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1st short take

The art of writing a research paper, I confess, is not an easy one for me. In fact, it can be painful at times, but somehow I always seem to manage to get the work done. I try to complete each step of my process as efficiently and accurately as possible.

The first step I always take with writing a research paper is to reread the instruction that the instructor handed out. The next step I would take is to find a copy of William Blake's poem "The Garden of Love.", if it wasn't already given to me by the instructor. After obtaining a copy, I would read over it and possibly pick a line or two to use in the paper.

My second step would be to head to the library. Dacus's online catalogue is very helpful for finding books related to your topic. To know a poem I think you must first know its author. Therefore, I would first do an author search for William Blake to see what else he has written. This would also tell me if he only wrote poetry or if he wrote other things as well. I would take a look at some of his other writings to see if there was a pattern to his writing and if this poem was something that fit in his pattern. I would also make note of what made the poem unique and what set it apart from his other works. After this I would keyword search his name to find any biographical books or books that mention him that might give a clue as to why he chose the subject matter of his poem. This may reveal some a deeper understanding of the poem. I would also keyword search the poem to see if it was mentioned in any books. Before leaving the computer, I would write down all the titles and call numbers of the books that I thought might be of use for writing my paper. I would try to find at least the minimum required for the paper.

After locating the first book, I would look at either the chapter headings or the glossary (if the book contained one). From there I would find a section of the book that contained information that I could use in my paper. I would then scan that section looking for something interesting, possibly reading a paragraph here or there. Once I found something within the text that I could use, I would write it down on a notebook with pencil (I hate writing in pen because I can't erase it and I mess up a lot) and then copy all the information I would need for making a citation like the copyright date, author(s), and ect. Before returning the book to the shelf I would search the text for a couple other sentences incase I'm unable to use the first. Once this is concluded I would continue to the second book on my list and repeat my steps until I have enough book sources for my paper. This process may take me two or three trips depending on how many books are available and how much time I have. Each trip would last 1-3 hours so this whole process may take me 6-9 hours, usually closer to the lower end.

The next major step I would take is my online search. Typically, I use Google for all my online searching. I would type in the search as follows "The Garden of Love, William Blake". Then I would begin picking through the results to find the most reliable sites, which are usually are the ones that end in .gov, .edu, or .org. If I found that the poem held historical value, I would try searching on history.com. The Library of Congress's website might prove useful as well. As with the books, I would found my information and the information I need for making citations. If the paper required a scholarly article, I would use a database through Dacus, most likely Academic Search Premier, because I've used this one the most and am the most familiar with it. This portion would take me about 3-4 hours.

Once I'm finished with my information gathering, I would begin writing my paper. Sometimes this is out of order and I've already started writing. At this point, I would write most

of my paper and then find from my sources things I could plug into my paper. If I don't have enough information, I would begin gathering information again. The last step would be my citations page. Since I'm not the best with understanding MLA format, I would use a website I found through my first college's website that aids with writing citation, including the ones that go within the text.

I will be perfectly honest. I am apart of the sea change, I always have been, but maybe not for the same reasons as others. Text books have always been a challenge to me. As creative writer, I love to write fiction and read it as well. Give me a good fiction novel and I'll sit and read it in a day, depending on length. However, with most of my textbooks, it could take me days to slug through the first so many chapters. The article mostly relates it to online reading. In my case, I hate reading things on a computers screen. If the article is for school and its short enough I will always print it out. I treat online research much the same as I do book sources. I do my search, find as many reliable sources that I can, and skim them for information that will fit the theme of my paper, which in this case would be the poem.

In the field of Mass Communications writing for online is becoming an increasing desire, but with my major being in Broadcast Journalism this will not impact me as much as the Print Journalism, and IMC concentrates. I would be writing scripts for television so I wouldn't have to worry if people are reading my writing online. I also plan to be a creative writer on the side, but I already knew that there wasn't any money in it, that's why it's not my major. However, in both fields, I will have to deal with capturing readers. With the direction, the internet is heading that first sentence or even just the title will have to be something that grabs the reader, followed by something of equal or ever greater value to compete with the changing market. It will become increasingly harder to hold a captive audience.