

Defining a Focus/Topic

Using a Question or Statement as the Title of the Paper

The title of the research paper should engage the reader to want to turn the first page and read the paper. It should also set a reasonable expectation of the content of the paper. Writing a title that includes a question can work to that effect. The writer may use one of the essential questions or an overriding question to establish the title.

The title of the research paper could also be a statement. The purpose of the title remains the same: in essence, it is what authentically markets the paper to the reader. A title such as, “Things Your Grandpa Never Did,” while peaking interest, gives the reader absolutely no idea what the research paper is about.

If your title does not engage the reader, why would the reader turn the page?

Examples:

Using a Question as the Title	Using a Statement as a Title
Can Urban Planning Create Better Living Conditions?	Using Urban Planning to Create Better Living Conditions
Should Parkour Jump Its Way Into the Olympics?	Parkour is the Next Olympic Sport
Is Acupuncture an Effective Health Care Practice for Animals?	Substituting Acupuncture for Traditional Veterinary Medical Techniques
Buddhism: How Does Meditation Impact One’s Physical Well-being?	Buddhist Meditation Impacts One’s Well - Being

Titles and Capitalization

The punctuation in titles follows particular rules. All words are capitalized except articles, pronouns, and small words. However, in short titles of three words or less, all words are capitalized.

The examples above show proper capitalization. For more information, see MLA format guidelines or the CVU Library website.