



# 20% Project



**10<sup>th</sup> Grade Academic English  
Research Project  
Ms. Ward  
Haverford High School  
Havertown, PA**

# Project Description

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## WHAT IS 20% ALL ABOUT?

The basic premise of the 20 percent time project is that it is student-driven, passion-based learning. The idea gained traction as more and more people read Daniel Pink's book *Drive*. Pink, a former speech writer for Al Gore turned author, cites an idea that started with the 3M company and was expanded by Google. Google encourages its employees to spend one day each work week, 20 percent of their work time, focusing on their own projects. Why? Well, it turns out that when people have autonomy over their work, time to master their skills, and a clear purpose, they are more motivated to learn. And scientific studies and research supports this claim. In fact, Google's philosophy of 20 percent time is how we now have Gmail!

DISCOVER  QUESTION  REFLECT  TRANSFORM

## THE PROJECT

**What do you want to learn?** Each Friday during the second quarter we will be using our time to research the topic of your choice. Your goal is to become an expert on that topic. But this project is not just about researching...it is about doing something with what you learn. To complete this project successfully you will

1. Pick a topic you are passionate about, something you want to learn. You may work alone or in small groups of no more than four students.
2. Find a book on your topic to guide your learning.
3. Pitch your project idea in a project proposal to the class for topic approval. You will submit both a written proposal and produce a video proposal to be posted to our class site for our community of learners to vote on.
4. Connect with an expert on your topic to interview.
5. Blog each Friday reflecting on your progress. Each post should also incorporate reflections on how your selected book is guiding your research.
6. Produce something - a presentation, a writing piece, a show - that you share with people outside of our classroom.

This is not simply a research project. Once you've finished the research phase of this project, you must do something with your new found knowledge. Students will be creating products and presentations (either individually or in small groups) that will extend beyond the classroom, such as documentary videos for H-Vision, web pages, pamphlets, newspaper or magazine editorials, an article for the *Fordian*, letters, public speaking presentations, fund raising, music, plays...or whatever you can think of to best make our community aware of your research topic. The idea is to reach an audience outside the doors of our classroom in order to share your research.

You will turn in assigned pieces along the way for teacher consultation and evaluation, but you will not receive a grade for this project until the very end of the course. In this way, you will be given many opportunities to utilize peer, self, and teacher revision to help you bring each piece of this project up to publishable quality. This is the culminating writing assignment for the course, and as such, it should represent your very best work.

# Expectations and Requirements

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This multi-step assignment will require a great deal of organization and planning. You will be given the opportunity to revise each step before turning it in for your final grade, and you will not want to misplace any revisions or drafts that you complete along the way. You will be asked to turn in final copies as well as rough drafts for each of the major steps of this project. Use the calendar of dates to help you keep track of each of the steps explained below.

## **PROJECT PROPOSAL AND PITCH (20% of grade) DUE: Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>**

Students will submit a one to two page, double-spaced, typed project proposal that answers the following questions: Why are you interested in this particular topic, What question are you hoping to answer through your research, What will you need to research, Where will you find the expert and information you need; and What is your action plan? In addition to the written proposal, the student will turn the proposal into a video pitch (less than 2 minutes) to be posted to our class website.

## **WEEKLY REFLECTION (30% of grade) DUE: end of class each Friday**

Each student will select a book to guide their research project. Students can use time in class Friday to read their selected book, but reading must also be done outside of class. Each Friday students need to post a blog entry that reflects on the progress being made toward the project's goals and incorporate significant reflection on how their selected book is helping to guide their learning. Each blog entry must be a minimum of two substantial paragraphs.

## **THE INTERVIEW (20% of grade) DUE: Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup>**

Students will need to connect with and interview an expert on their research topic. Students will submit between 7-10 well-worded interview questions to the teacher prior to meeting with their expert. Once approved, the student will meet with the expert, making sure to ask permission to use and/or record the interview. The student will post a two page reflection on the interview and information learned along with any supporting information (video or audio recording) to their project blog.

## **PRODUCT (30% of grade) DUE: Tuesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>**

Your final product can be completed individually or in small groups. The most important aspect to consider when planning your final product is that you choose a product type that will be effective in reaching your identified audience. You may produce a website, a public service announcement for H-Vision, a documentary film, a public speech or presentation for another class or venue, an informational binder/resource for public use, a fund raising campaign, etc. The product will be evaluated on quality, reflection of research, and effect on audience. The expectation is that you will create and distribute a product to an audience outside of our classroom.

## **FINAL PROJECT FOR GRADING: DUE: Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup>**

Revisions will be made to the proposal, blog posts, interview reflection, speech, and product prior to the final due date. Students will turn in final good copies of each piece as well as rough drafts and revisions for each portion of this project. The final project will be graded using the holistic rubric on the following page. Projects will NOT be accepted after this date.

# Brainstorm

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What have you always wanted to learn about, but so far, haven't had the opportunity? Would you like to learn about photography from an expert? Do you want to teach elementary students French? Are you interested in raising money to help those in need? This is your opportunity to research something you are passionate about. But there are a few guidelines. **Complete questions below as part of your initial brainstorm.** Your project may change from this, but you need to start somewhere!

**Motivation:** What is the inspiration for this project? Why did you choose this project? Why is it important to you?

**Topic:** What is the background of your topic? Find some research online about your topic. What do others have to say? Summarize what it is that you would like to learn.

**Issue Analysis:** Hopefully you've thought about something for which you have a need. What is the need- what is the gap you are filling in your life/school/community? Where is the niche your project will fill? How can you improve the topic/area/situation/field?

**Objective:** What is your goal in one sentence?

**Mentors:** You will need to find a book on your topic to guide your learning as well as an expert to interview.

- Book and author
- Potential person to interview

**Action Plan:** This is where you plan the details of the project.

- What will be done?
- When will it be done?
- Who will do it?
- How much will it cost?
- How will you determine if you are making successful progress?

# Preparing Your Project Pitch

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While the form and style of proposals vary widely, proposals are a way to help others understand what motivates you to undertake a particular project. As an example of scholarly and academic writing, a good proposal blends the best elements of informational, persuasive, and narrative writing styles. You must be keenly aware of who your audience is and what he or she may be looking for. Your task is to convince Ms. Ward and the students in our class that your project deserves support.

## **THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROPOSAL:**

You will need to type a one-two page formal project proposal before beginning any in-depth research into your topic. Your project proposal or pitch will be done in two parts - a written component and a video to be posted to our class site. Your written project proposal will be typed in paragraph form using MLA formatting style.

In order for your proposal to be accepted, you will need to address the following questions:

- 1) **Why are you interested in this particular topic?**
- 2) **What question(s) are you hoping to answer through your research?**
- 3) **What will you need to research?**
- 4) **Where will you find the expert and the information you need?**
- 5) **What will the outcome/product of your research be?**
- 6) **Why is this a viable topic?**

## **Successful proposals:**

- Identify a **specific, limited, and viable** research topic. The student has selected an issue that he or she can both learn something about through research as well as create a product to share with our larger community.
- Identify a clear and focused research question.
- Present the rationale for the research project in a well-organized and clearly structured proposal that answers the above research questions in paragraph form. You will organize your proposal like other expository writing assignments - capture your reader's attention with a solid hook sentence, your thesis is your focused research question, and your body paragraphs should persuade your audience why your topic is viable.
- Mention specific research found during the preliminary research process.
- Are written using clear and concise wording.
- Utilize appropriate scholarly and persuasive diction in order to convince the reader that the topic selected is worthy of study.

## **Research proposals that do not succeed are ones that:**

- Lack organization and structure
- Lack focus on a specific culture and/or problem
- Identify a topic that is too vague or too broad to actually research
- Are repetitive and verbose
- Fail to mention viable research
- Fail to stay focused on the research question
- Fail to develop a coherent and persuasive argument for the proposed research
- Provide too much detail on minor issues, but not enough detail on major issues
- Ramble, using too many examples without a clear sense of direction
- Fail to follow MLA formatting style
- Do not demonstrate evidence of both editing and revision

## THE WRITTEN PROPOSAL:

### I. The Introduction

- Begin with a creative hook - an startling statistic, a quote from a person affected by your topic, paint a scenario with your words
- Give some background on your topic
- Why is this topic important to you
- What questions are you hoping to answer through your research (this is the thesis of your proposal worded as a question)

### II. Body of your Proposal

#### A. What will you need to research?

- What sort of background on your topic will you need to understand?
- What do you already know but need more information?
- What will you need to know in order to do something with your research?

#### B. Where will you find the information you need?

1. What specific books, magazines, and other print resources can you use as guides? This is your place to mention the specific book you will use to guide your learning.
2. What expert will you interview? Why is he or she an expert?

#### C. What will be the outcome of your research?

1. What will you have to show at the end of your research?
2. What will your product be?

### III. Conclusion

#### A. Why is topic viable?

## THE VIDEO PITCH:

Once you've completed your written proposal, you will turn your proposal into a video pitch. The video pitch will be organized in the same way as the written proposal; however, you have the freedom to produce your pitch in a way that makes the best sense for your topic. You can elect to screencast a slide or Prezi presentation or you may want to record yourself talking - it is up to you. Your video pitch should

- engage your viewers with use of appropriate images and design elements,
- present your idea in a professional, well-prepared manner,
- be under two minutes in length,
- answer the same six questions as the written proposal, and
- be posted to our class website for our class to vote on.

# Proposal Rubric

Progress:	Expectations:	Comments:
<p><b>Proposal Accepted</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MLA:</b> The proposal is correctly set-up using MLA guidelines (1” margins all the way around, header in upper right, name and information in upper left, font, and spacing)</li> <li>• <b>CONTENT:</b> The proposal identifies a specific, limited, and viable research topic. The student has selected an issue that he or she can both learn something about through research as well as create a product to share.</li> <li>• <b>ORGANIZATION:</b> The proposal presents the rationale for the research project in a well-organized and clearly structured proposal that captures the reader’s attention with a solid hook sentence, presents a thesis focused on a research question, and persuades the reader using well developed body paragraphs. The proposal answers the following questions in paragraph form with specific and detailed responses:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Why are you interested in this particular issue?</li> <li>○ What question are you hoping to answer through your research?</li> <li>○ What will you need to research?</li> <li>○ Where will you find the expert and information you need?</li> <li>○ What will the outcome/product of your research be?</li> <li>○ Why is this a viable topic?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>STYLE:</b> The proposal is written using clear and concise wording. It also utilizes appropriate scholarly and persuasive diction in order to convince the reader that the topic selected is worthy of study.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Proposal Provisionally Accepted But Revisions Are Needed</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MLA:</b> The proposal has minor MLA formatting problems.</li> <li>• <b>CONTENT:</b> The proposal identifies a viable research. However, the topic is not limited enough. The student has selected an issue that he or she can both learn something about through research as well as create a product.</li> <li>• <b>ORGANIZATION:</b> The proposal is well-organized into paragraphs using the outline provided in the packet. It answers all six of the research questions; however, the proposal lacks specific details and needs to be revised.</li> <li>• <b>STYLE:</b> The proposal is written using clear and concise wording. It also utilizes appropriate scholarly and persuasive diction in order to convince the reader that the topic selected is worthy of study.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Proposal Rejected</b></p>	<p>The proposal is not formatted correctly, lacks specific details, and does not have a clearly identified research plan.</p>	