

# Prewriting

To get to the top of a mountain, you must take one step at a time. The same is true of a research project. First, you need to choose an interesting topic. Next, you must carefully research the topic, establish a thesis, and plan your writing. Then you'll be ready to write.

## **Keys to Effective Prewriting**

1. For your topic, choose an interesting country or global issue that is influential in today's world.
2. List questions you want to have answered about the topic.
3. Be sure that there is enough information available about your topic.
4. Use note cards to organize your research questions and answers.
5. Be careful to cite the sources of any information you paraphrase or quote.
6. Write down the publication details of all your sources as you do research.

## Note Cards

Use the following strategy in order to take notes on a note card. This process will help you organize your notes in order to make creating the Formal Outline and organizing your Research Paper easier.

Number each new card and write the question at the top. Then answer the question with a paraphrase, a quotation, or a list. At the bottom of each card, identify the source of the information (including a page number if appropriate).

As you read information about your topic from a source, record the following information on a Note Card:

1. Information you did not know about your topic
  - **Paraphrased** information
  - **Direct Quotation** (enclosed in quotation marks “ ”)
2. Citation (reference to Works Cited page & parenthetical citation)

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>What is the history surrounding Sudan?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sudan gained independence from Britain in 1956</li><li>• Southern Sudan seceded in 2001</li></ul> <p style="text-align: right;">("The World Factbook")</p>	<b>1</b>
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As you continue taking notes on different sources, follow the same process and begin to organize your note cards as you begin to notice a pattern of significant topics.