

# Developing Stronger Research Questions

The research question must be appropriate to the particular subject in which the essay is submitted. In history, this means that it must focus on the human past and not be of a trivial nature. The research question must be clearly and exactly focused, and stated in both the abstract and the introduction of the essay.



**What will you measure?**

**How will you measure it?**

**Through what sources?**

# What will you measure?

“The impact of **Abbasid Queen mothers** on the **strength of their sons' rule**.”

“The impact of **economic class relations** in **directing the French Revolution**.”

“The extent to which **World War II altered college football**.”

“How **computers** changed the **college experience** in the 1950s.”

You are taking a **variable** and measuring the  
*“impact” that that variable had on the outcome.*

# What will you measure?

“How **computers** changed the **college experience** in the 1950s.”

To what extent **did the use of new technology impact people in history?**

To what extent **did the use of computers impact people in history?**

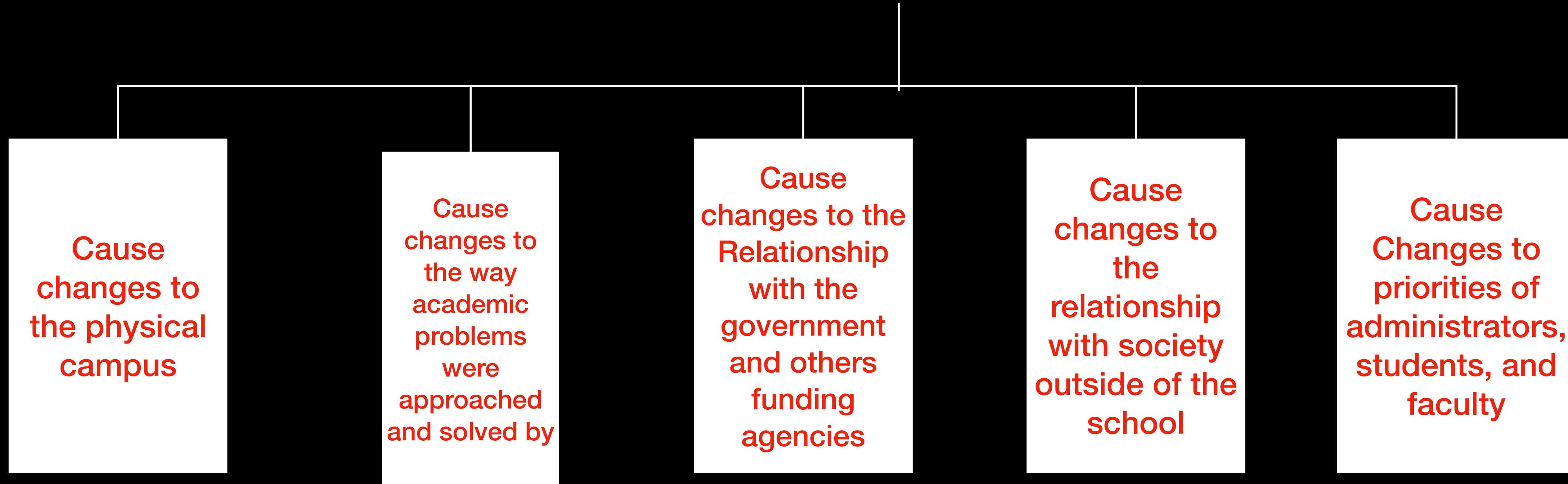
*(Early digital computers came about in the 1950s often on college campuses)  
Or so, I learned in my background reading*

To what extent **did the use of computers impact college students in the 1950s?**

Minimize the **variable** and minimize **the thing upon which you are measuring its impact** to make a project more manageable.

# What will you measure?

To what extent did the use of computers impact college students in the 1950s?



Minimize the variable and minimize the thing upon which you are measuring its impact to make a project more manageable.

*The more I can minimize the less work I have to do to complete the project.*

# What will you measure?

To what extent **did the use of computers**

Cause  
changes to  
the way  
academic  
problems  
were  
approached  
and solved by

**college students in the 1950s?**

**In the U.S.**

**In the South**

**In Georgia**

**At UGA and Georgia Tech**

Minimize the **variable** and minimize **the thing upon which you are measuring its impact** to make a project more manageable.

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# What will you measure?

~~To what extent~~ did the use of computers

Often used when a student is making an assumption at the beginning of a project and can become hard to let the assumption go.

Cause changes to the way academic problems were approached and solved by

college students in the 1950s?

In the U.S.

In the South

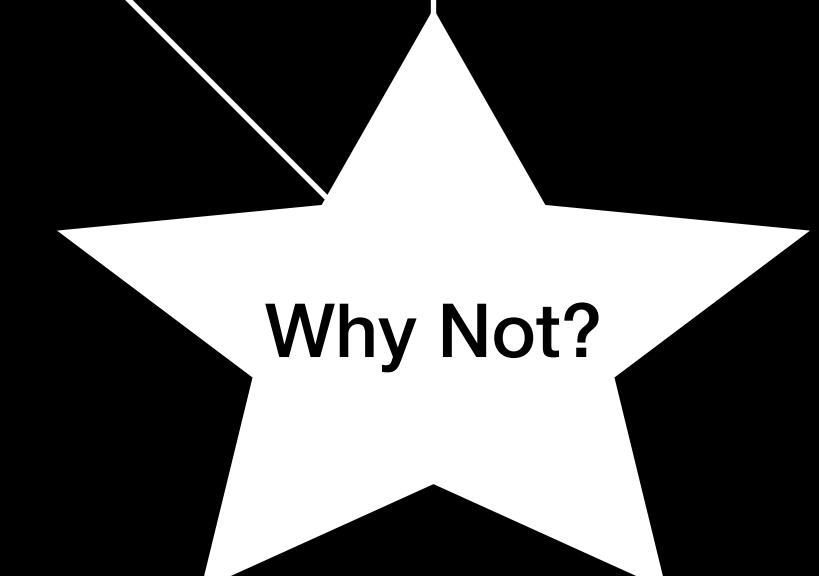
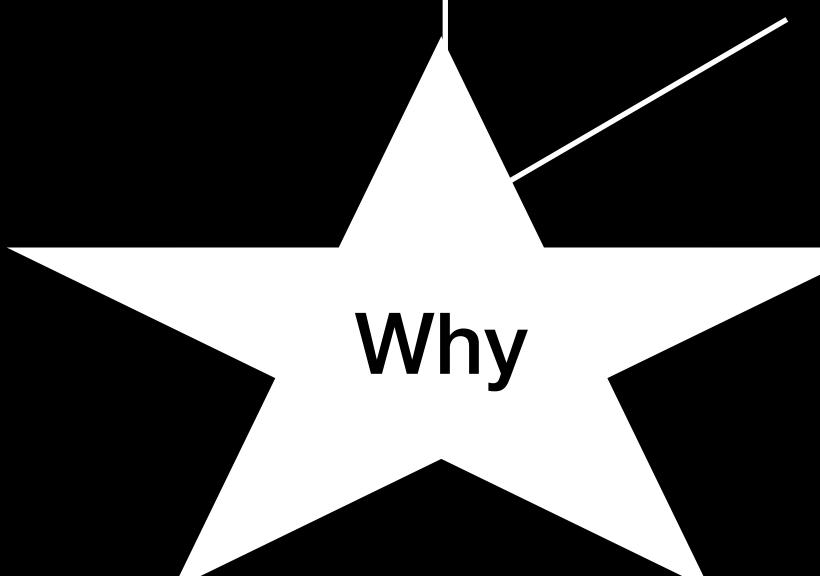
In Georgia

At UGA and Georgia Tech

**Cause(s)  
Significance**

Yes  
(Change)

No  
(Continuity)



The more I can minimize the less work I have to do to complete the project.

“The impact of economic class relations in directing the French Revolution.”

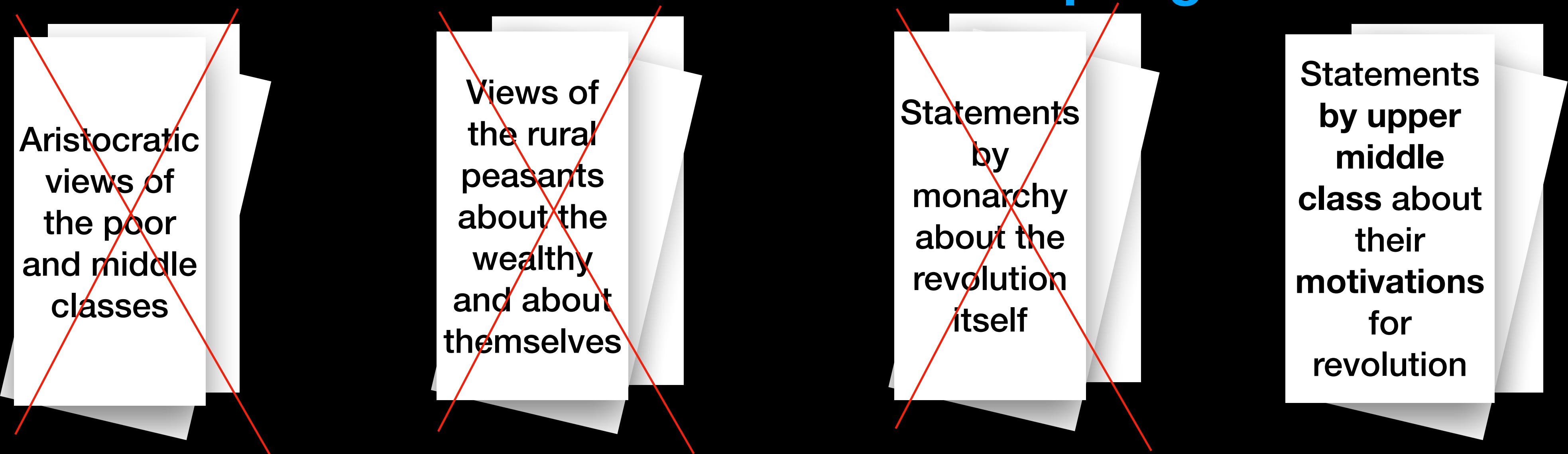
To what extent did upper middle class revolutionaries' perceptions of an aristocracy that was blind to the plights of the lower classes motivate them to start a revolution in the Spring of 1789.

You are taking a variable and measuring the “*impact*” that that variable had on the outcome.

The more I can minimize the less work I have to do to complete the project.

“The impact of economic class relations in directing the French Revolution.”

To what extent did upper middle class revolutionaries' perceptions of an aristocracy that was blind to the plights of the lower classes motivate them to start a revolution in the Spring of 1789.



You are taking a variable and measuring the “impact” that that variable had on the outcome.

The more I can minimize the less work I have to do to complete the project.

# What will you measure?

To what extent did upper middle class revolutionaries' perceptions of an aristocracy that was blind to the plights of the lower classes motivate them to start a revolution in the Spring of 1789.

## How will you measure it?

By seeing how often the upper middle class revolutionaries spoke about the way they felt the aristocrats viewed the lower classes and whether or not the revolutionaries used similar language in the laws and proclamations that they made during those early months of the revolution.

## Through what sources?

Statements by upper middle class about their motivations for revolution

Primary Sources

Secondary Sources



By seeing how much significance historians have placed on on *the perception of middle class revolutionaries as a cause* of the French Revolution

**Could you and a friend write on  
your topic using different sources?**

**If so, your question/topic is too broad!**

**The point is to make sure that your research efforts have clear direction so that you don't wander around**

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