

The Rhetorical Situation and the Research Paper



"I call it, 'Research Paper Lite.' It contains a third fewer facts, but you'd never know it."

Research and Rhetorical Invention can at times seem like separate concerns.

However, it is important to consider the rhetorical situation when doing research, a process which can begin by examining the **exigence**, or the problem that prompted you to write.

To generate research questions, it can be helpful to consider the following categories-

- ✓ **Questions about Causes-** Why does this happen?
 - **ex. Why did the United States invade Iraq?**

- ✓ **Questions about Consequences-** What are the results of this?
 - **ex. What effect has the deterioration of the ozone layer had on the environment?**

- ✓ **Questions about Processes-** How does this work?
 - **ex. How are presidential campaigns funded?**

- ✓ **Questions about Definitions-** What does this mean?
 - **ex. How do you know if you are addicted to something?**

- ✓ **Questions about Values-** Is this right, wrong?
 - **ex. Should indigenous tribes be allowed to hunt whales?**