

SMART™ Lesson

Literature: Developing Research Questions

In order to conduct research on literature, we must develop research questions. These questions guide our research and help us to focus on the key ideas and themes within the text. In this lesson, we will learn how to develop research questions for literature.

What is a research question?

A research question is a question that guides our research. It is the question that we hope to answer through our research. Research questions are specific and focused, and are designed to help us focus on a particular aspect of the text.

Developing research questions for literature

When we are developing research questions for literature, we should focus on the key themes and ideas that are present in the text. We can also ask questions that help us to better understand the characters or the setting of the text. Here are some examples of research questions for literature:

- How does the main character change throughout the course of the novel?
- What is the significance of the setting in the play?
- How does the theme of love and loss impact the story?
- What is the role of friendship in the novel?
- What is the author's message about society in the book?

Task

Now it's your turn to practice developing research questions for literature. Choose a book or a play that you have read and develop three research questions that you would like to investigate further:

1. What is the significance of the title in the novel/play?
2. How does the author use symbolism to drive home the themes in the book?
- 3.
4. What is the intended message the author sends to young people in the book?

Answer the following questions by writing your responses in a notebook:

- What is a research question?
- What should we focus on when developing research questions for literature?
- Provide two examples of research questions for literature:

Now that you have developed your research questions, you can begin your investigation of the book or play. Good luck!

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