**Searching for Justice— English 12 Research Project March-April 2015**

An Authentic Research Assignment—Conflict and Curiosity

Write a paper of 1,500--2,000 (5-7 pages) words that **informs the reader beyond commonplace knowledge of a subject**. The essay should show the depth of your investigation of a question or problem you are curious about. You will collect information from print and electronic sources that will help you focus your topic and you can also collect data through interviews, questionnaires or content analysis that can be displayed and analyzed as evidence. The following questions will help you become authentic researchers:

* What is research and how is it different from reporting?
* What is a researchable question?
* How do I do prepare a proposal for my research?
* How can do we evaluate our own success as authentic researchers?
* Where do I get information?
* How do I get data from a primary source?
* How do I display and analyze data?
* How do I present my paper using a style sheet? Modern Language Association (MLA)

Bonus Topic for County Competition—Focused on Maryland’s Eastern Shore

Research and present a topic for the Old Home Prize Essay contest. The contest requires seniors to explore little known facts or legends about Maryland’s Eastern Shore in a 5-7 page essay to increase awareness and interest in the life, culture and traditions of the area. This essay adheres to the Elsie W. Jackson Old Home Prize which is awarded yearly to the student in the senior class who writes the best essay that preserves unrecorded or little known facts and legends connected with Maryland’s Eastern Shore.

**Research Project Criteria:**

1. The essay should thoroughly discuss a narrowed topic.
2. The content of the essay shows evidence of research with MLA citations and a “Works Cited” page.
3. The research should include a sufficient number of authoritative works cited. The sources may include interviews as well as internet, database and print sources (6 sources or more and at least 60 note cards and varied sources).
4. The essay should present a logical and satisfactory development of controlling purpose of the writer. Length is 1500-2000 words (5-7 pages), double-spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman.
5. The paper should be written in standard, edited English in MLA format with page number and last name of the author on each page.
6. The paper should preferably be typed. A handwritten paper should be written double-spaced on one side of unlined paper in blue or black.
7. The paper must include a cover sheet containing the name of the student, title of the paper, name of the high school and date of submission.
8. The paper must be turned in with a rough draft, formal outline and all note and bibliography cards.

**Step 1: Choose a topic and determine questions you have about it; use those questions to narrow your topic to make it manageable.**

**Step 2:** Locate sources of information, getting publishing information and taking notes by quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing.

* Use a working bibliography form to record publishing information and your preliminary evaluation of the source’s information.
* Use note cards to record your notes, identifying them as direct quotes, paraphrases, or summaries as per the prescribed format.
* Submit your first ten cards to check for accurate format.

**Step 3:** Develop a working thesis statement that captures the main idea of your research. Your thesis statement should be a complex or compound-complex sentence in order to capture and direct different facets of your topic. Remember that a working thesis statement is an early draft. You can change it.

**Step 4:** Continue taking notes from source material, with a particular eye toward supporting your thesis statement. You will need to make at least 40 additional cards/notes.

**Step 5:** Make an outline of the essay. Physically arrange your notecards to determine the best order of presenting your information. On your outline, use your slug and source/card number as well as a brief reference to the quote. Make note of any parts of your topic that you need to find more information for.

**Step 6**: Write your complete rough draft following the guidelines below.

* 5-7 pages, not including works cited page
* use MLA style (Times New Roman 12-point font, double spaced)
* working title, an introduction with thesis statement underlined, all points in outline, conclusion, and works cited page
* all references in their complete forms (i.e., summarized, paraphrased, or quoted)
* Use parenthetical documentation on all source material; turn in all source material

**Step 7:** Write your final draft, improving and polishing as best you can. Follow the guidelines on the rubric.

**Step 8:** Use the information but not the paper itself to create a presentation and visual display. More information about this will follow.

Schedule:

Assignment introduction--Feb. 27 in the Media Center—print sources intro/topic selection

Feb. 28 in the Media Center—topic selection, working thesis, working bibliography

March 1 SAT Day---Periods 1-3 cancelled, ½ hour classes for Periods 5 & 6

March 2-3—Finish Macbeth and final Macbeth Essay

March 6 & 7—Research in Media Center—notecards/sheets after source card creation

\*Turn in 10 notes and 2 sources by end of class on March 7

March 8—Drafting a working outline/ drafting the introduction and conclusion

March 9—Drafting the body with in-text citations

March 10—Peer revision of rough draft (no computers—please bring printed copy.

March 13—Half draft with in-text citations, works cited, and outline

March 14—Complete rough draft edits, revise for voice and rhetoric

March 15 & 16—In classroom on computers for final edits and revisions

March 20—Final Project due—all parts of the project are turned in:

* Final draft of the essay with a cover sheet and works cited
* Formal outline with the thesis
* Rough draft with peer revision and self-edit/ revision
* Minimum 50-75 notecards and 5 or more source cards that include print, database, multimedia and interviews.