

Los Altos High School

The Senior Project Handbook 2010-2011

15325 East Los Robles Avenue
Hacienda Heights, CA 91745
(626) 934-5400

Ms. Meylor & Ms. Piner, Senior Project Advisors

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NOTE TO STUDENTS

Welcome to your senior year at Los Altos High School: the year of the Senior Project. Not all high schools require a Senior Project, so why does Los Altos? The purpose is to provide you with many worthwhile academic opportunities, including:

- writing a college-quality research paper on a topic that matches your passions
- learning a new skill of your own choosing
- assembling a professional portfolio, complete with business letters and forms
- gaining confidence in giving PowerPoint presentations and oral reports
- exploring your role and opportunities in the community around you

In short, Senior Project not only offers students real-world experience and valuable college and job skills, but it provides an opportunity for personal growth and the chance for students and the community at large to work together.

Seniors are not in this alone. Not only will you enjoy the camaraderie of working through this experience with your peers, your English teacher will guide you through the process and devote class time to helping you meet select Senior Project goals. Also, you will have a **Faculty Advisor** to assist and mentor you **throughout the entire school year**. From first-semester check-ins to make sure your ideas are on track to second-semester forms and portfolio checks, your Advisor should be there to help you all year long.

Requirements in brief

All seniors must complete all major aspects of Senior Project in order to receive a passing grade in English 4. During the first semester, all students must research and write original persuasive research papers. Next, they must thoroughly investigate organizations and options for the second-semester Fieldwork (Learned Skill and Community Service) portions of the Project, as instructed by their teachers and as guided by their Faculty Advisors.

To be eligible for grading, the body of the persuasive research paper must be the equivalent of **at least six full pages, with one-inch margins on all sides and 24 lines per page. In addition, the word count (excluding header and Works Cited page) must be at least 1,900 words.** The paper must be built upon sound research practices, as evidenced by the completion of project benchmarks. The paper must adhere to formatting and style conventions established by the Modern Language Association, known as *MLA format*.

In the second semester, students must submit Portfolios documenting at least 15 hours of challenging Fieldwork (Learned Skill and Community Service). Your Faculty Advisor, independent of your English teacher, will evaluate and grade your portfolio documents. Finally, all seniors must present formal oral reports and PowerPoint slides before Review Boards composed of Los Altos faculty along with community members.

At least 10% of your first-semester grade will be based on the final draft of the research paper. Similarly, 10% of your second-semester grade will be based on your portfolio, and an additional 10% on your final presentation. Other benchmarks along the way will count for additional points. **Failure to punctually submit or honestly fulfill Senior Project requirements may result in a student's failure of English 4, regardless of performance in other aspects of the class.**

What can cause you to **automatically fail the Senior Project**? Here is a partial list.

First Semester

- Not submitting an approved letter of intent, research benchmarks, or paper drafts
- Not investigating your Fieldwork (Learned Skill and Community Service) options
- Fabricating or copying research
- Plagiarizing¹: a mark of over 15% plagiarized on Turnitin.com
- Not submitting your paper to turnitin.com
- Not submitting **at least four** complete pages (excluding Works Cited) of a persuasive research paper
- Submitting your final paper late
- Forgery on any forms

Second Semester

- Not completing a portfolio or a final presentation, including PowerPoint slides
- Fabricating any portion of the portfolio documents
- Not providing Fieldwork documentation or supervisor verification
- Not submitting portfolio documents to turnitin.com, as instructed by your teacher
- Undertaking a Learned Skill that is already within your abilities and therefore not a challenge
- Completing either only the Learned Skill or only the Community Service portion of Fieldwork
- Forgery on any forms

¹ See "Plagiarism: Just Say No!" on page 7 of this Handbook, or <http://turnitin.com>

PROPOSAL/LETTER OF INTENT

Once you know what you want to do for your Senior Project, the next step is to put your plan into words.

Write your proposal to your senior English teacher in the form of a **business letter**. This letter will be **turned in to your teacher for approval**, and it will be returned to you in the Spring for **inclusion in your Senior Project Portfolio**. Your **typed** letter should present your position in a polished manner and should include the following:

Paragraph 1: Describe the **general area of interest** you have chosen for your focus (e.g., religion, travel, the environment). Next, explain **why you chose this subject**, along with what you may already know about it and how you can use this knowledge.

Paragraph 2: Discuss the **specific topic** you plan to explore in your **research paper**. Mention not only some of the ideas you plan to consider but also the types of **resources** you plan to use.

Paragraph 3: Introduce your proposed **Learned-Skill Fieldwork** and, if necessary, explain how they relate to your paper. Discuss the **anticipated costs** of your activity in terms of time, money, people involved, and resources needed. In addition, identify what you anticipate your Final Product to be: How will you demonstrate what you plan to learn from the Fieldwork?

Paragraph 4: explain how you plan to give back to your community and how this activity relates to your general topic. You must provide a brief description of the **specific organization** where you plan to do your **Community Service**. Finally, explain how your Senior Project will both challenge your personal limits and be a benefit to your community.

Paragraph 5: Close your letter by acknowledging that you understand what plagiarism is and why it is important to avoid it. Identify the consequences of plagiarism and the impact it will have on a Senior Project. Also, identify both the **minimum page requirement** for a paper to be accepted for grading and the **requirement to satisfy project benchmarks** prior to submitting a paper. You may use the wording from the sample letter that follows.

 **SAMPLE LETTER** 

Jane Conqueror
Your Address
City, State Zip

October 4, 2010

Your English Teacher
15325 East Los Robles Avenue
Hacienda Heights, CA 91745

Dear English Teacher:

For my Senior Project, I am interested in learning how to sew. I have played around on my mom's sewing machine before, but all I know how to do is push down on the pedal and sew loose pieces of fabric together in a very sloppy way. Sewing seems like an interesting, useful hobby to me. I like the idea of being able to design my own clothing or make my own Halloween costumes. I see this as a perfect opportunity to gain this skill.

For my research paper, I have chosen a topic that is also related to clothing. I will argue whether schools should have dress code policies. I personally am against our school's dress code, so I am hoping to find arguments and research supporting my position. I will conduct most of my research on the computer using not only the Internet, but also academic databases like EBSCO. I would also like to interview Mr. Cazares and our security guards to get their perspective.

For my Fieldwork, I will be taking sewing classes at Whittier Adult School. This project will be a big challenge for me, because I have no knowledge about how to use patterns or correctly use a sewing machine, so I will be learning new skills. Also, even though I like being creative, my attempts at craft projects usually turn out looking very sloppy, so trying to make something that looks nice will be tough. The Adult School classes meet weekly for one month, and each class is about three hours, so I should be completing around 12 hours. My parents have agreed to pay for any supplies I will need, and I will cover the \$15 class fee out of my allowance. My final product will be the items I've learned to make in class.

At the end of the learned portion of my Fieldwork, I will use my sewing skills to sew clothing, and/or blankets to give to "Safe Haven" women's shelter in Whittier. This organization helps women in abusive homes recover and gets them to become independent and self-reliant.

I understand that if I copy someone else's work without identifying whose work it is, I am going to risk failing English because I will have committed the offense of plagiarism. I also understand that my research paper will not be accepted for grading unless it is at least four full pages and unless I have produced an approved letter of intent and documented research.

Sincerely,

Jane Conqueror

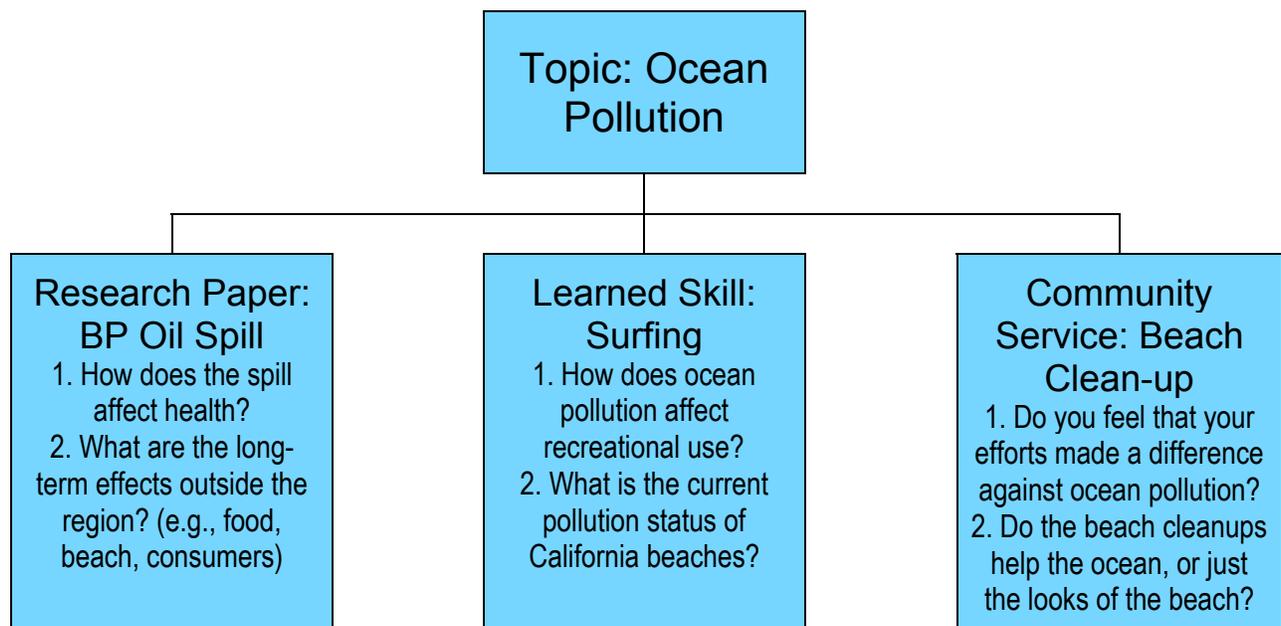
RELATIONSHIP CHART

Traditionally, the LAHS Senior Project has started with a Poster that showcased the three elements of each student's Senior Project and how they all tie in to a certain theme. Building on that idea, this year you will create a more informative **Relationship Chart** as a tool to focus your work throughout the year. Your Relationship Chart will not only help to anchor your ideas but will also provide a visual explanation of your project for your Advisor, English teacher, and eventually, Panel judges to see.

In an appropriate computer program such as MS Word or PowerPoint, you will create a chart that describes your **research paper**, **Learned Skill**, and **Community Service**. These three elements must all relate to a common topic. Do not pursue any component that does not clearly relate to your overall topic. **If any one portion of your Senior Project does not relate to the other two, you might fail the Senior Project.** Students must consult their English teachers/Faculty Advisors for approval of the three elements.

You will be adding to this chart throughout the year, and an updated version of it will be included in your second-semester portfolio. Each section will include at least two **guided questions** that will help you reflect on that aspect of the project. These questions will be answered in your Self-Evaluation during second semester. This information will also be reflected in your PowerPoint presentation, giving insight both on the individual aspects as well as on how they all fit together.

Sample completed Relationship Chart with guided questions



PLAGIARISM: JUST SAY *No!*

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is the use of “another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the sources...it constitutes intellectual theft and often carries severe penalties” (Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1995. 126). At Los Altos, plagiarism on a Senior Project paper results in **the disqualification of your research paper for grading consideration** and may result in your **failure of the class**. Therefore, when you are researching and writing your paper, you must **carefully document (cite) information** and give appropriate written credit for sources used.

What does documenting, or citing a source, mean?

According to MLA format, the citation style used in English classes at Los Altos, citing a source means listing in parentheses following the borrowed information an author's name and the page number of the source. Here is an example of a citation from a book entitled *Cultural Literacy*, by E.D. Hirsch, Jr.:

“In the mid 1980's American business leaders have become alarmed by the lack of communication skills in the young people they employ” (Hirsch 5).

Please note that not just exact quotes but **even paraphrased ideas** need to be cited. Also, in addition to citing sources within the body of your paper, you will also be required to list more complete information about your sources on a separate Works Cited page.

Citing sources is a lot easier than you might think. Your English teacher will take you through each step.

Why do I need to cite a source?

1. When you use information or knowledge that is not your original thought, it is a form of cheating. Doing so will result in automatic failure of your paper.
2. Citing information acts as a guide to the reader, who may want to find more information on the topic.
3. If the author's information is erroneous, biased, or untrue, you will want to make a clear distinction between the author's ideas and your own. This will protect you from being misunderstood.

What information do I need to cite?

You need to cite **every idea that you paraphrase or quote directly from a source**. Also, you need to cite any information or **facts that are not considered general knowledge**. See the following examples for clarification.

FACT: At first, Patrick Henry opposed the Constitution, but he later reversed his opinion (Davis 60). *[This idea needs to be cited, because most people don't know it off-hand.]*

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: George Washington was the first president of the United States. *[This idea does not need to be cited, because most people **do** know it off-hand.]*

How do I know if I'm plagiarizing?

Some plagiarism is accidental, some is intentional—but be vigilant, because **the consequence is always the same.**

- **Plagiarism is** directly quoting a source, but **failing to include the quotation marks or parenthetical citation.** (Yes, it's still plagiarism **even if you just forgot!**)
- **Plagiarism is** presenting someone else's **ideas or line of thinking** without citation.
- **Plagiarism is** **rewording** source documents like essays or articles without citation.
- **Plagiarism is** **using a paper by someone else** and presenting it as your own.
- **Plagiarism is** **combining** sections of other papers/articles as if they were your own.

See <http://www.turnitin.com> for more information on how to avoid plagiarism.

If you aren't sure if you're plagiarizing, ask your teacher.

GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE NOTE-TAKING

As one research-process benchmark, you will be required to produce note cards that keep track of the best ideas you find in your sources. A guide for taking notes follows.

1. Buy at least one pack of lined **3x5 or 4x6 note cards**. Punch a hole in the upper left hand corner (if you are right-handed) or in the upper right hand corner (if you are left-handed). Place a ring through the hole in the cards. You will probably want to use ink when taking notes; writing in pencil often fades or disappears.
2. Prepare a **working bibliography of ten sources**. A working bibliography is a list of possible research sources. The easiest way to prepare a list is to visit any online database or library that generates a computer listing of writings on your topic.
3. **Review a couple of the sources** on your working bibliography to get an overview of what you will be looking for. Identify possible sub-topics for your paper and come up with a **working thesis statement** to focus your research. Write your working thesis statement and list your sub-topics on **your first note card, the cover card**.
4. Start **looking through the sources on your working bibliography** to see if they have information pertaining to your sub-topics and thesis statement. If the source is no good, cross out the title on your listing. If the source looks promising, create a **source card** by copying all the necessary bibliographical information onto a note card (see "Explanation of the Works Cited Page"). Use MLA format. Be sure to create a source card for each writing from which you take notes.
5. Next, begin to **read your sources** and **take notes on information** related to your sub-topics and thesis statement.
6. When taking notes, **include only one idea per card**. One idea may be more than one sentence, but do not overload a card with too much information. If you copy the information word-for-word, be sure to use quotation marks to remind yourself that it is not your idea on the card.
7. In the upper right hand corner of the card, write the **author's last name and the exact page number(s)** where the information was found.
8. **At the top of the note card, indicate the sub-topic** to which the card is related. To help organize your ideas, you may want to color code the cards according to sub-topic.

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

In addition to gathering information from **secondary sources** such as written works, consulting a **primary source** such as an expert on your topic may provide you with valuable insight and the most current information available for your research. Personal interviews can greatly enhance the thoroughness of your research paper. To conduct a successful interview, follow the guidelines below:

Prior to the Interview

1. Choose an appropriate and accessible expert, then **learn about the interviewee's** education, background, and significant skills or experiences.
2. Set the **specific purpose** for your interview. What information do you hope to gain? Are you attempting to use this expert's knowledge to prove or disprove a specific point? Going into the interview without a specific purpose in mind will likely produce little useful information for your paper.
3. **Write out clear questions** which get to the heart of what you want to know. Organize your questions logically.
4. Go in prepared with appropriate **interview materials**, such as a working recording device, if desired, in addition to pen, paper, and your predetermined questions.

At the Interview

1. **Dress** appropriately.
2. Arrive for the interview **on time** (or even a bit early).
3. **Introduce yourself professionally**: shake hands, smile, make eye contact, state the purpose for the interview, and thank the interviewee in advance for making time to meet with you.
4. Ask the interviewee's **permission** if you plan **to record** the interview.
5. **Stay on task** with your questions, clarify when necessary, and listen for opportunities to ask follow-up questions.
6. Don't be afraid to **ask for clarification** on the answers you receive. In addition to any recording you make, take careful, accurate notes.
7. Take heed of an interviewee's request for "**off the record**" status.

After the Interview

1. **Review your notes** as soon as possible. Weed out information you can't use.
2. **Copy the useful information onto note cards**, just as you would for other sources. Be sure to record direct, word-for-word quotes accurately. Put the interviewee's name and the interview date in the corner of the card.
3. If you discover you are unclear about any of the information, **contact the person again to clarify**.
4. Send a brief but professional thank-you note.

SAMPLE NOTE CARDS

Cover Card: The first card in your stack, this lists all your ideas for sub-topics.

Working Thesis: Working while attending high school has a negative impact on achievement.

Sub-topics

1. Types of jobs/ statistics
2. Sleep deprivation
3. Diminished study time

This outline keeps you focused on the different subtopics you should be researching.

Source Card: **One card for each source should contain the exact information and proper formatting needed for the Works Cited page.**

Carsey, Daniel and Veronica Mason.
"Students in the Work Force."
Newsweek 14 April 2009: 38-40.

The source card is written in MLA format, **exactly as it will appear** on the Works Cited page.

Note Card: Each note card contains **only one idea** gained from a source, along with proper identifying notations.

Carsey and Mason 39
Types of Jobs/ Statistics
Forty percent of high school students in California work from 20-30 hours per week.
One fifth of that number has jobs in fast food.

Refers to the source and page number. This information would be used in the essay's parenthetical citation.

Refers to the outline subtopic.

Paraphrased information

FROM NOTE CARDS TO FIRST DRAFT

You have some great information and a stack of note cards. Now what do you do?

1. Find a **quiet place** where you can spread out and organize your note cards.
2. **Group your note cards by sub-topic.** Read all of your note cards for your first sub-topic, and arrange them in a logical order. (Don't be surprised if you don't use all of the notes you have taken.) Read through the cards for that sub-topic a few times. Then, set those cards aside and begin writing in your own words about those ideas. Please note, however, that you should not use subheadings in your final paper.
3. Start writing the paper in **your own words**, using the ideas from your sources. Remember that this is a research paper, not a report. Therefore, you need to **analyze, synthesize, and evaluate** the information on your note cards. Check yourself often to be sure you are developing your sub-topics and supporting your thesis statement. If you find yourself having trouble getting started, try writing each sub-topic separately and add transitions, an introduction, and a conclusion later.
4. **Do not overuse quotations** in your paper. Because this paper is *your* masterpiece, your narrative voice should come through clearly throughout. **Use direct quotations only to highlight the exact words of an expert or authority.** To do so, you must give the name of the person who said something in the sentence and identify the speaker's qualifications. For example, you might write: Susan Johnson, Professor of Educational Counseling at UCLA, believes that "students who begin working fifteen hours per week or more during their junior or senior year generally experience a drop in their cumulative grade point average" (Carsey 40). **Never quote something simply because you like the way the original author worded it.**
5. Your teacher will provide you with many more tips, but here are a few pitfalls to avoid:
 - ✓ Using passive voice
 - ✓ Constructing questions
 - ✓ Referring to the fact that you are writing (e.g., "This paper will prove...")
 - ✓ Overusing "to be" verbs
 - ✓ Using constructions like "There is" or "There are"
 - ✓ Using **any** form of the personal pronouns "I", "you", "we", etc.

You might struggle with some of the following issues as you write.

- ✓ How do I maintain my paper's focus?
 - Don't get sidetracked by the stress of writing the paper. Let the ideas flow first, then go back to tighten up your writing. (This requires starting early!)
 - Keep a sticky note with your thesis on it clearly visible to you as you write. This will help you to consider, "Is what I'm about to write really on target?"
 - Similarly, keep your outline in front of you as you work. You can check points off as you cover them in your writing.
- ✓ How do I keep track of all the details that go on the Works Cited entries?
 - Use a site such as EasyBib.com to do the first steps for you — but always verify what the site produces against MLA rules or samples from papers that you know are MLA formatted.
- ✓ How do I convey a personal opinion — or especially a strongly-held conviction — without using "you" or "I"?
 - State the issue as the way things should be. So instead of, "I think people should recycle more," simply assert, "People should recycle more."
 - See samples of well-written MLA-style papers for models to follow.

RESEARCH PAPER STYLE SHEET

The Format

(How to set up your research paper)

1. The Body (6–10 pages; at least 1,900 words)

The **body of a paper refers to the paper itself**, minus the Works Cited page or any appendices. This section must always be double-spaced. Your **last name** and the **page number** must always appear **in the upper right-hand corner of each page**, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the top. Do not use the letter "p" to indicate the page number.

The **top, bottom and side margins of each page must be one inch**. After you print your final draft, **check your margins with a ruler**, because there is some variance between printers. You might need to adjust the page settings to actually print one-inch margins. If your paper is formatted correctly, you will have 24 lines of text per page (not counting the header).

2. The Works Cited page

A Works Cited section lists identifying information **for all the sources** (articles, online documents, books, films, personal interviews) **that you actually quote or paraphrase** in your paper. This list starts on a new page at the end of the paper. Sources are listed in alphabetical order by the entry's first letter. Entries are not numbered.

Use hanging indent for your Works Cited section. Before you begin typing the page, in Microsoft Word, go to Format>Paragraph. In the middle of the Indents and Spacing tab, change *Special* from (*none*) to *Hanging*. Each line after the first in each of your entries will automatically be indented.

Remove all hyperlinks (blue font and underlining) from any Web addresses used on your Works Cited page. To do this, right-click the text and select "Remove Hyperlink."

Several excellent Web sites, such as EasyBib.com, will help you make sure that your Works Cited entries are formatted correctly and include all the necessary information. Remember, however, that it is your responsibility, and not the Web site's, to make sure that your Works Cited page meets proper MLA standards.

3. The Works Consulted section (also called Bibliography)

You may wish to include a Works Consulted list of **all the sources that you reviewed—including ones that you did not cite**—which added to your overall knowledge of your subject. This list would appear at the end of your paper, after your Works Cited page. Again, each source is listed in alphabetical order, and you do not number the entries.

Writing and Documenting a Research Paper

For your Senior Project paper, you will be expected to include at least one book and at least one primary source. This requirement will help assure the quality of types of sources.

A research paper requires the use of *borrowed material*, or information gained from primary sources like interview subjects that have firsthand knowledge of the events or ideas in question and secondary sources, including most books, articles, and written works that appeared after the fact or include further reflection or analysis.

With the exception of ideas that are common knowledge, **material is considered borrowed even when you put it in your own words**, and even when you have read it in several sources. All borrowed material must be cited: direct quotations, paraphrased material, and ideas that did not originate with you.

Paraphrasing involves put into your own words any ideas that you gained from primary or secondary sources. Paraphrased ideas must be cited.

Quotations are an important part of the research paper, but they must be used selectively and formatted properly. **Quotes should be used only when they highlight the essence of an expert's point of view.**

Good writers **avoid using “naked” quotes**, or quotes not contained within a sentence that makes reference to the quote or names the source. Quotes may come at the beginning, middle, or end of a sentence, but they should be woven into your own original writing.

How to Incorporate and Cite Quotes and Paraphrases

When writing your research paper, you must **document your sources by using properly-formatted citations**. Not giving credit to your sources is considered plagiarism: a *major* mistake that will result in a failing grade.

In keeping with MLA guidelines, you will use **parenthetical citations** to document your sources. Placed immediately after paraphrased or quoted ideas in your paper, parenthetical citations provide quick reference points to your sources of information. These citations help the reader find the complete source information on your Works Cited page.

Citing Quotations (of less than four typed lines)

The citation for a direct quote **comes** directly after the closing quotation marks and **before the final period of the sentence**. The citation must include the author's last name and the page number of the source.

1. When the source has an author and you did not include the author's name as part of the sentence, the citation consists of simply the author's last name and the page number. Do not use any punctuation, such as commas or periods, in the citation.

EXAMPLE: Chinese and American cultures are skillfully interwoven as the immigrant mother teaches her daughter "the art of invisible strength" (Tan 89).

2. When the source has an author and that author's name is part of your sentence, the citation is simply the page number.

EXAMPLE: Amy Tan has skillfully interwoven the Chinese and American cultures when her characters teach their daughters "the art of invisible strength" (89).

3. When a source, such as an article from a Web site or TV show, has no author, use the first word of the entry as it will appear on the Works Cited page. If it also has no page number, just use that single first word, in quotes.

EXAMPLE: A recent editorial called Ralph Ellison "a writer of universal reach" ("Invisible").

4. When the source, such as an anthology or textbook, has no author but has an editor, use the editor's name as if it were an author name.

EXAMPLE: Most contemporary readers understand that "escape literature is that written purely for entertainment..." (Perrine 4).

5. When citing two different authors with the same last name, include enough information to distinguish between them: (L. Smith 49) or (P. Smith 122).
6. If the source has two authors, list both names: (Gonzales and Rystad 49).
7. If you are citing two different works by the same author in your paper, include the last name, the first words of the entry as it appears on the Works Cited page, and the page number: (Gilbert, *Blood* 5)
8. If information is from an Internet source that is not paginated, do not use page numbers: (Koretz)

Citing quotations of four or more typed lines

While using your own words is always preferable, sometimes it is necessary to include longer quotes. **If a quotation is four full typed lines or more**, begin the quotation on a new line, indenting one inch from the left margin. Continue to use double spacing and type the quote exactly as it appears in the original, but do not use quotation marks.

Usually a colon (:) introduces these longer quotes. A period follows the quote, and the citation is placed in parentheses.

EXAMPLE:

The true joy that reading can provide is often lost as people age:

Some adult readers lose something precious as we grow older: Many—
nay, most—readers never grow beyond the fairy tale except in the most
basic of senses. In some way, their movement is backward, for it involves
a loss of the sense of wonder that marks a child's vision. (Perry 5)

Indeed, reading often becomes more of a chore as people lose the excitement that can accompany a good book.

Ellipsis

At times you may wish to omit some words from within a section that you choose to quote. To show this omission, use an *ellipsis*, a special symbol that resembles three spaced periods, to indicate that you omitted part of the quote. You can find the ellipsis character under Insert->Symbol in Microsoft Word. If your omission includes the end of a sentence, add a period to the end of the ellipsis character, to result in four dots (...).

EXAMPLE: "Unfortunately many readers ... never grow beyond the fairy tale...their movement is backwards, for it involves a loss of that sense of wonder that mark's the child's vision" (Perrine 5).

Citing paraphrased sources

The parenthetical citation for a paraphrase follows the last sentence of the paraphrase. The citation appears after the last word of the last sentence of the paraphrase, before the period.

EXAMPLE: Most US newspapers and magazines preferred not to cover the growing women's movement in the late 60s and early 70s (Faludi 75).

EXPLANATION OF THE WORKS CITED PAGE

A Works Cited page is often confused with a bibliography. However, according to MLA terminology, a **Works Cited page lists all the sources that are actually mentioned in a research paper.** The optional Works Consulted or Bibliography page provides a longer list of works that you may have read and that informed your opinion but whose ideas do not directly appear in your paper.

The Works Cited page:

- ✓ Appears on a separate, numbered page, and is the last page or two of the research paper.
- ✓ Contains entries arranged alphabetically by the first letter of the first name or word to appear in each entry, excluding “a, or the.”
- ✓ Uses reverse/hanging indentation.
- ✓ Must be double-spaced throughout. Do **not** quadruple space between entries.
- ✓ **Must not** be numbered or bulleted.

For any type of source not listed in the explanations and examples here, see your teacher or a current copy of *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. The handbook is available online, in book stores, and at most libraries.

In general, the format for **books** is:

Author’s last name—comma—one space—author’s first name—period—one space—*Title of book in italics (or underlined)*—period—one space—City of publication—colon—one space—Name of publishing company (use only the name, not the words Inc.; Co.; Press)—comma—one space—year of publication—period.

Note that for books with more than one author, the second and consecutive authors are listed as first name—middle initial—last name.

Berlage, Gai Ingham. *Women in Baseball: The Forgotten History*. Westport: Greenwood, 1994.

Jakobson, Roman, and Linda R. Waugh. *The Sound Shape of Language*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1979.

Marquart, James W., Sheldon Ekland Olson, and Jonathan R. Sorensen. *The Rope, the Chair, and the Needle: Capital Punishment in Texas, 1923–1990*. Austin: U of Texas P, 1994.

If there are two books by the same author:

Gilbert, Sandra M. *Blood Pressure*. New York: Norton, 1989.

-- -. *Emily's Bread: Poems*. New York: Norton, 1984.

Book with an editor only:

Toffler, Alvin, ed. *Learning for Tomorrow*. New York: Random House, 1974.

A work in an *anthology* (textbooks, compilation of essays):

Crane, Stephen. "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky." *Literature: Structure, Sound, and Sense*.

New York: Harcourt, 1978. 425–434.

Franklin, Benjamin. "Emigration to America." 1782. *The Faber Book of America*. Ed.

Christopher Ricks, and William L. Vance. Boston: Faber, 1992. 24–26.

The format for *magazines* and *periodicals* is:

Author's last name—comma—author's first name—period—one space—Quotation marks—Title of the Article—period—Quotation marks—one space—*Title of the magazine* in *italics* (or underlined)—one space—day month year—colon—one space—page number(s)—period.

Bender, William H. "How Much Food Will We Need in the Twenty-First Century?"

Environment Mar. 1997: 6–11.

Fricke, David. "New Age, Old Hat." *Rolling Stone* 18 Dec. 1987: 95–100.

For a magazine or journal article with no author:

"Dissecting Network News." *Broadcasting* 26 Feb. 1990: 40+.

For a *newspaper* article and editorial:

Feder, Barnaby J. "For Job Seekers, a Tool-Free Gift of Expert Advice." *New York Times* 30 Dec. 1993: D1+.

"Death of a Writer." Editorial. *New York Times* 20 Apr. 1994: A18.

For a *pamphlet* or a *brochure*:

Best Museums: New York City. New York: Trip Builder, 1993.

For a *government document*:

New York State. Commission on the Adirondacks in the Twenty-First Century. *The Adirondack Park in the Twenty-First Century*. Albany: State of New York, 1990.

United States. Cong. Joint Committee on the Investigation of the Pearl Harbor Attack. *Hearings*. 79th Cong., 1st and 2nd ses. 32 vols. Washington: GPO, 1946.

The format for an *interview* that you watched, read, or personally conducted, is:

Blackmun, Harry. Interview with Ted Koppel and Nina Totenberg. *Nightline*. ABC. WABC, New York. 5 Apr. 1994.

Gordimer, Nadine. Interview. *New York Times* 20 Oct. 1999: C25. Ebsco. Los Altos High School Lib., Hacienda Heights, CA. 17 Oct. 2000 <<http://search.epnet.com>>.

Knechtel, Susan. Personal interview. 28 Nov. 2008.

Poussaint, Alvin F. Telephone interview. 10 Dec. 2007.

The format for a *film* or *video* is:

It's a Wonderful Life. Dir. Frank Capra. Perf. James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore, and Thomas Mitchell. RKO, 1946.

Like Water for Chocolate [Como agua para chocolate]. Screenplay by Laura Esquivel. Dir. Alfonso Arau. Perf. Lumi Cavazos, Marco Lombardi, and Regina Torne. Miramax, 1993.

The format for a *television or audio show* is:

“Yes...but is it Art?” Narr. Morley Safer. *Sixty Minutes*. CBS. WCBS, New York. 19 Sept. 1993.

The format for *Proquest, EBSCO, or other online databases* is:

Author’s last name—comma—author’s first name—period—one space—Quotation marks—Title of the Article—period—Quotation marks—one space—*Title of the magazine or newspaper* in *italics* (or underlined)—one space—day month year—colon—one space—page number(s)—period. Name of subscription service—period—one space—Name of subscribing library or library system—comma—one space—city where library is located—comma—one space—state abbreviation—period—one space—Date of access—one space—left angle bracket—URL to subscription service—right angle bracket—period.

Koretz, Gene. “Economic Trends: Uh-Oh, Warm Water.” *Business Week* 21 July 1997: 32.

Proquest. Los Altos High School Lib., Hacienda Heights, CA. 17 Oct. 2000

<<http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb>>.

Generally the format for *web pages* is:

Author’s last name—comma—1 space—author’s first name—period—one space—Quotation mark—Title of Article—period—Quotation mark—Name of the Website in *italics* (or underlined)—period—one space—Date of posting or update—period—one space—Name of the Organization or Institution sponsoring the site—period—one space—Date of access—1 space—left angle bracket—Electronic address or URL—right angle bracket—period.

If the work has no author last name, start with the article title.

Landsburg, Steven E. "Who shall Inherit the Earth?" *Slate*. 1 May 1997. 2 May 1997

<<http://www.slate.com/Economics/97-05-01/Economics.asp>>.

"Pregnancy: MedlinePlus." *National Library of Medicine—National Institutes of Health*. Web.

18 Aug. 2010. <<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/pregnancy.html>>.

Willett, Perry. ed. *Victorian Women Writers Project*. Apr. 1997. Indiana U. 26 Aug. 2000

<<http://www.indiana.edu/~letrs/wwwp/>>.

Special notes for citing Web pages

The amount of source description available for Web sites often varies. **Include as much of the following information as is available, in this order:**¹

1. Name of the author, editor, compiler, or translator of the content, reversed for alphabetizing and, if appropriate, followed by an abbreviation, such as *ed*.
2. Title of the article or other short work from the site, enclosed in quotation marks. Or, use the title of a posting to a discussion list or forum (taken from the subject line and put in quotation marks), followed by the description *Online posting*.
3. Publication information for any print version of the source.
4. Identifying title of the Internet site (e.g., scholarly project, database, online periodical, or professional or personal site), in *italics*; or, for a professional or personal site with no title, a description such as *Home Page*.
5. Name of the editor of the site (if given).
6. Version number of the source (if not part of the title) or, for a journal, the volume number, issue number, or other identifying number.
7. Date of electronic publication, of the latest update, or of the posting.
8. For a work from a subscription service, the name of the service and—if a library or a consortium of libraries is the subscriber—the name and geographic location (e.g. city, state abbreviation) of the subscriber.
9. Name of any institution or organization sponsoring the site (if not cited earlier)
10. Date when the researcher accessed the source.
11. URL of the source or, if the URL is impractically long and complicated, the URL of the site's search page. Or, for a document from a subscription service, the URL of the service's home page, if known; or the keyword assigned by the service, preceded by *Keyword*; or the series of links followed, preceded by *Path*.

¹ See the complete list on pages 214–215 of *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. Ed. Joseph Gibaldi. New York: MLA of America, 2003)

Automated citing engines

Free automated applications on Web sites such as EasyBib.com make it easier than ever to create your Works Cited page. It is highly recommended that you use these sites to help you include all relevant details for your Works Cited listing.

However, please be sure that you **check the details carefully** that these cites provide. For example, a string of text preceded by the word “by” on a Web page might look like an author to the computer, but a human should know the difference.

Unacceptable Sites

Good research relies on carefully selected information, not general articles that are written at the level of an informational brochure or an encyclopedia entry. **Do not use** the following Web sites for your research, or any other too-general or unreliable sites as instructed by your teacher. **Use of these sites will result in a loss of points** on your research paper final grade.

- wikipedia.org or similar sites
- about.com

Sample Works Cited Page

LastName 7

Works Cited

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- Blais, Madeleine. *In Girls, Hope is a Muscle*. New York: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1995.
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- Danzey, Leigh Ann. "The Price of Success: An Analysis of Funding Top Ten Men's and Women's Programs in Comparative Sports." *Dissertations*. June 1999. Florida State U. 12 Mar. 2000 <<http://www.floridauniv.edu>>.
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- "French Women Form 1-2 Punch in Epee." *Los Angeles Times* 22 Aug. 1996: S7.
- Johnson, Anne Janette. *Great Women in Sports*. Detroit: Visible Ink, 1996.
- Nelson, Mariah Burton. *Are We Winning Yet?: How Women Are Changing Sports and Sports Are Changing Women*. New York: Random House, 1991.
- Richardson, Dot. Personal interview. 23 Mar. 2000.

SAMPLE RESEARCH PAPER

Conqueror 1

Jane Conqueror

Ms. Piner

English 4

9 November 2009

"Under God" Under Scrutiny

Schoolchildren recite this promise nearly every day. Immigrants must learn this oath to become American citizens. And broad cross-sections of people say these words, hands over hearts, at sporting events around the country. The words in question? The Pledge of Allegiance, which has come under scrutiny because of the inclusion of the words "under God."

In the early 2000s, atheist Michael Newdow sued Elk Grove Unified School District, where his daughter was a third-grade student at the time, maintaining that she should not have to hear the Pledge of Allegiance, whose words "under God" violated religious freedom. Students are not required to say the Pledge if they do not want to. Newdow's case went all the way to the US Supreme Court, where the justices decided that Newdow did not have legal standing to bring the case. In fact, Chief Justice William Rehnquist derided his complaint as a "'heckler's veto'" (qtd. in "Court").

If the Supreme Court were to have decided on the merits of the case, they should have found that the words "under God" have no place in a patriotic oath of the United States. Instead, in the latest development in this case, the San Francisco-based Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which has jurisdiction for Newdow's area, decided to keep the words in the Pledge, and to keep "In God We Trust" on U.S. currency (Chea 7) as well. However, because the US does not have a state-supported religion, because the mention of a deity really has nothing to do with a promise of loyalty to a flag or country, and because any form of religious expression should be

an individual choice, the US government should remove the words “under God” from the flag salute.

The current Pledge of Allegiance has changed in small but significant ways since it was first written by former Baptist minister Francis Bellamy in August 1892. Reciters of the original Pledge did not refer to the US as “one nation, under God.” They also promised loyalty to “my flag,” instead of to “the flag of the United States of America.”

Why this absence of a mention of God in the original Pledge? Bellamy did not include any mention of God in the Pledge, expecting that it would be said in situations that embraced the young country’s commingled religious and secular foundations, including public schools. In fact, Bellamy intended that the Pledge would be said right along with other songs and prayers that celebrated both God and country equally (Ellis 122). In a way, this approach reflected the country as it was: founded by religious individuals escaping persecution, but not by religious fanatics who wanted to impose a state religion.

In 1954, during a time of Cold War fears and anti-Russian sentiment in the US, a Presbyterian pastor, the Reverend George Docherty, urged the inclusion of the phrase “under God” into Bellamy’s Pledge, stating, “I could hear little Muscovites reciting a similar pledge to their hammer-and-sickle flag with equal solemnity” (qtd. in Schudel). He advocated for the phrase to show a uniquely American spirit, allowing for, he claimed, a variety of religious beliefs — but excluding atheists — within the American family.

Similar religious overtones in patriotic arenas have been common throughout U.S. history. “In God We Trust” has been on American coins since 1861 (“U.S. Treasury”). “God Bless America” is traditionally sung at baseball games during the seventh inning, a custom reinvigorated after the September 11, 2001 attacks. However, these touches of religious

influence, while true to the spirit of the founding of America, were never meant to force Americans to espouse a particular religious tradition or even to sit quietly while a particular belief is publicly aired.

The rationale behind the inclusion of the phrase “Under God” reveals an unacceptable bias against Americans who do not believe in God. Motivated by fear and prejudice, advocates for including “under God” wanted to underscore that a Christian ethic was central to an American way of life at a time when fear of Communism was at a peak (Schudel). But even in 1954, belief in a Christian worldview was hardly universal, and Christianity was never meant to be the country’s established faith.

Around the world, many countries embrace state religions: official religious creeds that citizens are meant to follow, with varying degrees of individual flexibility and official financial or other support to the church. In extreme cases, governments may punish citizens for not believing in the official creed or for outwardly practicing non-official faiths. In the United States, however, the First Amendment forbids the federal government from establishing or designating an official religion.

If no religion is part and parcel with American citizenship, patriotic oaths or activities should not invoke a deity. Labeling the United States of America as “one nation under God” makes a statement that not all Americans believe in and really has nothing to do with the basic point of the Pledge of Allegiance: to profess loyalty to the country. Because it is memorized and recited at public gatherings of U.S. citizens, it is inherently a statement of unity and should therefore be a completely secular communal ritual.

When Newdow first brought his civil case in 2002, his main concern was that his daughter would have to hear a phrase that went against his religious beliefs. (It is interesting to

note that while Newdow himself is an atheist, the girl's mother and the girl herself are not.) However, it is not only atheists who subscribe to the position that "under God" doesn't belong in the Pledge. "Keeping the First Amendment wall strong is often difficult, complex," says Donahue. "But it is worth the effort; its purpose is noble. It is to ensure that Americans remain free to worship a God of their choice, free to pray in one's home and at one's privately funded place of worship. It ensures that no money from other Americans will benefit someone else's religion."

The United States should and does allow for a variety of expression of religious beliefs in private homes, churches, mosques, and synagogues. However, exposing any and all Americans to religious phrases must not sit well with atheists or others whose view of a deity is not labeled "God." This might include Muslims, Wiccans, ancestor worshippers, and UFO-cultists, to name but a few. In his essay, "My God, My Constitution," talk-show host and Christian churchgoer Phil Donahue expresses the opinion that once the U.S. begins to include mention of God in patriotic settings, it begs the question of which God to mention: "...one nation under Allah?" Donahue asks. Even within the realm of people who believe in some higher power, to preferentially call this entity "God" shows a preference for worldviews that espouse that name over others.

America has had a long and painful history of how to treat citizens of different backgrounds and ethnicities. While pre-civil-war slavery and the subsequent inequitable treatment of African-Americans provides the most obvious example, religious prejudice has proved painful for its sufferers as well. Particularly after the September 11 attacks, warmth toward Muslims had diminished to say the least. Although the words "under God" are not a direct attack against people of Islamic faiths, surely they add to a picture showing America as a

place where non-Christians don't really quite belong.

Why, when one is free to praise God privately at home or in religious settings, must expressions of patriotism and God be bound together? Defenders of keeping the “under God” phrase in, including Ninth Circuit Appeals Court Judge Carlos Bea, see the Pledge as words that help “unite our vast nation through...some of the ideals upon which our Republic was founded” (qtd. in Chea 7). Detractors view the inclusion of those two words as transforming the Pledge into a prayer. Americans have ample opportunity to pray privately, even silently to themselves while in a crowd, without causing discomfort to those who do not believe or agree with the words being spoken. This is especially true of words meant to unify individuals under the common banner of patriotism. How is an atheist supposed to feel “united” to his or her fellow Americans if the very next phrase recited by the group highlights a philosophical difference?

One might argue that not much harm can come from having to hear a God-tinged phrase, even if it does little to encourage unity. Recent events have shown, however, that this is not always the case. In 2008, for example, a New York Yankees baseball fan was kicked out of Yankee Stadium for attempting to leave his seat during the presentation of “God Bless America” at the seventh inning stretch (Sanchez and Costello). The ejected fan, Bradford Campeau-Laurion, claimed he just needed to use the restroom, but the restraining officers found his actions unpatriotic and also believed that he was acting disruptively. Lawsuits regarding the matter are still pending on either side.

On a smaller scale, individuals who refuse to participate in saying the Pledge of Allegiance in its entirety are often uncomfortable at the fact that their non-participation is noticed by their peers. After all, the argument might go, to stand there silently, or sit the Pledge out, or mouth the words, should not be a big deal to people. While attention — and possible silent

condemnation — from peers who notice the non-involvement should not concern adults, atheist children of those from faiths that do not name a higher power “God” are apt to feel embarrassed by such negative attention from their classmates.

Alternatively, a point could be made that no one should worry about these two small words in a 31-word utterance, since so much of American life pays tribute to and is intertwined with the country’s religious foundations. Donahue alludes to this reality in his article. In fact, many courthouses throughout the country, and in particular in the South, are decorated with crosses, prayers, the Ten Commandments and other emblems of Christian belief. If vestiges of belief in God are officially all over the country anyway, from the Bible that citizens swear on in courthouses to religious emblems people walk under in public buildings, one might wonder why the words “under God” rankle with people. The answer is this: Changes to a country’s mindset can only be made piecemeal, not all at once. This is probably part of the reason that Newdow started small, with “under God” in the Pledge and “In God We Trust” on American currency.

In the end, why do these two little words matter so much? Because the Pledge of Allegiance is meant to be a communal expression of shared patriotism. All Americans, of any of no religious background, should have the opportunity to express and feel solidarity without mention of any potentially divisive sentiments. With words like “Under God” in our Pledge of Allegiance to the symbol of our country, with “God Bless America” being played during our national pastime game of baseball, with that greatest symbol of American capitalism, money, mentioning God, non-God-believing Americans must often feel like they just don’t belong.

While the problem of Christian touches permeating American culture is greater than just two words, the solution could start simply. The solution could start with the Supreme Court re-examining the “heckler’s veto” with an eye toward inclusion and healing.

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SENIOR PROJECT

PORTFOLIO

Even before you begin your Fieldwork, you should start to think about how it will all be arranged in your Senior Project Portfolio. Graded during second semester, this portfolio showcases all the documents used in support of your journey through Senior Project. This collection provides concrete evidence showing the depth and breadth of your year-long Project. In addition to being graded by your Faculty Advisor, your Portfolio will be available during your final presentation for your Review Board to examine.

You should include all of the following required elements, as well as whatever optional elements you feel are necessary to allow the review board to appreciate the scope and quality of your Senior Project. The table of contents will make it easy for your Faculty Advisor and Review Board members to explore your portfolio materials.

Required elements:

1. Table of Contents
2. Letter to Faculty Advisor
3. Teacher-approved letter of intent (from first semester)
4. Senior Project Poster/Relationship Chart
5. Research paper (print a clean copy)
6. Overall Fieldwork self-evaluation (typed)
7. Fieldwork log for all 15 hours: Learned Skill (10) + Community Service (5)
8. All verification forms
9. Signed Fieldwork agreement form
10. Faculty Advisor forms
11. Additional Documentation: photographs, written verification, certificates, licenses, permits, documents, awards, report cards, correspondence, etc.¹
12. Proof of **final product** (indicate whether you will show a live demo, video clip, certificate, etc.)

Your Portfolio will help make a positive first impression on your Review Board, so take care to produce a polished, finished work. If you wish, you can get your Portfolio professionally bound at an office service center such as FedEx Office. This service will cost about \$5 and should take only minutes.

¹ Be sure to caption these elements so the judges can place them into the context of your Senior Project.

FIELDWORK: LEARNED SKILL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Learned Skill:

The Senior Project gives you an opportunity to learn a new and challenging skill that relates to your overall Senior Project topic. You are required to **complete 10 hours of learning, not including your individual practice time.** As you learn this skill, you must show proof and document your learning process. Your grade, as judged by your Faculty Advisor, will be based on how you learned, what you learned, and any struggles you encountered along the way. Your evidence should include some of the following:

- Photos or videos of you *throughout* the learning process (beginning, middle, end)
- Receipts of classes taken
- Certificates earned
- Informational pamphlets
- Learning materials used in the process
- Class schedules
- Audio files

Community Service:

You are required to **complete 5 hours of Community Service** with an organization outside of Los Altos High School's clubs and activities. Any organized activity in which you help improve a part of your community qualifies as Community Service. Please note that merely helping friends or family members accomplish a task does not qualify. The Community Service chosen must relate to your overall topic of your Senior Project. Here are some examples of appropriate versus inappropriate Community Service:

Inappropriate Examples:

1. Giving free oil changes to friends
2. Teaching your cousin to play an instrument
3. Cooking dinner for your family
4. Cleaning or assisting in a gym
5. Teaching your friends to surf
6. Sew friend's prom dress
7. Helping a friend lose weight/work out
8. Doing secretarial work for family business

Appropriate Alternatives:

1. Free oil changes to foster parents
2. Playing music for a kindergarten class
3. Cooking for a shelter
4. Cleaning or assisting in a group home
5. Help Surfers Healing Autism group
6. Sew blankets for cancer patients
7. Helping with the Special Olympics
8. Doing secretarial work for PETA

You must work with an organization that will support your Community Service goal while still relating to your overall topic.

Common Fieldwork mistakes that might result in failure:

1. Showcasing pictures of other people in act of learning, not you
2. Using another's pictures, videos, or audio as a final product, rather than producing your own
3. Not including receipts or adequate proof of your learned skill
4. Fabricating a series of pictures by simply changing clothes to suggest different days
5. "Learning" how to do something you already know how to do
6. Asking friends or family to sign off on hours
7. Waiting until the last minute to start your Fieldwork

**Always ask questions if you are unsure about any part of the Senior Project.
Your reticence could cost you your grade!**

FIELDWORK LOG

During the completion of your fifteen project hours, you will be required to keep a record of your time spent, efforts, and personal thoughts. This log will

- help you stay on task as you routinely record what you have accomplished and what you need to do next;
- help you keep track of the number of hours you have spent toward the completion of your project;
- serve as a tool for personal reflection as you encounter new experiences;
- serve as documented proof of your accomplishments.

If your project involves an experience, such as volunteering, teaching, or learning a skill, **that does not result in the creation of a product, the log will be the main way of proving you have completed the project's required steps and hours.** Because the Senior Project log will be included in the portfolio presented to your teacher, your Faculty Advisor, and your Review Board, and because it will be submitted to turnitin.com, **you must type it.**

EACH LOG ENTRY MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. **A DESCRIPTION of your project tasks and accomplishments** such as planning, designing, constructing, interviewing, reading, researching, volunteering, and purchasing materials related to your learned skill.
2. **REFLECTIONS on your experiences:** thoughts on personal growth, feelings about your successes or setbacks. (This is your chance to freely express your ideas as you learn about yourself.)
3. **A PLAN** of what tasks you need to do next and how it will be accomplished.
4. **A RECORD of the time** spent on each task, as well as the cumulative time spent.
5. **A TITLE** for each log, identifying it as either “Learned Skill” or “Community Service.”

Sample Fieldwork Log Entry

(Project: Learning to Sew)

March 23, 2004

LEARNED SKILL

Well, sewing isn't easy! I went to class last week just about ready to get on the machine, and so I spent the whole time sewing. During that time, I managed to create a couple of stay-stitch seams and I sewed the front and back of my bodice together at the shoulders. Stay stitches don't have to be perfect; they're just designed to help the fabric keep its shape during the sewing process. However, they're supposed to be one half of an inch the whole time. Did I successfully keep it at a half inch? Of course not. It wandered until it was a much wider hem than a half inch.

As for sewing the front and back bodices together, that was a bust, too. I got one side to the point where it looks fairly clean, but there was a big pink thread on one of the shoulders, so I had to rip it back out. Basically, you're supposed to start part of the way in on the fabric, and then you stitch in reverse to the edge, and then you start going forward. I kind of caught the edge in my stitch, so I don't know whether it's okay that way. I'll ask Beth next week.

Sewing is turning out to be hard work! My one dress is certainly taking me a long time, and with all the tearing out of seams I'm bound to do, the thing might be filled with holes by the time I'm finished! I hope I'm not too embarrassed to ever wear it. I mean, I'm not expecting a work of art, but I don't want it to be pathetic, either.

In next week's class Beth will lecture if someone is at the point of doing something complicated (buttons, zippers, etc.). If no one is there yet, I'll be spending the whole time on the (dreaded) machine again. Practice makes perfect, right? I will conquer—I hope!

Time spent on project: 2.5 hours

Time spent to date: 15.5 hours

LETTER TO THE FACULTY ADVISOR

Your Letter to the Faculty Advisor in the Portfolio gives you the opportunity to consider your project in its entirety. In your own words, you'll relate the experience as you lived it while also explaining how your experiences helped to either fortify or change your ideas about your original thesis. This letter will discuss your Senior Project challenges and accomplishments throughout each part of the process. You will have the opportunity to thank your advisor for a year's worth of guidance in helping you complete the Senior Project. The letter must include the following:

1. Opening greeting and expression of appreciation for your advisor's mentorship throughout the year.
2. What did you do for your Senior Project research paper? What did you learn?
3. What did you do for your Fieldwork (Learned Skill and Community Service)? What did you learn?
4. How did your Senior Project *challenge* your abilities, comfort zone, worldview?
5. How did you use your Community Service to give back to your community? What did you learn about yourself and others from your Community Service?
6. A thank-you to your advisor for the support and guidance you received.

Throughout your letter, you should tie your Fieldwork and experiences back to the realization of your topic's thesis. In the sample letter, look for the sentences that bring the writer's experiences back to her paper topic.

Your letter may also mention, as appropriate, your family background, schooling, goals, personal philosophies, talents, hardships, any unusual circumstances or experiences involving the Senior Project, reflection on your high school years, or expressions of regret or gratitude. If English is not your primary language, you may wish to discuss how this affected your project experience.

As with your initial letter of intent, you must **type** this letter, using a **formal business letter format**.



SAMPLE LETTER TO THE ADVISOR



(continues on next page)

Jane Conqueror
Your Address
City, State, Zip

April 17, 2010

Faculty Advisor's Name
15325 Los Robles Ave.
Hacienda Heights, CA 91745

Dear Mr. Advisor:

First, I would like to thank you for taking the time to work with me all year on my Senior Project. This portfolio represents a lot of hard work and time on my part. I sometimes hated having to complete the project, but I must admit that I learned a lot.

As you know, my research paper topic during first semester was school dress codes. I argued vehemently against dress code policies, but I had a very difficult time! I am sad to say that most of the research I found actually supported dress codes in schools. I was about halfway done with my paper when I realized that I was on the side that was much harder to argue. If I weren't so stubborn, I might have switched sides just to make things easier on myself. Even though I still believe strongly in freedom of expression, I did learn that there are many good arguments against it. I still believe dress code policies are against freedom of expression and I hope to continue this argument in my presentation.

For my Learned Skill, I took a sewing class through Whittier Adult School. This was a real challenge for me! I had no experience at all with fabrics or sewing, so I had a lot to learn. I am very grateful to my instructor, Beth, for being so patient with me. The biggest challenge for me was being able to do everything neatly enough since I have a hard time cutting and sewing in a straight line. Making the assigned projects were difficult because it took longer than I expected. To be honest, I think this is too time-consuming of a hobby for me. I am not patient enough to work that long on something that might not turn out well. In reflecting on the art of sewing, it actually helped strengthen my argument that dressing to express yourself is an art form and allows creative expression and should be allowed because of the time and effort it takes to create these clothes.

For my Community Service portion, I worked with "Safe Haven," which is a woman's shelter in Whittier. I must admit, I was nervous about going to the facility because of the high security measures they took to ensure the safety of the women. It already let me know how much these

women have gone through. I wanted to be respectful and I was worried I would be intruding. Once again, this experience reminded me of clothing and buying simple things such as blankets as a freedom that everyone deserves. After discussions with the coordinator, I was able to give the homemade blankets and scarves I made to the twelve women at the shelter. The women were so nice and they asked me how I learned to make them. The coordinator showed me the daily schedule and explained the process for getting the women away with their children with only the clothes on their backs. I was shocked at the things that women had to go through to get to safety. It immediately made me want to do more for these women. I felt very happy that I learned about this facility and it gave me the motivation to hold a clothing drive to get as much as I can to give to this shelter in the future.

Overall, Senior Project taught me a lot about freedom of choices and clothing as an art. My experiences have locked down my own opinion that everyone should have the right to wear what they want as a way to express themselves because it is an act of freedom of one's opinions and choices. On top of defending my argument, I also learned that I sometimes make things harder on myself simply because I am stubborn. When it comes to sewing, I learned that my hand/eye coordination is not the best. The most important thing I learned was the plight of abused women and the magnitude of their situations. I feel really proud for doing a small part to make them feel special with my blankets and scarves. I look forward to continuing my donations to this facility and to educating others about the things they can do to make a difference in their community. I am proud that I successfully completed such a daunting project and come out feeling good about myself.

I would like to thank you, Mr. Advisor, for helping me throughout the year and giving me such great suggestions and motivating me to do my best. I appreciated your honesty with my paper and your opposite viewpoints on my topic. It really helped me to see how I needed to defend my argument throughout the paper. I also want to thank you for always making time for our appointments and being so involved in my success. Your interest in me and my project gave me the extra incentive I needed to make this project a success.

Thank you again for your time throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Jane Conqueror

SENIOR PROJECT PRESENTATION

The following outline suggests how you might structure your final presentation, to be delivered before a judging panel, or Review Board, at the end of second semester. You should feel free to adjust the order of your presentation and adapt this outline to suit your personal style and your Senior Project topic. However, certain slides are required.

Time requirement: 8–10 minute speech

I. Introduction

Let the Review Board know who you are. What do they need to know to appreciate you and the effort you have put into your Senior Project?

Project overview

- ✓ Reasons for interest in this subject
- ✓ Research paper topic and thesis
- ✓ Fieldwork (Learned Skill/Community Service): Briefly describe
- ✓ Most important thing you have learned about your subject and yourself

II. Body

Research paper

- ✓ Why you chose the topic
- ✓ The thesis of your paper
- ✓ What you learned about the research process
- ✓ The most important or surprising thing you learned about your subject
- ✓ The effort you put into the writing of your research paper
- ✓ What you have learned from the process

Fieldwork/Community Service activities

- ✓ Why you chose your Learned Skill and Community Service
- ✓ Describe each in detail:
 - Who?
 - What?
 - Why?

- ✓ How your research paper relates to your Fieldwork
- ✓ How the project was a challenge
- ✓ What you learned from the project
 - about the learned skill: the problems involved and how you solved them
 - about yourself through Community Service
- ✓ Acknowledge/thank people who helped or inspired you, mentioning what you might have learned from them
- ✓ Presentation of final product

III. Conclusion

- ✓ What did you learn about yourself through completing the Senior Project: intellectually, emotionally, physically?
- ✓ How can you use what you learned?
- ✓ Reflect on how the Senior Project affected your senior year at LAHS

POWERPOINT SLIDES AND OTHER VISUAL/MULTI-MEDIA ELEMENTS

As you present your oral report, you will also be showing the Review Board a PowerPoint slide show. In planning your presentation, think about the following questions to determine how your PowerPoint slides and any additional visual or media components can enhance your demonstration.

Keep in mind, however, that your spoken words and delivery should be the focus of your presentation. Any audio, visual, or supplemental displays should be secondary to how you present yourself.

- ✓ What chart, graph, table, timeline, slides, tapes, videos, or other multi-media elements can help the Review Board visualize your project?
- ✓ Where in your presentation is the best place to insert additional media elements?
- ✓ What hardware/software/technology will you need?
- ✓ Have you made technology arrangements in advance? Have you made sure the materials you need will be available in the location of your presentation?
- ✓ How can you edit your visual or audio portions into your presentation?
- ✓ What will your backup plan be, in case of a failure of all or some technology components?

Remember that you must present a *8–10 minute* oral report, supplemented by the accompanying PowerPoint slide show. **An 8–10 minute video of your activities does not satisfy this requirement.** Any video shown as a Final Product must be **between 30 seconds and 2 minutes.**

Things to remember:

- You should never read directly from the slides. You should use the slides as a way to remind yourself of what you will discuss.
- Your slides should never have long, complete sentences. They should be **phrases only** so that *you* are presenting the information, not the PowerPoint slides.
- Do not have busy backgrounds. It is very important that the panelists can see your slides clearly.
- Font should be a minimum of size 26, and titles should stand out.
- Small pictures will not be seen. Use a **maximum of two** pictures per slide.
- You ***must*** practice!!

APPENDICES

On the following pages you will find copies of **some** of the forms that will require your and others' signatures throughout the year.

Also included is the **calendar** for this year's Senior Project, which is **subject to change**.

Finally, you will find drafts of Senior Project **rubrics** that have been used to evaluate the major Senior Project benchmarks in previous years. Use these to guide your work, but please be aware that they are **also subject to change**.

PROJECT VERIFICATION FORM

Student Name _____

Project _____

By filling out this form, you will help Los Altos High School to verify that the above-named student has completed the required out-of-class hours for Senior Project, a multi-faceted year-long undertaking. Your honest answers to the following questions will contribute to our evaluation of this project phase. Your answers should reflect your knowledge of this student's participation in either learning a new skill or completing a community service activity.

1. Did you assist the student with a **Learned Skill** or with **Community Service**?
2. For how many hours did you **directly supervise** the student? _____ hours
3. Have you seen this project at different stages of completion? Yes _____ No _____

Explain:

4. To your knowledge, what specific **problems** did the student encounter and overcome?
5. What **successes** have you seen the student achieve?

Supervisor Name _____

Signature _____

Daytime Phone or e-mail address _____ Date _____

Please note that you will receive a call from a member of the Los Altos High School staff to verify that the above information is correct.

FIELDWORK SELF-EVALUATION

Directions: As one of your portfolio documents, you are required to complete the following self-evaluation form. Because it must also be submitted to turnitin.com, you need to **type, print, and submit the following questions, along with your answers.**

Respond to each item as thoughtfully and completely as possible. Your responses will help your Faculty Advisor evaluate the quality of your effort and the outcome of your Fieldwork.

Name _____ Date _____ Period _____

1. Topic of your Senior Project _____

Briefly describe:

A. Learned Skill

B. Community Service

2. Estimated hours spent on your combined Fieldwork _____

Date Started _____

Date Completed _____

3. Your Fieldwork involved the help, expertise, or guidance of others. Identify anyone who was instrumental in helping you complete your Fieldwork, listing the type of assistance each person offered and whether or not each completed a Verification Form.

| Name | Type of Assistance | Verification form? |
|------|--------------------|--------------------|
| | | |
| | | |

4. If you completed any portion of your Fieldwork without assistance, explain.

5. What was most enjoyable about the learned skill? What did you learn most about yourself in learning this particular skill?

6. Why did you choose your specific Community Service? What did you learn about your organization and their mission that was important to you? Do you feel like you made a difference? Why or why not?

7. All seniors were required to complete a Senior Project log. Review your log and reflect on what your log reveals about you and your project as you moved through your Fieldwork.

8. An important element of the Senior Project is the challenge that you made in the selection and execution of your Senior Project activities. Describe how you pushed your limits in both: 1) the learned skills portion 2) the Community Service portion. *(This is a critical part of your self-evaluation, so give this question your deepest consideration.)*

9. You started the senior project with guided questions. Now that you have completed your research and hours, please list your questions and answer them.

10. Now that your activities for this project are complete, describe how your experiences helped you better understand your research paper thesis overall. Did it change your opinion in your thesis or make your opinion stronger? Explain your answer.

11. Using your personal experiences and guided questions, how would you now present and defend your thesis (or further discuss your topic if you no longer agree with your thesis) to a group of educated professionals?

12. Considering your effort, outcome, Fieldwork log, documentation, and this evaluation, what grade would you give yourself for your work?

Grade_____

Signature_____

Date_____
