

FINAL RESEARCH PROJECT

English 101/Morales/Spring 2013

ASSIGNMENT:

You will write a research paper on one of the topics listed below. **To begin**, you will conduct some preliminary research to familiarize yourself with the issue. To get an overview of your subject, you will want to learn the basic history of the issue. You will want to find out answers to the following questions: When did this problem/debate begin? Who are the experts in the field? Who else is affected or involved? What is the current research? Have any laws been passed or altered in response to this topic? What does the future hold? **Second**, you will decide how you wish to focus your topic (e.g.: Causes of obesity~causes of obesity in children~connection between children's obesity and fast food). Once you have decided on a focus-area, you will write a list of questions that you wish to answer. All of the questions should be tightly connected to your focus-area, and all of your questions should follow some form of logic (Background/Problem/Effective Solutions/Challenges/Solutions).

Third, you will begin to investigate your questions. Gather and organize your information, and then take a position and support your conclusions with evidence and analysis. All of this will culminate into an 8-10 page essay/report.

Some additional tips: The use of the pronoun "I" is optional; writing in the first person is generally acceptable, especially if you intend to include a personal anecdote that relates to the research. Finally, consider how to best appeal to your audience as you construct your essay. Consider Aristotle's appeals of ethos, pathos, and logos as you attempt to persuade your readers. How can you present your research in an artful and engaging manner? Include real stories and examples to illustrate your points. Pay attention to language; diligently edit and proofread.

To summarize, this research involves three steps: Investigation, Analysis, and Reporting

RESEARCH PAPER TOPICS:

Assumptions/Research Topics

1. *Are the effects of preschool/daycare for young children really as beneficial as many people seem to think? Isn't a child happiest at home with his mother or father? Can't a child learn just as well from being with an attentive parent? And if a parent chooses to put his/her child in a preschool, at what age is a child ready? What are the qualities of a good preschool?*

2. *In many public schools, visual arts programs are usually among some of the first classes to get cut when money is scarce. Many people would argue that arts programs are valuable more many reason that go beyond just learning how to draw, paint, etc. But are they right? Is learning art just as important as math, science, and language?*

- 3. Many people assume that all private schools are better than public schools. Obviously there are good private schools and good public schools, but what are the qualities of an effective school, whether it's public or private? What does the current research show on effective schools? What are some of the best schools, both private and public, and what do they have to offer?**
- 4. Recent research has shown that football players sustain injuries, particularly brain injuries, that can follow them throughout their lives. What is being done to protect young football players? Is it worth it to let young boys get involved with such a tough sport?**
- 5. Many people assume that illegal immigrants come here for a better life, and once they arrive, they get jobs, medical care, and schooling for their children. But what is the reality in the life of a typical undocumented immigrant? What sorts of jobs do they find? What are the dangers they face?**
- 6. Are parents putting too much pressure on children these days? Is there too much pressure on children to play team sports, learn an instrument, join a club, get extra tutoring, etc.? For those parents who push their children to be "the best," might there be some negative effects on these children?**
- 7. What is homeschooling? Is it possible for a parent to effectively homeschool a child? If so, how does it work—do they have to follow the same state curriculum? Wouldn't it be torture for a child to have to learn at home every day without the joys of friends and a life beyond his/her parents?**
- 8. What is ADHD? How are schools determining whether a student might just be lazy or whether an actual learning disability exists? What are the most common learning disabilities? How are some teachers/schools accommodating these students? Are TOO many students being diagnosed as having a learning disability?**
- 9. Is the teacher-directed approach the best method for educating young children? Why do most schools use a teacher-directed approach? What other philosophies challenge this model and how do they work? (Reggio Emilia, Maria Montessori, Waldorf, etc.)**

10. Many people would be surprised to learn that some Americans cannot read or write. More surprising is that some of these Americans graduated from high school! What is the truth about illiteracy in America, and how do these people just “fall through the cracks?”

11. Is social networking just a big distraction? Don’t people get obsessed with online social networking and then neglect their real lives and the people next to them? Aren’t we sending the wrong message to children about real relationships when we conduct so much of our social lives online?

12. Why are Americans obese? Why do they seem to be getting fatter and fatter? What are we doing wrong? What are some of the causes? Can we blame advertising, schools that cut physical education programs, fast food restaurants, or should we just blame ourselves for being lazy and gluttonous?

13. Many people think that if they cannot have a baby, that hiring a surrogate mother is a good option. But is it really? What are the legal boundaries? Is this natural? What are the complications? What are the ethical concerns?

14. Why are most people so ignorant about money and financial matters? Shouldn’t we be teaching young people more about how to manage their finances, how the banking industry works, how to invest in the stock market? How can we improve our knowledge of financial matters?

15. Do some animals have more understanding or awareness than we give them credit for? What does the latest research show about how animals behave and communicate? And if the communication of animals like whales and primates is much more sophisticated than we once thought, what are the ramifications of that? Does that mean that we have to re-think places like zoos and how we use animals for our own benefit?

PAPER GUIDELINES:

LENGTH: 8-10 pages of text, or 2,000-2,500 words (This does NOT include photos, charts and graphs).

FORMAT: MLA. All essays must include in-text citations and a Works Cited list.

GRAPHICS: Photos, charts, and other visuals are wonderful additions to a research paper, but they must be *relevant*, and they must be cited, just like any other text. If you include any graphics in your paper, label them fig. 1, fig. 2, etc. and put a corresponding citation on your Works Cited list.

SOURCES: Your Works Cited list must contain a minimum of 8 print sources. Carefully evaluate all of your sources for accuracy, authority, and fairness. I strongly recommend that you use college research databases and consult with the research librarians as needed. In addition to print sources, film sources, audio sources, and visual sources are also acceptable.

End-of-semester RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS:

To present your knowledge and your research, you will share your research findings with the class. You will prepare a brief PowerPoint presentation to share with the class (50 points)

GRADING /SCORE:

Content	45 points
Organization	40 points
Grammar	40 points
Formatting/MLA guidelines	25 points
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	150 points (roughly 15% of overall grade)