page of thoughts on the topic, listing the questions and issues related to the topic. A similar method is to “brainstorm,” writing short statements and questions related to the topic, then paring the list down to the most relevant. Using these methods one can surmise the possibilities, set priorities, and evaluate items on the list to narrow the choices. The goal of this process is to go beyond common knowledge to discover issues in need of further investigation.

At the heart of these methods is the need to ask questions and to narrow the topic for the sake of the advancement of knowledge.

In the search for topics and resources there are several listings that can be used to gather information. They include the Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), *The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, as well as internet sites and listings. As we continue this part of the project, it is also helpful to speak to colleagues to get their feedback and input on the issue.

Once we have settled on a topic for research, it is important to create a tentative thesis statement. This statement should be taken from the freewriting and brainstorming described in the last section. This is an important part of the process because it guides all of the future research and sets the target for the project. As a next step in the process, the author encourages the writer to produce a more lengthy statement of purpose in which a research strategy is set forth.

Related to this is the need to keep a research journal for jotting down new ideas, setting out a weekly schedule, and providing a written assessment of the progress of the study. It should record all the time spent on research and writing. It should be a place for creative thinking and processing data, and a record of the completion of major sections of the project, as well as a place to vent frustrations and concerns. The journal should also record the plans for future work and needs to be updated on a regular basis.

Ultimately it is important to have a plan of attack along with a written schedule of the work to be done. In this way, the project can be completed on time and achieve the goals set out for it at the very beginning.

Chapter Two – Locating Sources

The second chapter of the book primarily describes the methods for utilizing the resources in a college library. The author describes the parts of a typical library and how to gain access to the books and periodicals it contains. She gives helpful rules for narrowing a search,

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using general reference works like encyclopedias and indexes. She also presents ways to find background material for a research question using dictionaries, almanacs, and historical surveys. In looking for sources, the author directs us to larger indexes and databases.

The author gives a relatively thorough description of the three catalogs of a typical library: the author catalog, the title catalog, and the subject catalog. Originally these were three separate card catalogs, now they are computerized. But these three methods of search are still available and accessible online or through an in-library computer terminal. The author next presents the information available on a typical page entry for an item in the catalog. This includes author, title, publication information, call number, and availability. Dr. Seyler also describes the basic classification systems, whether the Dewey Decimal System or the Library of Congress classification system (LC). The Library of Congress (LC) system is the most widely used among college libraries.

The goal of a search is to develop a working bibliography. The book gives tips for finding and recording items to be included in this document. As one searches for specific books in a library stack it is also helpful to examine other books on the same shelf because they will be related to the topic at hand. She makes the point that we must always be on the look-out for books related to our topic.

The reference section of the library is an important place for identifying resources and narrowing the search. Here one finds background information and a more general overview of the subject. Some of the most helpful general references are the latest copy of *Books in Print* and other book indexes. Also included in the reference section are dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases, books of quotations, collections of mythologies, almanacs, yearbooks, indexes to bibliographical dictionaries, bibliographical indexes, and general literature indexes.

Magazine and journal articles often reflect the most up-to-date research on a given topic. They are, therefore, an important place to look for source materials. One identifies relevant articles by searching periodical indexes. In this section, the book is a bit dated since so much of

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the material found in periodicals is currently located online. Dr. Sayler does speak of this growing trend, but the book offers instructions in the use of CD-ROM for this search. Today, such searches are primarily digital. The author also gives instructions on searching for related newspaper articles and academic journals.

The chapter also covers the use of documents published by the government. Documents included are the results of government research projects that relate to economics, public policy, health care, law, business and other topics of public interest. These reports are often important sources for statistics and demographic information.

Finally, the chapter describes the use of specialized resources in creating a research bibliography. These include indexes that reveal secondary sources for the topic in question, lesser known or used journals, dissertation abstracts, and citation indexes. These resources can often lead one to previously unknown books or articles related to the subject and deepen one's understanding of the issues involved.

Enhancing our capacity to perform research today are all of the online databases that provide access to academic journals, dissertations, and other resources. Most college libraries subscribe to some or all of the databases. These include ERIC, EBSCO, MLA International Bibliography, and ScienceSource.

There are also times when it is necessary to look for resources that are not found in a library. The author suggests these searches normally include topics in the humanities or social sciences. These resources include documents retained in the National Archives which are located in Washington, D.C. and in regional branches across the country. In addition, there are state and local archives, historical societies, and other sources of documents and correspondence. Even more directly, one can write letters to business leaders, government officials, and others who would have relevant knowledge of the subject of the study. Finally, many qualitative studies are built around surveys and interviews which become an important source of relevant information.

Chapter 3 – Preparing a Bibliography

As one proceeds in the search for resources, we must make and keep a record of the materials to be used for the project. In making this record, we are producing a working bibliography for our research. This document will serve to show that there are sufficient resources available to complete the project, which of these resources will be the focus of the study, and to provide proper support and documentation for the conclusions of the study.

The author suggests using 3X5 cards, one resource per card, a card for every relevant source, each card containing all the required bibliographic information, and completed in the proper format for later use in the final bibliography. In doing this recording properly, we are ensuring that we have all the necessary information to complete the written project without having to go back to the library to add missing details, thus saving time and effort in the process of completing the project, and assuring that our report is thoroughly documented.

In filling out the cards we wish to use in creating our bibliography it is essential that we include the author, title, and publication information. It is also important to create each card in compliance with the style format used by the assigning school or institution (MLA, APA, ACS, and others). In this chapter, the author presents samples of completed bibliographic cards, reminding the reader that in many cases, bibliographic information must be “translated” into the order and format of the assigned style, and the cards should be constructed to reflect the required style. In this way, the cards can be directly used in creating the final bibliography for the study. Dr. Sayler then presents the conventions for producing a proper bibliography. In general, each citation should be given using hanging indentation. Each citation should be in given in the proper order. As well, she presents the proper form for giving an author’s name whether a single author or a work with multiple authors. She also describes the conventions for titles and publication information. This section is a valuable resource for anyone writing a research paper or other scholarly work. The chapter concludes with a description of the rules for completing a “Works Cited” page in the MLA format.

Chapter Four – Understanding Sources and Taking Notes

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Once we have created a working bibliography, it is time to study those resources in order to gather the information and gain the insights that answer the questions posed in the research project. Central to this process will be note taking, in the process of studying the selected , resources. Here, the author gives guidelines for properly using sources in a research project. In doing so, she describes a process of collecting resources and narrowing the focus of the study to understanding of the topic. In addition, she describes the purposes behind the process. We may be attempting to defend a position in the face of a controversy or in the attempt to prove a hypothesis. We need outside sources in order to establish that our view is more than a personal opinion, but is defended by legitimate scholarship. Sources also help us expand our understanding of an issue and enable us to make inferences and gain new insight into the question at hand.

The ultimate concern with proper sourcing is the need to avoid plagiarism and to establish that the work is original. The price of improper documentation is loss of reputation and credibility. As a result, we must provide references for all direct quotations, all paraphrased ideas and opinions, all summaries of ideas, and any factual information that we take from outside sources. In line with this, we must be able to make the distinction between widely known and accepted information which does not need documentation and the discussion and opinion concerning even widely known facts by authors which do need to be referenced.

It is important for us to be able to differentiate between primary (direct quotation from an author's book or article) and secondary (quotation of an author by a different author) sources and to know when the use of each is appropriate. We also need to know how to assess the reliability and credibility of our sources. The author suggests that we question all of our sources and make the effort to verify a statement or fact with multiple sources. The quality of our sourcing is a reflection on the quality of our study.

The author presents a helpful chart for knowing the difference between primary and secondary sources. A primary source would be a letter written by a famous person, while a secondary source is the reference to or quotation from the letter in a history book or biography.

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She also explains which types of reports require primary sources and which must have secondary sources.

When we use a source for our study we are implying that the information is accurate and true (unless we specifically say otherwise). Our own credibility is on the line when we reference a “fact.” In addition, we must evaluate our sources to see that they are relevant and useful to our premise. To do this, we must identify the leading authorities and works in our chosen field of study and build our report around them. This requires that we establish the credentials of the authors we use. We also must examine the reviews of the works we are using, and know the frequency of the use of book or author for citation in other publications using the *Citations Index*.

With the dramatic advances in knowledge in the past decades, it is possible for older sources to become outdated. We must therefore be concerned to find newer, more relevant sources for our research, and eschew older (even though well known) sources whose information is passé. In addition, we must be sure the information in our sources is properly documented within the source; we need to be careful of undocumented statistics from a secondary source. We also need to pay attention to whether a publication is intended for a general audience or for specialists in the field of study. One must develop a system for evaluating sources as part of the research process.

The author next instructs the reader in developing a preliminary outline to guide reading and note taking. Like the search for outside sources, this outline must be built from the purpose of the study. In line with this, the book presents several organizational strategies for use in this step. These include a report structure, a comparison/contrast structure, the testing of a theory or model, and the problem/solution structure. The appropriate structure must be applied for the chosen subject and the purpose of the study.

The preliminary outline is used in guiding the study and note taking required to complete the study. Notes should be written on 3X5 cards, in ink, and using only one side of each card.

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One should do reading and analysis of the sources first before taking notes to avoid wasting time and effort. Be sure to include a clear reference for each note (author and page number). Write out the complete quotation or paraphrase on each note card, and clearly describe what is fact and what is opinion. We also need to state what is an opinion taken from a source and what is personal opinion.

At this point, Seyler presents the different types of note taking. These include summary notes, paraphrase notes, and direct quotation notes. Each of these notes has a role in the final preparation of the paper, and it is important to create the notes in such a way that they can be transferred easily into the final paper. Direct quotations should be used sparingly and where needed to provide statistics, the authority of the original author, or for a special way of making the statement that increases its effect.

At the end of this chapter, the author takes the reader through a description and sample of an annotated bibliography and a review of the literature on a topic. An annotated bibliography is a bibliography with summary notes included for each work. In a literature review the chosen works are listed and the reasons for their incorporation into the study are given.

Chapter Five – Presenting and Documenting Research

An academic paper must be formatted according to the chosen style requirements of the institution. This book tells the reader how to format according to the MLA standards, and by that, takes them through the process of formatting itself. This process goes beyond just avoiding technical errors to preventing charges of plagiarism. The author takes us through the conventions for referencing authors and titles, and makes the point that using these conventions when creating the notes makes it much easier to produce the references in the paper.

The author explains how to avoid an unintentional charge of plagiarism by avoiding sloppy note taking or failure to write down proper references on the note cards. All these dangers can be avoided by being meticulous in properly creating the note cards. It is often useful in writing a paper to create an “introductory tag” in which the author’s name and credentials are

given before the quotation. We also must be careful to not mix a direct quote with a paraphrase; a paraphrase is an author's statement in our own words. She also describes the dangers of parenthetical referencing at the end of paragraphs.

By contrast, the book does explain how to use parenthetical referencing (according to MLA formatting) within the body of the paper. She shows how to create parenthetical citations, where to place them, and how to deal with complex sources. She also describes a process for adding footnotes or endnotes to a paper along with cautions about their use.

Quotations should follow certain conventions; they need to be accurate, they must be enclosed in quotation marks, they should be brief, and they should be preceded by a reference to the original author. If the writer adds words of explanation to a quotation on a notecard, they need to be put in brackets (not parentheses). When a quotation is given as part of a longer sentence, the first word of the quote is not capitalized. The author also describes the rules for punctuation for a quotation including the use of ellipsis. Finally, she describes the process for recording longer quotations using indentation rather than quotation marks.

The book also presents some helpful guidelines for the proper style of using quotations. We need to use enough of the original statement to get the meaning across. We must be careful to not take the quote out of its context, and thus must give the reader enough information to clearly understand the quotation. We must also introduce the quote properly so as to prevent confusion, and we must incorporate the quotations into our sentences smoothly and properly.

Next Dr. Saylor provides the rules for punctuation, starting with most commonly used and abused rules for commas. She also gives the distinctions between the use of colons and semicolons. This section describes the proper inclusion of numbers into a text, including when to write out the number and when to use numerals, how to give percentages and amounts of money, how to present dates, and give a sequence of numbers.

The last section of the chapter details the rules for including tables and charts into a report. In general we must see tables and charts as tools of communication and choose the best graphic for expressing our intended message. They should be simple, well-constructed, properly labeled and identified. Tables are helpful for presenting numerical data, while charts translate statistics into visual symbols that help people see the implications of the data. The author also presents methods of using more specialized charts such as line charts and flow charts.

Chapter Six – Writing the Paper

The writing of a paper is built around all the work of research and preparation that provides the base of information to be presented in the report. The book takes us through the process of organization and writing that ensures a high quality of presentation. In organizing the material that will go into the paper, it is important to put the note cards generated in the research phase into a logical order. Then one needs to review the tentative thesis and combine the results of the research to produce a clear and concise thesis statement.

A thesis statement must be given in a complete sentence. It must be limited and focused. It must be taken from the actual research. It must also stand as a unique and possibly unprecedented idea or approach to the topic.

Next, we must compare the organizational approach and information gathered from the organization of the note cards to the preliminary outline. From here, one re-visits the purpose for the project, and begins the process of developing a formal outline for the paper.

The author shows how to construct a traditional outline using roman numerals, capital letters, Arabic numerals, and lower case letters and numbers in parentheses. She also describes a decimal outline, and gives the common rules for creating outline divisions. One can create a paragraph style outline, a sentence outline, or a topical outline. But whichever style one chooses, the style must be consistently used throughout the outline.

The book does not encourage the use of paragraph outlining for a research paper, as they are too wordy and come to resemble the paper itself. She acknowledges that sentence outlines are popular with teachers who assign research papers and gives hints on turning a topical outline into a sentence outline. She also describes the rules for producing an effective topical outline. First, headings of equal rank must be constructed using either a noun, gerund, or infinitive. Second the headings must be specific and meaningful. Also the book gives rules for punctuation and capitalization.

Now we arrive at the process of actually writing the paper. One must plan for an adequate amount of time to compose and revise the paper. The book provides some helpful rules for determining the amount of time required for a normal academic paper, and warns against trying to complete the project “at the last minute.”

The author recommends adding references as the paper is being written rather than waiting until after the first draft is written and going back to add the documentation. The risk of missing a reference is too great to allow this practice. Along these lines, it is important, as one of the steps in reviewing the paper, to make sure that the “Works Cited” page has an entry for every document referenced in the text of the paper. This rule applies to all forms of referencing.

It is also important in the writing process to have all notes, cards, photocopied articles, and other necessary items readily available. And we must make the effort to have them organized and placed so that they can be easily accessed. This will reduce the time needed to complete the project and help eliminate errors in the document. It is also important to choose a comfortable place that is conducive to the writing process. The author reminds us that one of the secrets to writing is to just do it. If we encounter an opening seems difficult, we should move on to write the body of the paper (for which you have the outline and notes) and come back to write the opening later. The author also encourages taking short breaks during writing, as well as, reading and re-reading what you have already written.

In regards to style issues for an academic paper, the author endorses writing in the third person to enhance a sense of objectivity. The author also gives instances where it is proper to use the first person in distinguishing the writer's personal opinion from other views in the paper. Also important in writing the paper is the proper use of tense, and the author gives rules for moving from present to past and even to the use of the "historical present" in describing a past event.

It is important that the paper be presented in the writer's own words. While the paper reflects the personal style of the writer, it should not include slang or overly familiar language. Nor should the writer adopt an artificial "academic" style of rarely used terms and complex sentence structure. There is a need for using the specialized terminology of the field, which must be understood by the writer and used properly, but we must avoid a pretentious feel to the paper.

A well written introduction is very important; it engages the potential reader and shows the direction that the study will take. It, therefore, must present the thesis of the paper, describe the intent and the limits of the study, and reveal why the study is worth reading. The author suggests using more than one paragraph for this introduction, and presents useful examples of introductions for a student paper. She also demonstrates some attention gaining methods such as invoking a popular concern, challenging a commonly-held view, or choosing dramatic terminology. One can go too far with these methods, but with careful use, they enhance the appeal of the study.

The introduction can also be the place to give a brief review of the literature on the chosen topic and thus lay a foundation for the study. In the same way, important relevant information and statistics can be used to set the stage for the theme of the paper. Often, writers present the thesis in the opening in order to begin the process of expansion and explanation. The author ends this section of the chapter by giving some rules for what should be avoided in an introduction. These include a simple restatement of the title, using artwork or fancy lettering, attempts at humor, use of an ambiguous question, quoting a dictionary definition, or starting with a purpose statement. All of these techniques misdirect the interest and attention of the reader.

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In writing the main body of the paper the author reminds the reader that there are three goals to be pursued. One must provide unity and coherence, take the reader through the source material that supports the thesis, and combine the source material with the writer's insights to make the case. In this way, the writer takes the reader through the logical process of understanding what has been written.

In order to achieve unity and coherence, one must begin with paragraph unity (each sentence of the paragraph is related to the theme of the paragraph). She makes the important point that well organized notes leads to unified paragraphs. She also describes the process for achieving coherence by repeating important terms, carefully referring to the important terms using pronouns, and the proper use of transition phrases. Transitions are also important in linking paragraphs together into a coherent structure. Relying on an outline does not guarantee that a reader will be able to follow the writer's argument. The deliberate use of transitions is necessary to make a written document coherent.

Continuing in this vein, the author cautions against using direct quotations that lack some form of introduction or context. This practice leads to confusion on the part of the reader. Related to this is the need to vary the terminology used in introducing quotations. This is necessary to maintain the reader's interest. This rule applies for introducing any material from sources as well. Adding context and explanation is essential for obtaining coherence.

The goal of a research paper is to combine the information gleaned from outside sources with one's own thoughts and insights on the topic. Ideally this would be a synthesis which takes known facts and combines them with thought and understanding to achieve a new insight into the question and advance the level of knowledge in the field. While this is the ideal, any good writer presents their own thoughts, formed and expanded by the research they have undertaken. In other words, good writers are not normally telling us what others have thought but what they have learned from the process of interacting with the ideas of those "others." The book takes the reader through this section by presenting examples and discussing the ways they do or do not

demonstrate a synthesis of writer's thoughts and the information gleaned from research. In this, she warns against just stringing together a series of facts with little context or explanation.

Good writing entails a clear statement of purpose and direction (topic sentence for a paragraph), multiple sources to reveal the extent of knowledge and discussion of the question, and evaluation by the writer himself to explain the significance of the data. These principles apply at the micro and macro level of writing a research paper. Each paragraph must be carefully constructed which leads ultimately, to a well written complete paper.

The author next describes the writing of the conclusion of the paper. She presents helpful principles for completing a paper. The first is to restate and extend the thesis of the work. This is not a simple repetition of the original statements, but an expansion and explanation of them. A second effective method is to use an important quotation to sum up the ideas expressed in the paper. This requires, of course, not just the quotation, but a surrounding explanation that uses the quote to provide a final punch line and conclusion to the document. A third strategy is to summarize the issue and call for further research. In other words, using the thesis to explain what is currently known and also what doors to future study still lie unopened. Finally, the author encourages the writer to use the conclusion to present a solution to the problem raised in the paper. As you can see, each of these methods is related to the purpose and development of the paper. In one study, presenting a solution is the natural result of the progression of thought. In another, the research leads to further questions that need answering. The writer should choose the method that fits the style and direction of their paper.

The book also gives rules for what to avoid in developing a conclusion to a paper. First, we should not present new or different material. Also, we must not just end the paper abruptly without a summary or a conclusion. It also doesn't work to tell the reader what you, as the writer, have achieved. Further, we should not offer apologies or "hope" the readers have gained something from reading the paper. Lastly, don't give too short an answer to a complex question. A one or two sentence summary is insufficient for a detailed research project.

Now the book turns to the question of putting the paper into its final form in preparation for submission. The first issue raised is the choice of a title. This is not an insignificant issue; a good title tells what the paper is about and can even draw the reader in. Dr. Sayler warns against being too clever, while still seeking to gain interest from the reader, and she gives positive and negative examples of titles.

An important part of the writing process is the need for consistent and diligent revision. Rewriting is as important as the writing itself. This entails a three step process: rewriting, editing, and proofreading. The author encourages the writer to print out a hard copy of the first draft (at least double spaced) that can be used for proofreading and revision. The first thing to look for is whether the paper met the original purpose for which it was written. Next, the reviewer should ask if the terms will be understood by the intended audience.

In terms of content, the review must establish that the theme or purpose of the paper is clearly stated and supported. Further, the reviewer must look for irrelevant or unnecessary sections that can be removed. In terms of structure, the reviewer is looking for well-developed, clear, and cohesive paragraphs. Does the logic of the argument flow from premise to conclusion, and does it follow the framework of the outline? Always we are seeking clarity and efficiency of communication. One must also confirm that the document is the required length (whether number of pages or word count).

The author encourages the writer to make large-scale revisions first. Many of these revisions can be made using cut and paste features of our word processor that allow the moving of entire paragraphs within the body of the paper. After making these revisions, it is time to start the process over by printing out this second draft, proofreading, and editing again. The author suggests that we look for coherence and the flow of the thought in the paper. One should also review sourcing, length of quotations, placement of the name of the original author or work for context, documentation, and the details of referencing.

The next step in the rewriting process is to edit the text of the re-structured paper. In editing, one should examine the tone of the paper, looking for such errors as sarcasm, condescension, or attempts at humor. The paper should reflect the professionalism and seriousness of a research project. Editing also involves examining each sentence in the text, looking for correct grammar and other construction errors. One must look out for clichés, trivial wording, or overly long sentences. Also, are the sentences varied in length and construction? Finally, are the sentences clear and do they convey the intended meaning?

Lastly, one should examine the type of language used in the paper, making sure to avoid stereotypes or other forms of inappropriate language. The author includes what she considers “sexist” language and encourages generic terms rather than pronouns such as “he” or “she.” Related to this is the need to be sure that we are using our terms correctly, that we are not using too many specialized terms, that we are avoiding overly abstract terminology, that we have used homonyms correctly, and that we are not overly informal (stay away from contractions).

The last step in the rewriting process is proofreading. In this phase, we looking for typographical errors, and other visual mistakes (a paragraph not indented, for example). It is in this phase that we assure that we have met all the requirements of the formatting style for the paper. These include proper cover page, proper referencing, and works cited page.

The final form of the paper should include a cover page, an outline (if required), an abstract (if required), the body of the paper, appendices (if needed), and a works cited list. The book presents two sample research papers; a shorter work without a cover page, and a longer paper with a cover page. The samples include notes from the author pointing out important features of the two papers for the reader’s instruction.

Chapter Seven – Observing Other Styles of Documentation

Dr. Sayler constructed her book around the use of the MLA style format, but she recognizes the need to be familiar with other formats for writing at the academic level. She summarizes the MLA as an author/page style and notes that an author/year style is used in social

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Doing Research: The Complete Research Paper Guide by Dorothy U. Seyler - A Review 253

science writing, a footnote/endnote style is used in the humanities, and the number style is used in science writing. No matter what, one must be consistent in using a single style throughout a paper.

The book then takes us through a summary of all of the leading style formats used in academic writing. She begins with author/year style exemplified by the American Psychological Association (APA). One of the advantages to the APA style is the use of parenthetical referencing. The book takes us through several examples of how to deal with a single author, multiple authors, and other anticipated options. The author also reveals how to produce a bibliography that includes books, articles, and dissertations. This section ends with a sample of an APA paper.

Next the author explains the features of the CBE (Council of Biology Editors) style. This style is similar to APA and uses author and year in parenthetical references. It differs from APA in the way references are listed in works cited page. A third style that is similar to these two is the USGS (U.S. Geological Survey) style.

After this, the author describes the footnote/endnote style. This style has two main sources, the *MLA Handbook* and the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The MLA style prefers endnotes and Chicago Manual prefers footnotes. This is one of the reasons the Chicago Manual style (Turabian) is so widely used in graduate level academic papers. One of the distinctive characteristics of this format is the use of superscript numbers to identify references that are listed in either the endnotes or the footnotes. Footnotes must be on the same page as the reference given, and follow the rules for the style. Endnotes need to be in consecutive order. The author also takes the reader through the conventions for the first reference to a work and how to cite later references to the same work.

Finally the book shows us how to write a paper in the number style. In number style, each reference is given a number in sequence (1,2,3,...). The number can be presented as a superscript, in parentheses, in parentheses either underlined or in italics, or placed in square

brackets. The author explains where to place the numbers and how to use them in citations and references.

While this book gives a helpful summary of each of these styles and their unique characteristics, it is important that we refer to the latest edition of the style manual for the style that we are assigned to use for our document. After working our way through this text, we see that this book operates as a helpful guide to researching and writing an academic paper. It is clearly written. It contains helpful advice as well as actual written samples to help the student understand the process. Anyone attempting to write an academic research paper would find this book helpful.

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