Writing Center

How to Choose a Topic/Other Information

1. Think about where your interests lie.
   - What are your hobbies?
   - What do you enjoy learning about?
   - What topics have you had questions about but never got around to researching?

2. Brainstorm several possible topics.
   - Write down all possibilities.

3. Find topics about which there is a large amount of accessible information.
   - Talk to a librarian about possible topics. You can use the “Ask a Librarian” service on the web: [http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/index.htm](http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/index.htm). With this service, you can either chat online with a librarian or e-mail a question.
   - Look at the list of controversial topics from the library accessible through the library home page: [http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/index.htm](http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/index.htm).
   - Use Internet directories, such as SpeakOut.com.
   - Look at the Subject Guides accessible through the library home page: [http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/index.htm](http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/index.htm).
   - Use the library catalog to do a keyword search for your subject and the word “encyclopedia.” The library catalog is accessible through the library home page: [http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/index.htm](http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/index.htm).
4. Find handouts on avoiding plagiarism, evaluating sources, distinguishing magazines from journals, using MLA citations, and other resources.

- Also, online introductions to library research and literature research are available:
  
  http://www.tcc.edu/lrc/services/instruc.htm.

5. Narrow down your focus.

- Decide on a topic you would enjoy researching and about which there is sufficient information available.

- Talk to your instructor about your topic to make sure it is acceptable.