

Creating a Research Question

The table below illustrates how a research question develops from a broad topic to a focused question. Follow the four examples down the columns to see how the questions develop. Then use the blank form provided below to develop your own research question.

Broad Topic	Pollution	Substance Abuse	Marketing	Nutrition
Restricted Topic	Acid Rain	Alcoholism	Nike and Marketing	Diets and nutrition
Narrowed Topic	Acid rain and water quality	Alcoholism and homelessness	Nike and international marketing	Vegetarianism
Research Question	What does acid rain do to drinking water supplies?	What issues need to be addressed to help homeless people deal with alcoholism?	What are Nike's business practices in international sales?	How does a vegetarian diet maintain adequate nutrition?

Now try out your topic idea below. It is useful to work out several variations of the topic idea to see how it could change slightly and be improved or amended.

Broad Topic				
Restricted Topic				
Narrowed Topic				
Research Question				