

WRITING YOUR RESEARCH PAPER

In addition to the 100 multiple choice question closed book exam you are also required to submit 30 case studies and an 8 - 10 page Research Paper. Writing a research paper helps one share information with others in an easy to comprehend way. It is also an opportunity of adding to the knowledge base of aromatherapists. You will find an excellent guide to writing a research paper at <http://www.aresearchguide.com/1steps.html>.

I don't have any preference for the font or layout of the Research Paper, however if you choose to use double spacing then the length of the paper should be 16 - 20 pages. All references that you use should be cited either as footnotes, or endnotes, or within the body of the text. Your paper should also have a Bibliography if relevant.

Your choice of topics for your Research Paper is pretty wide open and you are welcome to investigate any area with respect to the use of essential oils that is of interest to you. It is important to remember that whatever you choose to write about the focus is on the use of the essential oils.

Also please keep in mind that this is meant to be a Research Paper and NOT a general article. You will need to narrow down your subject to something very specific and cover that in depth. When you try to cover too many different aspects you end up with a superficial general article and not a Research Paper. You will be amazed at how quickly 8 - 10 pages can get filled up once you get started, so try to be as specific as you can. As an example, don't ask '*Do essential oils help with insomnia?*' Rather ask something along the lines of '*Is the essential oil of lavender helpful in promoting sleep in insomniacs?*' Don't ask '*Can essential oils quieten fussy children?*' bur rather something along the lines of '*Does a drop of Roman Chamomile added to the bath water at night help to calm fussy babies?*' Don't write about "*How essential oils can be used in your clinic*" but rather pick one essential oil and discuss how it can enhance a specific area in your clinic. When the paper is too general it can be difficult to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion.

Also remember that no matter what conclusion you come up with, whether or not you can support your original hypothesis, the information is still valid and helpful.

Follow the guidelines outlined in Getting Ready to write your Paper to help you focus and construct your Research Paper.

Some Ideas for your Research Paper

Keeping in mind that you will still need to narrow this down to meet the brief of being a Research Paper and focused on a specific area. If you try to cover too much, or keep things too broad you are writing a general article, which while very interesting is not a Research Paper.

- Discuss a particular essential oil.
- Discuss a botanical family producing essential oils.
- Compare essential oils in the same botanical family.
- Using essential oils within a specific setting (in a nursery, in a school, in palliative care, in the home, at the office, environmental fragrancing, meditation, etc.).
- Incorporating the use of essential oils within another discipline (massage, counseling, esthetics, nursing, counseling, alternative therapies, energy healing).
- Using essential oils within another framework (Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine, the Chakra System).
- Using essential oils in product formulation (soaps, lotions, creams, body products, environmental fragrancing, etc.).
- Discuss a specific condition and how essential oils can be used for that condition. This can be physical, emotional, mental or spiritual.
- You may wish to conduct your own experiment to prove a hypothesis about an essential oil or family of oils.

PLEASE NOTE:

If you intend to apply to join the **Alliance of International Aromatherapists** they have more specific requirements as to what the topic of your research paper should be and these are narrower than those that I suggest.

- For their **Level Two Membership Category** they require that the Research Paper be either a Literature Review on your topic OR a Research Study conducted by you.
- For their **Level Three Membership Category** they require that the Research Paper be a Research Study conducted by you.

At this point in time, NONE of the other Associations have requirements on what the Research Papers are written on.

Remember that your research paper is an opportunity for you to examine, and access, an aspect around the use of essential oils. You should clearly state what it is you are looking at, the evidence that supports this, or the evidence against it, and then wrap up it up in your conclusion. Your conclusion will reflect what it is you have understood in your own independent assessment. Both positive and negative conclusions count.

Getting Ready to write your Paper

Step 1. Choose a topic. Try and find something which interests and challenges you. Your attitude towards the topic may well determine the amount of effort and enthusiasm you put into your research. Remember to stay focused on a limited aspect of the topic. Don't try and cover too much, keep it simple.

Step 2. Find Information. Lots of information is freely available through surfing the net. Use Google's Scholar to help find pertinent papers. CAM on PubMed is another good place to look.

Step 3. State your thesis. Do some critical thinking and write your thesis statement down in one sentence. Your thesis statement is like a declaration of your belief. The main portion of your essay will consist of arguments to support and defend this belief.

Step 4. Make a tentative outline. The purpose of an outline is to help you think through your topic carefully and organize it logically before you start writing. A good outline is the most important step in writing a good paper. Check your outline to make sure that the points covered flow logically from one to the other. Include in your outline an INTRODUCTION, a BODY, and a CONCLUSION.

INTRODUCTION - State your thesis and the purpose of your research paper clearly. What is the chief reason you are writing the paper? State also how you plan to approach your topic. Is this a factual report, a book review, a comparison, or an analysis of a problem? Explain briefly the major points you plan to cover in your paper and why readers should be interested in your topic.

BODY - This is where you present your arguments to support your thesis statement. Remember the Rule of 3, i.e. find 3 supporting arguments for each position you take. Begin with a strong argument, then use a stronger one, and end with the strongest argument for your final point.

CONCLUSION - Restate or reword your thesis. Summarize your arguments. Explain why you have come to this particular conclusion.

Step 5. Organize your notes. Do not include any information that is not relevant to your topic and do not include information that you do not understand. Make sure the information that you have noted is carefully recorded and in your own words if possible. Remember to include a Bibliography of the works you have used and/or cited.

Step 6. Write your first draft.

Step 7. Revise your outline and draft.

Step 8. Type your final paper.