

Writtle College Library

Research pt 1: Brainstorming



This guide will help you start research for course assignments.

What are you researching and why?

Research means looking for information for a reason.

You need to have a clear idea about **why** you are doing the research and **what** you hope to find out at the end of it. This is the **purpose** of your research.

If you are looking for answers, you need to be able to **ask the right questions**.

It is not a good idea to start collecting information until you have a clear idea about what you are looking for.

Working out the **purpose** of your research is the first part of the research process.

Ask yourself:

☞ What do I already know about this topic that may be helpful?

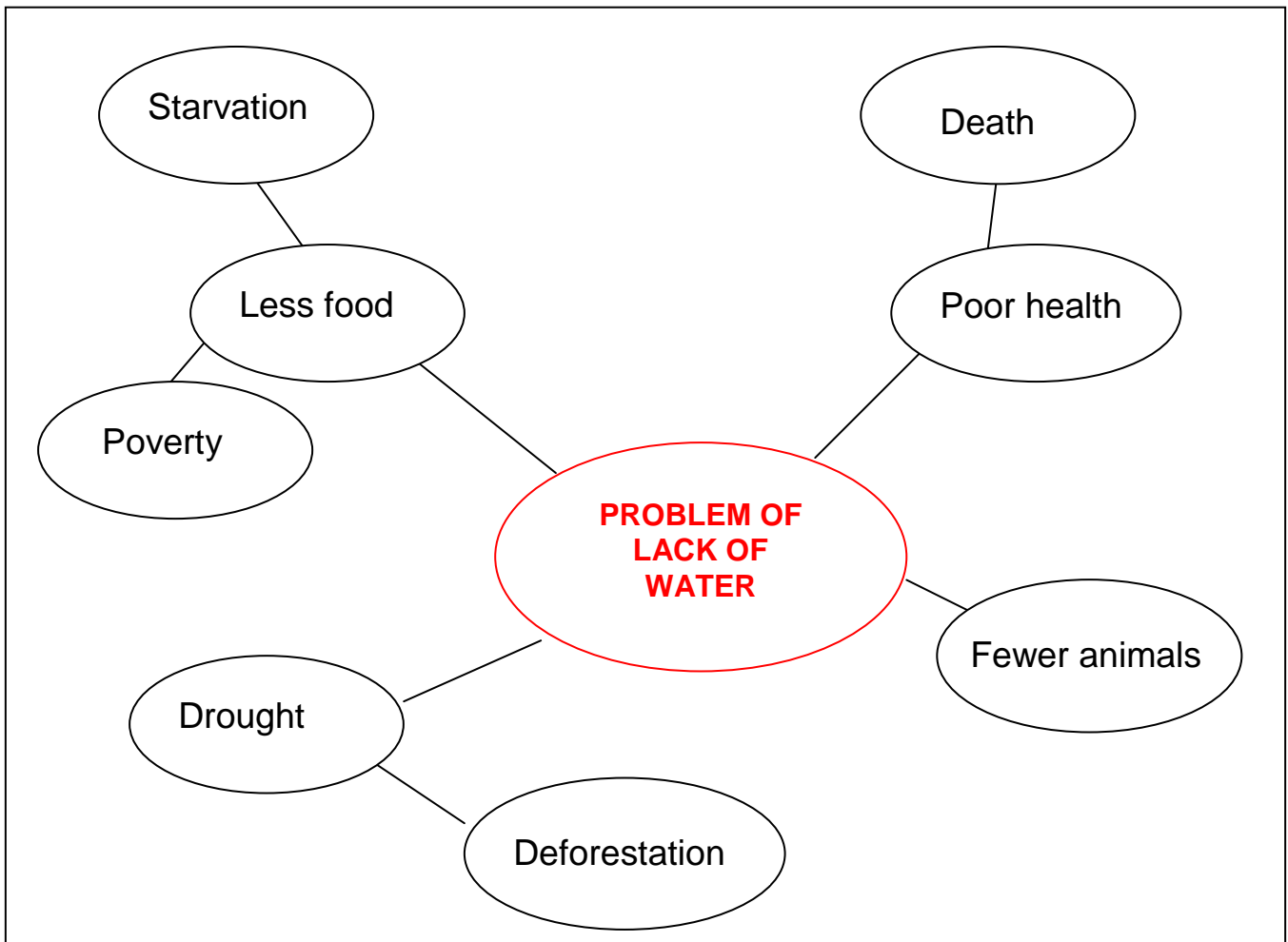
Sometimes you may not know anything about your topic. Often you know something about your topic and you want learn more. We learn best when we build on things we already know.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a popular way of working out what you already know about a topic and what you want to find out.

Brainstorming involves thinking of words that you might associate with a topic.

For example, if you are going to research the problem of lack of water, then you could create a **spider diagram** of all the words you come up with when you brainstorm the topic.



Brainstorming task

Try brainstorming the topic you are working on.

Ask yourself:

☞ What words best describe what I know already?

☞ What words best describe what I still need to find out?

These words should be **keywords** for your topic. Keywords are words that are important to the topic that you are researching.

Draw your spider diagram here.

