**Finding Common Ground**

In this activity, students practice writing the common ground section of an introduction. They also practice researching either in the library or on the net. You can assign the activity as a classroom exercise or as a part of the revising process for an assigned paper.

**Process**

1. After students have completed any of the activities generating questions for paper topics, have them state those questions as conceptual problems.

2. Students find texts articulating positions that their problem contradicts, complicates, completes, or otherwise destabilizes. They then add to their problem statements two or more versions of common ground based on those texts. Students should try to make their statements of common ground as different as the texts will support.

3. *(Optional)* Have students discuss how those different statements of common ground would color their problem and shape their readers’ expectations.