fact, the library is best seen as a formal meeting room for interviews with authorities not otherwise available. That's precisely the way the very best thinkers regard it.

If your aversion to the library is based instead on the fear of lingering too long, you'll be pleased to learn that the people who use the library most oftenprofessional writers, speakers, and scholars-have even more reason than you to save time. They often have difficult deadlines to meet. Efficiency is not just a matter of preference with them; it's a dollars-and-cents concern. Yet they don't avoid the library; they simply use it more effectively.

The first step in using the library as professionals do is to determine all the headings and subheadings that might apply to your subject. Because the information sought may appear under different headings in the library's various sources, this is an important step. Start by giving free rein to your imagination and listing as many headings as you can. For example, for crime, you may think of the subtopics homicide, rape, shoplifting, kidnapping, vandalism, and burglary. Next, expand your list of headings by consulting two sources available in most college libraries: the index volume of Encyclopedia Americana and the Thesaurus of Psychological Index Terms, a companion volume to Psychological Abstracts. You'll find such additional headings as felonies, misdemeanors, antisocial behavior, behavior disorders, psychosexual behavior, and infanticide.

Once you have determined the headings under which the information you are looking for is classified, get the information by using the following simple and efficient approaches:

- 1. Consult a good encyclopedia for a broad overview of your subject. Encyclopaedia Britannica and Encyclopedia Americana are generally considered the best. Note important facts. In addition, note special terms that might be useful in further research.
- 2. Consult an almanac, a collection of miscellaneous facts and statistical information about a wide variety of subjects. On the subject of crime, for example, you can find information under as many as two dozen specific listings. Most almanacs are published once a year. Thus, you can obtain comparative data-say, for 1970, 1980, and 1990-quickly and easily.
- 3. Consult the appropriate indexes. Indexes do not present the information you are looking for, but they tell you where to find it and so save you much time and energy. The following are among the most generally useful indexes. (Your librarian will be able to suggest others.)
 - For information in nontechnical periodicals—The Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature.
 - For information in specialized and technical publications— Applied Science and Technology Index Art Index

Biography Index Biological and Agricultural Index Book Review Index Business Periodicals Index Education Index Engineering Index Essay and General Literature Index General Science Index Humanities Index Index to Legal Periodicals Magazine Index Music Index Philosopher's Index Psychological Abstracts Religion Index One: Periodicals Social Science Index

- For information in newspaper reports—the New York Times Index.
- For information in government publications—the Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications and the Monthly Checklist of State Publications.
- 4. Consult computer databases and abstracting services. Data searches are easier than ever with modern information-retrieval technology. Your librarian can explain the databases available to you. Ask, too, about abstracting services such as Sociological Abstracts, America: History and Life, and Dissertation Abstracts International.
- 5. Use the subject heading feature of your library's online catalog for books on your subject. Use broad subject headings as well as narrow ones; often a book that treats a larger subject will have a chapter or two on your subject.
- 6. Obtain and read the books and articles that are most relevant to your subject. Though the number of books and articles you read will depend on the scope of your project, the first five steps of the process should be followed for all but the very briefest of treatments.

These reference works are only the basic ones. For that reason, it is important to remember that your most important resource in the library is the people who work there: the librarians and their assistants. They can suggest other research materials and help you expand your expertise.

USING THE INTERNET

In a relatively short time the Internet has become one of the most popular and useful research tools. One important reason is that you don't have to leave home to access it. All you need is a computer and an Internet Service Provider (ISP). Then you just dial up the ISP, get online, and you're free to surf the Web. You can visit commercial sites, designated by .com; organizational sites (.org); government sites (.gov); and education sites (.edu).

The main challenge of using the Internet is finding the information you are looking for quickly and efficiently. If you don't have a specific address, you will have to use a search engine. One of the best is Google, which you have probably used in your past research. Another excellent site is Google Scholar, which allows you to search widely through scholarly literature. If you search for Google Scholar, you will land on the home page as shown in Figure 8.1. If you then keyed the phrase "media bias" in the search box, you would get a page like the one shown in Figure 8.2. Notice near the top center of the page how many results the search produced. The page shown here contains only some of the results on the actual Web page. You can access any one of the items by clicking on its title.

Use Google or Google Scholar when you don't know which website is likely to provide the information you are seeking, or when you wish to expand your search. On the other hand, if you do know the most likely website, start your search there.

For Finding Hoaxes and Viruses

If you've ever passed on an e-mail warning to your friends only to learn later that it was a hoax, you know how embarrassing the experience can be. By checking the following sites before you pass on the message, you can spare yourself that embarrassment:

Snopes2

Truthorfiction

Urbanlegends

Scambusters

Center for Disease Control and type "hoaxes" in the search box.

The National Fraud Information site.

For Evaluating the Quality of a Website

Purdue Owl

For Informed Opinion

Conservative

Townhall (click on any of the featured columnists)

Jewish World Review

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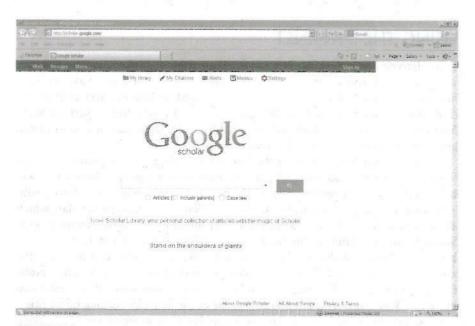


FIGURE 8.1 The Google Scholar search page.

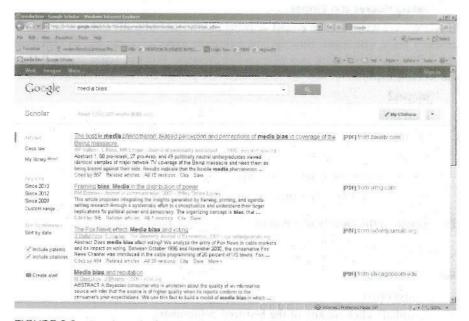


FIGURE 8.2 Search results from Google Scholar.

Liberal

The American Prospect Daily Kos

Varied

Associated Press

CNN

For News

Associated Press CNN

For Reference Materials (including encyclopedias; thesauruses; dictionaries; collections of quotations; guides to English usage, religion, and literary history)

Bartleby

Information Please

For Legal Information

Legal Engine

For Health

WebMD National Institutes of Health Medline Plus

For General Up-to-Date Information on Search Engines

Search Engine Watch

MAINTAINING A QUESTIONING PERSPECTIVE

When dealing with published ideas, particularly those of well-known authorities, you may be tempted to surrender your judgment. To let that happen is a mistake. Being human, authorities are subject to making the same errors as anyone else. They can, for example, be blinded by personal preferences, cling stubbornly to outmoded views, and suffer lapses in reasoning.

Even when they manage to avoid such elementary errors, they may miss important new developments in their field or related fields, or they may misinterpret the significance of such developments. Research is constantly being done in every field, and the findings of such efforts often overturn previous conclusions. For example, for years, expert medical opinion was in agreement that eating fats increased the risk of heart disease, that heavy salt consumption caused a rise in blood pressure, that the frequent consumption of eggs caused an increase in serum cholesterol, and that obesity in adulthood depended on childhood eating habits. Then new studies were published that challenged each of these conclusions and caused expert opinion to be modified.⁹

Complicating the matter further is the fact that new insights often take years to become general knowledge among the members of a profession. Psychologist Carol Tavris's excellent study Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion, which demolished the traditional assumption that venting hostility is beneficial, was published in 1982. Yet articles are still being written endorsing the earlier idea, the authors apparently oblivious of Tavris's work or irrationally committed to an erroneous view.

Accordingly, as important as it is to seek out authoritative opinion, it is equally important to maintain a questioning perspective. The best ways to do so are to consult several authorities of differing perspectives, to ask probing questions of each, and to compare their responses.

MANAGING AN INTERVIEW

Chances are, most of your investigation will be done in the library or on the Internet. But you may, on occasion, have the opportunity to interview an authority (for example, a professor on your campus who has done special research in the area you are investigating). In such cases, follow this basic rule: Be considerate of the interviewee, who is donating valuable time and shouldn't be taken for granted. Here are some specific ways to show consideration:

- Call or write ahead for an appointment. Explain exactly what you wish to discuss and how long you'll take. (Keep the time as brief as you can, preferably under half an hour.) Make yourself available at a time that fits the interviewee's schedule best.
- Before the interview, make an effort to learn the fundamentals of the subject you will be discussing. If the subject is controversial, know the issues in dispute and have at least a general notion of the competing arguments.
- 3. Prepare your questions carefully in advance. Make them clear and brief.

 Try to avoid those that can be answered yes or no; they won't be very helpful. For instance, instead of asking, "Do you agree with the governor's position?" ask, "What is your reaction to the governor's statement?" If you are sufficiently informed about a view that opposes the interviewee's views, ask, "Dr. ______ says such-and-such. How would you respond?" If you are insufficiently informed about opposing views, ask, "On what matters do those who oppose your view differ with you, and how would you respond to their disagreement?"
- 4. Anticipate the responses to your initial questions, and prepare follow-up questions to probe those responses you feel don't go far enough or don't address the points you wish addressed.
- Arrive on time. When you begin the interview, get right to the point. Keep your questions crisp and clear. Avoid thinking ahead to your next question.

Instead, listen carefully to the reply. If any of your interviewee's comments open up an aspect of the issue you did not consider but is worth pursuing, be sure to pursue it. However, try not to overstay your welcome.

6. If at all possible, don't make the person wait while you take notes. If you can't take shorthand or write rapidly in longhand, consider the possibility of taping the interview. (Always obtain permission to tape an interview. Never merely assume taping is acceptable to the other person.)

If an in-person interview is not possible, consider a telephone interview. Such an interview is conducted the same as the preceding, with two additional requirements. First, be sure to call or write in advance to determine when the interview will be most convenient. It is boorish to assume that because you are ready, your interviewee is, too. Second, remember that when conducting a telephone interview, it is especially important to speak clearly and to ask clear, concise questions.

AVOIDING PLAGIARISM¹⁰

Once ideas are put into words and published, they become "intellectual property," and the author has the same rights over them as he or she has over a material possession such as a house or a car. The only real difference is that intellectual property is purchased with mental effort rather than money. Anyone who has ever wracked his or her brain trying to solve a problem or trying to put an idea into clear and meaningful words can appreciate how difficult mental effort can be.

Plagiarism is passing off other people's ideas or words as one's own. It is doubly offensive in that it both steals and deceives. In the academic world, plagiarism is considered an ethical violation and is punished by a failing grade for a paper or a course, or even by dismissal from the institution. Outside the academy, it is a crime that can lead to prosecution if the person to whom the material belongs wishes to bring charges. In the eyes of the law, stealing ideas and/or the words used to express them is as criminal as stealing the computer on which they were recorded.

Some cases of plagiarism are attributable to intentional dishonesty, others to carelessness. But many, perhaps most, are due to misunderstanding. The instructions "Base your paper on research rather than on your own unfounded opinions" and "Don't present other people's ideas as your own" seem contradictory and may confuse you, especially if no clarification is offered. Fortunately, there is a way to honor both instructions and, in the process, to avoid plagiarism.

Step 1: When you are researching a topic, keep your sources' ideas separate from your own. Begin by keeping a record of each source of information you consult. For an Internet source, record the website address, the author and title of the item, and the date you visited the site. For a book, record the author, title, place of publication, publisher, and date of publication. For a magazine or journal article, record the author, title, the name of the publication, and its date of issue. For a TV or radio broadcast, record the program title, station, and date of transmission.

Step 2: As you read each source, note the ideas you want to refer to in your writing. If the author's words are unusually clear and concise, copy them *exactly* and put quotation marks around them. Otherwise, paraphrase—that is, restate the author's ideas in your words. Write down the number(s) of the page on which the author's passage appears.

If the author's idea triggers a response in your mind—such as a question, a connection between this idea and something else you've read, or an experience of your own that supports or challenges what the author says—write it down and put brackets (not parentheses) around it so that you will be able to identify it as your own when you review your notes. Here is a sample research record illustrating these two steps:

Adler, Mortimer J. The Great Ideas: A Lexicon of Western Thought (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992, pp. 867, 869) Says that throughout the ages, from ancient Greece, philosophers have argued about whether various ideas are true. Says it's remarkable that most renowned thinkers have agreed about what truth is—"a correspondence between thought and reality." 867 Also says that Freud saw this as the scientific view of truth. Quotes Freud: "This correspondence with the real external world we call truth. It is the aim of scientific work, even when the practical value of that work does not interest us." 869 [I say true statements fit the facts; false statements do not.]

Whenever you look back on this record, even a year from now, you will be able to tell at a glance which ideas and words are the author's and which are yours. The first three sentences are, with the exception of the directly quoted part, paraphrases of the author's ideas. The fourth is a direct quotation. The final sentence, in brackets, is your own idea.

Step 3: When you compose your paper, work borrowed ideas and words into your writing by judicious use of quoting and paraphrasing. In addition, give credit to the various authors. Your goal here is to eliminate all doubt about which ideas and words belong to whom. In formal presentations, this crediting is done in footnotes; in informal ones, it is done simply by mentioning the author's name.

Here is an example of how the material from Mortimer Adler might be worked into a composition. (Note where the footnote is placed and the form that is used for it.) The second paragraph illustrates how your own idea might be expanded:

Mortimer J. Adler explains that throughout the ages, from the time of the ancient Greeks, philosophers have argued about whether various ideas are true. But to Adler the remarkable thing is that, even as they argued, most renowned thinkers have agreed about what truth is.

They saw it as "a correspondence between thought and reality." Adler points out that Sigmund Freud believed this was also the scientific view of truth. He quotes Freud as follows: "This correspondence with the real external world we call truth. It is the aim of scientific work, even when the practical value of that work does not interest us."1

This correspondence view of truth is consistent with the common sense rule that a statement is true if it fits the facts and false if it does not. For example, the statement "the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center were destroyed on September 11, 2002" is false because they were destroyed the previous year. I may sincerely believe that it is true, but my believing in no way affects the truth of the matter. In much the same way, if an innocent man is convicted of a crime, neither the court's decision nor the world's acceptance of it will make him any less innocent. We may be free to think what we wish, but our thinking can't alter reality.

¹Mortimer J. Adler, The Great Ideas: A Lexicon of Western Thought (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1992), pp. 867, 869.

Three problems commonly arise in quoting and/or paraphrasing. Here is an explanation of each, together with a practical way to solve it:

Problem 1: Deciding whether to quote or paraphrase. The general rule is to quote only when a statement is so well and concisely expressed that a paraphrase would add unnecessary length and/or lose the force of the original. Such instances are rare. Most passages can be stated as well-some can actually be improved—by being paraphrased.

Statements that should be quoted rather than paraphrased:

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted." Aesop

"What we think, we become." Buddha

"It is impossible for a man to learn what he thinks he already knows."

Statements that should be paraphrased (with suggested paraphrasing): (Notice that the source of the material is stated in the paraphrase, so that appropriate credit is given for the idea.)

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Proverbs 23-7 (Paraphrase: As the Book of Proverbs reminds us, we are what we think.)

"He does not believe who does not live according to his belief." Thomas Fuller (Paraphrase: To be genuine, belief must be practiced.)

Problem 2: Converting the author's words to your words. Constructing a paraphrase is mentally taxing because it involves thinking of alternative ways to express ideas. It is tempting to say, "The way the author said it is the only way," and to settle for a quotation. But if you do that you will quickly find that most of your paper requires quotation marks. Not wanting to appear so obviously imitative, you may decide to leave the quotation marks off. But then you will have committed *plagiarism*!

The solution to this problem is to acknowledge that there are always alternative ways to express an idea and that to find them you just have to put forth a little effort and invest a little imagination. Here is an example of an effective paraphrase of a passage from Shelby Steele's book, White Guilt. (For the purpose of this exercise, five passages that appear on different pages are joined together, with the junctures indicated by ellipses.)

Original Passage

". . . This new black consciousness [of the 1960s] led blacks into a great mistake: to talk ourselves out of the individual freedom we had just won for no purpose whatsoever except to trigger white obligation . . . The goal of the civil rights movement had escalated from a simple demand for equal rights to a demand for the redistribution of responsibility for black advancement from black to white America, from the 'victims' to the 'guilty.' This marked a profound-and I believe tragic-turning point in the long struggle of black Americans for a better life . . . Black militancy, then, was not inevitable in the late sixties. It came into existence solely to exploit white guilt as a pressure on white America to take more responsibility for black advancement . . . Thus, since the sixties, black leaders have made one overriding argument: that blacks cannot achieve equality without white America taking primary responsibility for it. Black militancy became, in fact, a militant belief in white power and a correspondingly militant denial of black power . . . But this sad symbiosis overlooks an important feature of human nature: human beings, individually or collectively, cannot transform themselves without taking full responsibility for doing so. This is a law of nature. Once full responsibility is accepted, others can assist as long as it is understood that they cannot be responsible. But no group in human history has been lifted into excellence or competitiveness by another group." Shelby Steele, White Guilt: How Blacks and Whites Together Destroyed the Promise of the Civil Rights Era (New York: HarperCollins, 2006), 45, 58, 59, 60, 62.

Paraphrase

Shelby Steele contends that blacks in America have allowed whites to overcome their guilt for the evils of slavery and discrimination by treating blacks as victims and taking over all responsibility for black people's advancement. This he regards as a serious error because "no group in human history has been lifted into excellence or competitiveness by another group."

Note: (1) The first four words make clear that the author is paraphrasing Steele. (2) Some individual key words that appear in the original, such as

"advancement" and "responsibility," also appear in the paraphrase. Such repetition is often unavoidable and does not constitute plagiarism. (3) The only group of words that is repeated appears in quotation marks. To omit the quotation marks would have constituted plagiarism. (4) Although the paraphrase embraces the entire idea expressed in the original, it is more compressed. This is a typical feature of paraphrasing.

Problem 3: Constructing ideas of your own to blend with paraphrased and/or quoted material. If the subject is unfamiliar or complex, you may wonder what you can possibly add to what the authors you consulted have said. Using the Shelby Steele passage as an example, here is how you might solve this problem. After presenting your paraphrase of his ideas, you could do one or more of the following: (1) Elaborate on Steele's views by mentioning some of the evidence he offers in the book to support them. (2) Present the views of other authors who share Steele's perspective and the evidence they offer in support of their views. (3) Present the views of authors who disagree with Steele on this issue and the evidence they offer. (In all three of these steps, you would, of course, exercise the same care in paraphrasing, quoting, and citing your sources.) (4) Present your evaluation of the issue, explaining which author(s) you agree with and which you disagree with, in each case presenting your reasons for thinking as you do.

This fourth step makes the composition or research paper uniquely your own. It represents your thinking and your expression. The more carefully you approach it-explaining thoroughly, providing evidence, and anticipating and answering objections—the better its quality will be.

CONDUCTING YOUR OWN RESEARCH

The approaches considered so far in this chapter constitute the first and most fundamental line of investigation—determining what is already known. In many cases, such an investigation will produce all the evidence you need to solve the problem or resolve the issue. Sometimes, however, you will need to go beyond what is already known and develop new knowledge by conducting your own research. Here are two suggestions.

Consider Doing a Survey

Among the survey topics that might be interesting to investigate on a college campus are students' attitudes toward cheating, the campus community's position on the issue of whether women's athletic teams should receive the same level of funding as men's teams, and the professors' attitudes toward open parking on campus.

Consider Doing an Observational Study

Examples of observational studies that would be appropriate on a college campus are a study of the dynamics of a committee meeting to determine areas of inefficiency and ineffectiveness, and a study of the flow of people through the campus cafeteria during peak volume periods to identify how and where bottlenecks occur.

Before you attempt either of these approaches, reread the explanation provided earlier in the chapter.

KEEPING CREATIVITY ALIVE

As crucial as the investigation stage is in the solution of many problems, it can threaten creativity. The more information you accumulate, the greater the potential for confusion. To keep creativity alive, you will have to overcome that confusion. Here is how to do so.

Whenever you are confused by the amount or complexity of the information you have obtained and have difficulty sorting it out, pause for a moment, look back at your statement of the problem (stage 2), and use that statement to decide what is relevant and what is not. If you are dealing with an especially difficult problem, you may have to use this approach many times. Even the best and most creative thinkers lose their bearings from time to time, but they don't allow themselves to become discouraged. They just find their bearings again and continue.

A large amount of information can also have a daunting effect on your confidence. The more you probe a problem, the more you are likely to realize its complexity. In time, you may find yourself thinking, "I didn't realize it would be this difficult. Maybe there is no solution. If other, more qualified people have been unable to find a solution, what business do I have trying?" When such thoughts occur, remind yourself that others may not have solved the problem precisely because they gave in to their feelings of apprehension—the ones that at this very moment threaten your creativity—or because, despite their expertise, they lacked the techniques for unlocking and applying their creativity. (After all, creativity is not a formal subject taught in most schools and colleges, so it is not surprising that otherwise educated people should be uninformed about it.) Remember, too, that whatever difficulties arise in thinking, there are effective methods for dealing with them, and your resources for producing creative responses to problems and issues are, as the next chapter will demonstrate, considerable.

WARM-UP EXERCISES

8.1. Read the following dialogue carefully. Then decide what you would say next if you were Veronica. Make your response so clear and effective that the matter would be settled.

PERRY: The only book a person ever needs to read is the Bible.

VERONICA: I don't agree. Other books surely have something to offer.

PERRY: Let me show you how wrong that is. If other books agree with the Bible, they are unnecessary. And if they disagree, they are irreligious and should be avoided.

- 8.2. Create as many new food recipes as you can. Include ingredients and preparation instructions.
- **8.3.** Old toothbrushes are usually thrown in the trash. But are they really useless? Think of as many uses as you can for them.

APPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Each of the following cases was reported in the news. Most readers undoubtedly viewed them narrowly, believing each was entirely irrelevant to any but the most obvious subject. Yet, to someone searching for more than surface connections, each case offers some interesting possibilities. For each of the following cases, list as many implied subjects or issues as you can. Be sure to specify what those implications are.
 - a. Some research findings suggest that personality differences among individuals are more a result of heredity than of environment. For example, University of Minnesota psychologists who studied 400 sets of adult twins found a strong genetic link for such qualities as anger, cautious behavior, and social-political religious conservatism. And a Pennsylvania State University study of 700 sets of twins estimated that environment counts for only 10 percent of personality differences.¹¹
 - b. A nine-year-old boy known as Robert M. pointed a toy gun at a New York City bank teller and robbed her of \$118. He was placed on two years' probation after his attorney argued he was only playacting during the robbery. Then, a year later, the same boy, with two accomplices, was arrested for stealing a sled from two boys at knifepoint.¹²
 - c. Three-year-old Chad Chancey was expected to be the youngest trial witness in Oklahoma's history. He was the only person with any knowledge of the events that took place the night his mother and sister were murdered. Chad reportedly heard a loud argument in the next room, women's screams, a sound he described as a loud handclap, then silence. He later identified the man who had been in the apartment that night from a police file photo. The defense attorney expressed concern that the child might be too young to separate fact from fantasy.¹³
 - d. In 1945, Charles Jamison was found badly wounded on a Boston dock. He carried papers identifying him as a first mate on the USS Cutty Sark. Yet no records could be found of the existence of such a ship, and all further investigations about the

- man revealed nothing. Interviews with him disclosed only that he had no family, had gone to sea at age 13, and believed his ship had been torpedoed. He remained in a Boston hospital until his death 30 years after his discovery on the dock.¹⁴
- e. Dr. Martin Orne, a psychiatrist and an expert on memory and hypnosis, and Dr. Elizabeth Loftus, a psychologist and memory expert, presented information to the American Association for the Advancement of Science that suggested that using hypnotism to get witnesses to recall details of past events may be ill advised. Their research showed that memory may be unintentionally altered by the form of the hypnotist's questions. "If the hypnotist has certain beliefs," said Dr. Orne, "he will create memories in the subject's mind." 15
- f. A human fetus survived to full term after it was extracted from its mother's womb for surgery and then returned to the womb following surgery. The surgery, which took place in the 24th week of pregnancy, corrected a life-threatening urinary tract obstruction. 16
- **8.2.** Woebegone College is having a problem with grade inflation. The average grade submitted by many professors is a B+, even though the average entrance examination score of Woebegone's students has declined steadily over the past decade. It appears that work that would have received a C 10 or 15 years ago is now being given a B or B+. One effect has been that 60 percent of the student body is on the dean's list. Find the best expression of this problem. Then investigate it, as necessary, using the approaches explained in the chapter, and produce as many solutions as you can. (Record all your thoughts as they occur to you, and be prepared to submit them to your instructor.) Finally, state which of your solutions you believe is best, and briefly explain why.
- **8.3.** Every so often, someone writes an article about the poor state of composition teaching, usually with a title such as "Why Dick and Jane Can't Write" or "The Scandal in the English Classroom." The public then gets excited and calls for a study of the problem, and the media explore methods of developing students' language skills. But no lasting creative solution to the problem ever seems to be found. Identify and solve this problem, following the directions in Application 8.2.
- **8.4.** Alcohol and drug abuse are associated with crime in the streets, health problems, the breakdown of the family, and poor job performance. Identify and solve this problem, following the directions in Application 8.2.
- 8.5. In many states, the schools are financed primarily by property taxes. This system, of course, tends to favor wealthy areas over poor areas and often results in inequality of educational opportunity. Identify and solve this problem, following the directions in Application 8.2.
- **8.6.** On the one hand, the federal government forbids cigarette advertising on radio and television and requires health warnings to be