

7.1 EE Student Planning Sheets for History

Choosing a Topic

Answer the following questions to guide topic selection.

1. **Which historical periods, events, or themes interest you most?**
(For example: revolution, imperialism, nationalism, war, ideology, economic change, social movements, or political leadership.)
2. **What key historical concepts or terms define your topic?**
(Such as causation, consequence, continuity and change, significance, perspectives, or historiography.)
Use these as search terms when researching academic sources.
3. **What specific time frame and geographical focus will your investigation have?**
Ensure the topic is narrow enough to allow detailed analysis rather than broad narrative.
4. **What primary sources are available for this topic?**
(For example: speeches, letters, government documents, treaties, propaganda, memoirs, newspapers, or statistical data.)
5. **What do secondary historians argue about this topic?**
Identify key historical debates, differing interpretations, and areas of disagreement in the scholarship.
6. **What historical question emerges from this research?**
Formulate a focused, analytical research question that invites evaluation rather than description.
7. **Is the topic feasible within the word limit and available sources?**
Discuss your proposed question with your supervisor to confirm its suitability and academic value.

Developing a Research Question

Your research question (RQ) should be focused, analytical, and evaluative. Avoid broad or descriptive phrasing.

Follow these steps:

1. **Identify the historical event, period, or issue** you will investigate.
 - a. Clearly define **time frame**, **location**, and **historical context**.
2. **Decide the historical focus** you will analyse, such as:

- a. Causation
 - b. Significance
 - c. Consequences
 - d. Change and continuity
 - e. Comparison
 - f. Perspectives or interpretations
3. **Identify the historiographical angle**, where appropriate.
- a. Consider different historians' interpretations or debates relevant to your topic.
4. **Draft your RQ using evaluative phrasing**, such as:
- a. *"To what extent..."*
 - b. *"How significant was..."*
 - c. *"How far can it be argued that..."*

Primary Source Selection and Analytical Focus Planning Sheet

Note: Complete this section for every key primary source during your research stages.

Chosen Primary Source

List a primary source (e.g. document, speech, law, diary, image, statistics), including origin, author, and date.

Rationale for Primary Source Selection

Why did you choose this source? Consider relevance to the research question, historical significance, and usefulness for analysis.

Analytical Focus

Which historical approaches or perspectives will you apply (e.g. political, social, economic, cultural history, different historians' interpretations)?

List relevant secondary sources (historians, books, articles) that inform or challenge this primary source(s).

Reflection Prompts

Use these before, during, and after each formal reflection session.

1. **What drew you to this historical topic or period?**
Consider personal interest, relevance to wider historical debates, or gaps you identified in existing interpretations.
2. **What historical insights have you gained from your research so far?**
Reflect on how engagement with primary and secondary sources has shaped your understanding of the event, issue, or debate.
3. **What challenges have you faced in your historical investigation, and how did you address them?**
For example: limited primary sources, conflicting interpretations, language barriers, or narrowing an overly broad question.
4. **How has your interpretation of the historical issue evolved over time?**
Consider changes in your argument, weighting of factors (e.g. causation, significance), or reassessment of evidence.
5. **How does your essay demonstrate engagement with historical methods and perspectives?**
Reflect on your use of source evaluation, historiography, or comparison of interpretations.
6. **What historical skills have you developed through researching and writing your EE?**
For example: evaluating reliability and bias, synthesising historians' views, constructing causal arguments, or refining analytical writing.