

(An "Initial Proposal" should include as many of the points below as you are ready to provide as well as two complete footnotes and bibliographic entries in Chicago Style. Your formal proposal will include all of the points below as well as an extensive bibliography.)

Craft a Research Proposal

After you have completed your preliminary research, craft a one-page proposal. Your teachers and friends will probably be happy to read it and comment on it. Even if they are not, the process of writing the proposal will still help you to sketch out your ideas. The proposal is an early opportunity to think critically about your topic.

Every proposal should answer these questions:

1. What is your topic? Describe it briefly.
2. What is your hypothesis? Tell which question is driving your research.
3. What will your readers learn from this project? Will you be bringing new information to light, or will you be interpreting commonplace knowledge in a new way?
4. Why is your project significant or interesting? Discuss the relationship between your project and some broader issue in history.
5. What are your principal sources? Give a short bibliography.
6. What methods will you use to evaluate your sources? Will you be reading library books or will you be using archival materials? Will you be analyzing objects and paintings? Are any of your sources in foreign languages, and if so, can you understand them? Will you be using methods from another discipline, such as sociology?

Adapted from: William Kelleher Storey, *Writing History: A Guide for Students*. 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 14-15.