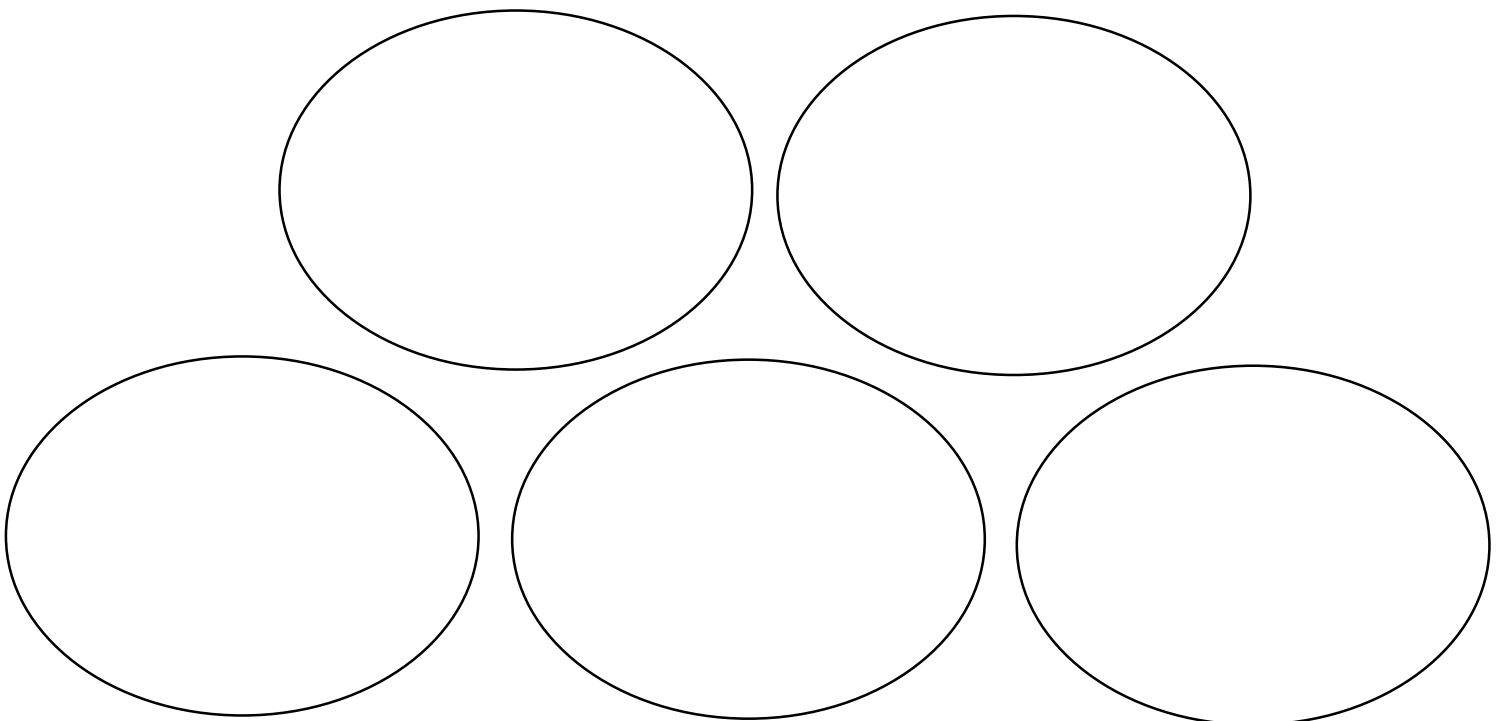


Using Outlines to Guide Research

Purpose: Instead of waiting until after you have written your paper to write an outline, you should put one together before you begin writing your first draft. However, it is important to view your outline as *changeable*. You will revise it alongside your paper as necessary, and it will serve as a reference to the structure of your paper at a given time. This will help keep the flow of ideas in your paper organized as you develop and revise it. This guide will help you create your first outline, and can be revisited when you want to revise your outline.

Instructions: Before beginning, you should have already come up with a good research question. If you do not yet have a research question, complete the guide “Developing a Good Research Question” first. Write down your research question in the box under (1) below.

1. *What will you need to say in your paper?* In the circles below, write down different elements of your research question that will need attention in your paper (What background information do your readers need? What must you address in order to answer your research question?). You may not need to use every circle. It will help to underline the different parts of your research question and draw lines to the relevant circles. In this way, you can clearly see the connections between your question and what you will need to say in your paper.



2. *Put things in order.* After you have written down some things that you will need to talk about in your paper, put them in a reasonable order of presentation. Background information will go into the introduction section, then you can put the things you wrote in the circles in a logical order to form an outline for the body of your paper. You will also need a conclusion, but you will not be able to write anything more than “conclusion” in your outline until later on, after you have developed the body of your paper. The notes section at the bottom is for any extra questions or comments you might like to add to the outline to help guide your research.

Introduction

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Body

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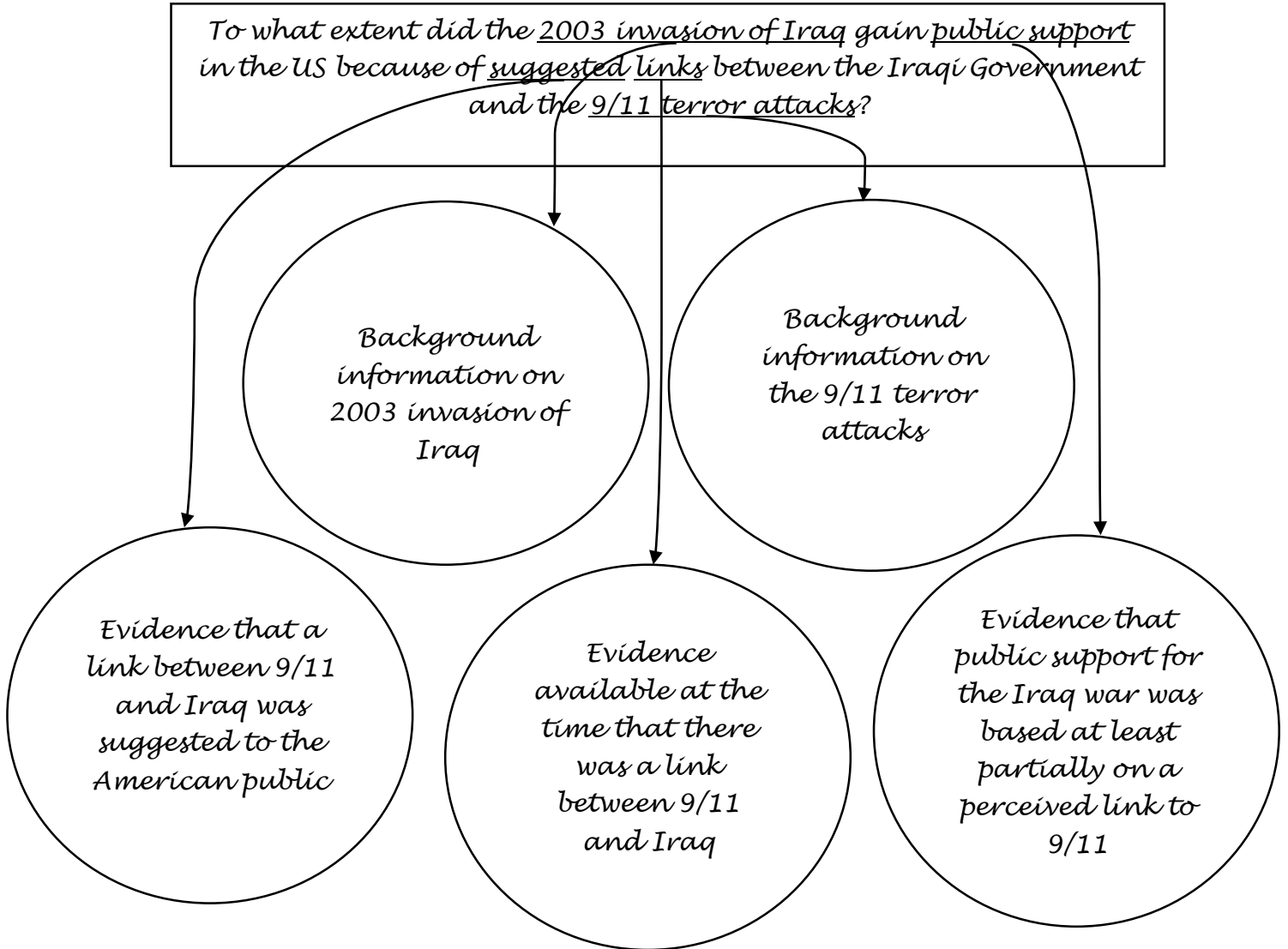
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Conclusion

NOTES:

EXAMPLE



EXAMPLE

Introduction

- *Background information on the 9/11 terror attacks and the 2003 invasion of Iraq.*

Body

- *Evidence available at the time that there was a link between 9/11 and Iraq*
- *Evidence that a link between 9/11 and Iraq was suggested to the American public*
- *Evidence that public support for the Iraq war was based at least partially on a perceived link to 9/11*
-
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Conclusion

NOTES: