

## Note cards: muscle for your paper

When doing research, you should create two types of note cards. The first type is a bibliographical information (resource) card. On this card you put all the information you'll need for your works cited page. Every time you find a book, article, image, or website you might use, create a card. It might look like this.

	Dude
Moore, Michael	
<u>Dude, Where's My Country?</u>	
New York	
Warner Books	
2003	

The second type of card is for information. You may only have five or six bibliographical cards, but you'll have scores of research cards. On these cards you'll write a summary of what you've read in your own words, or you may write a quote. Limit the information on each card to ONE idea or concept. Here are a couple of examples.

	Dude
Colin Powell claimed that Iraq had mobile facilities for making chemical weapons, but we never found any when we invaded.	
(p. 47)	

	Dude
"But after invading Iraq, the U.S. Army couldn't find a single one of these 'mobile labs.' After all, with so many palm trees to hide them under, who could blame our army for not uncovering them?" (p.47)	

The "Dude" in the corner lets you know the source of your information. You could, of course, use the author's name or a number instead. The page number is for citation purposes.

Note cards allow you to rearrange your information, and help you organize your paper to best support your thesis. Before you begin writing, arrange your note cards in the order that matches your outline. Begin with the first card and just write. You will rearrange as you work through the first draft. They keep you from falling into the plagiarism trap. They work!