

East St. John High School

Senior Project Guide

Initial Implementation
July 2008

The English Department of East St. John High School gratefully acknowledges the permission of Destrehan High School to use their Senior Project materials for our students' use.

Why Do Senior Projects?

Because senior projects can help you

- **Model independent, lifelong, learning skills.**
- **Apply competent basic skills.**
- **Use effective self-evaluation skills.**
- **Work successfully independently and interdependently.**
- **Practice decision-making strategies.**
- **Have a sense of self-confidence.**
- **Understand the importance of a sense of humor.**
- **Recognize and understand systems.**
- **Demonstrate responsibility, reliability, and accountability.**
- **Meet challenges without undue stress.**
- **Have a sense of their skills and abilities.**
- **Be able to create a plan and follow through.**
- **Understand the complexities, connections and relationships within ideas and disciplines.**
- **Celebrate personal success and that of others.**
- **Feel empowered, valued, and capable.**
- **Learn to problem-solve.**
- **Communicate effectively.**
- **Be prepared to embrace life.**
- **Be courteous and polite.**
- **Use critical and creative thinking skills.**
- **Demonstrate ethical behavior.**
- **Maintain a sense of balanced perspective.**
- **Understand and demonstrate a quest for quality.**
- **Value tolerance, patience, and diversity.**
- **Set and reach goals.**
- **Enjoy learning.**
- **Be able to network within the community.**
- **Apply time management skills.**
- **Contribute to the community.**
- **Recognize and value the success of others.**

Q: What are some important ideas embedded in the Senior Project program?

A: The first thing to remember is that Senior Project is only a program which means it is as good or as bad as we make it. The key to implementation and success is hinged on several beliefs. All graduating exit students should be actively engaged and rigorously involved in learning and applying sophisticated skills. The senior year should be challenging and, to some degree, student-driven. Remember, 75% of the students in traditional high schools are “Wanna Be’s.” They want to be seniors. They watch seniors, model what seniors do, and can’t wait to become seniors themselves. If these students see seniors as disengaged and laid back, then they perceive the last year of high school as easy and unimportant. However, if they see the seniors challenged, excited, and meeting a requirement framed by high standards, learning tension, interest, and skill, then they see the senior year as challenging and critical to their future. Senior Project high schools believe the seniors deserve the best efforts and highest expectations. After all, shouldn’t seniors represent the most skilled and educated students in the high school?

Senior Project high schools believe it is a mistake to ask too little of the seniors. Planning and preparing college or workforce applications, though important, should not be the rigorous, defining force of the senior year. We shouldn’t accept irresponsibility and disengagement as normal, nor should we allow substandard work

Though lowering the senior year bar may represent a tolerance policy and be a traditional mind set, it does not prepare seniors for life after graduation. Success in life, school, employment, relationships, and financial stability—all require hard work, goal setting, commitment, and problem-solving abilities.

In other words, a culminating performance demanding sophisticated skill application and student initiative should be a standard exit expectation. It is important to require that seniors work hard, problem solve, and practice self-directed learning. In doing so, they’ll likely exhibit excitement and interest in reaching a personal educational goal.

Because we are committed to the idea that every educator is a teacher of seniors, we are skeptical of a process that implies only certain people teach seniors. In reality, seniors are the end result of a huge effort involving a large number of people. The little child in kindergarten is simply a “senior in progress.” In fact, all educators teach seniors, so we should all be aware of seniors’ skill levels and the quality of work they produce. How can a viable curricula be developed if we, as an educational family, do not all sit down as a team and review together the active work and applied skills of our graduates?

Consequently, quality Senior Project programs embrace all staff, all seniors, the community, and are district-wide endeavors that are not isolated. Senior Project represents a long-term educational legacy that requires a vision and a continued commitment. Stellar programs take time to develop and need to be evaluated, upgraded, monitored, and adjusted every year. The staff should be willing to take some risks, think outside the box, and make some mistakes. The old saying, “If you are not making any mistakes, you are probably not making anything” certainly applies to the Senior Project. No amount of information, planning, or prior experience will make the path perfectly clear. Sophisticated programs represent hard work and constant vigilance, just as all good teaching does.

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Section I - Introduction

- 1.) Overview
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- 3.) Stretch Commitment
- 4.) Letters to Students and Parents
- 5.) Project Outline
- 6.) Important Dates and Timelines

East St. John High School Senior Project Overview

During their senior year at East St. John High School, students will be required to complete a multifaceted project which will give them the opportunity to exhibit, in summary fashion, the skills, knowledge, creativity, and talents which they have been developing throughout their education. This Senior Project will be introduced as part of the English IV curriculum and will comprise a significant part of the grade for this course. The Senior Project will not only require the student to read and write, but it will also require students to analyze, synthesize, speak, apply, and evaluate. It will require that each student employ self-discipline, organizational skills, initiative, and imagination in a dynamic and exciting project. It will allow students the freedom to explore an area or field of their own choosing and an opportunity to relate what they have learned to the “real world.”

The Senior Project will consist of four basic components:

- 1.) a research paper (5 - 8 pgs.)
- 2.) a physical project based on research and inquiry
- 3.) an oral presentation reflecting on the paper and the project and the student’s own experiences during completion of the project
- 4.) a portfolio containing all of the rubrics, checklists, and research materials employed in producing the project.

The first component will consist of a research paper. This should be 5 to 8 full body pages in length. Using the MLA format, the **students will be required to employ five or more citations from five or more sources.** These sources should consist of primary (interviews, surveys, etc.) and/or secondary sources (books, magazine articles, scholarly journals, etc.).

The second component will consist of a concrete or abstract example (product) based upon the student’s investigation and research. An example might consist of a work of art such as a painting, photographs, a student film, a performance, or musical composition. It could be a scale model or perhaps an example of a type of cooking or even a machine. There will be a wide range of choices for this component, but this phase will have some basic requirements. Students will be required to spend at least twenty hours (outside of class) on this phase of the project, and a mentor must verify this time using the appropriate form.

The third component of the Senior Project will be an 8-10 minute speech to be delivered before a panel of judges comprised of educators, business and community members who are familiar with the student’s chosen topic. The student will explain and reflect on their research, present their visual example and describe their personal experiences with the entire Senior Project. Students who have chosen similar topics may be present also. Students should also anticipate a short question and answer period following the oral presentation.

The final component will consist of a portfolio, which will document the student’s entire Senior Project. This portfolio will include all of the rubrics, checklists, timelines, prewriting, drafts, plans, graphic organizers, and evaluations the student has received and employed to complete the project. A copy of the final research paper is to be included in this portfolio.

In order for a senior to receive credit for his or her Senior Project, all components must be completed satisfactorily. If a student fails to complete the Portfolio, Research Paper, Product, or Presentation, no credit will be given for any of these quarterly components.

The Senior Project will be an important part of each student's English IV grade and will comprise 25% of each marking period. The Senior Project will impact the English IV grade as follows:

- **Quarter One – Brainstorming, Signature form compliance** (Mentor Agreement, Letter of Intent, Stretch Commitment, and Parent Consent Form., Poster)
- **Quarter Two- Research Paper Components** (Thesis statement, Outline, Bibliography, Note Cards, and Research Paper Rough Draft.) The completed research paper will be due (must be on time!) at midterm and graded for content and form.
- **Quarter Three and Four –Learning Logs, Product Description, Mentor Verification.** The final Research Paper will then be carefully reviewed for effective revisions. **Physical Product** Final Project Portfolio, In-class presentation, and presentation plan.
- **Final Exam** - In the place of a traditional final exam, the four components will count as the final exam grade with each of the components counting as 25% .

Students and Parents, please read and sign this page. **(REQUIRED FORM # 1)**

In accordance with Louisiana State Law HB 1990:R.S. 17: 235.2 which states that students must “demonstrate significant effort toward completing all required class work and homework assignments,” and in an effort to enhance student success, the Senior Project Committee will implement the following pyramid of intervention for identifying and assisting “at risk” students:

- 1.) Upon missing the first deadline, the Senior Project Committee will:
 - A. identify the student as being “at risk.”
 - B. phone parents or guardians at home
- 2.) Upon missing an additional deadline, the Senior Project Committee will:
 - A. remove the student from “Early Release” status until the assignment is completed in a Senior Project study hall under the supervision of an ESJHS educator.
 - B. assign students without early release to attend an after-school session until completion of the assignment.

In order for a senior to receive credit for his or her Senior Project, all components must be completed. If a student fails to complete the Portfolio, Research Paper, Product, or Presentation, no credit will be given for any of these quarterly components and affected quarterly grades will be changed.

It is the intent and purpose of the Senior Project to allow seniors to assume more responsibility in their own learning processes while also encouraging them to use and apply what they have learned in a “real world” environment. Although students will need to communicate carefully and often with faculty members and mentors, the ultimate direction and expression of the Senior Project will be the student’s responsibility. Creativity is encouraged and many Senior Projects will be unique and perhaps unusual.

It is hoped that the Senior Project will be both challenging and exciting and will allow students to realize and achieve their full potential. Signing this means that the student understands and will abide by the above rules and regulations. Also, I, the student have been cautioned to make a hard copy of my term paper and all supporting documents.

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____ **Date:** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____ **Date:** _____

Name _____ Period _____

“STRETCH” COMMITMENT

Senior Project Description:

(Continue on back of sheet as needed.) TEACHER’S INITIALS _____

I hereby declare that the above described project represents a “stretch” or challenge in my educational growth because (1) I have never attempted or accomplished it before (must be new learning), (2) I was not already planning to attempt it at this time apart from my enrollment in English IV, and (3) I consider it to rank high on a scale of significance. Also, if I am already skilled or knowledgeable in the general area in which this project falls, I declare it to represent a new challenge sufficient to earn the label of educational “stretch.”

I commit myself to the full completion of the project as described and initialed. If I wish to make any change, I must ask permission of my English IV teacher and, using the back of this sheet, rewrite the proposal. It must then be initialed a second time. I am aware that any such change must be made before the official end of the second quarter. Otherwise, I must proceed as stated above and receive a grade on that basis.

I understand that this sheet becomes a permanent part of my Senior Project Portfolio and that the panel assembled for my presentation should include in its evaluation a judgment of whether or not I actually completed and presented the project as described above. If this signed sheet is not in my portfolio at the designated time for my presentation, I forfeit my right to present and accept a zero for my Senior Project presentation grade.

I have gathered the signatures of the following people who are willing to verify that the above information is true to the best of their knowledge. My English IV teacher has designated with a check (✓) the required signatures of those who may be knowledgeable about these matters either because of the nature of my project or their relationship with me.

		<i>student</i>	
	phone/E-mail		phone/E-mail
parent/guardian _____ / _____		mentor _____ / _____	
administrator _____ / _____		clergy _____ / _____	
teacher _____ / _____		counselor _____ / _____	
coach _____ / _____		other _____ / _____	

This form must be signed by ONE of the above and a phone number or E-mail address provided for verification.

Dear East St. John High School Senior,

The purpose of the Senior Project is to allow **you to choose the content** of your learning, to **shape the process** of your learning, and to **produce high quality work** that is the result of your learning.

• **You can learn about anything you want!!!**

- The learning process will probably involve hands-on experiences, research using primary sources, especially interviews, and research using secondary sources, most likely text. The specific nature of this learning process will be determined by the content you choose to learn about.
- One product of your work will be a **paper** of at least five to eight full body pages. The paper should be a traditional research essay. (MLA Format.)
- Another product of your work will be either a tangible **product**, some "thing" that you created, either lasting or ephemeral, or it will be an experience or set of experiences. If your project is "experience" oriented, you should plan on somehow documenting that experience, either in words, pictures, sounds or video.
- A **portfolio** will document your progress and keep you organized. It will contain various elements and forms as outlined in the booklet and the final corrected copy of your research paper will be included.
- Finally, you will have the opportunity to present your project to a panel. Your presentation will allow you to explain your project and exhibit all that you have learned through your research. Your **presentation** will include your product and your portfolio and will be the culminating activity of your Senior Project.

Ideally, the work on the paper, the research you are doing, and the work on the project, are very much in accord— in some cases essentially reflections of each other.

In December/May you will give an eight to ten -minute oral presentation with a three to five minute question and answer period on the Senior Project before a panel of five or six judges in which you discuss what you got out of the work you did.

Key things to remember:

Find something you really want to do. You should look forward to doing this work. Make sure your research and project work are sufficiently focused and doable that you can complete a satisfying experience by November/April.

Believe us when we say: **You can learn about anything you want.** You are not limited to a literary subject. The whole point of this project is that you do something you want to do that leads to a new challenge and **high quality** work worthy of a high school senior.

At some point you will get a bit burned out on your work. This is normal. So long as the central purpose of the project has meaning to you, keep going. You will be happy when you have completed an excellent project.

Remember, in order for a senior to receive credit for his or her Senior Project, all components must be completed. If a student fails to complete the Portfolio, Research Paper, Product, or Presentation, no credit will be given for any of these quarterly components.

Dear Parents/Guardians of East St. John High School Seniors,

As your son/daughter may have indicated to you, our seniors are required to complete a Senior Project. This Project has four components: a research paper; a project, which is related to the paper; an oral presentation of the paper and project to a panel of judges; and a portfolio which reflects the creation of the project from beginning to end. This Project will call upon your son/daughter to use the skills he/she has acquired and practiced throughout twelve years of formal education.

The first component of this Project, the research paper, will require the student to use specific skills such as research, organization, and time management to produce a fairly lengthy document which has been typed or word processed. Senior classes will complete this during their second quarter.

The second component is the actual physical product (visual), a “hands-on” experience or product related to some aspect of the research topic. The student will need a mentor who will provide some expertise on the project and verify that the student has spent at least the required 20 hours working on it. This project is to be worked on and completed outside of the regular classroom.

The third component of the overall Project is a portfolio, which will contain all of the instructions, rubrics, guidelines, learning logs, a copy of the research paper, and any other materials pertaining to the Senior Project.

Finally, the student will be responsible for delivering an oral presentation to a board of adults. During this presentation the student will explain the learning, which occurred in completing the research and project. These presentations are scheduled for the last week of the senior term. In order for a senior to receive credit for his or her Senior Project, all components must be completed. If a student fails to complete the Portfolio, Research Paper, Product, or Presentation, no credit will be given for any of these quarterly components.

One of the objectives of the Senior Project is to teach students to prioritize their time in order to meet deadlines. Due dates for the components are given in advance and students are expected to meet them. Not being in school on the day of a deadline does not excuse a student from the responsibility of turning the item in on the required date. The student is expected to arrange to have the item delivered to school either by a friend or a parent. However, exceptions may be made for serious illness.

A successful Senior Project involves parent, teacher, and mentor support as well as student initiative and self-discipline. To graduate, the student must complete and pass each of the above components. We hope you will become involved with your son/daughter in this Project. If we all work together, this will be one of the most rewarding experiences the students will have in high school! More detailed information is available in the Senior Project and Research Paper Manual, which your son/daughter has received. If you have questions, please call the English Department at 536-4226

Sincerely,

The East St. John High School English Department

SENIOR PROJECT OUTLINE

- Step 1** **Brainstorm a topic. (Quarter 1)**
Begin Portfolio (Learning Logs etc.)
Complete required forms
Complete the Mentor Agreement
- Step 2** **Prepare a formal**
research paper on the topic.
(Quarter 2)
- Step 3** **Create an object or depiction of product that ties in to**
your research.
(Quarter 3)
- Step 4** **Complete the portfolio (include all rubrics, checklists,**
prewriting, drafts, plans, graphic organizers, and
evaluations given during the course.
(Quarter 4)
- Step 5** **Prepare an 8-10 minute speech for a panel of**
judges in which you reflect on your research,
show your visual, and describe your personal
experiences with the entire Senior Project.

NOTE - Expect a 3-5 minute question & answer session – so know your topic and be prepared!
(Quarter 4)

**East St. John High School
Senior Project Timeline Fall
Component**

Quarter	
1st	Seniors are introduced to the ESJHS Senior Project
1st	Time for initial research will be scheduled through English IV.
1st	Brainstorming forms, Letter of Intent, Parent Consent Form, and Stretch Commitment.
2nd	Mentor Agreement due.
2nd	Poster of Commitment Due
2nd	Rough Draft will be due for review
3rd	Final Term Paper Due Papers will be graded for Accuracy and Content (See Pg. 36-48 Section III)
3rd	Physical Product due with Product Description Essay on the day students give the final classroom presentation.
4th	Portfolio Due –the day students are scheduled for the final classroom presentation.
4th	Classroom Presentations with Product and Portfolio
4th	Panel Room Practice
Final	Panel Presentations

*Note – All components (**portfolio, paper, product, presentation**) must be completed in order to present. Also- student must present to receive credit for all components.

EAST ST. JOHN HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PROJECT PARENT CONSENT FORM

As a parent/guardian of _____, a senior at
(Student's Name)

East St. John High School, I am aware that my son/daughter must complete and pass the three phases of The Senior Project (research paper, the project, and the presentation to a panel of adults) in order to graduate. For the physical project, my son/daughter has chosen to:

(continue on back if necessary)

He/she has my permission to complete this project, and I agree to release the school district and its employees from all claims arriving from financial obligation incurred, or damage, injury, or accident suffered while my son/daughter participates in the project that he/she has chosen.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Phone Number: (Home) (_____) _____ (Work) (_____) _____

Parent/Guardian E-mail: _____
(optional)

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

EAST ST. JOHN HIGH SCHOOL URGES SENIORS TO CONSIDER THE SAFETY FACTOR WHEN
SELECTING THEIR PROJECT AND TO CONSIDER ANOTHER CHOICE IF THEY WISH TO CHOOSE A
PROJECT INVOLVING DANGER TO THEMSELVES OR OTHERS.

Section II - Brainstorming/Topic Selection & Required Forms

1.) Brainstorming Section

2.) Required Forms Including:

A.) Proposal

B.) Letter of Intent Form

C.) Parent Consent Form

D.) Student/Mentor Agreement

E.) Publication releases (if needed)

F.) Mentor Verification Sheet

3.) Learning Process Portfolio

BRAINSTORMING

(REQUIRED FORM #4)

Because you will be spending many weeks working on your project, you will need to consider your topic choices carefully. Think about your world and what you would like to fix, do, learn, understand, see, improve, create, experience, or own. Go through the following checklist and circle the subjects which hold your interest: (You may add your own.)

- | | | | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------|
| literature | music | woodworking | travel | mechanics | endangered species |
| art | dance | electricity | careers | biology | literature |
| math | theatre | carpentry | history | medicine | taxidermy |
| science | business | cooking | government | manufacturing | social problems |
| computers | sewing | religion | astronomy | film making | game conservation |
| philosophy | sports | education | health | robotics | computer graphics |
| space | cultures | special hobbies | marketing | books | politics/government |
| movies | writing | comics | collecting | anthropology | ecology |
| economics | psychology | communications | social studies | languages | local industry |
| military | engineering | genealogy | photography | _____ | _____ |

Next, think about those circled items and narrow them into research project ideas. Put your ideas in the boxes as they come to you.

Idea: Product:	Idea: Product:	Idea: Product:
Idea: Product:	Idea: Product:	Idea: Product:
Idea: Product:	Idea: Product:	Idea: Product:

Next, look over your ideas and consider the ones that are the most feasible. Ask yourself these questions for each idea:

- Can I make a research paper out of this?
- Is there adequate information out there to gather?
- Can I make an object to relate to my research paper?

(REQUIRED FORM #6)

- Which idea do I have a secret desire to pursue but am cautious in the face of peer pressure? Idea # ____
- Which project idea would my parents most like to see me accomplish? Idea # ____
- Which project idea is affordable to me? Idea # ____
- In spite of what others think, what do I want to do? Idea # ____

Now count up how many times you marked each idea. The idea with the most marks is the Senior Project you should pursue! If you ended up with a tie, answer the questions again - this time, honestly.

Once you have your area of focus, take some time to analyze your decision. If you suspect that your project isn't all you thought it would be, you will need to perform the topic selection process again. It is much easier to change topics at this point, rather than once you've begun your research.

Take a few days off and relax. Try to visualize the final product as you would like to present it to the public. The next phase of preparation is the research paper. Your teacher will notify you of time scheduled in the library.

Remember, students will often select a topic that is too broad an area for their project such as "space" or "medicine". In order not to be overwhelmed, it is important that a student focus on a manageable topic in their chosen field . Focusing on a specific topic is part of the process.

Field (such as Space or Computer Science or Environmental Studies. . .etc.)

Area (such as Space Exploration or Robotics or Conservation. . .etc.)

Specific Topic (such as Mars exploration or Computer Robotics in Medicine or Louisiana Wetlands Management. . .etc.)

Focus on a manageable topic!

CREATING THE PRODUCT

The next step to completing your Senior Project is creating a visual depiction to go along with your research paper. This product represents a hands-on experience. It allows the student to apply the information gained in research to create a product demonstrating learning and mastery of the topic. The product can take on a variety of forms (construct, make, perform, volunteer, etc.) You will have four weeks to complete this facet of the project. Return to your brainstorming rubric to refresh yourself on the visual idea you came up with.

There are a variety of ways to demonstrate your information. Below is a list of possibilities: (You can add your own.)

Make a book.	Research a trade.	Write a story.
Make a video.	Build a machine.	Hold a mock trial.
Compose a song.	Write a comic strip.	Teach a class.
Create an event.	Design a web site.	Sew a garment.
Make a model.	Write a play.	Cook a special dish.
Create artwork.	Make a commercial.	Create a robot.
Perform an experiment.	Create/write a game.	Start a business.
Choreograph a dance.	Design a model.	Design a marketing campaign.
Perform an investigation.	Re-enact an event.	Write a program.
Shadow a job.	Explore a historical site.	Customize an object.
Complete a community service project.	_____	_____

Decide which avenue will best meet your goals for your presentation.

Ask yourself these questions:

- How much will it cost?
- Do I have access to supplies and equipment?
- How long will it take to make?
- Will I get bored with it?
- Will everybody else do the same thing?
- Am I really interested in making that?
- Will my visual reflect the best efforts I can offer?
- Are my talents being used to their fullest?

(REQUIRED FORM #7)

**Once you have realistically decided on a visual, create a plan of action to get it into existence:
(Who do I need to contact? What materials do I need to secure? How will I physically make it?
How long should each step take? Etc.)**

Step 1:	Step 2:	Step 3:	Step 4:
Step 5:	Step 6:	Step 7:	Step 8:

Now that your plan of action is completed, make yourself schedule days to accomplish steps of the process. Use the attached calendar. Fill in the appropriate dates for the month first, then write in your deadlines and activities. You will be expected to document at least 15 hours of work toward the product. Record everything on your calendar. The calendar will be checked by your teacher during scheduled conference days.

Insert Thinking Maps Here

East St. John High School Senior Project Letter of Intent

Your Mailing Address
City, State, Zip
Today's Date

Your English Teacher's Name
East St. John High School
#1 Wildcat Drive
Reserve, LA 70084

Dear (English Teacher's Name):

Paragraph 1: Describe your general area of interest (history, art, science, technology, recreation, etc.) and tell why you chose this area. Explain what you already know or have accomplished in this area.

Paragraph 2: Describe your project. Tell what it will be, who will be involved, when and where it will take place, how it will be accomplished, how it is a "stretch" beyond your current abilities, and how much it might cost in time and money.

Paragraph 3: Begin with a transitional sentence that shows the relationship between your project and your research paper. Then state your specific research topic. Include some of the ideas you hope to cover, and some of your possible resources.

Paragraph 4 Tell who your mentor will be or how you plan to obtain a mentor (an adult qualified to help you in your field). Explain whom you plan to interview for information and identify their expertise/background.

Paragraph 5: Explain your understanding of plagiarism and the repercussions of such an act, including the fact that this would result in failing English and the Senior Project; a graduation requirement. Conclude with a statement affirming that you will not plagiarize or falsify any of the information in your research or your project.

Sincerely,

(Your signature)

(Your typed name)

SAMPLE LETTER OF INTENT # 1

123 Central Avenue
Reserve, LA 70084
September 1, 2008

Mrs. Donna Newsome
East St. John High School
#1 Wildcat Drive
Reserve, LA 70084

Dear Mrs. Newsome:

For as long as I can remember, I have been interested in woodworking, specifically the design and manufacture of home furnishings like chairs and tables. I have virtually no experience in this area, aside from making a cutting board and a mailbox for my grandmother 3 years ago in junior high school wood shop class, so I would be learning almost from scratch.

I plan to build two Adirondack chairs with footstools and a matching small table. I recently purchased a table saw for my shop, so I will be able to work at home during the winter after school and on weekends. I haven't priced wood recently, and I'm not sure yet what wood I will use, but I expect this project to cost about \$100 for the wood, sandpaper, screws, and paint. I'm not sure how long the entire project will take, but I expect to spend three-four weeks on it, working several hours at a time two-three days a week. Given my lack of previous woodworking experience, completing two chairs with footstools and a table will be quite a challenge and certainly a stretch of my current abilities.

To help me settle on the exact design of the chairs and table, I will research the history and evolution of Adirondack furniture. Using both woodworking and historical sources, I hope to find the origin of this distinctly American design and some of the reasons Adirondack furnishings have remained so popular through the years.

I have already asked Ron Sterni, a former shop teacher and cabinetmaker living in Sonora, to be my mentor. He is used to working with both beginning and advanced students, and he has been building beautiful cabinets and furniture for over 35 years. I would also like to contact John Hongola, a local artist who makes very unique and beautiful furniture.

I know that plagiarism is stealing another author's words or ideas without giving him or her credit. I understand that if any part of my research paper is plagiarized, I will receive an F on the paper and in my English class.

Sincerely,

Steve Student

Steve Student

SAMPLE LETTER OF INTENT # 2

123 Historic Street
Garyville, LA 70051
September 1, 2008

Mr. Robert Beadle
East St. John High School
#1 Wildcat Drive
Reserve, LA 70084

Dear Mr. Beadle:

For my Senior Project I have chosen the topic of Flamenco dancing which is the traditional dance of Spain. I will research how the Spanish culture affected the development of the Flamenco dance, and how this culture is relayed through the dance itself. I first became interested in Flamenco dancing when I saw "Ballet New England" perform at the Peterborough Arts Festival last summer. I loved the rhythm and the liveliness of the Flamenco dance. The costumes were also very interesting and beautiful. Later that summer I also saw "River Dance" in Boston. A section of this performance was dedicated to flamenco dancing, and it was mesmerizing. I immediately knew that I wanted to learn how to dance like that, and I thought that Senior Project would be the perfect opportunity to learn how.

Since there will also be a performance aspect to this Senior Project, I will need to overcome my fear of dancing in front of my peers. Making my costume will also challenge me, since I do not have any sewing background. I have studied classical ballet for the past fifteen years. I have also studied other types of popular dance such as tap, lyrical, and jazz. Yet, even though I have an extensive knowledge of these types of dance, I have never been introduced to the wide variety of dancing that is popular outside of the United States. As for Flamenco dancing, I have no prior knowledge of this subject.

I will begin my Senior Project by researching as much as I can on Spanish culture in order to get background information. There are many books written that are dedicated to the topic of Spanish tradition, and I am sure that I will find them helpful in understanding Flamenco dancing. *Flamenco for the Soul* by A. Wren and *Culture and the Gypsy World* by Peter Haven are two I know will be helpful. Flamenco dancing takes many years to perfect. The challenge that I face is whether or not I will be good enough at the dance to perform it in front of an audience. I am also anticipating that the costume will be difficult to make. It seems very intricate and complicated, especially for someone who has no sewing experience.

There is a friend of mine who spent a large amount of time in Spain last year. She has given me the name of a woman who lives in Milesville and is an accomplished Flamenco dancer, and has much knowledge on Spanish culture. Her name is Maria Jose, and I am looking forward to making contact with her. I am also planning to contact "Ballet New Orleans," which is a dance company centered in New Orleans, Louisiana. I would love to be able to take classes with the Flamenco dancer I saw perform at the New Orleans Arts Festival.

I promise that I will not plagiarize any portion of my senior project. Furthermore, I understand that if I do plagiarize, I will fail my English class, which is required for graduation.

Sincerely,

Buella Ballerina

Buella Ballerina

Section III - The Learning Portfolio

During your senior project you will be creating a Learning Scrapbook (formally called a portfolio). The basic form for this scrapbook is described beginning on page 50. In addition to the required components, the following is a list of suggested items you should place in your scrapbook:

- 1.) Any memories from your mentor
- 2.) Pictures of your project including photo negatives
- 3.) Letters, printed e-mails/on-line conversations
- 4.) Faxes
- 5.) Written/tape-recorded messages
- 6.) Written descriptions of meetings with your mentor
- 7.) Shopping lists and receipts for items purchased
- 8.) Calendars and check lists
- 9.) Flyers and/or business cards
- 10.) Diagrams, sketches, and drawings
- 11.) Any notes you have taken
- 12.) Library evidence
- 13.) TV listings for programs relating to your topic
- 14.) Phone number logs
- 15.) Any pamphlets, newspaper, magazine, or Internet articles
- 16.) Critiques and editorials
- 17.) PowerPoint presentations
- 18.) Timelines
- 19.) Any leftover materials from your product
- 20.) Any other materials you feel are pertinent to your project

Remember, your portfolio is your evidence that you have been continually working on your project throughout the term and it will be reviewed periodically and date stamped. **Do not assemble this at the last minute as it is very obvious to the panel and to your teacher when this is done and your overall grade will suffer!**

STUDENT NAME _____

PORTFOLIO COVER SHEET

- DID THIS STUDENT ASSEMBLE A COMPLETE PORTFOLIO IN A TIMELY MANNER?
YES NO

- DID THIS STUDENT PRESENT A RESEARCH PAPER WITH A SUPPORTABLE THESIS ADEQUATELY ADDRESSED?
YES NO

- DID THIS STUDENT FULFILL HIS OR HER ORIGINAL, APPROVED STRETCH COMMITMENT?
YES NO

- DID THIS STUDENT PROVIDE A SIGNIFICANT, “FUNCTIONAL” FINAL PRODUCT?
YES NO

- DID THIS STUDENT SHOW IN-CLASS EVIDENCE OF PRESENTATION READINESS?
YES NO

TEACHER: _____

ESJHS Senior Project Portfolio Components

Your portfolio will be housed in a two-inch binder. The portfolio must be decorated, presentable, and professional. Your work must be a clear reflection of your senior project, and it must include all of the required components.

Required Pieces:

- 1. Introduction to you and your project**
- 2. Brainstorming**
- 3. Parental Consent Forms**
- 4. Proposal and Letter of Intent**
- 5. “Stretch Commitment”**
- 6. Mentor Agreement**
- 7. Record of Twenty Project Hours with Mentor Verification**
- 8. In-Depth Weekly Learning Log (with pictures if applicable) and Interview Record**
- 9. Research Components: (bibliography cards, note cards, drafts, etc.)**
- 10. Final Research Paper and Rubric**
- 11. Two-Four Page Project Description and Presentation Plan**
- 12. Senior Project Reflection (What project advice would you pass on to next year's seniors? Explain.)**

The following form will be inserted into your portfolio prior to its being presented to the panel:

Name: _____ Title of Project _____

Senior Project

Portfolio Evaluation Rubric

A portfolio without the required content components will not be accepted for evaluation.

Section I - Required Content				
	4	3	2	1
Table of Contents				
Letter of Intent/Project Proposal				
Stretch commitment				
Documentation of hours				
Research paper				
Mentor Verification Contact Record				
Parent consent				
Reflection of learning				
Section II—Creativity/Appearance				
	4	3	2	1
Cover design (Electronic or bound--contains graphic/visual related to project, title of project, student name, instructor name, pleasing composition, and appropriate use of space)				
Neatness and professional appearance (visually appealing and organized, clean, purposeful, and functional)				
Section III--Supplemental 1				
	4	3	2	1
Teachers should check which of the following items should be included in the portfolio:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Letter of recommendation				
<input type="checkbox"/> Résumé				
<input type="checkbox"/> Graphics (sketches, designs, photographs, paintings, pictures, etc.)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Videos				
<input type="checkbox"/> PowerPoint™				
<input type="checkbox"/> Certificates				
<input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming				
<input type="checkbox"/> Interview documentation				
<input type="checkbox"/> Research bibliography/note cards				
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing assignments				
<input type="checkbox"/> Letter to the panel members				
<input type="checkbox"/> Presentation plan				
<input type="checkbox"/> Scrapbook				
<input type="checkbox"/> Assignments				
<input type="checkbox"/> Thank you notes				

Scoring:

4 = Excellent (complete, clearly stated, error free, meets all the requirements provided in writing by teacher)

3 = Good (complete, a few minor errors, meets most of the requirements provided in writing by teacher)

2 = Average (meets most of the requirements provided in writing by teacher.)

1 = Unacceptable or Poor (incomplete or contains major errors, some requirements not met)

THE PERSONAL LEARNING JOURNAL

(Weekly entries on the PLJ form are required)

Students are required to maintain a personal journal during all facets of the Senior Project. This means that as the student begins the project journey, he keeps a daily log of all activities performed and experienced pertaining to the Senior Project. This journal should be considered reflective and be written in first person. It should be an actual retelling of what the student experienced each day (including what the student did, when it was done, and what was learned as it was done.) It can be compiled on a weekly basis but will be checked regularly for compliance. This journal will comprise one of the components of the Senior Project portfolio.

During the product facet of the project, students will need to log in work hours on a calendar that is included in this handbook. **All mentor contact work hours should be verified by your mentor who will initial the form and make any applicable comments.** You must meet with your mentor on at least 4 occasions; therefore, a minimum of 4 weekly forms must be initialed by your mentor.

You will be completing weekly journals during the course of your project.
Your teacher will check learning journals weekly for a grade. Make sure you stay current with yours.

Get into the habit of making entries *every day* or so to document your progress.

You can make copies of the forms in this booklet or go to the ESJHS website where the entire manual is posted as a word document under “Senior Project” and obtain a copy of the journal form (as well as any other form you might need).

Note – When printing forms be sure to indicate CURRENT PAGE in the copies box so that the entire manual does not print!

PLJ FORM

Date Stamped

(Sample)

The Student Log

(Sample)

Name Ima Student Date 8/28/08 Teacher Mrs. Newsome

Topic Salt Water Intrusion in St. John Parish Period 2

Mentor (if applicable) Name Mr. Smith Initial CJS
(Must be an adult and not a relative)

Position Supervisor - Bonne Carre Spillway

Telephone 985 - 555 -1255

Actual Log: What have you done? When did you do it? Where do you stand at this point? Describe the status of your project and what progress you have made this week. Include any feelings, reactions, successes/failures, frustrations, and victories/defeats.

I have obtained maps of the waterways in St. John Parish and am in the process of gathering information about how far salt water has intruded into the areas around St. John Parish. I have contacted the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to get information about how this has affected wild life in the area and will contact some seafood vendors to find out how salt water affects their livelihood. I am having trouble contacting someone in the Seafood industry on Monday.

What needs to be done next?

I will ask Mr. Smith when I see him on Tuesday to help me locate a contact in the seafood industry. I went to the Bonnie Carrie Commission and found several people who would be willing to help me. I will begin constructing my display next week. I have gotten some really neat maps and charts to use for my product, but I can't seem to find a lot about salt water intrusion in the school library so I am going to have to ask Mr. Smith if he knows where I can find some sources for my research paper.

Mentor Comments (if applicable):

You must make copies of these pages so that you can have a log entry for each week you work on the project. Remember that the log is very important when the teacher evaluates your portfolio.

PLJ FORM

The Student Log

Name _____ **Date** _____ **Teacher** _____

Topic _____ **Period** _____

Mentor: (if applicable) **Name** _____ **Initial** _____
(Must be an adult and not a relative)

Position _____

Telephone _____

Actual Log: What have you done? When did you do it? Where do you stand at this point?
Describe the status of your project and what progress you have made this week. Include any feelings, reactions, successes/failures, frustrations, and victories/defeats.

What needs to be done next?

Mentor Comments (if applicable):

You must make copies of these pages so that you can have a log entry for each week you work on the project. Remember that the log is very important when the teacher evaluates your portfolio.

FINDING A MENTOR:

Finding a mentor is a requirement of the senior project. Your mentor agreement is an important document and must be completed in a timely fashion. Seek out an individual who has experience in the subject matter from which you plan to research your project. There are many people in our community who have the type of knowledge you seek. Your personal mentor will need to check your logged hours regularly and monitor your progress during research and construction of your product. He or she can be any adult who is not your immediate relative. *We welcome the opportunity to meet with your mentor if feasible.

***In some cases an immediate relative may be allowed at the teacher's discretion depending on the candidate's qualifications.**

Mentor Requirements:

- 1. Be knowledgeable about the field.** This means that the mentor has significant experience in the subject that you wish to explore.
- 2. Be over 21 years of age.** Mentors must be adults and not your peers.
- 3. Be a non-relative, preferably.** If, however your primary mentor is a relative, then you must have a non-relative co-mentor. Parents, brothers, or sisters do not qualify.
- 4. Be available for consultation.** Your mentor must be able to meet you on a regular basis, which is a minimum of four meetings, and be able to verify that you actually completed your required hours.

How to Find a Mentor:

- 1. Decide on your field first, then try some of the following methods to find a mentor:**
- 2. Select a person at your fieldwork site.**
- 3. Consult the Yellow Pages.**
- 4. Ask relatives or friends who are working in the related fields (they must meet the above requirements.)**
- 5. Ask current or former employers and or employees.**
- 6. Consult your own physician/ dentist/ if your fieldwork is medically related.**
- 7. Consult zoos, aquariums, and/or parks/recreation departments.**
- 8. Consult city and county agencies in related fields.**
- 9. Consult teachers of the classes that you are attending for fieldwork. (Most teachers cannot take on more than one student, however.)**
- 10. Consult senior teachers and counselors to see if they know someone.**
- 11. Contact local universities and trade schools.**

Sample Telephone Script for Finding a Mentor:

“Hello, my name is 'Ima Senior.'

I'm a senior at East St. John High School and I'm working on my Senior Project for graduation. I have decided to do a project on (describe your project) and was wondering if you might know of someone who might be able to give me some direction in this field. I am also looking for someone to mentor me while I complete my project. Hopefully, I will find someone who is knowledgeable in this area and can give me some suggestions and guidance as I complete my project.”

You can obtain leads from many including teachers, acquaintances, family members, colleges and universities, counselors, and even the phone book.

Once you have found a potential mentor you can go over the following job description.

MENTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

(This form is to be given to your mentor)

Thank you for taking on the task of mentoring one of East St. John High School's seniors through his/her Senior Project. It is because of the efforts of our community volunteers like you that this senior endeavor achieves success. In order to make the experiences between you and your senior a worthwhile and rewarding one, allow us to briefly outline some of the things that you can do to assist the student in successfully completing the Senior Project. You may:

1. Offer advice and direction with regard to the topic/thesis choice of the research paper and project.
2. Suggest sources that the student can seek out for research.
3. Read the preliminary draft of the research paper and offer constructive criticism with regards to content.
4. Loan the student any materials to which you have access that will help the student complete his/her paper or project.
5. Listen to the student's presentation and offer suggestions for improvement.
6. Meet with the student on a regular basis to check his/her progress.
7. Encourage the student to perform at his/her maximum.
8. Reassure the student that there is a light and success at the end of the tunnel.

Remember that a mentor is just that, a guide. You are not expected nor would we want you to do the project or paper for the student. Furthermore, if you find that the student is simply not doing the work needed for completion, you are free to remove yourself as a mentor. If this should happen, we would ask that you contact the English Department at East St. John High School and apprise the student's senior English teacher of this situation. (536-4226).

Finally, allow us to once again thank you for your time and generosity.

The Senior English Teachers at East St. John High School.

Mentor's Name: _____

Phone # and/ or E-mail: _____

Student/Mentor Agreement**(REQUIRED FORM #9)**

Student : _____

Conference Date _____ Time: _____ Location _____

Mentor: _____

Occupation/Expertise _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: Work- (_____) _____ Home/Cell – (_____) _____

Email Address: (optional) _____

Brief Project Description: (Share this information with your mentor at the conference)**I need help from my mentor in the following areas:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Mentor Comments: (Please directly address what you can provide to meet each of the student's needs)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Mentor Agreement:

I _____ agree to help my mentee with each of the above items. I understand that it is my responsibility to verify that the student has worked for at least twenty hours on the completion of this project. My mentee and his/her teacher may contact me about this project at the phone number indicated above. I have been given a timeline by my mentee, and I will help him/her meet all required deadlines and components.

Mentor 20 Hour Verification Sheet (REQUIRED FORM #10)

Mentor Signature _____ Phone: (____) _____ Date _____

Student's Name _____

Project: _____

You have been chosen to verify this student's efforts on his/her Senior Project. Since most of the time spent on the project phase of the assignment has been out of class, verification of the student's efforts is necessary. You are not required to spend 20 hours with your mentee, but we do ask that you verify that she or he spent at least 20 hours outside of the classroom working on the project and that you have met with your mentee on at least 4 occasions.

1. Can you verify that he/she spent at least 20 hours creating this project?

Yes _____ No _____

Comments:

2. Have you seen this project at different stages of completion, not just the final phase?

Yes _____ No _____

Comments:

3. Can you verify that your mentee has met with you on at least 4 occasions?

Yes _____ No _____

Comments:

3. What specific problems did this student encounter and overcome?

4. What successes have you seen this student achieve?

Thank you for your cooperation. It is appreciated.

Section IV – Research Paper Instructions

Research Paper Instructions

- 1.) Research Paper Agenda**
- 2.) Developing a Thesis Statement**
- 3.) Citing Sources Guidelines**
- 4.) Senior Project Writing Style Sheet**
- 5.) Rough Copy Editing Sheet**
- 6.) Plagiarism Document**
- 7.) Research Paper Rubric**

RESEARCH PAPER AGENDA

Phase I: Research Paper Explanation and Thesis Topic

You will write a one-paragraph general explanation of your term paper topic including any details you already know about your topic and questions you are forming about your topic. Remember that you will be **exploring, investigating, discovering, and deciding something about the topic you have chosen**. In this explanation, you will begin to narrow your research idea into one thesis statement.

The thesis statement is the sentence that tells the whole focus of the paper or what you are proving by investigating the topic. **A thesis statement should state the opinion or position which you will be supporting throughout your paper.** Be sure you have a clear thesis statement and be sure to include it in your introductory paragraph..

Phase II: Library Research

The class will spend time in the library or computer lab, affording you class time to get some research done. You must also spend time out of school doing research. You will need the following materials:

- **index cards (according to teacher's directions)**
- **10"X13" brown envelope with a clasp**
- **paper, pens, rubber bands, paper clips**
- **change for the copy machine**
- **disk or jump drive**

- Library time will allow you to complete these three research components: bibliography cards, index cards, and outlines.

Bibliography cards – a list of resources you are using in your term paper. Bibliographical information must be correctly written on index cards. Your ten bibliography cards should contain a variety of reliable sources: books, CD-ROMs, articles, and digital sources. You must cite at least five sources in your paper. Refer to [A Guide to MLA Documentation](#) .

***It is important that each student keep a copy of rough drafts, notes, and final draft of his/her term paper as a hard copy and saved on a disk in Microsoft Word.**

Preliminary Outline – a written or working outline to guide your note taking. This outline will probably change as you research your topic. Below is what a topic outline might resemble or refer to [A Guide to MLA Documentation](#):

Writing the Note cards

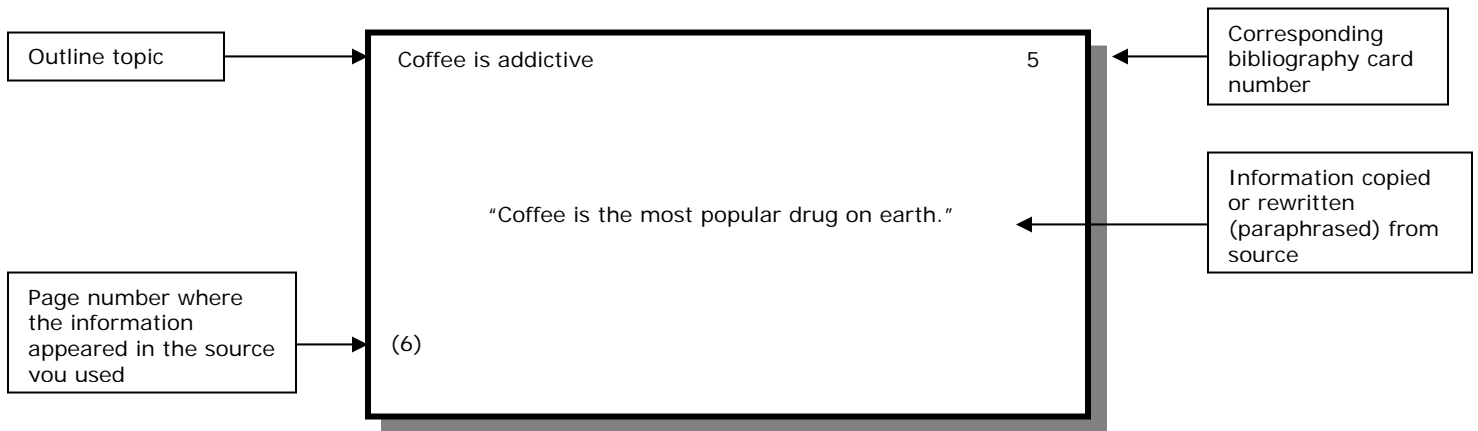
Note cards are index cards that contain specific notes or information you gather for your research paper. The purpose of the note card step is to have you read, select, and evaluate specific information that matches your preliminary outline and information that supports the thesis statement of your research. The focus must be on reading and evaluating. *HINT*: Remember, when you switch topics or sources, you must move to another card. It is pointless to fill a note card with trivial information you know you cannot use.

According to your grade level, you must complete the following amount of cards:

English IV – 30 minimum

When writing note cards, you can use either of two methods. You may use the **direct quote** method where you copy information as it appears in a source, or you may use the **paraphrase** method where you put the author's thoughts into your own words. When using the direct quote method, remember to place quotation marks around the sentence you copy. When paraphrasing, be careful not to distort the original idea presented by the author and simply write your opinion. It is not your original idea, so you must give the author credit.

It is also essential that you carefully label and document each card you write. Inaccurate documentation on cards will result in inadvertent plagiarism when you use the card in your paper. Each note card must contain the following: the outline topic, the corresponding bib. card number or author's name, the copied or restated information, and the page number where the information was found in the source. **Sample:**



Note Cards – cards containing information you gather for your term paper. Take your notes on index cards. You must use both direct and indirect quotes. Remember to use quotation marks for all direct quotes. You may summarize in your own words as you go.

Format for note cards:

Author's last name/book & page Topic from outline

(note and quotes here)

When should you start working on a new note card?

- When you go to a new page in the book you are using
- When you go to a new book to take notes
- When you go to a new topic in your outline
- When you have completely filled the card and wish to continue taking notes from the same book, same page, and same outline topic. Put the same heading on the index card, and add “continued” next to the outline topic.

Remember that your research paper must be written in your own words with only a few quotes.

Final Outline – revised preliminary outline. Use the same format.

Phase III: Writing the paper

Rough Draft – Place them in order according to your final outline. Begin the rough draft by writing the introduction with the thesis statement as the last sentence of that paragraph. Write the body of each supporting note incorporating your point into it. Use transitions to connect ideas and to lead in to different supporting points. Information that you paraphrased and quoted directly must be cited in your paper. This means that you must state in parentheses the source of your information. Use the author’s last name and the page number. If there is no author, or one author wrote more than one of the books you are using, write the title of the book and the page number. MLA allows abbreviations for long titles.

Works Cited – Following the text of the paper, you will include a page called “Works Cited.” You must cite at least five different sources. Just list them in alphabetical order in the same format as the bibliography cards. Refer to A Guide to MLA Documentation.

Final Format – Place the paper in this order:

- Title Page
- Final Outline
- Body
- Works Cited

Tanya Smith

Mr. Dorris

English IV

12 December 2008

(Example A)

First page of the paper – this page should have your name, your teacher’s name, English IV, and the date in the upper left hand corner (see *Example A*).

The Art of Quilt Making
(Example B)

Title – the title of your paper should be centered and underlined followed by double spaces (see *Example B*)

Numbering pages – The first page of your paper is the first page of the body of your paper. The cover sheet and outline pages do not count. Begin numbering page 1 with your last name and page number in the top right corner, 1 inch from the top of the page. See page 29 of A Guide to MLA Documentation. (See *Example C*)

Example C: Smith 1
(in upper right hand corner, 1 inch
from the top of the page)

Your teacher should have examples of term papers for you to see.

SENIOR PROJECT WRITING STYLE SHEET

All Senior Project research papers must conform to the following guidelines. This is the style currently modeled in the latest edition of the *MLA Handbook*

- Body of 5 to 8 pages typed
- No use of boldface print
- Use black ink only
- Outline of the paper using correct format as shown on previous pages (see A Guide to MLA Documentation)
- Standard white computer paper
- Standard first-page heading (see example in A Guide to MLA Documentation)
- Courier New, Arial or Times New Roman font size 12 point (as specified by your teacher)
- Double-spaced (like this list)
- One-inch margins
- No decorative graphics (except supportive graphs, tables, or illustrations)
- Use a paper clip on final draft (some teachers may prefer staple; if stapled, staple vertically in upper left corner)
- One-sided only
- Unbound and unpackaged (no plastic sheet protectors please)
- Pages numbered in upper right-hand corner (see A Guide to MLA Documentation)
- **No unexplained gaps or spaces**
- 5 - 10 *MLA* style in-text source documentations using direct quotes – (example)
 “. . . is seldom true” (Brown 126). and paraphrase (author’s last name only page number) end mark.
 (see A Guide to MLA Documentation)
- Appropriate “Works Cited” page.

Interview Guidelines

Interviews can provide a valuable source of information and may be used as a primary source in your term paper (citation). Interviews can be very helpful, or they may be a very disappointing experience for everyone involved. To take full advantage of the time with an expert, students need to prepare ahead of time, use proper interviewing skills, and follow up the interviews with immediate review. The following guidelines have been found to be very helpful:

Before the Interview

- The person to be interviewed should be thoroughly researched in terms of the individual's position, background and education, as well as any special skills and experiences he/she might have had.
- Learn for whom the interviewee works.
- Clearly define the purpose of the interview, i.e., what's to be accomplished. If there isn't a clear purpose or knowledge of what's to be accomplished, the interview will be disjointed.
- Write clearly phrased questions that reflect the purpose, research, and knowledge.
- Organize questions in a logical fashion: for example, from simple to complex or from objective and factual to personal.
- Gather necessary materials, i.e., pen/pencil, ample paper, and tape recorder, if desired. The functioning of the recorder should be checked before the interview.

The Interview

- Dress appropriately - be well groomed.
- Be punctual -10 minutes early is desirable.
- Make introductions in a professional manner with a firm handshake, smile, and eye contact. State the purpose of the interview and thank the interviewee for his/her time.
- If using a tape recorder, ask permission of the interviewee.
- Don't digress during the interview; stay on task.
- Listen for possible leads and formulate new questions.
- Ask for clarification if needed and don't be embarrassed to ask for an answer to be repeated. Take time to be correct in note taking.
- Ask permission if you plan to quote your interviewee in your paper or presentation.
- Honor "off the record" remarks.

After the Interview

- **Thank the person. Follow up with a letter.**
- Review the notes as soon after the interview as possible.
- Consolidate information; discard information that can't be used.
- Be especially careful that direct quotes are accurately recorded.
- If in doubt about a specific comment, contact the person again.
- Make a list of any additional resources that have been uncovered.
- Record interview highlights and quotes/facts on note cards to be used in your research paper.

Prior to each Interview, an on/off-campus interview form is required. This will help you prepare for the interview so that all the information needed will be collected and the time will not be wasted. When completed, The Senior Project interview evaluation form is to be sent to the interviewee. It is important that you keep a record of all interviews and surveys you conduct during the course of your research. Remember that it is important to give proper credit where credit is due and if you plan on using quotes, facts or any information you have gained during an interview, these must be treated as a resource and proper credit and documentation must be provided.

Remember that the interview can be a valuable source of information and as a primary source can be cited in your paper and entered on your works cited page as one of your sources.

EAST ST. JOHN HIGH SCHOOL ON/OFF CAMPUS INTERVIEW

Name: _____ Date _____ Period _____

NOTE: Important. This form must be completed prior to conducting an interview with someone for your paper or project.

Person to be interviewed: _____

Place of interview (specific address): _____

Date and time of the interview: _____

If interviewing another student during school time, has permission of that student's teacher been secured?

Yes _____ No _____ Teacher's Name _____

Estimated length of interview: _____

(If interview extends beyond class, it is your responsibility to arrange absence with your other teachers.)

1. Briefly state nature and purpose of interview.
2. List objectives you hope to accomplish during interview.
3. List what you have accomplished In preparation for the interview.
4. List all the questions you intend to ask during the interview. Be thorough. Write at least ten questions.

- (1)
- (2)
- (3)
- (4)
- (5)
- (6)
- (7)
- (8)

(continue on back of this form)

EAST ST. JOHN HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PROJECT INTERVIEW EVALUATION FORM

(to be given to the person being interviewed)

To Our Resource Volunteer:

Thank you so much for volunteering your time to talk to a student concerning his/her Senior Project. The Senior Project program affords students the opportunity to gain specific information regarding an occupation, body or knowledge, or skill from an adult expert in that field.

The time, place, and approximate length of interview should have been arranged with you prior to the interview. We would find it very helpful if you could spend a few minutes after the interview filling out the following information concerning the interview. We would like you to help us determine how effectively the student utilized this opportunity. You may either give this completed evaluation to the student after the interview or send it to his/her teacher at school. Your evaluation is an important part of his/her grade.

Thank you, again, for taking time to share your expertise with our students. School and community working together benefits everyone.

Signed _____

Student's Name _____

Area of Study _____

Volunteer's Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

1. Did the student arrive on time for the interview? Yes _____ No _____

2. Was the student prepared with questions? Yes _____ No _____

3. What was the total interview time? _____

4. Did the student take notes? Yes _____ No _____

5. Did you feel the interview was valuable? Please explain.

Comments:

SENIOR PROJECT RESEARCH PAPER ROUGH COPY – EDITING SHEET

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

A. Content and Organization:

1. How long is your paper (approximate words and pages)? _____

2. State your thesis: _____

3. What are the major sections of your paper?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

4. Do all the sections of your paper support and develop the thesis? Yes _____ No _____

5. Is the paper well written with well-phrased sentences and needed transitions? Yes _____ No _____

6. Does your conclusion restate your thesis? Yes _____ No _____

7. Do you have an added thought for the reader to consider later? Yes _____ No _____

8. What is it? _____

B. Use of Sources:

1. Does your works cited page have at least five or more sources? Yes _____ No _____

2. What types of sources are they?

- 3. How many times did you document sources within the context of your paper? _____
- 4. Do you feel you have enough sources cited in your paper to make it a research paper instead of a personal essay? Yes ___ No ___
- 5. Was all paraphrased information honestly documented? Yes ___ No ___

C. Mechanics:

- 1. Did you underline all book, magazine, and play titles? Yes ___ No ___
- 2. Did you put quotation marks around magazine articles? Yes ___ No ___
- 3. Did you use parentheses around documentation within the text? Yes ___ No ___
- 4. Did you put the periods following the parentheses, not before them? Yes ___ No ___
- 5. When using a direct quote, did you put the end punctuation before the last quotation mark? (i.e., John said, "I love to write papers.") Yes ___ No ___
- 6. Please circle all possible spelling errors on your rough draft. Yes ___ No ___
- 7. Check commas. Did you use a comma between two sentences joined and, or, nor, for, or but? Yes ___ No ___
- 8. Did you put a comma after a long, introductory clause? Yes ___ No ___
- 9. Are you going to make another draft of this paper before typing? Yes ___ No ___
- 10. Have you re-read your final draft for clarity and to correct any additional errors? Yes ___ No ___

Items to address:

Plagiarizing vs. Paraphrasing

Plagiarism is a form of theft. It is the stealing of intellectual property and the consequences are often severe. Colleges expel students who plagiarize and in many cases further legal action is taken. This can ruin a career and like any crime, appears on one's permanent record.

As you know, plagiarism is a crime. Not only is it a crime, but if you plagiarize any portion of your senior project, you will fail senior English and your project, both of which are required for graduation. Therefore, it is important that you understand the difference between plagiarism and proper means of utilizing resources.

A paraphrase is...

- your own rendition of essential information and ideas expressed by someone else, presented in a new form.
- one legitimate way (when accompanied by accurate documentation) to borrow from a source.
- a more detailed restatement than a summary, which focuses concisely on a single main idea.

Paraphrasing is a valuable skill because...

- it is better than quoting information from an undistinguished passage.
- it helps you control the temptation to quote too much.
- the mental process required for successful paraphrasing helps you to grasp the full meaning of the original.

6 Steps to Effective Paraphrasing:

1. Reread the original passage until you understand its full meaning.
2. Set the original aside; write your paraphrase on a note card.
3. Jot down a few words below your paraphrase to remind you later how you envision using this material. At the top of the note card write a key word or phrase to indicate the subject of your paraphrase.
4. Check your rendition with the original to make sure that your version accurately expresses all the essential information in a new form.
5. Use quotation marks to identify any unique term or phraseology you have borrowed exactly from the source.
6. Record the source (including the page) on your note card so that you can credit it easily if you decide to incorporate the material into your paper.

Some Examples to Compare

The original passage:

Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final [research] paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes. Lester, James D. Writing Research Papers. 2nd ed. (1976): 46-47.

A legitimate paraphrase:

In research papers students often quote excessively, failing to keep quoted material down to a desirable level. Since the problem usually originates during note taking, it is essential to minimize the material recorded verbatim (Lester 46-47).

An acceptable summary:

Students should take just a few notes in direct quotation from sources to help minimize the amount of quoted material in a research paper (Lester 46-47).

A plagiarized version:

Students often use too many direct quotations when they take notes, resulting in too many of them in the final research paper. In fact, probably only about 10% of the final copy should consist of directly quoted material. So it is important to limit the amount of source material copied while taking notes.

Be forewarned that teachers are becoming increasingly aware of Internet sources and it is now fairly easy for a passage to be identified as original or as plagiarism. Many of the term papers and research materials available on the internet are of questionable value and it is not uncommon for the providers of such material to turn right around and provide institutions with the names of those who have purchased these materials.

Name: _____ Title of Paper: _____

**Senior Project
Research Paper Rubric**

To be accepted for scoring, the research paper must have the following: documentation (Bibliography/Works Cited and internal citation) and length of 5 to 8 pages.

Section I—Form (MLA)				
	4	3	2	1
Manuscript Form—Typing/Spacing, Page Numbers/Order, Heading/Title				
Documentation—Correct form for parenthetical documentation				
Bibliography—At least 4 correctly typed entries on a Works Cited page				
Section I—Mechanics, Usage, Grammar				
Sentence Construction Errors—Fused Sentence/Run-on Error, Comma Splice/Comma Fault Error, Mixed Construction, Garbled Sentence, Stringy Sentences, Parallelism				
Major Grammar Errors—Subject-Verb agreement, Verb Forms (principal parts and tense), Pronoun Case/Usage/Antecedent Agreement, Adjective-Adverb Usage (such as double negatives), Misplaced/Dangling Modifiers				
Informal language—Incorrect word usage, contractions, slang, abbreviations, 1 st /2 nd person pronouns, shift in tense				
Minor Punctuation/Grammar/Spelling Errors—End Marks, Comma Errors, Underlining, Quotation Marks, Spelling, Capitalization				
<p>Scoring:</p> <p>4 = Excellent (no errors)</p> <p>3 = Good (two or fewer errors)</p> <p>2 = Average (four or fewer errors)</p> <p>1 = Unacceptable or Poor (five or more errors)</p>				
Section III--Content				
Introduction				
Thesis Statement—clearly stated, introduces the topic of the paper and the main points to be discussed				
Thesis/concepts Development				
Organization				
Accuracy				
Citations				
<p>Scoring:</p> <p>4 = Excellent (demonstrates complete understanding of concept; shows thought, responds well to topic, and covers the appropriate scope of the assignment; is well developed with specific, detailed, relevant, and accurate support; is organized in a unified and coherent manner)</p> <p>3 = Good (demonstrates understanding of concept with minimal misconception/confusion, responds with adequate analysis/response, elaborates with enough examples and acceptable reasoning but needs more specific details to fully develop thesis, needs more transitions to maintain unity and coherence)</p> <p>2 = Average (demonstrates limited understanding, may demonstrate an acceptable thesis but lacks sufficient details to support both major and minor points, may digress, frequently lacks unity and coherence)</p> <p>1 = Unacceptable or Poor (demonstrates little or no understanding, lacks a thesis or fails to maintain an acceptable one, frequently digresses, fails to provide supporting details or does not clarify relevance of details that are provided, lacks unity and coherence throughout)</p>				

Section V - Product and Presentation

1) Product Rubric & Expectations

2) Speech Preparation Guidelines

Some do's and don'ts

3) Presentation Rubric

Name: _____ Title of Project: _____

Senior Project Product Evaluation Rubric

To be accepted, a product must have the following components: 15 hours of document work and connection to the Research

Section I—Quality of Product/Service					
		4	3	2	1
Utilization of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of material gained from work with mentor and from independent research 				
Planning, management, and follow-through	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realistic, thoughtful and clearly stated plan • Organization skills indicated • Deadlines met 				
Aesthetics and value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to excellence • Visually pleasing 				
Creativity and uniqueness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt to make the product stand out from others of a similar nature 				
Section II—Mentor					
		4	3	2	1
Interaction/communication with mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates in an effective and courteous manner • Contact was consistent throughout project 				
Section III—Stretch					
		4	3	2	1
Goal setting/problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals stated clearly • Resourcefulness and creativity demonstrated when facing obstacles 				
Challenge component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of stretch and high level of challenge • Significant endeavor • New learning • Evidence of personal growth 				

Comments:

Scoring:

4 = Excellent (demonstrates superior effort and results)

3 = Good (quality and effort meet expectations)

2 = Average (meets requirements)

1 = Unacceptable or Poor (some requirements not met, quality unacceptable)

SPEECH PREPARATION

Your speech and presentation is an extremely important part of the Senior Project. It is imperative that you make every effort to exhibit mastery of your chosen subject to a panel made up of community leaders and educators. Your personal appearance and demeanor are extremely important and you should be familiar with all aspects of your presentation including PowerPoints and other technological aspects of your presentation.

STEP 1: What are you going to talk about? Answer the following questions. Referring to the Project Self-Analysis form and Task Analysis form might help.

1. How do your paper and project connect?
2. What emotions did you experience as you worked through the paper and project? (anger? excitement? pride? frustration?)
3. What problems did you encounter (money? time management? skill deficiencies?) Explain.
4. What personal growth did you gain from the paper and project? What self-knowledge did you gain? What knowledge of your topic did you gain?
5. How did the project affect your plans for your future? Explain.

STEP 2: How am I going to say this? Use the answers to the questions above as reference.

1. Organization--jot your ideas on separate 3x5 cards and arrange them into an order that is logical and pleasing.
2. Slip blank cards into spaces where visual aid is needed or would be appropriate.
3. Add blank cards for introduction and conclusion.
4. If you have a project that can be displayed, jot your ideas for that display on one card, i.e., photographs.
5. Plan your introduction. The introduction should:
 - a) Grab attention
 - b) Make topic thesis clear. (Be sure to mention both paper and project.)
 - c) Take no more than 60 seconds.
Consider using quotations, readings, dramatics, jokes, surveys, or other audience participation sets, games, audio-visual devices, demonstrations, or questions.
6. Plan your conclusion. A good conclusion should:
 - a) Restate topic/thesis.
 - b) Leave the audience thinking.
 - c) Take no more than 30 seconds.
7. Plan the display of your project. Will it be an on-going, integral part of your speech, such as a slide show? Part of your introduction? Happen after your conclusion? Will you wear it? Sit on it? Serve up samples? Avoid passing items around during your speech--this causes too much distraction.
8. Plan your visual aids.
9. Make sure your teacher knows what AV equipment you will need and you can use it!
10. Look at each idea card and fill in details, colorful anecdotes, and factual information.
11. Place all cards back in order and begin practicing your speech.

STEP 3: Speech techniques to remember:

1. Eye contact--This is extremely important. Practice often enough that you rarely need to look at your cards. Remember this is a friendly audience. Your peers and your judges are pulling for you. You need the reinforcement that their encouraging expressions will give you. Look at them. True communication happens with the eyes. A speech without eye contact is only half a speech.
2. Posture--Stand proud. You have a right to be. You have accomplished a great deal.

Avoid:

- a) gripping the podium--white knuckles are so unattractive.
- b) locking your knees--you've come too far to faint now.
- c) twitching, wiggling, shaking.

You want your audience to pay attention to what you are saying.

3. Voice--Your voice needs to:
 - a) be loud enough to be heard.
 - b) vary appropriately in pitch and tone.
4. Gesture--Use your hands to help make your point. Gestures should be natural and spontaneous, not choreographed and mechanical.
5. **Props--Plan and practice using any props you will need.**

STEP 4: Prepare for questions. Of course, there is no way to know for sure what the panel members will ask you, but you can make some educated guesses, and that process will provide you with the confidence and clear-headedness to take on any queries. Answer the following brainstorm questions:

1. Why did you choose your topic?
2. What was the most difficult part of doing your project?
3. What help did you get from your mentor?
4. Why do you consider your project a learning stretch?
5. What did you learn about yourself by doing the project?
6. What was the most valuable asset in accomplishing your project?
7. What advice would you give to juniors about to undertake this project?
8. What skills did you develop in doing this project?
9. How did you finance it?
10. How much time did you spend?
11. Did the project involve knowledge learned in another class?
12. How did you feel about completing your Senior Project?

Finally, some do's and don'ts to help you put your best foot forward.

(These suggestions were taken from previous seniors who have presented their projects in previous years!)

DO's

1. **Rehearse** your speech in front of your peers/ family/ sponsors and ask for critical feedback to make your presentation the best it can be. **Be sure you can use all technology (PowerPoints, Smart boards, VCRs, CD players, etc.) before you give your presentation. You must perform a full practice run in your panel room in the days prior to your presentation.**
2. **Take some time to consider your personal appearance.** A shirt and tie certainly would be more impressive than jeans and a T-shirt. A nice dress or ensemble will lend an air of confidence while making your presentation. Appearance is very important and you should approach your presentation with the same regard that you would give to a job or college interview.
3. **Do go over your portfolio and eliminate any unsightly corrections or errors** that might detract from your overall project. Your portfolio is the first thing the panel will be viewing and it is important that this first impression be a good one.

DON'TS

1. **Do not go into your presentation unprepared thinking that you can “wing it”.** Lack of preparation will cost you valuable points and there very well may be some experts on your topic in your panel and you will be considered an expert on your topic.
2. **Do not read your PowerPoint presentations and posters to your audience.** The information should be self evident and should support your presentation, not take the place of it.
3. **Do not try muddle your way through a question if you do not know the answer.** Simply state that a good answer will require more research on your part. You are not expected to be an expert on all facets of your project although you should have a good command of the areas you have studied.

Your Senior Project Presentation should be the peak of your high school career (unless you caught the pass and made the winning touchdown for the state championship). Your audience will be small and supportive. You will be well prepared. This is your chance to show off and shine! Enjoy!

Name _____ Title of Project _____

**Senior Project
Presentation Evaluation Rubric**

		4	3	2	1
Content & Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates mastery of topic • Gives clear explanations • Shows evidence of time and effort • Displays clear evidence of a learning stretch and self discovery (new information) 				
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employs a dynamic attention-getter • Presents in an organized, logical and sequential order • Connects all project components • Presents conclusions and a closing statement • Stays within the allowed time limit 				
Presentation Aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are relevant • Are error free (spelling and usage) • Are artistic and pleasing in design • Guide the audience through the presentation effectively and creatively 				
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is articulate • Speaks in standard English • Maintains correct posture and poise • Sustains eye contact with audience • Is dressed professionally or clothing enhances presentation 				
Question & Answer Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds to panel questions directly and accurately • Answers panel questions fluently and confidently • Demonstrates exceptional knowledge of research topic • Shows enthusiasm for topic 				

Comments _____

Scoring:

4 = Excellent (clear, logical, error free or almost so)

3 = Good (clear/logical—can be improved; few errors—none interfere with understanding)

2 = Average (orderly; some things unclear, errors random)

1 = Unacceptable or Poor (random order; errors interfere with understanding; many points unclear)