Research Proposal Assignment

You will be doing a lot of writing throughout your academic career as a master's level student. This assignment is designed to provide you an opportunity to more fully develop your writing skills in a manner that occurs frequently at the graduate level: the paper topic proposal.

Over the last 3 weeks, your journal and discussion board writings have been designed to help you identify and focus on a problem in your field that you feel strongly about. To develop your paper topic proposal requires research in order to make sure your proposal reflects your paper topic. The proposal should explain/address the following:

1. Your proposed paper topic: This should be a statement of what problem or issue your research will address. This part of the proposal is 1 (one) sentence. You want to be as specific as possible but not so specific that you have no scholarly sources available.
2. Research Design/Methods – How will the research achieve its stated aims?
3. Benefit: What will the research contribute to existing knowledge?

Your proposal will have the following sections, clearly labeled with matching level 1 headings:

I.   Specific Aims / Objectives
II.   Background / Significance of the problem
III.   Design and Methods
IV.   References

The proposal should explain why the problem/issue/topic is interesting or important or both. Why should the reader care about your problem/topic (which means you have to know who the audience of your paper will be). Your topic/problem/issue should be something you care about, something that interests you because if not it will show in your writing. You'll want to do some initial research to find out the type, quality and quantity of information available directly or indirectly (related topics). The proposal requires that you have a clearly stated thesis. A thesis is a proposition that you then prove. It is an assertion NOT a question. You cannot be neutral. A thesis statement requires that you take a position, develop a claim about a subject.