



Choosing a topic and title

From Idea to Project

- ▶ You've decided on your rough subject area – you have an idea of what you want to do
- ▶ Then what are the considerations that you need to take into account in order to make your research project a success?

Considerations: The Material

- ▶ What primary sources are there relating to your subject area?
 - ▶ How do you find out?
 - ▶ Are there enough of them? (And what *is* enough, anyway?)
 - ▶ Can you access them?
 - ▶ Availability in LRC or a library you can access
 - ▶ Language skills – not only ancient, but modern languages too!

Considerations: Materials

- ▶ What secondary sources are there relating to your area?
 - ▶ How do you find out?
 - ▶ How do you avoid getting bogged down by scholarship?
 - ▶ Why reading too much can be bad
 - ▶ ...and what can that tell you?
- ▶ Can you access the necessary secondary literature on your subject area?
 - ▶ Availability in the LRC or a library you can access
 - ▶ Language skills

Considerations: About you

- ▶ Do you have pre-conceptions about your area?
 - ▶ Have you studied it before?
Have you not studied it before?
- ▶ Can you let go of those preconceptions?
- ▶ Or else:
 - ▶ You will read primary and secondary evidence with blinkers on
 - ▶ Your readings will be vulnerable to criticism



To think about

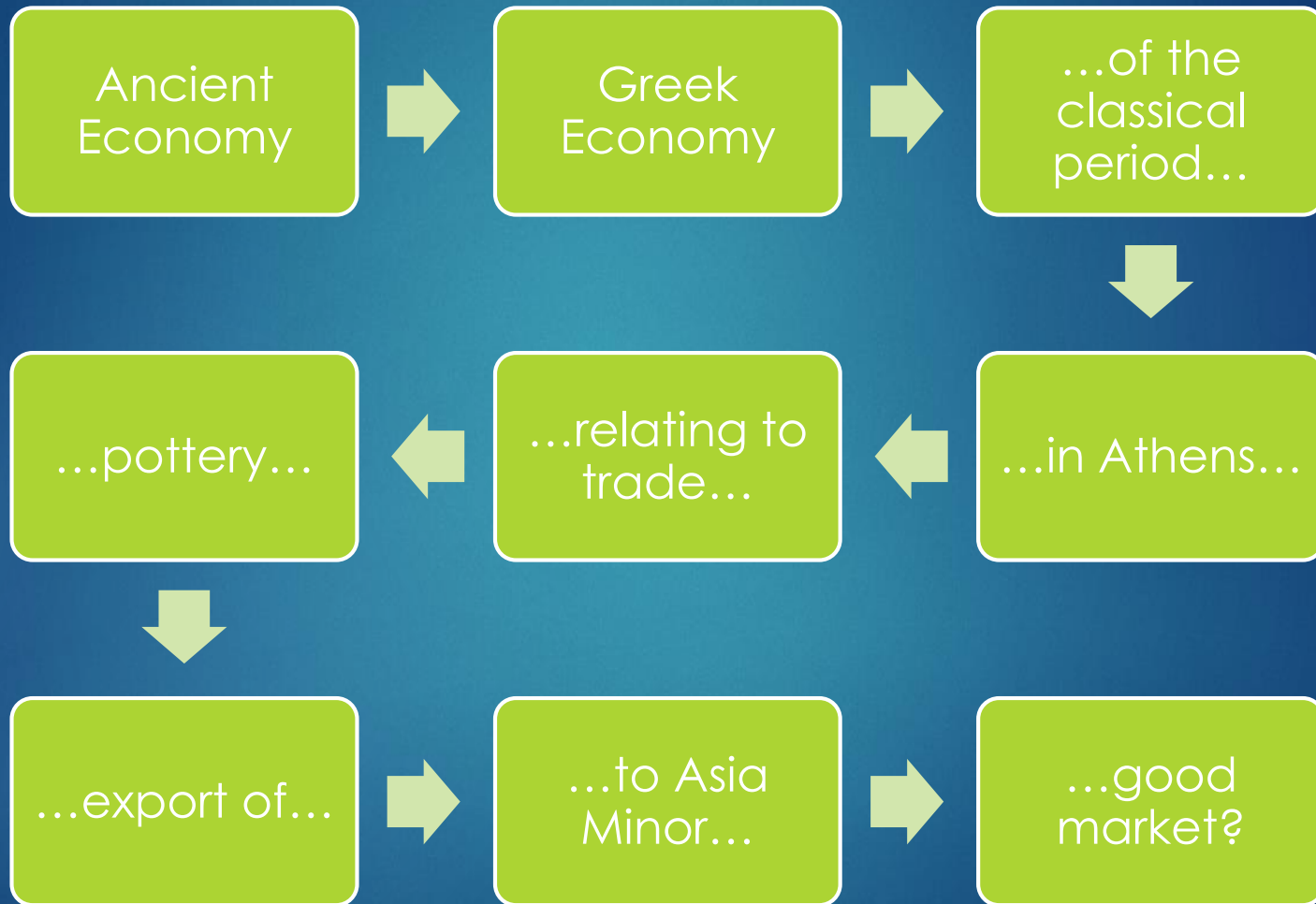
- ▶ Consider the following issues:
 - ▶ How do you locate the material you will need?
 - ▶ What are the main primary sources you expect to use?
 - ▶ What are the main secondary sources you expect to use?
 - ▶ How do you work with them (primary and secondary)?
 - ▶ What do you expect to be the main problems you will have to face?



You have chosen your
subject area...

NOW WHAT?

Step 1: Narrowing it down



Step 2: Focusing your reading

1. What is available?
2. What primary material is available and can you access it?
3. What modern scholarship is available and can you access it?

Step 3: Tweaking the topic

1. A lot more material to do with ETRURIA, very little to do with Asia Minor.
2. There is some scholarship on Athenian – Etruscan relationships in the period
3. SO, not Asia Minor but ETRURIA
4. More material on pottery in the 6th century (archaic period).
5. SO, not classical period but 6th century

Step 4: Write a working title

- ▶ A working title needs to tell you and the reader what the topic is about.
- ▶ It needs to have the possibility of an answer
- ▶ It needs to create the need for an argument or discussion rather than merely be descriptive

Step 4(B): The working title

- ▶ Why was Etruria a good export market for Athenian pottery in the 6th century BCE?

Working titles and the Eye-catcher

- ▶ A working title (or subtitle) is there to tell the reader specifically what your work is about.
- ▶ The “eye-catcher” is there to seduce the reader into picking up your work with interest.
- ▶ The “eye-catcher” is best written when you are nearing the completion of your work.

