**Middle East Research Paper**

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3)Research Question: What is a Research Question? A research question is a clear, focused, concise, complex and arguable question around which you center your research. Research question is an essential part of the research process. Research questions help writers focus their research by providing a path through the research and writing process. The specificity of a well-developed research question helps writers avoid the “all-about” paper and work toward supporting a specific, arguable thesis. Research questions are open-ended “how” and “why” questions. For example, “How did Japan manage its economic development?” or “Why don’t we see democratic governments in oil- rich countries such as the Middle East?” Consider the following checklist for your research question: • Is your research question clear? Research questions must be as clear as possible in order to be effective in helping the writer direct his or her research. • Is your research question focused? Research questions must be specific enough to be well covered in the space available. • Is your research question complex? Research questions should not be answerable with a simple “yes” or “no” or by easily-found facts. They should, instead, require both research and analysis on the part of the writer. Sample Research Questions Unclear: How does globalization benefit China? Clear: Do Foreign Direct Investment inflows help reduce poverty in China? The unclear version of this question doesn’t specify what aspect of globalization will be the topic of the paper (foreign direct investment) or clarify what category of benefit the paper will talk about (poverty reduction). It also assumes that this “benefit” is proven and/or accepted. The clearer version specifies the category of benefit and globalization (FDI-reduction of poverty). A strong research question should never leave room for ambiguity or interpretation. Unfocused: What is the effect of liberalism on development in Jamaica? Focused: How is the IMF Structural Adjustment package affect unemployment in Jamaica? The unfocused research question is so broad that it couldn’t be adequately answered in a book-length piece, let alone a standard college- level paper. The focused version narrows down to a specific cause (IMF Structural Adjustment Package), a specific place (Jamaica), and a specific category of development that is affected (unemployment).