

## The Term Paper - Putting It Together

1. **Sort your note cards into topics.** Within each topic, place the cards in the order in which you would logically use them to explain the topic to someone. You can either keep these topic piles separate or make one large pile in which the topics are placed in the order that they will appear in the paper.
2. **Make an outline of subtopics and be sure that your notes cover all sections that are necessary for a complete paper.** Assess whether you originally had too many sections or too few to produce a complete paper.
3. **Immediately research any areas that are still uncovered or weak.** Just having 60 note cards doesn't automatically mean you have covered all of your key topics. Sort these new cards into the pile(s).
4. Write an **introduction**. This large paragraph must introduce the reader to the topic you will be discussing. It should be used to **introduce basic background information and to define any terms** that will be used throughout the paper. The time and place you are covering would be good items for the introduction as would be a definition of mythology that you will be using. It must also **provide a guide to the topics that will be covered** in the paper. In a sense, you will be writing out a table of contents as part of this paragraph. You are letting the reader know what to expect by providing a verbal **map** to the paper. However, don't refer to the paper (or paragraphs). You should close with a **thesis statement, the main point you have learned or will prove about your overall subject**. This vital paragraph must interest your reader in your topic; it should not include in depth analysis or evidence, which belong in the body.
5. Write the **body paragraphs**. Body paragraphs should each have a unique topic. The first sentence of the paragraph should make clear what this topic is. The paragraph should then provide information from your note cards and explain it. **Any quotations, statistics, facts that aren't widely known or any original ideas coming from a source must be noted as explained in your packet (author's last name page number) regardless of whose words are used to explain them.** There's no comma in a parenthetical note. **Quotes need to be discussed fully and not just tossed in for effect.** Each body paragraph should end with a sentence that summarizes the point of the paragraph and ties this point back to the overall point of the paper.
6. Write the **conclusion**. This long paragraph should summarize the main things you discovered in the course of researching this topic. It should then state the conclusion(s) you came to after assessing your research. **Your opinions** should be given prominence in this paragraph, and you should take pains to show **how you arrived at them based on the research** you have presented in the body paragraphs. Close by restating your main point in a sentence or sentences that should resemble thematically the thesis statement that ended your introduction.
7. Proof read your draft before submitting it. While I'm not expecting perfection at this state, it doesn't do much for my opinion of your work if your draft is terribly written, spelled or punctuated.
8. Write a **bibliography** by listing the information on your bibliography cards **in alphabetical order**. This must be done properly. See The Columbia Guide to Online Style for help. **A great resource that will create your bibliography for you is [bibme.org](http://bibme.org).** This is a computer shortcut you are allowed to use.
9. **Hand it in on time** or, preferably, early. This will enable you to earn credit.