I-Search Research Paper Information Packet

The I-Search research paper requires you to choose a topic - a topic you have interest in knowing more about. Your topic will be written about from a personal point of view. You will also write about the research process itself. Your paper will consist of four major parts:

**The introduction:** You will begin by stating what you already know and what you want to know about your topic. You will also identify the reason you chose your topic.

**The search:** This section describes the research steps taken to find out what you wanted to know—including both the steps that led to useful information and the steps that turned out to be dead ends.

**The research results:** In this section, you discuss the results of your research using the information you found from credible sources.

**The conclusion:** This final section will include your reactions and reflections to the information you discovered during the research process.

Part 1: Select a Topic

Even though an I-Search paper is usually less formal and more personal than a traditional research paper, its purpose is the same: to find information. The main difference between an I-Search paper and a typical research paper is that most of an I-Search paper is written in first person (I) and includes the story of your search process along with your reflections about what you learned. For this I-Search project, your research choice should focus on one of the topics from The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian or Picking Cotton.

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* topics:
- Indian reservations
- Indians of North America: politics, government, social conditions, social life
- Poverty: poor children, poverty and children, poor families, poverty and health
- Racial discrimination
- Bullying
- Alcoholism

*Picking Cotton* topics:
- DNA evidence, DNA and crime, criminal investigation, forensic evidence
- Wrongful convictions, judicial error, discrimination in law enforcement, racial profiling in law enforcement
- Eyewitness identification
- Rape
Think about which one of these topics you are interested in and would like to further explore. Once you have selected a topic, your task is to find sources and write a paper about the information from your sources.
To avoid collecting information that you cannot use in your I-Search project, you need to narrow the focus of your topic as much as possible. The best way to do this is to ask yourself exactly what you want to find out from your research. To get started, think about the questions below. After doing so, respond to these questions.

A. *What is my topic?*

B. *Why am I interested in this topic?*

C. *What do I hope to learn from my research?*

**Part 2: The Introduction Paragraph**

The introduction paragraph to your I-Search project will tell what you already know about your topic and what you want to learn about your topic. Use the chart below to list everything you know about your topic and everything you want to learn. You may not use all of these ideas when researching, but they will help you decide the direction of your research.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I already know</th>
<th>What I want to learn</th>
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Use the above information to answer the following questions in a paragraph. This paragraph will be the introduction to your research project. Write this portion of the paper before you begin searching for your answers. It should reflect all of your ideas, questions and opinions prior to your investigation. The introduction should be written in first person.

1. Why is this topic important to you or of interest to you?
2. What do you already know about the topic?
3. What specifically do you want to learn?

**Paragraph 1 (Introduction):**

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**Part 3: The Search (2 paragraphs)**

Describe the steps you went through to research your topic. Include both the steps that led to useful information and the steps that turned out to be dead ends. Explain who you talked to, where you searched, and how you found the information for the I-Search paper. Then, reflect on the search process. Tell what the experience has taught you about doing this kind of research project. This section should also be written in first person.

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Part 4: Searching for Sources

You will need to use three different sources (the course LibGuide is a good resource for help):

1. One background database.
   Print the source.
   Background database information for Works Cited page:
   Author name(s): ____________________________________________________________
   Article title: ______________________________________________________________
   Source: ______________________________________________________________________
   Publisher: _____________________________________________________________________
   Date: _________________________________________________________________________
   Database: _____________________________________________________________________

2. One book (select a specific chapter from the book) Call Number:____________________
   Copy the chapter used from a book.
   Book information for Works Cited page:
   Author(s): ______________________________________________________________________
   Book title: _______________________________________________________________________ 
   Publisher: __________________________________________________________________________
   Publication year: _____________________________________________________________________

3. One periodical article from a database for a newspaper or magazine.
   Print the article.
   Article information for Works Cited page:
   Author name(s): ______________________________________________________________
   Article title: _________________________________________________________________
   Publication name: __________________________________________________________________
   Date: ____________________________________________________________________________
   Page numbers: _____________________________________________________________________
   Database: ________________________________________________________________________

Part 5: Research Notes

Take notes from your three sources. Use any technique(s) (marking text, bulleted lists, outlining, highlighting, etc.) of your preference. Your notes will be turned in with your final project.

Reminder: Final typed copy of your paper does not need to include every detail from your handwritten notes.

Part 6: Research Paragraphs (3 paragraphs)

Remember when you summarize, you should put the information in your own words. It is plagiarizing if you copy a source word for word or if you use your source’s ideas and don’t cite the source. This portion of the project should be written in third person and state source facts only with no personal opinions.

Reminder: Each of your three sources should be summarized using the 5-8 sentences per paragraph rule. The first sentence of each paragraph should include the source’s author, title and main idea statement.
Part 7: Conclusion/Reflection (last paragraph)

The final paragraph of this project revisits your overall purpose for writing. Your final paragraph should describe your reflections from what you have learned. Do you need to learn more? What other information do you need? Have your ideas or opinions changed in any way? How does the information you learned impact you or your life? The conclusion should be written in first person.

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Part 8: Your Rough Draft (Typed & Peer Edited)

Your rough draft will be typed and edited by a Learning Center tutor (use I-Search Paper Peer Edit Rubric). Rough draft will be turned in with your final project.

Rough draft should include:
1. The introduction paragraph that was written in Part 2 of this information packet. Paragraph should be written in first person. Reread it and be sure this paragraph grabs your reader’s attention and makes the reader want to read your paper.

2. The search paragraphs should describe where and how you searched for your information (written in Part 3). This should also be written in first person.

3. Research paragraphs should tell what you discovered about your topic by summarizing the information that you learned from your sources (see Part 6 and write in third person).

4. Your final paragraph of conclusion should describe your reflections on what you learned and should be written in first person (see Part 7).

*After completing your first draft of your paper: Print paper, read it and read it again out loud. Take your paper to The Learning Center for an English tutor to help you. Make corrections and changes as needed.

Project Reminders:

- Pages typed using MLA format (see Completed Assignment Requirements on next page).

- Works Cited page with three sources listed in alphabetical order

- Mechanics: Grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.

- Appropriate organization of project materials
Materials to be turned in on due date:

- I-Search Research Project Information Packet
- Printed sources as instructed in part 4 (stapled separately with your name on each source)
- Research notes (stapled and labeled as source #1, source #2 and source #3)
- Typed rough draft from peer edit
- Final copy of your paper stapled with Works Cited page

Completed Assignment Requirements: Paper should be typed and double-spaced with 1” margins. Pages should be stapled. Use a standard font (Times New Roman or Arial) with a 12 point font size. Only the first page should include identification in upper left corner. Use example below.

Jane Smith  
Professor Jones  
English 003  
10 January 2016
I-SEARCH PAPER PEER EDIT RUBRIC

Writer’s Name_____________________ Title of I-Search Paper________________________

Peer Editor’s Name_________________ * *** PLEASE READ THE ENTIRE PAPER***

GUIDELINES: First check the paper for MLA format. Next, read each paragraph carefully, check the boxes of this rubric as you read.

☐ Correct heading in the upper left hand corner of first page only
  o Student’s name
  o Instructor’s name
  o Course name
  o Due date (day month year)

☐ Writer’s last name, space and page number are in the upper right hand corner of each page

☐ Title is centered on the first page
  o Does the title introduce the topic of the paper?
  o The title should not be bolded, underlined or italicized.

☐ Entire paper (including the heading and title) is double spaced with NO additional spacing

☐ Beginning word of each new paragraph is indented

☐ Entire paper is written in Times New Roman or Arial with 12-point font (compare font size to this handout)

☐ There are at least 7 paragraphs
  o Introduction (1 paragraph)
  o Description of search (2 paragraphs)
  o 3 Research paragraphs (1 for each source)
  o Conclusion paragraph (1 paragraph)

☐ A Works Cited page is attached with 3 sources
  o The words Works Cited are centered at the top of the page
  o The font is Times New Roman or Arial, 12-point
  o The sources are listed in alphabetical order
  o Hanging indent for sources used (if needed)
# I-Search Project Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Part 1: Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part 2: Know &amp; Learn</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Part 2: Introduction Paragraph</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Part 3: Search Paragraphs</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Parts 4 &amp; 5: 3 Sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source #1-Printed + Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source #2-Copied + Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source #3-Printed + Notes</td>
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<td>Part 6: Research Paragraphs</td>
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<td>Source #1</td>
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<td>Source #2</td>
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<td>Source #3</td>
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<td>Part 7: Conclusion/Reflection Paragraph</td>
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<td>Part 8: Peer Edit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>MLA Format</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanics:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Works Cited Page</td>
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