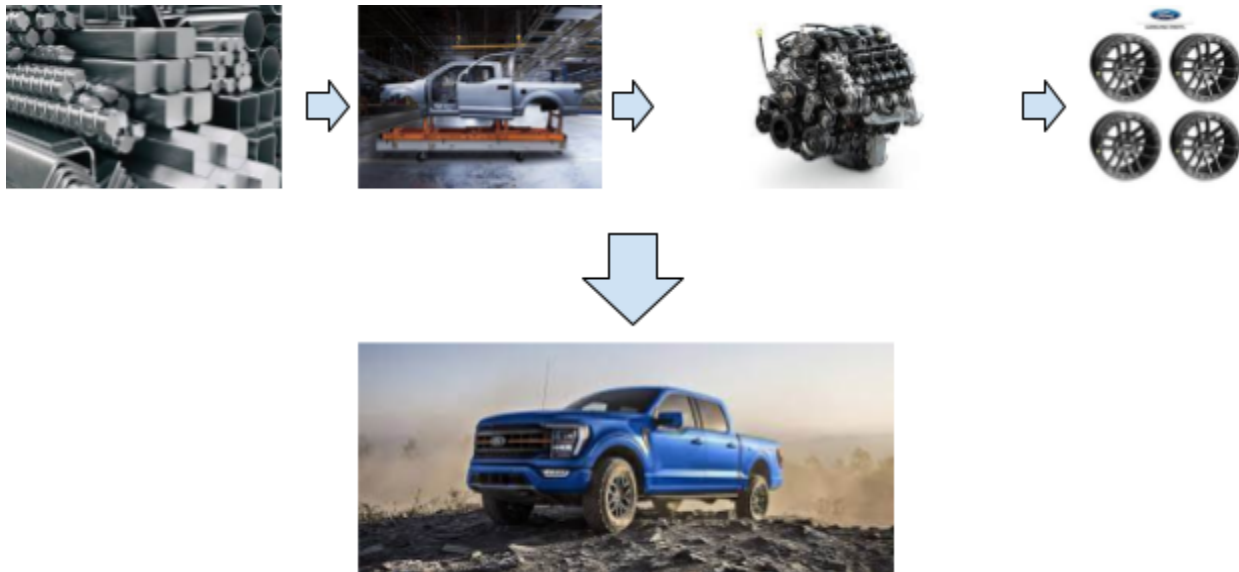# The Research Process

Process, from the Latin *procedere* or to move forward, describes **a series of actions or operations conducing to an end**.

Consider the simple process of making a truck: to make a truck we need to get the metal first, then mold it into a truck body, then add the engine, and all the parts, then the wheels, and at the end we come up with a truck.

Just like building a truck, doing research for a paper or an essay can be thought of as a process. If we were to break the work of doing research for a paper into steps leading to the successful completion of our class project, we would then call it the **research process**.

Now let's say we want to turn doing research for our project into a process, what would it look like?

First, we find out what the project is, what we need to do, and when it's due,

Then we choose a topic to write about,

Then we learn basic information and key concepts,

Then we get more information from library books,

Then we search the library databases for articles,

Then we go to the web to find quality information,

Then we draft and redraft our paper with the information we found,

Finally, once the paper looks nice, we turn it in, preferably at the due date.

The first step in the research process is to find out what our project is about and what we need to do.

Specifically, we want to find out the following:

- Due date
- Number of pages
- Type of essay
- Topic or range of topics
- Preferred resources
- Citation style

Let's go over each of the requirements:

There will be a very specific **due date** for the assignment. This is when the completed project is expected to be turned in.

Your instructor will ask for a minimum number of pages to turn in. The average term paper is usually 10 to 20 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font, one inch margins, plus a "references" or "works cited" page, depending on citation style.

There are generally two types of essays: **analytic**, and **argumentative**. Ask your instructor if your project will be analytical or argumentative in nature.

Your instructor will give you a topic or range of topics to write about. It's also very common for you to pick your own topic.

Your instructor may also ask you to use specific sources of information, like books from the library or articles from the journal databases.
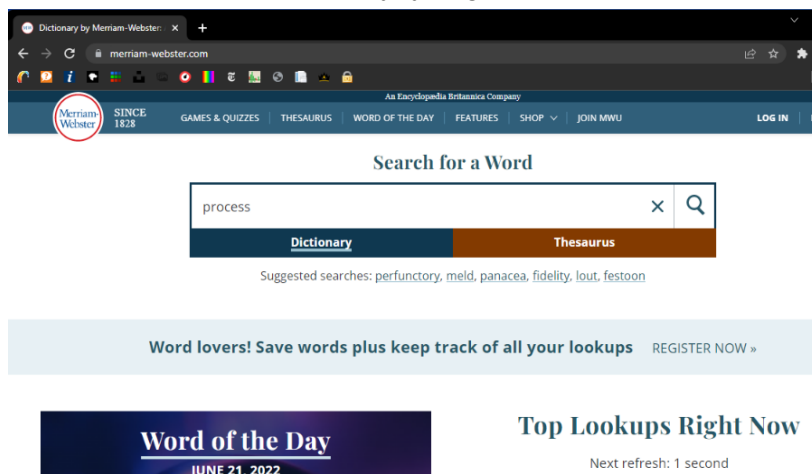
Additionally, your instructor will ask for a specific citation style. MLA, APA, and Chicago are some of the most common citation styles. Most writing courses use the **MLA** (Modern Language Association) citation style.

Sources:
"process," *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*,
https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/process. Accessed 4/25/2022.

Exercise

Find the meaning of the word "process" in the Merriam Webster dictionary online www.merriam-webster.com by typing the word in the search field and clicking the search icon

Go over the different definitions of the word process.

Scroll down until you find the **Cite this Entry** section of the page.

Pick MLA as the citation style from the drop menu, copy the citation and paste in **Exercise 1** section of the questionnaire. If you did everything correctly, a 30 digit flag will appear. Copy the flag and paste it in the flag box to unlock Exercise 1.

Congratulations! You captured the flag!