



Synthesis Paper

What does the synthesis paper do?

- Integrates (weaves together) information and ideas culled from multiple sources
- Uses this information and these ideas to elaborate and support an assertion of opinion (an arguable thesis statement) that the student has formulated
- Employs linking devices and transitions to lead the reader through the logic of the exposition of the assertion (thesis statement)
- Commands the reader's attention
- Justifies the importance of its content
- Employs paraphrases and direct quotations from vetted sources to lend authority to assertions
- Takes a stand on some aspect of the research topic and develops it through exposition
- Demonstrates extensive knowledge of a topic and extensive thinking about the topic





General Sections

- Title
- Abstract
- Introduction
- Body – Label the body sections with their own titles if needed (relate to the thesis statement)
- Conclusion
- Appendices (if needed)
- Bibliography – alphabetized and without annotations.

Things to Include

The first paragraph has to have the following elements:

- A hook that makes the reader believe this topic is incredibly important and worth reading about.
- A promise of what the paper will cover and in what order. The absolute key to this is carefully chosen verbs. “This paper will verb, verb, and verb (or however many more verbs you intend to do.)” This kind of sentence is completely acceptable in most academic settings, but if you feel it’s too heavy-handed or formulaic, you can substitute three or more assertions you intend to elaborate with reference to the work of multiple experts. Making a conscious decision about the order in which you intend to address these assertions is pivotal. This is the **thesis statement** – it identifies the theme of the paper.



Things to Include

- Body – contains the main points of the paper; can be subdivided into smaller chunks
 - If you conducted research that fits appropriately with your thesis, you should have a section dedicated to your research in the body. This would be presented after you discuss the main points of your thesis, and you would have to reference how your findings fit with the literature.





Things to Include

The conclusion should include the following elements:

- Restating the main idea; ties up loose ends; explains consequences; explains the importance/value of the paper; makes projections about the future.



Sources

- When documenting your sources, include **parenthetical documentation/in-text citations** throughout the paper. Seek formatting advice for your particular style of formatting (APA or MLA) through Owl at Purdue or other online sources. Whenever you use a quote or introduce knowledge that is clearly not your own (i.e. statistics), it should be followed by documentation.
 - Remember that long quotes, more than four lines in length, should be moved to a new line, and the entire quote should be indented by 1 tab mark.

Something to Consider

- Consider using **appendices** if you find that your paper is becoming too wordy, or your reader will need to reference something in order to understand your argument. Appendices go before works cited, but after the paper. They often include a glossary, charts, diagrams, and/or samples of work (i.e. your survey). Each unique object is a unique appendix. They are all labeled by letter (i.e. Appendix A, Appendix B, etc.)





Formatting

- Readable font, like Times New Roman, size 12, double spaced
- 8-10 pages, minimum
- Internal Citations and a Works Cited page (not your annotated sources, just citations)
- Page numbers must be included