

## 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English Research-based Persuasive Paper

A requirement for 10<sup>th</sup> grade English is a persuasive paper on a topic of your choice. This topic will be researched and argued in written, persuasive form using reliable sources and your own opinions. The paper will be completed using guidelines that are **standardized** across the 10<sup>th</sup> grade English classes. (In other words, it doesn't matter which teacher you have, we're all doing this!) Each class will be using 2-5 class periods of research time and 3-5 weeks to complete the project.

### **PROMPT:**

#### **Lifelong Learning (Research Paper):**

Research Equality Issues: Much progress has been made for equality between the sexes since the late 1800s, but there are still areas of inequality in modern life. With a partner, research an area of gender inequality, such as differences in pay, women's sports, or career advancement. Look for objective sources

OR Teacher-Approved Topic

#### **Paper requirements:**

- Topic selection meets one of the themes from our community (see below for suggestions).
- Research comes from a minimum of **four** reliable sources: one must be a **print** source and one must be an **electronic article** source. These, along with a **minimum** of two other sources, will be listed on a Works Cited page. At least one must be a **primary source**.
- Paper is 3-5 pages of text. (This is not counting the Works Cited page.)
- Paper is typed, double-spaced in standard font (12 font, Times New Roman or Arial).
- Paper is based on a clear thesis statement and is clearly persuasive. (In other words, there is a controversy and you have taken a position on that controversy.)
- Premises are supported with direct quotes and parenthetical citations.
- MLA format is used for parenthetical citation and a Works Cited page.
- Counter argument is addressed at some point in the paper.
- Two copies of your final draft will be submitted to teacher. (One to be graded; one to go on file.)

#### **Topic Selection:**

You must select a topic that has direct ties to our community of the Pacific Northwest Region. Below are broad themes and then more narrowly focused topics. These are suggestions only. Once you have chosen a topic and position on that topic you must write a proposal and have this approved by your teacher. **No two people in the same class can have the same thesis.**

#### **EDUCATION**

Dress code, school uniforms, WASL, single gender classrooms, graduation requirements, saying the Pledge of Allegiance in class, and so on....

#### **ENVIRONMENT**

Fishing rights, salmon depletion, Lake Whatcom watershed, the Hundred Acre Wood, Georgia Pacific, leash laws, protecting parks, the pipeline, and so on....

#### **REGIONAL MATTERS**

The US/Canadian border, homelessness, unemployment, and so on....

## STATE LAWS

Driver's licensing requirements/restrictions, drinking age, gambling/casinos, curfews, and so on....

## OPEN

Do you have your own idea? Remember, it must be a community issue focusing on the PNW (or smaller like Washington State, Whatcom County, the city of Bellingham, or Squalicum High School).

Talk to your teacher before you decide anything!

### Overview of the Scholarly Research Paper

The **goals** of the scholarly research paper are for students to show that they can organize information from multiple sources, interpret the information meaningfully, and communicate this meaning to others. Students must be able to use valid sources, formal English, and accepted research style.

The Scholarly Research Paper **Rubric/Evaluation** assesses eight main areas:

- 1. Ideas & Content:** a thesis is clearly stated (a side is chosen and stuck to); the paper is focused and interesting with relevant details
- 2. Organization:** the organization scheme is logical and complete; the reader moves through the essay easily.
- 3. Word Choice & Voice:** the writer uses sophisticated language appropriate to the topic, audience, and purpose; the vocabulary is interesting, precise, and natural.
- 4. Fluency:** there are a consistently strong variety of sentence structures; effective transitions move the reader easily through the essay.
- 5. Conventions:** there are minimal errors in punctuation, spelling, and Standard English grammar structures.
- 6. Format:** includes these eight MLA Structural Elements –
  1. Typing in 12 point Times New Roman or Arial font with quality printing
  2. Paper, 8½ X 11 inches
  3. Margins, defaulted (1" x 1 ½")
  4. Double spacing throughout (including heading)
  5. Heading, flush (aligned) with the left margin
  6. Title, centered with correct capitalization
  7. Header (Last name and page numbers) in upper right corners
  8. Length, three to five pages
- 7. References:** there are at least four reliable sources; at least one source is from print and at least one electronic; the "Works Cited" page follows the MLA format.
- 8. Quotations:** direct quotations are powerful examples of main points and follow MLA format. No more than 20% of the body is made up of quotations; transitions between text and quotes are seamless and clear. Quotations are taken verbatim and cited in order to avoid *plagiarism*.