**Identify your topic:** Choose a subject that interests you!

What initial ideas do you have? Keep in mind that a broad idea is fine at this point.

**Explore your topic:** Gather general information and form research questions to pursue.

What do you already know about your topic?

What do you wish to learn about your topic? What questions do you have?

**Refine your topic:** Gather more specific information and attempt to answer research questions.

After gathering general information, are you able to identify sub-topics that you would like to explore further?

What are some terms or keywords that come to mind when you think about your topic?

*This step will provide you with ideas when you begin to search for resources.*
Think about what kind of sources you are permitted to use:

1. Do you need to use scholarly resources such as books or journal articles?   Yes / No
2. Can you use magazines and non-library websites?   Yes / No
3. Do you know where to look to find the kind of sources you need?   Yes / No

What term or combination of terms are you using when performing a search? Are you finding results?

Write a thesis statement:  How has your research affected your understanding of this topic?
Is there something which you have been able to prove or disprove through your research? Create a thesis statement which describes this and outlines what you will write about in your paper.

Specifically, what information did you find to support your thesis?  Keep a list of sources.

Cite your sources:  Avoid plagiarism!
Do you have citation information for each of your sources? Yes / No

Do you know what citation style you need to use for your bibliography? Yes / No

Do you know where to find guidelines for compiling your bibliography? Yes / No