

NARROWING A TOPIC

Sample Brainstorming & Question-Asking on the Topic of Alcoholism

<u>Analysis of Parts</u> (Topic broken down into component parts.)	<u>Comparative Approach</u> (Topic compared to something else within its field.)	<u>Historical Perspective</u> (Topic seen in time.)
<i>Who:</i> woman, man, child; active alcoholic, recovered alcoholic	<i>Where:</i> rural alcoholism vs. urban; in U.S. vs. USSR	<i>What:</i> rates of alcoholism during Prohibition
<i>Why (causes):</i> physical, social, psych.	<i>Where & why:</i> causes of rural vs. urban alcoholism	<i>How</i> society accepts alcoholic in 50's vs. now
<i>What effects:</i> physical, social, psych. <i>On whom:</i> self, spouse, children, community	<i>Who, when & how effected:</i> society's view of alcoholic vs. cocaine addict, & effect of that view on who uses which drug in the 50's vs. today	

Sample thesis for research paper:

Too broad: Alcoholism causes many problems.

Still too broad: Children of alcoholics

Improved: Children of alcoholics often have difficulty establishing secure relationships later in life because of the lack of family stability and the lack of a model for working through problems early in their lives.