I-Search 2017

Here’s your opportunity to research a topic in which you are interested, interview experts in this field, file an eyewitness report, compile documentation, and produce a document based on your discoveries.

The first step is to select a topic that meets the following criteria:

- It interests you!
- It is researchable in books, periodicals, and through reputable web sites.
- You are able to locate and interview at least one expert in the field. These experts should be people you do not know well – casual acquaintances are acceptable. If you already know the experts (parents, relatives, parents of friends, etc.), they may be able to help you network with other experts – but they should not be the interview contacts themselves!

Talk to family, neighbors, friends, teachers, librarians, school staff, and community groups as resource tools at the planning stage of the project. Find out what they would do. You might be surprised at what they know!

The successful I-Search Project includes:

- A formal research proposal, explaining what you want to investigate, and where you plan to begin;

- Careful journal documentation of each phase of your research. Write dated entries to keep track of everything you do relating to this project - the people you talk with, phone calls you make, letters you write, articles you read, notes you take.

- Précis summaries of at least 75-100 pages of in-depth research (that is the amount of material you need to read and gather your information, NOT what you have to write,) from authoritative books, periodicals, and reliable online resources about the subject;

- Interviews with at least one expert about the subject;

- At least one visit to a place related to the topic for an onsite eyewitness report, known in journalism as a saturation report;

- Observation and, if possible, a “hands-on” experience to be included in your saturation report;

- A titled, exciting I-Search Project Report, complete with research results, and graphics/illustrations, as appropriate;

- Business letters thanking those people who helped you;

- A list of works cited and works consulted in accurate MLA format.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The report must be typed, double-spaced, in a conventional
font and size with standard one-inch margins. All papers must be carefully proofread for grammar and spelling errors. **ANY PAPERS SUBMITTED IN ANY OTHER FORMAT WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

☐ clear, logically developed writing that explores the topic in detail and presents findings in a manner that engages the readers’ interest.

☐ Project length varies with the topic. I never count pages, but it is generally between 25 and 35 pages long.

**Form:** The project report contains four integrated topics:

1. What I knew, assumed, or imagined prior to the search
2. Why I’m writing the paper, the explanation of the need to know!
3. The Search - the story of the quest for answers: results of the interviews, saturation report, visits, hands-on experiences, etc.
4. What I discovered. Remember, a search that “fails” can be just as valuable as one that proves prior expectations!

The writing should reflect the work you put into this project. Remember, the topic is self-selected! Write in a clear, articulate manner that does justice to your efforts. Avoid fluff phrases that add nothing to the exciting information you have to present! Also, avoid pretension, using vocabulary beyond your comprehension. Make sure you understand what you’re writing about. When you come across unfamiliar vocabulary, look it up - and document that in your journal!

**Documentation:** Keep a journal to track of every discussion, book, pamphlet, and experience that goes into the I-Search as you consult/experience them. A complete list of works cited and works consulted must be included as a part of the project. Consult the English Department Handbook, and/or the Analy Library connection to “Noodlebib” the Purdue Style Guide, for instructions and examples of the correct MLA format for documenting sources.

**Evaluation:** Each paper will be scored in four different project component areas:

1. **Thoroughness of Research and Investigation**
2. **Quality of Writing**
3. **Format:** content, organization and documentation, including works cited and works consulted in accurate MLA format
4. **Meeting the Requirements:** complete journal, research, interviews, saturation report, letters, and meeting all due dates.

**Schedule and Points Possible**

Thurs./Fri. February 2/3: Topic Chosen; Signatures due - 5 Points

Monday February 6: Preliminary Statements due – 5 points

Tues./Wed. February 7/8: Have Sonoma County Library Card – 5 points

Thurs./Fri. February 16/17: First draft of Introduction due – 5 points

Thurs./Fri. February 23/24: Precis statements due – 10 points

Thurs./Fri. March 16/17: Interviews due – 5 points

Thurs./Fri. March 30/31: Observation/Saturation Report due – 5 points

Thurs./Fri. April 13/14: Draft of Report “Product” Section - 20 Points

Thurs./Fri. April 20/21: Completed I-Search due – 200 Points

Monday, April 24: I-Search Deadline – minus 20 points!

This project will represent extensive work. Please take it seriously, as it also comprises a SIZABLE portion of your final semester grade. Discuss the topic selection and the requirements with your parents and have one of them read the assignment requirements, sign the bottom of this sheet, and return the signed portion to me by Thurs./Fri. February 2/3.

*********************************************************************************

DETACH HERE

My student and I have read the I-Search assignment information. We understand that the project requires self-discipline, organization, and independent research. My student may need my assistance and advice, but is responsible for his/her own work.

Print Student’s Name: ____________________________

Student Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________

Parent Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________

I-Search Topic: ____________________________

5 Points if returned by Thurs./Fri. February 2nd/3rd
I-Search! Putting It All Together!

The keys to a successful I-Search are

- networking early
- researching early
- working on it regularly
- managing your time wisely

A successful I-Search is not produced by working hours at a time the week before it’s due.

With that said, have you thought, wondered, worried about -

- What will the I-Search Project look like when you’ve finished?
- What are you required to include?
- How do you organize the project?

Here are several organizational requirements:

Use a compact and easily portable composition book to keep a Research Log with dated entries listing:

- research sources, including titles of books, magazine articles, websites
- phone calls related to the project
- letters written related to the project
- sites visited related to the project

This will be turned in along with the completed I-Search Project.

The final project must be submitted in a folder or binder, with eight labeled divider sections:

Section One: Introduction 2 - 4 paragraphs
You wrote a draft of this section in class. You may want to revise the writing, with the following guidelines in mind.

This section explains what you presume and/or know about the subject. It also explains why you want to know more:

- Identify the topic immediately (DEFINE OR STATE IT IN THE FIRST LINE).
- Explain any prior knowledge about the topic you may have.
- You may choose to “hook” readers with a startling fact, statistic, significant quote, thoughtful question, reflective statement
- You may use (but not overuse!) first person statements (I...) But there should be NO second person statements! (you...)
Section Two : Précis Statements

- Write a minimum of ten précis statement. Evidence from these article will be included in the body of the project. These articles must have the bibliographic info at the bottom of each and be included in the Works Cited section (described later).
- Fear not! You will know what a précis statement is!

Section Three  Interview the Experts

- You must interview at least one experts relevant to your research.
- Include either verbatim (word for word) transcripts of the interviews, or summaries of the interviews along with questions you asked.

Section Four: Saturation Report

A “saturation” report is a standard form of journalistic writing. It uses sensory details to describe an experience, place, group, or individual. The writing of a saturation report requires keen observation skills and careful note taking.

- Use fictional techniques to write a non-fictional article. Set the SCENE; use CHARACTERIZATION; include DIALOGUE. Your “VOICE” will need to be SUBTLE rather than overt or obvious.
- The saturation report must be filled with factual information. Your reader will want plenty of details to remain interested in your observations and experiences!
- The choice of subject for the saturation report will depend on your topic and the opportunities open to you because of that choice. Some saturation reports will expand upon one of the interviews; others will be reports of separate observations; still others will report on “hands-on” participation experiences.

Section Five: The I-Search Product

- A synthesis of information about the topic, compiled from research, interviews and observations.
- This is the heart of your I-Search. It should be developed and organized based on the guiding questions that you come up with.
- Relevant photos, artwork, pamphlets, etc., with explanations
- Include MLA citations of quoted and paraphrased interviews, information, photos, art, etc.
Section Six: The Quest for Knowledge - Reflections on the Process 2 + pages

- Explain how you went about discovering it all!
- Reflect on the ups and downs of the process - glitches and rewards - the surprises, disappointments you encountered along the way.
- Review introductory ideas; reflect on how your point of view has changed from the preliminary statement.
- Final reflection - reveal any new insights or opinions

Section Seven: Copies of Letters and Forms 3 + pages

- Copies of signed release forms for recording interviews (if applicable)
- Copies of signed release forms for photography (if applicable)
- Copies of thank you letters (business format) to those people who helped you with the project - interviews, places visited, etc.
- Brochures and business cards or any other paper work that you collect along the way

Section Eight: Sources Cited in Accurate MLA Format 2 + pages

Consult the Handbook of Written English for information on how to cite the variety of sources you use.

- Works Cited

That's a minimum of 30 pages.

As you can see, it's not all writing. Even the written sections include a variety of writing styles!
Guiding Questions for the I-Search

**Guiding Questions**, also known as Driving Questions or Essential Questions, are focused questions you develop that direct the course of your research. These questions should be powerful, provocative, and challenging; they should force you to think critically about your topic.

**Guiding questions** should guide your research. These questions set the stage for further questioning and a higher level of understanding of the topic you have chosen.

**Guiding questions** are open-end and meaningful. These questions should be debatable. There is no single right or wrong answer, and no simple “yes” or “no” answer. The guiding question cannot be answered in a single sentence that you look up on Wikipedia (i.e. When did the Golden State Warriors move to the Bay Area?), nor should it be so broad that you would need to write an encyclopedia to answer it (What are the different foods of the many cultures of the world?).

**Here are some helpful tips for developing your guiding questions:**

- The questions should drive your research.
- It should create a frame and a focus for your research.
- The question should be debatable.
- It should be short and sweet. It contains few words but demands detailed development.
- Use key words such as how, what impact, what effect, why, etc.
- Use simple language that makes sense to you.
- Be prepared to change or tweak the question as you gather research and gain more knowledge.

**Sample Questions:**

- In what ways does art reflect and/or shape culture?
- What role does nutrition play in health and recovery of professional basketball players?
- What impact did “fake news” have on the 2016 presidential election?
- What educational path is best for a career in the culinary arts?
- What work out plan could I use to prepare for a marathon?
- How do microbes influence the flavor of local wine?
- In what ways can technology enhance expression and communication?
- In what ways could football helmets be built to reduce concussive impacts?
- What makes a place worth fighting for?
- How has the Star Wars franchise influenced film makers over the last 40 years?
Name: ___________________________ Score: ___ /200 Points

Topic: ___________________________

**I-Search Evaluation**

- **HOORAY! You met the due date – April 20/21**
- **Minus 20 points** - Sorry! Project did not meet due date, but did meet the deadline. Monday, April 24th!
- **Minus 10 points** - Ouch! Project is not correctly and neatly organized in EIGHT LABELED SECTIONS in an appropriately sized three ring binder.
- **Bonus! 20 points extra credit for turning in every assignment on time since the beginning of the project.**
- **Bonus! 10 extra credit points for outstanding aesthetics.** I-Search is beautifully put together, and it looks like author went above and beyond.

/10 points **Section One: Introduction - Preliminary Statement**

- Hooks readers with a startling fact, statistic, significant quote, thoughtful question, reflective statement.
- Identifies topic immediately.
- Details prior knowledge about the topic.
- Explains why you wanted to research this topic, and what you were hoping to gain from the process.

/20 points **Section Two: Cited Précis Statements for each article included in the Product Section**

- Précis Statements provide an adequate summary of relevant information
- Follows the correct format; including the first line which gives author and title of piece.
- Each Précis Statement includes correct MLA format citation
- Each Précis Statement is included in list of Works Cited

/15 points **Section Three: Interview**

- [Additional interviews +5 points each (up to two additional, subject to teacher approval)]

- Interviews with at least one expert on the topic or a related subject
- Interviews respond to thoughtful questions

/30 points **Section Four: Saturation Report**

- Observation enhanced with sensory details
- Report includes elements of fiction-writing - setting, characterization, dialogue, interior monologue
- Report is filled with factual information; may include relevant, labeled photos, brochures, etc.

/75 points **Section Five: The I-Search Product**

- **/15 points** Intro:
  - Engaging first sentence
  - Clear definition of subject provided in introduction
  - Thoughtful, relevant focus or thesis statement

- **/30 points** Body:
  - Clearly stated topic sentence that make clear the direction of each paragraph.
  - Synthesis of information from research, interviews, and observations.
  - The author's (YOURS!) voice is clear throughout. Needs to sound more personal and less like an encyclopedia.

- **/10 points** Conclusion:
  - A recap of main points tied to a brief personal reflection on the information and process.

- **/10 points** Parenthetical references in correct MLA format and are from valid sources with authors.

- **/10 points** Artistic format that may include relevant, labeled graphics, photos, brochures, charts, etc.

/15 points **Section Six: Reflective Statement**

- The Quest for Knowledge
- Process of discovery, disappointments, rewards
- Reflects on the changes understanding about the subject from the Introduction/Preliminary Statement
- Final reflection offers new insights and/or opinions on the subject and the process of discovery

/10 points **Section Seven: Letters and Forms**

- Copies of thank you letters in business format to those people who helped you with the project - interviews, places visited, transportation
- Includes signed release forms for recording interviews. These must be included for a verbatim (word for word) interview.
- Includes signed release forms for photography (if applicable).

/25 points **Section Eight: Sources Cited**

- Cites all sources referenced in the Product
- Includes citations for all Précis Statement articles
- All sources are listed in correct MLA format
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of 1/23 - 1/27</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tues./Wed.</th>
<th>Thurs./Fri.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare yourself for the I-Search</td>
<td></td>
<td>The I-Search is Assigned!!!</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week of 1/30 - 2/3</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tues./Wed.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This week you should be figuring out your research topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td>* Topics must be chosen and the parent signature sheet is due (5 points). We’ll do the preliminary statement in class (5 points).</td>
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<th>Week of 2/6 - 2/10</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tues./Wed.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This is the beginning of your research. You have to find and comb through 75 – 100 pages of research. You should also be networking. Who do you know, who knows someone who could help you with your project? You need to find someone to interview and a source for hands-on experience.</td>
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<td>* Introduction is due (5 points).</td>
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<th>Week of 2/13 - 2/17</th>
<th>Monday</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Continue researching online and in the library. You will also want to start writing up your précis statements and complete your first draft of your introduction.</td>
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<td>* Precis statements are due (10 points).</td>
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<th>Week of 2/20 - 2/24</th>
<th>Monday</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue writing up précis statements and doing research.</td>
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<td>* Interviews are due (5 points).</td>
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<th>Week of 2/27 - 3/3</th>
<th>Monday</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Most of your research should be done by this point (though there is no reason why you can not continue to find more). You should be focusing on interviews and observation/saturation reporting.</td>
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<th>Week of 3/6 - 3/10</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tues./Wed.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Prepare for and conduct interviews this week or next.</td>
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<th>Week of 3/13 - 3/17</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tues./Wed.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Continue working on interviews and saturation reporting. Begin organizing the main research report. How have your guiding questions driven your research? What have you found? What will your research report look like?</td>
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<th>Week of 3/20 - 3/24</th>
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<th>Tues./Wed.</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Break: No school this week. You should be working on any and all parts of I-Search: Hands on experience for Saturation Report, more interviews, additional research, writing, writing, and more writing.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>You should have finished your hands-on experience and be working on your saturation report.</td>
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<td>* Observation/Saturation report is due (5 points).</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week of 4/3 - 4/7</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tues./Wed.</th>
<th>Thurs./Fri.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>You should be working on your research report (section 5) <strong>every night</strong> for several hours.</td>
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<th>Week of 4/10 - 4/14</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tues./Wed.</th>
<th>Thurs./Fri.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>If you have been keeping up with the soft due dates and have been diligently working on this the last 10 weeks, then this is the week you hate me. Stick with it. You’re almost there!</td>
<td></td>
<td>* First draft of Section 5 “The Product” is due for peer editing. (20 points)</td>
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<th>Week of 4/17 - 4/21</th>
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<th>Tues./Wed.</th>
<th>Thurs./Fri.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>If you have not been keeping up or diligently working on this project over the last 10 weeks, then this is the week that you hate me and yourself.</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>I-SEARCH DUE DATE!!!!</strong> 200 points</td>
</tr>
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| Week of 4/24 - 4/28 | Monday | | |
|---------------------|--------||
|                    | I-Search deadline. Will not accept past this day. Minus 20 points. | | |