17.9: Chapter 9: Towards the Well-Researched Paper

For the Instructor

At this point in the course, your students should have chosen the subject matter of their research assignments and started to examine it closely. They should also have started their research. Some of the problems mentioned in the “Instructor” section of Ch. 7 may be more apparent by this point; students may, for instance, be treating the research assignment like a repeat of the close reading (choosing one article and analysing it). It’s important to convince students that they can apply the concepts from Part I to the different type of evidence discussed in Part II.

We recommend that you require your students to read the chapter before class and bring to class the three-storey thesis and outline they should have been developing while working through the chapter.

In Class:

This is a good class in which to workshop the thesis statements and outlines the students have come up with. Students unable or unwilling to see the flaws in their own work will more easily see it in the work of their peers. Group work or class-wide discussion of samples from a few students will allow students to begin revising and refining their thesis statements in light of the evidence they have collected. It will also allow students to recognise thesis statements that lean towards vagueness or summary.

By the end of the class, students should have some idea of the future direction of their research and should have begun the process of refining and developing their thesis statements.