



How to Develop a Research Topic

INQUIRY AND SYNTHESIS THROUGH RESEARCH

How Do I Go From This...

“How has music influenced social trends in the U.S. from the 1920s to the 1980s?”

Brainstorm

Dictated fashion
Advertised trends
Prompted protest
Redefined cultural norms
Promoted social consciousness
Endorsed black rights
Stirred controversy

Thesis

From the 1920s to the 1980s, music has dictated fashion, promoted social consciousness of various cultures and stirred controversy.

Hook: In his 1976 hit song, “Sir Duke,” musical genius, Stevie Wonder sang, “Music is a world within itself, it’s a language we all understand.” That means that music is the arc that bridges the gap between any and all language, cultural, ethnic, social, or economic barriers. **It is the only “language” that transcends time and sets the tone for how society will behave.**

Topic sentences

(1) For example, in the 1920s, jazz music was important because it not only influenced a style of dance, it especially dictated fashion trends. (+2-3 Examples and Commentary)

(2) Next, during the late 60s to early 70s when the US suffocated on discrimination and other social changes like women’s rights and war, conscious music like Marvin Gaye’s “What’s Going On” and Aretha Franklin’s “Respect” was the periscope that guided society’s awareness of their thoughts, actions and spending habits. (+2-3 Commentary)

(3) Further, in the 80s, when hip-hop music began to spread like wildfire, “Us vs. Them” sentiments began to emerge, and songs like N.W.A.’s “F**k tha Police” stirred controversy. (+2-3 Commentary)

To This...

“How did music influence social trends in the U.S. from the 1920s to the 1980s?”

- I. Introduction (Hook, Commentary, Thesis)
- II. Body Paragraph – Topic
 - A. Evidence/Commentary
 - B. Evidence/Commentary
 - C. Evidence/Commentary
- III. Body Paragraph – Topic
 - A. Evidence/Commentary
 1. Details/Specificity
 2. Details/Specificity
 - B. Evidence/Commentary
- IV. Body Paragraph – Topic
 - A. Evidence/Commentary
 1. Details/Specificity
 - B. Evidence/Commentary
- V. Body Paragraph – Topic
 - A. Evidence/Commentary
 - B. Evidence/Commentary
- VI. Real-world conclusion

Each Roman numeral and letter is a paragraph!

Whew! Without the Mess!

“How did music influence social trends in the U.S. from the 1920s to the 1980s?”

- I. Introduction
- II. Music and fashion trends
 - A. Jazz and fashion trends of the 20s
 - B. Disco and fashion trends of the 70s
 - C. Hip-Hop and fashion trends of the 80s
- III. Music's Impact on Social Consciousness
 - A. Music and War
 - 1. Marvin Gaye – What's Going On?
 - B. Music and Women's Rights
 - 2. Aretha Franklin – Respect
- IV. Music Controversy
 - A. Protest Music
 - 1. N.W.A. – F*** the Police
 - B. Music about Treatment of Women
- V. ****Continue your OUTLINE as needed....****
- VI. Real-world conclusion

Each Roman numeral and letter is a paragraph!