

“The Teacher Wants Me To Choose My OWN Topic”?

It’s easier than you think. The biggest mistake writers make is to choose a topic that is too general. When you get an idea ask yourself if that topic can be broken down into subtopics. Look at the example below.

Generic Topic:

War

List possible categories of that topic:

- U.S. Civil War
- War in Iraq
- **Evil of War**

List possible sub-categories for one category from above:

- **Motivation for War**
- **Causes of War**
- **Effects of War**

Congratulations! You’ve found your topic. Now what 3 points can you make on this topic? They will become the body of your essay.

- War wrecks economies causing unemployment
- Unemployment keeps people hungry
- Hunger destroys development and education

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Now you try it! Choose a topic:

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List possible categories of that topic:

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List possible sub-categories for one category from above:

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Here’s your topic! Now what 3 points can you make?

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Check out some of these ideas below. Are some too general? If so, break them down like you did for practice on the other side of this paper.

- rain forests
- child abuse
- dream analysis
- violence in schools
- racial profiling
- dolphin intelligence
- eating vegetarian
- surviving teachers
- dangers of internet
- conservation/recycling
- stress
- stand up comedy
- phobias
- cloning
- The Bermuda Triangle
- fantasy vacations
- cliques
- cyber bullying
- sports drinks
- teenage fashions
- travel to another country
- body piercing/tattoos
- HIV/venereal diseases
- eating disorders (anorexia/bulimia)
- beauty secrets/myths
- giving blood
- technology in music recording
- American religions
- skateboard culture
- panic attacks
- depression
- art therapy
- cryogenics
- slang words
- what your adult life will be like
- privacy rights

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