FOCUSING YOUR TOPIC

What?
What's the general subject area you want to research? Examples: Healthcare, politics, the environment, finance, etc. Write it on the widest line of the pyramid.

Who?
Do you want to focus your research on a particular group? Examples: Latinos, killer whales, college students, women, Democrats, etc. Write it on the next line.

Where?
Is there a location where you'd like to focus your research? Examples: Arizona, Amazon rainforest, Germany, Pacific Rim, etc. Write it on the next line.

When?
What time period will you focus on? Examples: 19th century, the Reagan presidential administration, the Middle Ages, post-Watergate, etc. Write it on the next line.

POV?
From which point of view would you like to view your topic? Examples: Economic, legal, political, ethical, scientific, religious, historical, psychological, etc. Write it on the final line.

Put the pieces together
Combine the words in your pyramid to define your research topic. If necessary, tweak it a bit to form a solid question. From the sample pyramid at the right, you might formulate this research question:

"How have recent changes in environmental legislation affected agricultural workers in California?"

What's your research question? Write it here:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Topic focusing system based on "Narrow Your Topic" at
www.library.arizona.edu/libtutorial/narrowyourtopic