

Developing Research Questions & Narrowing Research Topics Practice

1. Which of the following is the best research topic for a 3 - 5 page research paper?
 - a. The negative damsel in distress stereotype in Disney's Cinderella?
 - b. The effect of Disney's heroines on girls' self-image

2. Which of the following is the best research topic for a 3 - 5 page research paper?
 - a. The direct correlation between global consumers and global warming
 - b. Electric cars' impact on decreasing America's carbon footprint

3. Which of the following is the best research topic for a 3 - 5 page research paper?
 - a. Martin Luther King Jr's influence on American Politics from 1963 to 2008
 - b. Martin Luther King Jr's use of civil disobedience in the Civil Rights Movement

4. Which of the following is the best research topic for a 3 - 5 page research paper?
 - a. Influence of the Bronte sisters heroines
 - b. The correlation between the ball and Emma's downfall in Madame Bovary

5. Which of the following is the best research topic for a 3 - 5 page research paper?
 - a. The effect of televised Presidential candidate on the 1960 election
 - b. The Democratic Party's ability to put forth better candidates

Answer Key

1. **A.** This topic is about the damsel in distress stereotype within one movie. Since there are multiple versions of the story Cinderella, the specific version was correctly mentioned. The topic was also narrowed to just the damsel in distress stereotype, not gender stereotypes or even female stereotypes as both of these topics are still too large for a 3 - 5 page paper.
2. **B.** This research question requires that you discuss what a carbon footprint is and how electric cars within America can decrease it. You would also need to contrast the emissions of an electric car with the regular gasoline automobile. All of this could be easily proven within a five-page paper.
3. **B.** You would have to discuss what civil disobedience is and how King Jr. used it to make an impact. This connection could be established within three to five pages.
4. **B.** This topic focuses on how one event caused the downfall of a novel's main character. This could be discussed within the parameters of your paper.
5. **A.** You would have to discuss how viewing Nixon and Kennedy in their 1960 debate influenced people's votes. Since this was the first televised debate, it radically changed how Americans viewed the candidates, literally!