

Basic and Advanced Research Questions

Even with a focused topic and a guiding research question, there would be an overwhelming amount of information that could lead you off topic. That is why you need to create basic and advanced sub-questions. These are really an outline/web of ideas to focus your research further. These sub-questions give the research a starting point and direction. The [basic questions](#) create the introduction by supplying [background information](#), while the [advanced questions target the real topic](#). By researching these advanced questions, the answer to the overall guiding research question becomes clear to you and the reader. **You may find that you need to add more sub-questions as you conduct your research.**

Basic Questions:

Basic questions will develop your background knowledge on the topic. Start with your main research question: *How did George Washington's Declaration of Neutrality affect American commerce?* Figure out what other information you need to answer this question. This information will be easiest to find, and will fill in the introduction portion of your research paper.

Examples:

- Who is Washington?
- What is the Declaration of Neutrality?
- When and why was it written?
- What areas of commerce were affected by neutrality?

Advanced Questions:

Then consider the advanced questions. What information are you going to need to find out to fully answer the **main research question? The main research question focuses on a connection to today, a comparison, or a cause and effect relationship.** In the example main research question, it asks about commerce; is there specific information about shipping, trade, money, or foreign relations that will help you answer your main question? You may not be able to find the answer to all of your questions, but it is still best to have questions in mind during your research.

Examples:

- How many ships were lost during this period?
- How many tons of goods were captured?
- How many people lost their jobs?
- How many businesses went bankrupt?
- How long did it take until America recovered from these issues?

