Chapter 14 offers students a reference to MLA and APA documentation styles including documenting electronic sources. Blythe Rogers’s paper shows how to integrate outside sources and document ideas, direct quotes, summaries, and paraphrases correctly. The writing assignments provide students with a focus for continuing to learn academic writing.

As Chapter 14 suggests, students reach a point in their research project when they “must stop planning and start writing.” Just as many students use planning activities as a way to avoid researching, so too do many students use research activities as a way to avoid writing. Many students are also “overimpressed by research,” as the quote from Barbara Tuchman in the introduction to the chapter indicates. You might want to stress to students that the purpose of gathering research is not to impress readers with strings of quotations from other sources, but to learn and formulate ideas. Research, like writing, is a process of discovery. Researchers begin with inquiry, not with a preconceived notion of proving or disproving a theory. Even before students begin any library research, it is a good idea for them to spend some time brainstorming and freewriting in their journals, as Blythe did in Chapter 13, to find out what they know and what they are most interested in learning about through research.

ORGANIZING A PRELIMINARY OUTLINE

This section suggests a sequence of three outlines that aid in planning and drafting the research paper: preliminary outlines to discover potential patterns, descriptive outlines to evaluate the initial drafts, and formal outlines to guide the writing of intermediate and final drafts.

The suggestion that students write several preliminary outlines is sound. Although students should review their notes in preparation for drafting these
outlines, it is a good idea for them to set aside their note cards when they begin drafting their outlines. This way they are less tempted to fit every idea from their note cards into their outlines and are better able to produce ideas that reflect their own understanding of the material, not the understanding of the authors cited.

Whether you collect the preliminary outlines and then schedule individual conferences to discuss these potential plans or arrange in-class work on the outlines, it is important at this point to assess each student’s progress and to identify those who are seriously behind or off track and are in need of immediate guidance. These are the students you might especially target for the Writing Center, although all your students should be reminded that Writing Center tutors can help them with the research process.

DEVELOPING A THESIS

Preliminary outlines generate hypotheses, and hypotheses generate preliminary outlines. One test of whether a potential hypothesis is workable is its generative power. The practice of trying out several potential hypotheses promotes the writer’s sense of control over the material. Similarly, putting note cards aside in order to begin the process of drafting hypotheses encourages independent thinking about the information and its significance.

One strategy for developing theses not mentioned in Chapter 14 is to think of the hypothesis as an answer to a question. To arrive at various hypotheses, the writer formulates several questions that direct his or her research.

Exercise (p. 374)

Blythe’s first hypothesis produces a link to Section 2 of her scratch outline. But it does not account for the data she presents in Section 1 and, especially, Section 3—which is becoming a major focus of her argument.

The second hypothesis needs more precision. Look at the qualities of an effective thesis in Chapter 1, page 16. Blythe may indeed want to argue that recent studies demonstrate that the effects of drinking coffee are “greatly exaggerated.” But the phrase “greatly exaggerated” is too vague to be useful.

The third hypothesis is more precise because it argues that “drinking coffee in moderation will not cause health problems.” Compare her version of this hypothesis in her final draft—pages 399 and 400.

WRITING THE FIRST DRAFT
Writing the first draft of a research paper, like writing the first draft of any paper, is an exercise in discovery. Yet it differs from writing the first draft of shorter papers because the research paper draft is longer and more complicated in content and formal features. The writer must synthesize a great deal of information, always keeping a central purpose in mind while conceptually, grammatically, and mechanically integrating source material with his or her own prose.

Beginning with the body of the paper is one strategy for overcoming first-draft blocks. It is usually liberating for students to realize they don’t have to begin a paper with the first sentence. Another strategy is to compose the paper in chunks, assigning themselves one chunk per writing stretch and building in a “reward system”: a cup of coffee, a walk around the block, a ten-minute chat with a friend. Once writers have experimented with various preliminary outlines and have produced a workable one, the final outline can be a guide throughout the initial draft. Suggest that students write the first draft of the research paper by reviewing their notes, setting them aside, drafting, and returning to the note cards only to substantiate or illustrate a point with a direct quotation, paraphrase, fact, or summary. This practice makes students less tied to the words and ideas of others.

CREATING THE INTRODUCTION

Whether drafting the introduction first, in the middle, or last, the writer would be wise to follow Donald Murray’s advice and write lots of “leads.” Students should begin keeping a list of possible leads throughout the research process, regarding this activity as creative experimentation. Although the introduction of a research paper involves more than just a lead, once the writer has a strong lead, composing the rest of the introduction—giving background information, setting the context, or explaining the paper’s organizational format—is usually much easier. “Leads,” writes John McPhee, “like titles, are flashlights that shine down into the story.”

Exercise (p. 375)

Blythe’s first introduction is too informal and lacks the larger scientific context she hopes to establish. Although her thesis sentence is also too colloquial, it reveals a midpoint between her third hypothesis and her final thesis. Her revision agenda helps her see that she needs to be more direct.

Her second introduction focuses on the conflict between pleasure and fear, which is at the heart of the controversy over coffee consumption. Her thesis sentence suggests the need for a compromise between the two extremes, but her
revision agenda points the way to a more balanced way to negotiate a middle position between the extremes.

**QUOTING AND DOCUMENTING SOURCES**

Students will face several challenges as they prepare their research papers: they must decide *if* and *how* as well as *when* and *where* to cite sources in support of an argument. The rule of thumb when writing for a general audience is that common knowledge does not need to be documented: that the Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776, and that William Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet* are not facts that require documentation. In *Writing from Sources*, Brenda Spatt explains, “In general, if the facts are not unusual, if they can be found in a number of standard sources, and if they do not vary from source to source, from year to year, then they can be considered common knowledge” (439). If the idea or fact varies at all from source to source or appears in some sources but not in others, the writer should cite the source where he or she initially encountered the idea or fact. A good rule for students is “When in doubt, cite the source.” It’s better to overdocument than to omit important citations.

Of course, documentation is also affected by audience. For an audience that shares specialized knowledge of a field, what counts as common knowledge naturally changes. In a professional journal, for example, a writer can refer to Aristotle’s *topoi* without citing from *Rhetoric.* But as your students are writing their research for a general audience, they cannot assume any specialized knowledge.

How to cite sources is addressed in several sections of Chapter 14. Instructors usually find that students need a lot of practice integrating source material into their own prose. For this reason, it is a good idea to ask students to begin citing sources early in the course, before they begin a formal “research paper.” By practicing documentation and integration of sources in all their writing, even if they are using only one source, students are less likely to be overwhelmed by the research paper.

If students are using supporting evidence for their arguments in the form of direct quotations, paraphrases, and summaries, they will build up their ability to successfully employ documentation methods. This also allows you to catch difficulties early enough to work with individual students on, for example, conceptual problems, where the writer fails to explain a relationship between the quotation and the interpretation, or mechanical problems, where the writer fails to introduce a paraphrase properly, put periods inside quotation marks, or use the correct parenthetical notation. The essays in earlier chapters by McPhee, Selzer, Quindlen, and others work nicely as examples of how writers use these styles of documentation.
You might also want to explain the process of documenting paraphrases and summaries in terms of framing. In the absence of a quotation mark, the writer lets the reader know when she or he is beginning to paraphrase or summarize another’s ideas by referring to the author or title. This announcement is the first part of the frame, and the parenthetical end reference or note is the last part of the frame.

LISTING SOURCES AND TYPING THE FINAL DRAFT

The information included in the sections on how to correctly document the sources and list them on the works-cited page is included for reference. You might want to point out the information but not spend a lot of class time discussing it until students are actually documenting their own papers. At that point, individual conferences or collaborative group work is most beneficial in helping students address their specific documentation issues.

WRITING YOUR RESEARCH PAPER ON YOUR COMPUTER

• Insist that your students frequently print out and review hard copies of their drafts. With a paper of this length, it is impossible to get a sense of overall unity and coherence from simply reading “screen text.” In addition, reading on the screen takes longer than reading printed text. Students should provide you with a printed draft each week, which they can then read and mark up as they consider a revision agenda. Since most English classrooms are not set up with computer terminals, students will need to bring printed drafts with them to class in order to work collaboratively.
• Your students will find that writing a research paper on a word processor is much more efficient than using a typewriter, since it makes the mechanics of revision so much easier. However, this “ease” can become a hazard if students resist revising their official-looking screen texts or neatly printed drafts. Promote both global and local revision by collecting hard-copy drafts, counting evidence of substantive revision as part of the final grade, and so on.
• Discuss with your students the grammars of printed texts versus screen texts. How does their reading change? Studies show that students are more likely to locate errors on printed texts than if they proofread on the screen. The fact that screen texts show only a small portion of the entire text is a drawback when students try to grasp an overall sense of their work.
• Emphasize how important it is to be sure to document all sources, including nonprint sources such as telephone interviews and e-mail conversations they
may have had. Since the boundary between author and text is easily blurred when students use computer technology, discuss the implications of plagiarism with your students. They should begin to construct a works-cited page early in the process and add to it as they use more sources.

- Encourage students to become aware of changing conventions in the writing of text on the computer. One convention easy to overlook is the importance of headings and subheadings. These can help break up a text and provide guidelines for reading while also providing the writer with a plan for shaping the text. These outlines will undoubtedly change as the paper evolves, but it’s a good idea to map out the general shape of the paper on the computer through the use of headings, even if that particular section is initially empty.

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

All these assignments could be revised from papers generated from assignments from earlier chapters. The assignments here offer students the opportunity to take an active part in their education and to observe firsthand how they are learning and what contributes to (and detracts from) their ability to grow intellectually.

1. Narrate: The assignment promotes cognitive awareness of rereading and of how one’s perspective changes with each engagement with a topic. This can be directly related to the research papers students are writing. Some students may have begun their papers with one point of view, but when writing “their side” of the argument, they may have reconsidered their position. Point out that there is nothing “wrong” with this; good researchers consider all the evidence before coming to a definite conclusion. What’s important is that they identify a question they want to answer, and become aware of their processes in trying to answer it.

2. Observe: As with any other writing assignment, students will need to determine a focus for their observations and a reason for their essay. Students may want to consider the tone and style of the language in a specific chat group. Or perhaps they may see—as Deborah Tannen does—a recurring cluster of images or metaphors (e.g., war) that point to the underlying assumption of the people who participate in a chat group.

3. Investigate: Students should discover a lot of explanations for “caffeine addiction.” They should also discover some interesting and even humorous
tales about attempts to quit. The essay—written for the student paper—would be particularly engaging during midterms or finals week.

4. Collaborate: This assignment could be used for extra credit, although you would want to offer another opportunity for those who lack the skills to create a Web page. If all students in your class have access, you might assign students to work in groups, with each group creating a different Web design. Students could then write critiques on each design and argue for which one they feel most successfully meets the purpose of the assignment. Students could also write descriptions of the process of their group in terms of decision making and in terms of using the technology skillfully.

5. Read: Starbucks has become almost as popular as McDonald’s. Pendergrast’s discussion of how this came to be is quite intriguing. But it does raise an important issue: Should the university cater to franchises such as McDonald’s or Starbucks? Whatever students decide, they should be prepared for the controversial responses from student and faculty readers—or the evasive responses from the university catering service.

6. Respond: Often writers assume that the key words in their arguments are self-explanatory. Even Blythe notices that several of her sources define moderate coffee consumption differently. Writers should not only point out Blythe’s failure but also suggest strategies she could use to introduce a more precise definition.

7. Analyze: This assignment may prompt several responses. Of course, writers could add more evidence to support Americans’ obsession with speed. But writers might create a more interesting text if they take the unpopular view—that Americans should adopt a slower lifestyle. Coffee or decaffeinated coffee may or may not be part of this analysis.

8. Evaluate: This is a good assignment for studying individual differences. Broad generalizations about any medical condition—addiction, medication, and others—must always carry a caution that individuals may respond differently. Evaluating different responses to coffee (or any other substance) should provide interesting data, particularly for a psychology class.
9. Argue: Addiction versus management is a tricky issue that has been debated in both the popular and the scientific press. Researching this debate should provide interesting evidence for or against managed care.

10. Argue: The issue of America’s exploitation of poorer countries—particularly those in Latin America—can be approached from many angles: drugs, tobacco, oil, and coffee. Depending on the sources, students can find arguments that America is developing these poorer countries or exploiting them.

USING THE WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center on your campus probably has a number of sources on documentation, including a copy of *Writing with a Purpose*, to which tutors and students can refer as they fine-tune papers. Continue to keep the Writing Center director informed of your class activities, and, when possible, send written assignments with students to the Writing Center. Remind your students that they can continue to work with tutors on all phases of essay development. Specify which documentation system (MLA or APA) you prefer your students to use, and let the Writing Center know how it can best assist you as you guide your students through the maze of conducting research and integrating sources into their texts.

Many students have difficulty introducing quotes or explaining why they have chosen them. Writing tutors can work one-to-one with students, asking them why a quote or particular information is significant and what they want the reader to understand from the quote. In this way, tutors help students integrate outside sources with their own ideas. As composition researchers have found, beginning students often have a great deal of difficulty believing in their own ideas enough to write them down. They are often intimidated or overly impressed by the published work of others and do not feel anything they can say is as good as what is already printed. It takes a great deal of practice to learn how to use direct quotations, paraphrases, and summaries successfully, as Jill does in her paper on recycling, and to control ideas to support arguments. Students respond to encouragement, and tutors can provide both encouragement and reader response to their work.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE COLLABORATIVE CLASSROOM
All the readings and writing assignments offer students the opportunity to work together in groups to process what they have read and share their interpretations and experiences. In addition, the following ideas may be helpful:

- Blythe’s research paper might touch off some heated debates, which you will want to encourage by providing guidelines for group work. You might want students to review types of argument outlined in Chapter 6 as they present their ideas. Students can then share personal stories, noting when they are responding on emotional levels and when they are presenting evidence that can be logically argued.

- During the writing of the research paper, from preliminary outline and hypotheses to first and final drafts, students need as much feedback as possible on the clarity and coherence of their evolving work. For that reason, ask groups or pairs of students to assess each other’s outlines, hypotheses, leads, and introductions; descriptively outline each other’s early drafts; and offer editorial (local revision) advice for each other’s later drafts.

- Ask students to bring two or three preliminary outlines to class. Divide the class into groups of four or five, and ask the groups to analyze the outlines of each member by answering the following questions: Does the outline suggest an argumentative hypothesis, and, if so, what is that hypothesis? What organizing principle underlies the outline? Does the organizational plan seem logical? Which outline seems most promising?

  If you wish to evaluate the preliminary outlines, ask students to turn in their outlines with a brief report of the group’s feedback.

- Ask students to bring a list of ten to twelve leads or a series of two or three introductions to class. In small groups, students can read one another’s leads and introductions, and each reader can write a defense of the best ones. This can also be used as a whole-class activity.

- Be sure to provide response guides that direct peer editing to a specific aspect of the process. Here is a sample peer response guide:

  Peer Evaluation

  
  Peer respondent:  

  Writer:
Read only the introduction to the paper. The introduction may be one paragraph or several paragraphs.

1. Formulate the central research question as you understand it from reading this introduction.
2. What is the writer’s answer to that question? Is the answer clearly stated? Argumentative? Logically sound?
3. Does the introduction include adequate background information—context setting, definitions of key terms? Should the introduction be expanded or tightened? If so, why?
4. Does the introduction announce the organizational layout of the rest of the paper?
5. Does the writer succeed in interesting you in reading more?
6. What new information or new understanding does the introduction promise?

**SOURCES AND ADDITIONAL REFERENCES**

Robert A. Schwegler and Linda K. Shamoon analyze the differences between students’ and teachers’ views of the purpose of research papers and argue that the academic model of a research product and the structure of the research process should be taught together as “a process of thought and expression” in “The Aims and Process of the Research Paper,” *College English* 82 (1982).


For a consideration of who owns language in the virtual age, see Andrea A. Lunsford and Susan West’s “Intellectual Property and Composition Studies,” *College Composition and Communication* 47.3 (1996): 383–411.