

English II  
The Research Project

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Hour \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Topic \_\_\_\_\_

Writing the Research Paper

Many students view the research paper as an overwhelming task. Hours of research, hours of reading, and hours of writing stand between the assignment and the finished product. However, it is more the fear of never having done something before that seems so overwhelming. Students are unsure of how to start the research, use the library, organize notes, document sources and create an outline. This packet is going to be of great help to you. I would recommend that you keep this packet for future references (In English III you will write another research paper!). In college your professors will expect you to know how to do this already. This packet will save you time and unneeded stress!

For this project you will be required to research a topic of your choice that is school appropriate. Some topic ideas are listed on the next page. This will not be merely a report where you will simply give facts. Instead, you will need **to prove** something about the social issue that you have chosen. You will be required to cite at least **SIX** different sources in your paper. You are required to turn in ALL notes and ALL sources found. PLEASE, do not feel limited to six sources! The more sources and information you have, the easier writing this paper will be. We will spend several days researching in the library, but you must use your time wisely in order to get all of your research done. Some of you who have trouble focusing in class may need to visit your public library on the weekends. Even though we will be spending a significant amount of class time on this project, **you should be working on it at home also.**

The topic list that I have provided for you in this packet is a list of topics with ample information found in our high school library. If you would like to choose a different topic, you do need to have it approved by me. If you choose to go out on your own, you may need to get information from another library and bring it with you to class. I will not allow you to sit there and do nothing. You need to have something with you in order to get work points in the library. Please keep this daily work grade in mind! All of those points can really add up!

### Helpful Tips:

- 1) Focus on the steps, not the end product at first – it's too overwhelming!
- 2) Use your time wisely. You will have to be motivated to work independently.
- 3) Follow the Media Center Rules:
  - 1) No food, drink or candy!
  - 2) Respect the librarians, say "please" and "thank you".
  - 3) Speak quietly!
  - 4) ID's are required.
  - 5) Resources cannot be checked out. Since every English II class is doing research it would not be fair to check the resources out and keep them to ourselves.
  - 6) Ask me before printing.
  - 7) Focus on this class - do not be socializing with students from other classes.
  - 8) Photocopies are 10 cents.
  - 9) Leave all books on the cart for our class. Return any books you don't want to the circulation desk.
  - 10) Stay in our work area!
- 4) You can earn a large part of your grade for this unit by earning all your work points in the library and the computer lab. I will be watching for appropriate behavior.
- 5) Ask me for help. Set up an appointment for after school.
- 6) **DO NOT PLAGIARIZE!** You will lose all of my trust, as well as your future teachers.
- 7) Please attempt things on your own first – it's the best way to learn. I will need to help a lot of you so please allow others to ask me questions too.
- 8) The Internet. Be careful. While being a great place to find information it can also give you false information. **YOU MAY NOT USE ANY .COM SITES.**
- 9) Your exam will be covering a lot of the information covered in the research unit.

Make sure you pick a topic that is interesting to you- this will make your time useful and you will not be easily bored.

# Social Issues (topics)

A list of possible topics from which to choose

Our society has many significant social problems worth examining. In this study, you will choose some particular aspect of a problem. Given the environment crisis, for example, you might explore the problem of waste disposal. Or you might research and write about rain forests. Ideally, you will choose a topic that both interests and concerns you, one you truly care about! However, you might choose a problem that is unfamiliar, that you do not understand. Homelessness might be an example. In any case, keep an open, questioning mind. Challenge your own attitudes and expectations. Be willing to learn about something so you can know the truth.

- Immigration
- Racial stereotyping
- Hate Crimes
- Alcoholism
- Teen Pregnancy
- Drugs in sports
- Animal Cruelty
- Teen Dropouts
- Anorexia/Bulimia
- Domestic Violence
- Sexual Harassment
- 3rd World Countries
- Health Care for the poor/elderly
- Education (low income kids)
- Steroids
- Gangs
- Gang-related violence
- Terrorism
- Downs Syndrome
- Literacy
- Child Abuse
- Diabetes
- Teen Depression
- Drug Abuse
- Prison Overcrowding
- Pollution/ all types
- Homelessness in the U.S.
- Smoking Effects
- Teen Crimes
- Increasing crime rate
- Bilingual Education
- Teen runaways
- Waste disposal
- Alzheimer's
- Hunger
- Drunk Driving
- Cancer (clear focus)
- Autism
- Hazing
- Gender Equality
- Hearing Impaired
- Political Correctness
- AIDS in Africa
- Veterans of War
- Divorce
- Affirmative Action
- Obesity
- Depression
- Anxiety disorders
- Global Warming

## OPINIONNAIRE FOR SOCIAL ISSUES

DIRECTIONS: DECIDE WHETHER YOU STRONGLY AGREE, AGREE, DISAGREE OR STRONGLY DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS. BE SURE TO ALSO GIVE A STATEMENT OF RATIONALE AS TO YOUR REASONING.

1. FEMALES SHOULD BE GIVEN MORE SCHOLARSHIPS THAN MALES BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN THE PAST.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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2. TEENS WHO ARE PREGNANT SHOULD PUT THEIR BABY UP FOR ADOPTION.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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3. NO ONE SHOULD VOLUNTEER TO HELP THE HOMELESS BECAUSE MOST OF THEM HAVE DRUG ISSUES OR ARE LAZY.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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4. THERE IS PRESSURE FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO USE STEROIDS.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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5. IT IS ACCEPTABLE FOR PEOPLE TO USE DEROGATORY TERMS FOR NATIONALITIES BECAUSE WE ARE AT WAR.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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6. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT SHOULD HAVE HEALTH CARE PROVIDED FOR ALL ITS CITIZENS.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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7. EVERYONE NEEDS TO HAVE A MORE FUEL EFFICIENT CAR.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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8. THE ELDERLY ARE TREATED POORLY BY NURSING HOMES.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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9. ALCOHOLISM HAS A GENETIC LINK.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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10. EVERYONE WHO DRIVES UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL OR DRUGS SHOULD HAVE HIS DRIVER'S LICENSE REVOKED.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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11. TAKING STEROIDS IS A FORM OF CHEATING.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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12. STUDENTS WHO GROUP UP IN INNER CITY NEIGHBORHOODS (GRAND RAPIDS) SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND MORE SUBURBAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS SUCH AS HUDSONVILLE.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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13. THE WAR IN IRAQ IS NECESSARY.

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14. THE UNITED STATES SHOULD BAN ANIMALS USED FOR THE TESTING OF PRODUCTS.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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15. PEOPLE SHOULD ONLY EAT LOCAL OR ORGANICALLY GROWN FOOD.

STRONGLY AGREE      AGREE      DISAGREE      STRONGLY DISAGREE

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## TrackStar Research Options

307421 Affirmative Action  
307422 AIDS  
307390 Alcoholism  
307391 Animal Cruelty  
300019 Career Exploration  
307450 Child Abuse  
307406 Child Pornography  
307407 College Binge Drinking  
307410 Divorce  
307337 Domestic Violence  
307440 Drug Abuse  
307434 Drunk Driving  
307446 Education (Low Income Kids)  
307388 Gangs/Gang Violence  
307424 Gender Equity  
307415 Hate Crimes  
307409 Hazing  
307502 Healthcare For the Poor and Elderly  
307397 Homelessness  
307403 Hunger  
307389 Immigration  
307436 Increasing Crime Rate  
307392 Literacy  
307339 Political Correctness  
307395 Pollution  
307420 Prison Overcrowding  
307416 Racial Profiling  
307448 Sexual Harassment  
307432 Sexually Transmitted Diseases  
307503 Teenage Dropouts  
307396 Teen Crime  
307418 Teen Pregnancy  
307400 Teen Runaways  
307393 Teen Suicide/Depression  
307441 Terrorism  
307435 Waste Disposal

## Paper Requirements

- 4-6 pages, typed, MLA format
- Minimum 6 sources (Internet, encyclopedia, magazine, book, newspaper, interview, etc.)
- Sources must be from 1990 or later unless checked by your teacher first.
- In addition to the 4-6 pages, you must have a rough draft and a works cited page.
- Other requirements
- Formal outline with citations and introduction and conclusion paragraphs
- Oral presentation done using your outline and notecards (YOU WILL NOT READ TO US!)

My topic is: \_\_\_\_\_ English  
Teacher Approval \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\* If you decide, after starting your research, that you are having difficulty with this topic, you have until \_\_\_\_\_ to change it. Please check with me before changing your topic. You will need to make up the research.**

## Take Note

- You must include the following areas of research for your social problem in your paper:
- background/history
- causes
- impact of problem on environment, society, individuals ...
- contributing factors (what adds to the problem?)
- human impact
- costs incurred by or for this problem (monetarily or emotionally)
- solutions: What has been done through government and private programs as well as individual efforts? What worked/didn't work? Why / why not?
- proposed solutions (these you will create based upon your research)
- is there any hope?
- who is to be held responsible?

Your notes will be organized on the source paper from which the data was gathered. Your source pages will be checked for a grade throughout the research process.

As you take notes, you **MUST** be aware of the three means of note taking.

### DIRECT QUOTE:

correct citation:

### PARAPHRASE:

correct citation:

### SUMMARY:

correct citation:



## **Taking Notes**

Once you've found a source that relates well to your research, it is important to make that information as usable as possible. In order to do so, you need to take concise, to the point notes that summarize the pieces of the source you'll be using for your paper.

For each source you find, you need only the information that applies to YOUR topic.

In some cases, it is helpful to photocopy sources, but if you don't take notes on what you've copied, there's a good chance that when you go to use the source, you'll find that it's junky and irrelevant to your research. Taking notes will make the later stages of research (outlining, drafting) much easier and will help you to get the most out of your sources.

## **Practice Note Taking**

**Correct works cited entry of article:**

### **Summary:**

1. **Sentence summary -- Write what this article is about in one sentence.**

2. **Main points -- list the 4 or 5 main ideas of this article; hint, look at the first sentences of main paragraphs. This should be done in your own words!**

### **Quotes:**

1. **Find 2-3 sentences/phrases that you would want to quote directly in your paper (in other words, they are too well written to paraphrase, or they are good summaries or explanations that would be helpful to your reader). Write the exact quote and page number below.**

### **Paraphrase:**

1. **Pick ONE paragraph (something important but not necessary to quote) from your article (circle it) and put it into your own words.**

SOURCE PAGE:

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NOTES:

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7. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Dear Parents/Guardians of English II students,

I'd like to take some time to fill you in on what your son/daughter will be working on in English II for the next 4 weeks. English II is a demanding class second trimester because we spend so much time working on the Research Paper. This is a rather large assignment and task. If your son/daughter does not complete this paper, he/she will lose credit for the class. Your child has a packet explaining all about the assignment, including a list of topics for them to choose from. I have encouraged each student to share this with you. The list I have supplied are topics that the High School library has much information about. Your child may pick another topic that is appropriate for school to research. However, he/she may need to use outside libraries if there is not enough information at the school library. There will be a significant amount of class time spent in the library and the computer lab. I expect your son/daughter to exhibit appropriate behavior. I have many students to help since this is a first time experience for most of them. The fewer disruptions I have, the better the experience will be for your son/daughter. If your child is a disruption he/she will be asked to go to the office and will lose work points for the day. He/she will also be expected to get the research done on his/her own time.

An issue that has been a problem at Hudsonville High School is plagiarism. Plagiarism can amount to failure of the class or suspension in some cases. Colleges and businesses do not treat plagiarizing lightly. It is considered grounds for expulsion at most major universities. Therefore, it is good for us to make high school students aware of its consequences. Please see the research packet that your son or daughter received from me for a definition of plagiarism. The best advice to your son/daughter is to work hard and use his/her own writing. I do not expect my students to be perfect writers. I would rather have them be honest individuals who work hard.

If I feel your son/daughter is not using his/her time wisely, I will give you a call at home to let you know that he/she is falling behind. If you would like to contact me to inquire about your child, please feel free. I can be reached at 669-1500 ext. 20220. I am also willing to make appointments with individual students to help them get started on their paper or to help them get organized with their research. I will strive to make this a positive learning experience for your son/daughter.

Thanks for your support!

Sincerely,

Kelly Irish

Please sign the bottom portion and return with your son/daughter.

I have reviewed the material for the English II Research Project second semester with my son/daughter and I approve of the topic he/she has chosen.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Student: \_\_\_\_\_