

RESEARCH WORKSHOP

What makes a good research paper?

- ▶ Clear thesis statement
- ▶ Argument that is well constructed across the paper and easy to follow (think about the organization of your paper!)
- ▶ Interesting research questions to be explored
- ▶ Well supported evidence (for an art history paper, this could mean an analysis that is drawn directly from the artwork, historical facts, writings of other scholars)

So what is a thesis statement?

Sentence(s) that:

- ▶ Identifies the topic of the paper
- ▶ Answers a research question
- ▶ Establishes to the reader what your argument is
- ▶ A statement of opinion (not a statement of fact!)
- ▶ Draws the reader in and lets them know what to expect from the paper
- ▶ **Is specific**
- ▶ In all, should form the core of your paper: **always go back to your thesis statement**

Next, what is a good thesis statement?

“Using the internet has a positive effect on people”



Next, what is a good thesis statement?

"Using the internet has a positive effect on people"



"The internet improves lives by instantly connecting people across the world, creating new networks and serving as a forum for the exchange of ideas"

Next, what is a good thesis statement?

This paper will look at the advantages of school uniforms



Next, what is a good thesis statement?

This paper will look at the advantages of school uniforms



School uniforms positively impact students by lowering clothing costs, reducing on-campus violence and bullying, and creating a unified schooling experience

How do you write a thesis statement for an art history paper?

1. Spend time looking at your chosen artwork(s)
2. Pose questions that you want to ask of them
3. Make a claim (a hypothesis) or state your opinion about the works
4. Collect evidence (ie. do the research)
5. Finally, go back to step 3- refine your thesis statement based on your findings

How do you conduct research?

Step 1: Background Information

Encyclopedias, Dictionaries, Reference Materials

Get a handle on your topic by gathering basic information such as key concepts, people, and dates.



Step 2: Refine Your Topic

Books, Articles, General Databases

As you hone in on your research question, use more specialized materials to find out what kind of information exists on your topic.



Step 3: Scholarly Research

Academic Books, Peer-Reviewed/Scholarly Articles

Consult materials written by experts in the field. What does the most up-to-date research in the field say about your topic?

Types of sources

PRIMARY SOURCES

Primary sources are materials that are eyewitness accounts or as close to the original event as possible.

- ▶ **What people said at the time:**
interviews, speeches, letters
- ▶ **What people wrote:**
autobiographies, personal journals or diaries, essays by artists, manifestos, newspapers
- ▶ **Documentations:** videos, photographs, drawings/sketches

SECONDARY SOURCES

Secondary sources are interpretations and analyses based on primary sources.

- ▶ Scholarly articles: historians, art historians, other scholars who have written about the topic
- ▶ Reports analysing the historical context
- ▶ Encyclopedias, documentaries, journal articles

Where can you look for sources?

To find books:

- ▶ Brooklyn College Library: library.brooklyn.cuny.edu (here's a guide on how to log in, search material etc. <https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/artresourceguide>)
- ▶ Interlibrary loan (if the book isn't available at CUNY): <https://libguides.brooklyn.cuny.edu/interlibraryloan>
- ▶ Finding a book at a library near you: <https://www.worldcat.org>
- ▶ Google books: <https://books.google.com> (often has sections or complete PDFs of books)



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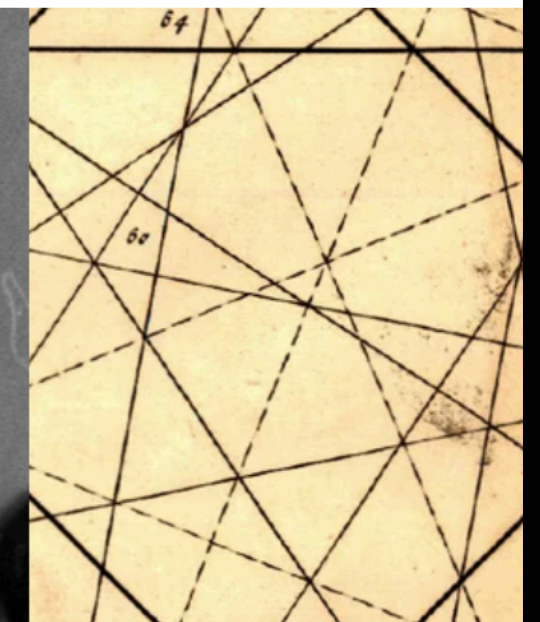
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...
y por la nariz sola
dar paso al aliento.
Echan atrás los hombros
levantan cabeza y pecho,
... ventanas

Con gritar y hacer ruido,
Comenzar una cosa,
Con idea segura,
Saber que todo juega
a, si mucho dura.



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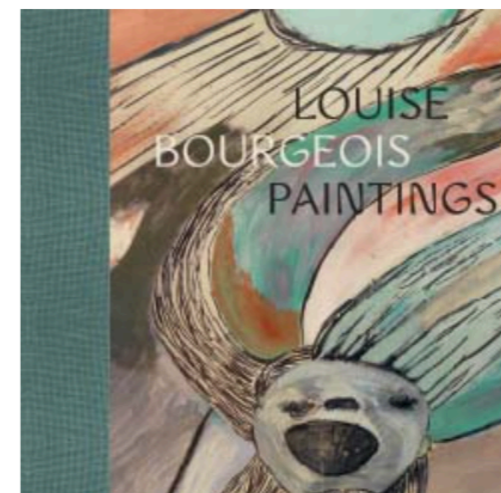
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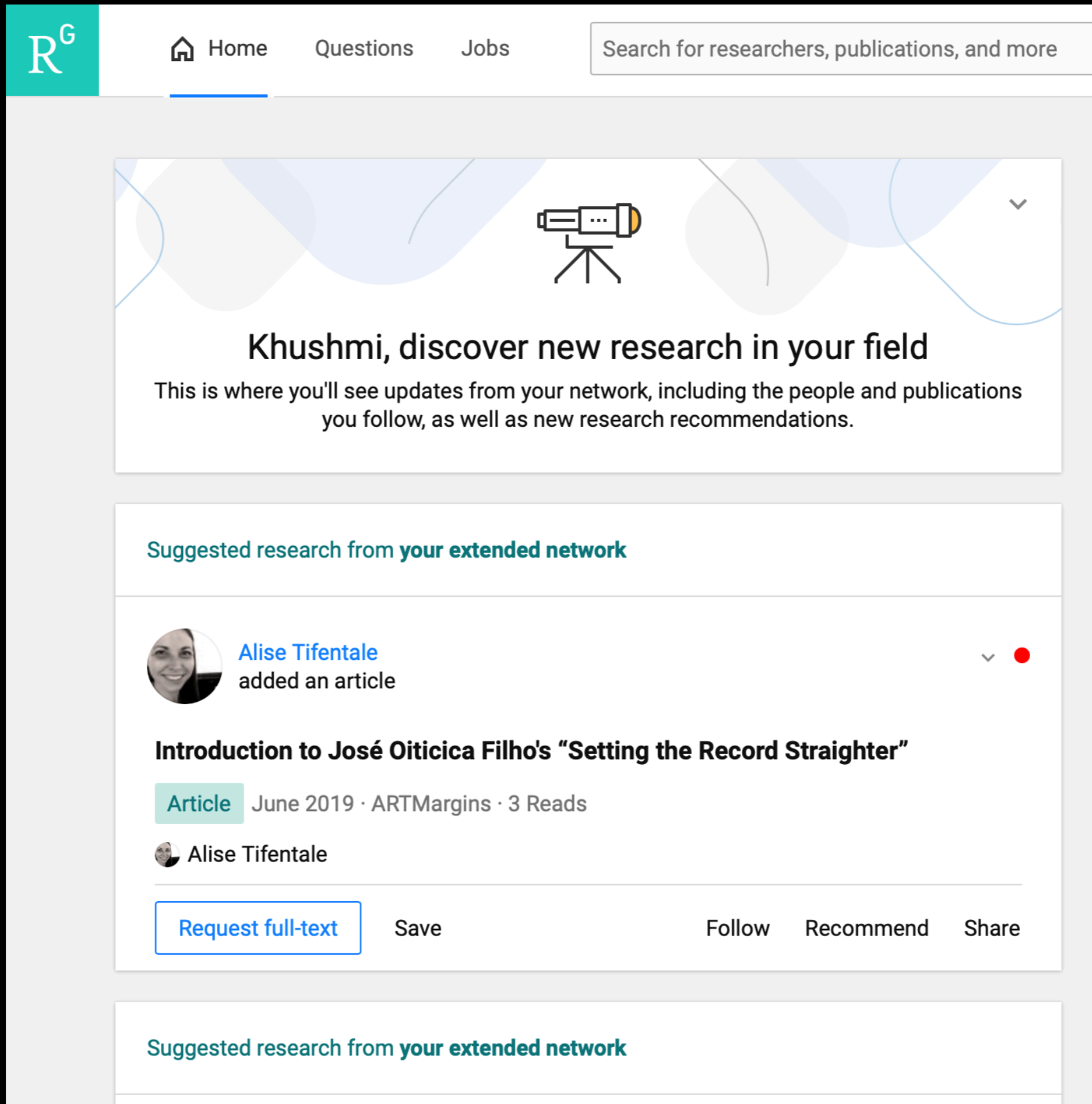
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The image shows a screenshot of the ResearchGate website's homepage. At the top left is the ResearchGate logo (R^G). To its right are navigation links for Home, Questions, and Jobs. A search bar is positioned on the right side of the top navigation bar. Below the navigation bar is a large banner area with a light blue background and a telescope icon. The banner contains the text: "Khushmi, discover new research in your field" and "This is where you'll see updates from your network, including the people and publications you follow, as well as new research recommendations." Below the banner is a section titled "Suggested research from your extended network". This section features a user profile for Alise Tifentale, who has added an article. The article is titled "Introduction to José Oiticica Filho's 'Setting the Record Straighter'" and is categorized as an "Article" from June 2019, published in ARTMargins with 3 reads. Below the article title are several action buttons: "Request full-text", "Save", "Follow", "Recommend", and "Share". At the bottom of the screenshot, the "Suggested research from your extended network" section is partially visible again.

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Suggested research from your extended network

 **Alise Tifentale** added an article

Introduction to José Oiticica Filho's "Setting the Record Straighter"

Article June 2019 · ARTMargins · 3 Reads

 Alise Tifentale

[Request full-text](#) Save Follow Recommend Share

Suggested research from your extended network

Where can you look for sources?

To find articles:

Here's a full list of databases you have access to through CUNY: <https://www.cuny.edu/libraries/e-resources/>

For art history specifically, these are some good databases:

- ▶ [jstor.org](https://www.jstor.org)
- ▶ <https://www-oxfordartonline-com.central.ezproxy.cuny.edu>
- ▶ <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/metpublications/>
- ▶ [academia.edu](https://www.academia.edu)
- ▶ [researchgate.net](https://www.researchgate.net)

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Vincent van Gogh



From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

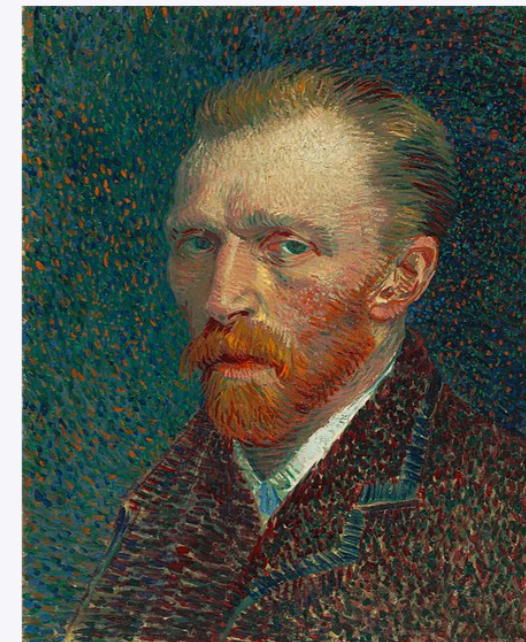
"Van Gogh" redirects here. For other uses, see [Van Gogh \(disambiguation\)](#) and [Vincent van Gogh \(disambiguation\)](#).

In this [Dutch name](#), the [surname](#) is van Gogh, not Gogh.

Vincent Willem van Gogh (Dutch: [ˈvɪnsənt ˈvɪləm vɑn ˈɣɔx] (listen)^[note 1] 30 March 1853 – 29 July 1890) was a Dutch **Post-Impressionist** painter who posthumously became one of the most famous and influential figures in **Western art** history. In a decade, he created about 2,100 artworks, including around 860 **oil paintings**, most of which date from the last two years of his life. They include **landscapes**, **still lifes**, **portraits** and **self-portraits**, and are characterised by bold colours and dramatic, impulsive and expressive **brushwork** that contributed to the foundations of **modern art**. Not commercially successful, he struggled with **severe depression** and poverty, eventually leading to his **suicide** at age thirty-seven.

Born into an upper-middle-class family, Van Gogh drew as a child and was serious, quiet, and thoughtful. As a young man, he worked as an **art dealer**, often traveling, but became depressed after he was transferred to London. He turned to religion and spent time as a **Protestant** missionary in southern Belgium. He drifted in ill health and solitude before taking up painting in 1881, having moved back home with his parents. His younger brother **Theo** supported him financially; the two kept a **long correspondence by letter**. His early works, mostly **still lifes** and depictions of **peasant labourers**, contain few signs of the vivid colour that distinguished his later work. In 1886, he moved to Paris,

Vincent van Gogh



Self-Portrait, 1887, [Art Institute of Chicago](#)

Born Vincent Willem van Gogh
30 March 1853
[Zundert](#), [Netherlands](#)

but- you can look at the sources cited at the end

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 Van Gogh, The Starry Night


 **Van Gogh, The Starry Night**

 Cassatt, The Coiffure

 Munch, The Scream

 Gauguin, Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?

 Sullivan, Carson, Pirie, Scott Building

 Cézanne, Mont Sainte-Victoire

Van Gogh, The Starry Night

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Vincent van Gogh, *The Starry Night*, 1889, oil on canvas, 73.7 x 92.1 cm
(The Museum of Modern Art; photo: [Steven Zucker](#), CC BY-NC-SA 2.0)

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Vincent van Gogh

The Starry Night

Saint Rémy, June 1889

New on view

MoMA, Floor 5, 502

The Alfred H. Barr, Jr. Galleries

Vincent van Gogh has 6 works online.

There are 2,396 paintings online.

In creating this image of the night sky—dominated by the bright moon at right and Venus at center left—van Gogh heralded modern painting's new embrace of mood, expression, symbol, and sentiment. Inspired by the view from his window at the Saint-Paul-de-Mausole asylum in Saint-Rémy, in southern France, where the artist spent twelve months in 1889–90 seeking reprieve from his mental illnesses, *The Starry Night* (made in mid-June) is both an exercise in observation and a clear departure from it. The vision took place at night, yet the painting, among hundreds of artworks van Gogh made that year, was created in several sessions during the day, under entirely different atmospheric conditions. The picturesque village nestled below the hills was based on other views—it could not be seen from his window—and the cypress at left appears much closer than it was. And although certain features of the sky have been reconstructed as observed, the artist altered celestial shapes and added a sense of glow.

Van Gogh assigned an emotional language to night and nature that took them far from their actual appearances. Dominated by vivid blues and yellows applied with gestural verve and immediacy, *The Starry Night* also demonstrates how inseparable van Gogh's vision was from the new procedures of painting he had devised, in which color and paint

Er zijn menschen met waar die schilders in den tijd dat zij nog
niet verdienen protegeeren - goed -
Maar hoe dikwijls gebeurt het niet dat zulke bescheid eindigt - voor
beide partyen onaanvaardbaar. Eenzijdig omdat de protegeer
onvoldoende is over geld dat gansch in 'water' is of althans
schijnt. Anderzijdig omdat de schilder meer verhooven
meer gebald ^{en belangstelling} ~~meent~~ te mogen vergen dan men geven wil.
Maar in de meeste gevallen is het door nonchalance
van beide zyden dat de misstanden ontstaan.
Ik hoop dat het tusschen ons niet het geval zal wezen -
En ik hoop dat langzamerhand mijn studies u wat nieuwe
moed zullen geven. Noch gy noch ik zijn lydgewalen
van deel gelucht dat begouwen dat bacht dat de van u. lus leest
"les vaillants" noemt.
Maar in dezen tijd het enthousiasme van loen te hoeden
is niet te min geraden naar 'my voorkomt' want dat
~~het~~ het geluk de dapperen begunstigt er loch wil dikwijls
waar en wat daar ook van zij van ^{of in de jaren 1800} ~~het~~ geluk ^{namelyk} -
men moet werken en durven wil men wezenlyk leven.
En ik zeg laat ons veel schilderen en
productief zijn en ons zelf zijn met
gebreken en kwaliteiten - ik zeg ons - omdat
het geld van u ~~te~~ dat ik weet u moete genuey
kost me te verschaffen u reyt geeft om als er
als goed en myn werk komt het ~~te~~ voor de
helpt als u eigen creatie ~~te~~ ^{te} beschouwen.
Tracht eens iemand van le chat naar te speken
en te vragen of zij een krabbel van ^{menschen}
die ~~te~~ aardappelen willen en op
welke grootte. want dat is me onverschillig.
Gegruet, met een handdruk

6.1
Vincent

398 Waarde Theo, het heeft my eenigzins verwonderd nog
niet eens een woordje van u ontvangen te hebben.
Gezult zeggen ge hadt het nu te druk daaraan
te denken - en dat kan ik den ook wel
begrypen -
Het is reeds laat - maar ik wilde u nog eens zeggen
dat ik reyt hartelyk hoop dat voortaan de
correspondentie weer wat levendiger zal worden
dan ze den laatste tijd wel was -
Meerly gaau twee krabbels naar een
paar studies die ik maakte terwyl ik leeren
bezyken op nieuw aan die boeren om
een schotel aardappels.
Ik kom er daarnet van thuis - en heb by het
lamplicht nog gewerkt er aan - afschaar
ik het by dag hetmaal heb aangezet.



Zie hier hoe de compositie nu gevorderd is
Ik heb het op een vrij groot doek geschilderd ~~te~~
~~te~~ en zoover de schets nu is zal geleuf ik er veel
leeren in -



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Van Gogh's "Bedrooms at Arles": The Problem of Priority

Richard R. Brettell and Van Gogh



Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies
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1 of 16 pages



Van Gogh's Bedrooms at Arles: The Problem of Priority

RICHARD R. BRETTELL,
Searle Curator of European Painting

WHEN Vincent van Gogh's *Bedroom at Arles*

What should you be looking for?

- ▶ **The depth of the source:** some sources, like smarthistory articles or museum labels may be credible, but are often intended to give an overview not an in-depth study of the work
- ▶ **Who the audience is:** it's important to judge who the work is written for, which would also affect the language and depth
- ▶ **Who the author is:** with online blogs for example, you might not even have the author listed. Is the author a recognized art historian or scholar?
- ▶ **Is it relevant to now?:** With a discipline like art history, some sources can be very dated, can have old arguments that have since been challenged- while you can still use older scholarship, it's important to be critical when doing so and think about how you might be responding to it today

You found a credible source . . . now what?

Highlight, underline, take notes, add comments

- ▶ What is the main topic? What is the purpose of this text?
- ▶ What is the author's main argument? (underline what you think is the thesis statement)
- ▶ Underline or highlight key sentences that might be useful to your own topic
- ▶ Jot down comments you have or questions that come up when reading- what is the author not addressing? What do you make of their argument?
- ▶ What kind of information can you use from the reference? Remember that not all details of the text will be relevant to your argument.

How do you use the sources in your paper?

- ▶ **Be selective:** Only include information that pertains to your paper. Not all information from the source will be relevant or serve your purpose
- ▶ **Use quotes effectively:** think about what directly quoting the author does for your argument- does it have a crucial idea of thesis original to the author? Is it from a primary source that provides new insight?
- ▶ **Always analyse the quotes:** What is your contribution to this discussion? How are you interpreting the quote? It's not enough to just insert a direct quote without telling the reader why or how it's important to your paper.
- ▶ **Read with a critical lens:** Remember that you are allowed to agree or disagree with the source, as long as you explain why. First identify what the author's argument is- are you adding to this, proposing a different take etc., providing a new framework by which to look at this?

Why should you cite your sources?

To credit the ideas to the authors of your sources, to show the reader the credibility of your work, to place your writing within the discipline

What counts as plagiarism?

If you use the **words or ideas** of another writer without acknowledging that writer it is considered plagiarism.

As I read your paper, I will be asking "How do they know this information?"

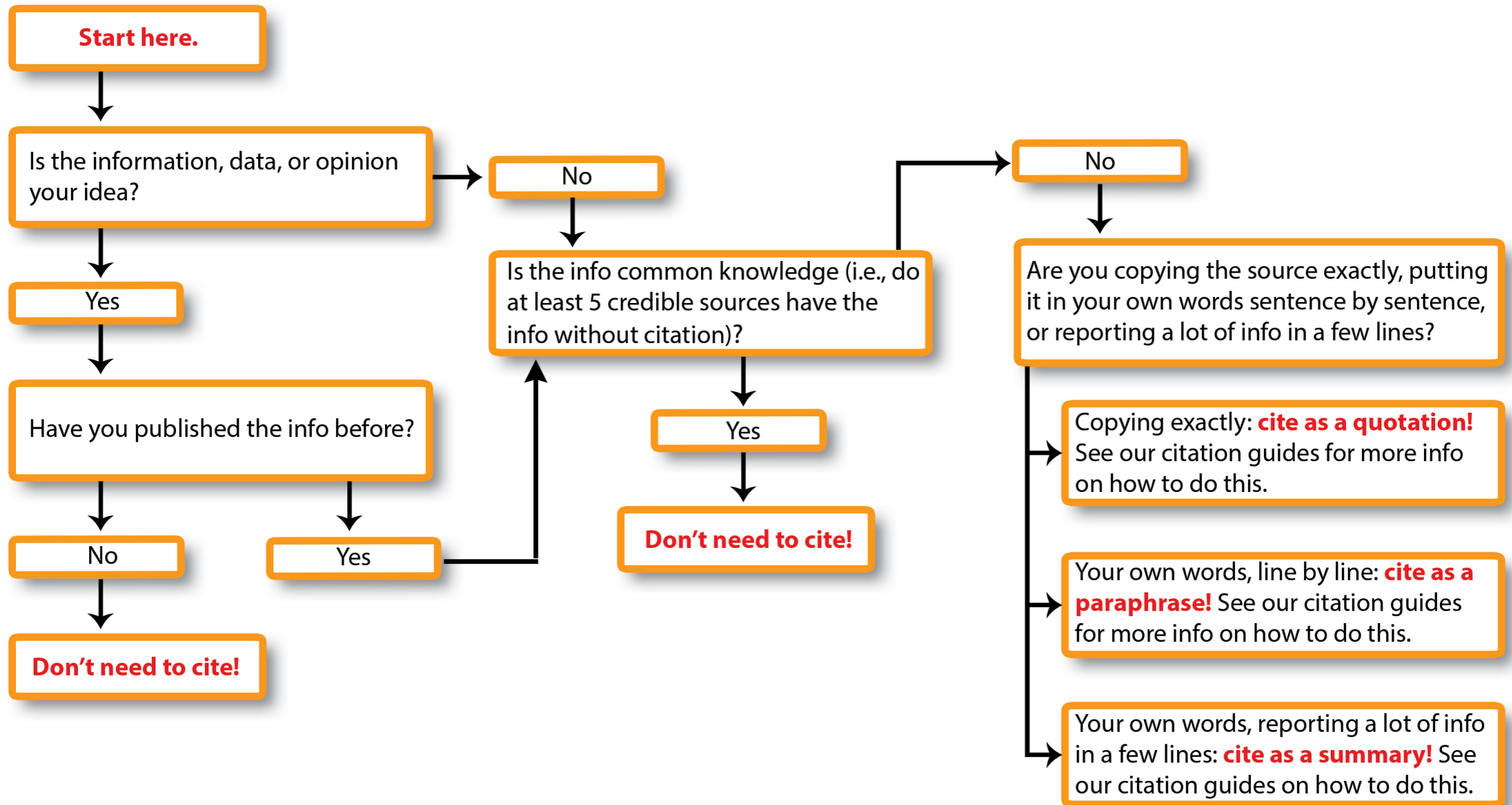
When are citations required?

For every statement that contains a fact that is not general knowledge:

- ▶ "Brooklyn College is in Brooklyn, New York" - does not need citation
- ▶ "Benjamin West's painting *Agrippina Landing at Brundisium With the Ashes of Germanicus* is an example of Neoclassicism during the Age of Enlightenment" - needs citation

All direct quotations

Any time that you are paraphrasing information or an argument you found in another source.



For more information about this and other important citation resources, visit the Purdue OWL's citation style guides.

APA: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

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Chicago: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/chicago_style_introduction.html

...and more!

How to cite your sources?

What's important is consistency, sufficient number of sources and complete citations

More guidelines here: <https://mehta1010.commons.gc.cuny.edu/citation-guide/>

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_style_introduction.html

- ▶ Humanities disciplines commonly use an **MLA style**, which is what I recommend for this class (but you can choose a different style if you prefer as long as you are consistent throughout)
- ▶ Either footnotes or in text citations (depending on the citation style you are using) following all quotes or paraphrased ideas in the body of the text. MLA uses in-text citation for secondary sources (Author's last name, page number)
- ▶ A complete bibliography of all sources referenced at the end of the paper

Examples of citations (MLA)

Books with one author:

- ▶ Gleick, James. *Chaos: Making a New Science*. Penguin, 1987.

Journal or magazine articles:

- ▶ Poniewozik, James. "TV Makes a Too-Close Call." *Time*, 20 Nov. 2000, pp. 70-71.
- ▶ "Business: Global Warming's Boom Town; Tourism in Greenland." *The Economist*, 26 May 2007, p. 82.

Article in scholarly journal:

- ▶ Bagchi, Alaknanda. "Conflicting Nationalisms: The Voice of the Subaltern in Mahasweta Devi's *Bashai Tudu*." *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1996, pp. 41-50.

Note, if you are citing an article that you found on a database like jstor, you should cite the original article, not cite jstor as a web source

Website or other online source:

- ▶ Lundman, Susan. "How to Make Vegetarian Chili." eHow, www.ehow.com/how_10727_make-vegetarian-chili.html. Accessed 6 July 2015.

Finally, accurately caption your images!

Artist's name

Title of Artwork

date

medium

Museum collection (if available)

Wine pot with figures in a landscape

18th century

China

📍 On view at The Met Fifth Avenue in [Gallery 210](#)

On view January 31–August 14, 2022





Kara Walker (American, born 1969). *Keys to the Coop*, 1997. Linocut on paper, 46 1/4 x 60 1/2 in. (117.5 x 153.7 cm). Brooklyn Museum, Robert A. Levinson Fund, 1997.152. © artist or artist's estate (Photo: Brooklyn Museum, 1997.152_SL3.jpg)



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Keys to the Coop

Kara Walker

CONTEMPORARY ART

Kara Walker has succeeded in developing a signature visual vocabulary that is instantly recognizable for its engagement with both nineteenth-century imaging techniques and the historical period of the American antebellum South. In *Keys to the Coop*, Walker depicts a young African American girl in bold silhouette, holding the decapitated head of a chicken in one hand, while in the other she nonchalantly twirls a large key. Walker portrays a self-empowered anti-heroine who possesses the key to her own salvation, in stark black-and-white. This image also provocatively alludes to food, gender, and racial mythologies, subjects that Walker often foregrounds in her work.

ARTIST [Kara Walker, American, born 1969](#)

MEDIUM Linocut on paper

DATES 1997

DIMENSIONS 46 1/4 x 60 1/2 in. (117.5 x 153.7 cm) ([show scale](#))

SIGNATURE Signed upper right: "KW '97"

INSCRIPTIONS Inscribed upper left in graphite: "Keys to the Coop"

COLLECTIONS [Contemporary Art](#)

MUSEUM LOCATION This item is not on view

EXHIBITIONS

- [Burning Down the House: Building a Feminist Art Collection](#)
- [Diverse Works: Director's Choice, 1997-2015](#)

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Paper outline

Based on what we have discussed so far, attempt to write a bullet point outline for the paper with:

1. A sentence summarising your topic.
2. 1-3 main research questions
3. Your thesis statement (at this point a claim or hypothesis)
4. Three topic sentences that would form the body paragraphs of your paper