

What's a Research Log?

The Research Log is a short description of your research process. These don't need to be anything particularly formal or fancy, but they need to be correctly spelled, in complete, grammatically correct sentences, and they should answer these basic questions:

1. What was the assignment?
2. What were the steps you took?
3. Did you get stuck at any point? If so, please describe what happened.
4. Did you need to ask for help at the Reference or Circulation Desks? If so, what happened?
5. Did you get what you needed?
6. Finally, how did the process go, overall?

What Will I Do With This?

When the end of the semester rolls around and you're compiling your semester project, you'll be able to see - very quickly - what worked and what didn't, and where you had the most success.

Technical Details

Typed, 1 page maximum (unless you have a lot to say 😊), double spaced, in no more than 12-point font. Please put your name, the date, and the name of the assignment on each of your entries.

Print out one copy, and save a copy on your computer and in another safe place. I'll make comments on the entries you hand in with your assignments. If there are grammatical or continuity errors, you'll need to revise the entry for the Semester Project, but if I've only made comments, you don't have to re-print them.

Let me know if you have any questions!

See the other side of this handout for examples of good and not-so-good Research Log entries.

Research Log Examples

Below is an example of an *inadequate* Research Log entry:

Jane doe Lib 120
I went to the library, and looked for some books in the catalog. Then I went to the self, found them, and checked them out. it went ok.

Below is an example of a *good* Research Log entry:

Jane Doe 4/1/2003 Annotated Bibliography Asst.
<p>For the annotated bibliography assignment, I went to the library and did a word search for “children and education” in the HELIN catalog. I found five books that looked useful. I wrote down the call numbers. I couldn’t remember which floor the Ls were on, so I asked at the reference desk. The librarian showed me where to find out which floors books were on. I went to the third floor, found four of the books, and then I ran across another one that looked interesting. I couldn’t find the last one, even though it said it was available in HELIN. I asked the librarian again, and he told me to check the temporary shelves. I found it there, but I still liked the other book I found better. I looked at the books and wrote the annotations, and printed out the HELIN record for each book.</p> <p>I’m glad I asked the librarian where the other book was, because I never would have known about the temporary shelves otherwise. Even though I thought I’d never be able to find anything in a library this big, I found what I needed pretty easily.</p>