

Use this to be sure that you choose an appropriate topic.

Your name _____

Make Your Case

First Choice

1. Why is your choice "eminent" or what is your essential question?

2. Why did you select him or her or this topic? _____

3. What do you already know about your choice? _____

4. Resources you plan to use: _____

5. Write a letter to: _____

6. Who could you interview? _____

7. A biography is available for my choice, my teacher's OK _____

Title _____ Location _____

8. Multimedia ideas for presenting your person: _____

2nd choice _____

If your 1st choice isn't approved, you will be asked to fill out the First Choice questions for this person.

3rd choice _____

If your 1st choice isn't approved, you will be asked to fill out the First Choice questions for this person.

KWL Chart

K	W	L
What do I know?	What do I want to know?	What have I learned?

Sample Essential questions for biographical topics:

1. How did other people view your person and his or her accomplishments at the time? How do they view your person today?
2. How did your person view himself or herself and his or her accomplishments at the time?
3. How did your person's accomplishments "live" past him or her?
4. What decisions and events led to your person becoming eminent? How did this person get to where she or he is today?
5. How did your person's goals change at various times in his or her life?
6. What is the single greatest contribution your eminent person made?
7. In what ways was your person influenced or affected (positively or negatively) by others?
8. What price did your person pay for his or her fame?
9. How did your eminent person handle unpleasant events/obstacles in his or her life?
10. Do you think he or she would choose to do things differently if there was an opportunity to relive his or her life?
11. Did your person have a role model? Was your person a role model for others?
12. A question of your own. (*Be sure to check with your teacher first.)

Sample Essential questions for science topics:

- 1 - How do crystals form?
- 2 - (color/light) Why does white light go through a prism and come out the colors that it does?
- 3 - What causes lightning to form?
- 4 - What are the differences between acids and bases?
- 5 - How do sea otters survive in the wild?
- 6 - How can we help save water and prevent drought?
- 7 - How do optical illusions fool the eye?
- 8 - How do mammals survive the winter?
- 9 - How do nocturnal animals (particularly bats) maneuver at night? (echolocation)
- 10 - How does electromagnetism run motors?
- 11 - What is a comet? What kind of damage can it do to the Earth?
- 12 - Do ferrets make good pets?
- 13 - How do eels breathe underwater?
- 14 - How do pulleys, levers, and gears affect the way work machines work?
- 15 - Why do different types of volcanoes erupt?
- 16 - How do complex electrical circuits work?
- 17 - How does the heart pump blood throughout the body?
- 18 - How do manmade things hover?
- 19 - What conditions best create static electricity?
- 20 - How do bones get calcium and use it?
- 21 - How does the brain use information from the senses?
- 22 - How do black holes form and how do they behave?
- 23 - Which rodent is the easiest to train in a maze? (Animals used in research)
- 24 - How are bubbles made? What can we do with bubbles?
- 25 - How does photosynthesis make leaves change color?
- 26 - How do tornadoes form?
- 27 - How do magnets work?

Following is a sample "Weekly Update". This is an organizational tool for students to report progress each week.

Assignment title:

Name _____

Topic _____

Date Due _____

Parent Signature _____

Resources:

I have found the following biography or autobiography: Search for Books online

Other resources I have already found (could include):

- Computer resources:

EBSCO _____

World Book Online (from home passwords are needed) _____

Internet through KidsClick _____

- Multimedia: _____

- Books: _____

- Other: _____

(You may attach your Citation Work Sheet to show specific resources.)

- I have been to the following libraries this week: _____

- I have begun to take notes in my biography packet (or other approved graphic organizer.) yes _____ no _____

Letters (letter requirements and format):

- I have found the addresses for these people/places:

- I have drafted _____ letters of inquiry.

- I have completed _____ letters of inquiry.

Please attach a copy.

General information:

Share anything else here that you have worked on toward your project that you'd like me to know: _____

Planning:

What do you plan to accomplish next week?

Questions you and/or your parents might have for me:

Letter Requirements

- Typed or in cursive and ink
- Two final copies, one for your teacher and one to send
- (Teacher must give final approval)
- This letter needs to be an authentic letter of inquiry. To do this, here are some guidelines you can follow:

Paragraph #1 Introduction

Who you are, age, grade level, description of the project you have taken on.

Paragraph #2

Share what you have located and learned about the topic you are researching.

Show your knowledge!

Paragraph #3

Ask specific questions for which you haven't found answers.

(Don't ask for things!)

Be sure to tell the reader when you need to have the information returned to you.

THE ART OF INTERVIEWING

Each one of you is responsible for interviewing at least one person. To choose a person to interview you must consider a few questions. Can you interview this person in person or will it have to be over the phone?

- List at least 2 people or places you might call for an interview:
- When are you not available for the interview? (Consider your parents' schedules if they will be driving you.)
- Think of at least five questions you'd like to ask:
- How will the above questions help you get to know your character better or help you understand your related topic better?
- What would be appropriate to wear to an interview such as this?
- I would highly recommend that you take a tape recorder so you can concentrate on what the person is saying and what would make sense for the next question.
- Do you need to borrow a tape recorder from the school?
Yes _____ No _____
- Do you have the address of the interviewee so you can write a thank you note and send an invitation? What is the address?

TIPS FOR A GOOD INTERVIEW

1. Introduce yourself, shake hands, and smile when first meeting the person. Be sure to thank him or her for this opportunity at the start. Your interviewee may have questions about our project. Be prepared to briefly explain the project. Also, if you take your process notebook that might help you share what you are doing.
2. Ask for permission to either audiotape or videotape the person. If your interviewee is not comfortable with this, graciously go along with that preference but let him or her know that you need patience as you take notes (or have a parent help you take notes so you can focus on the questions and interview subject.)
3. Try to look your interviewee in the eye as much as possible.
4. Be prepared with written questions. These may either be on a page or you may want to put one question per note card.
5. You want your questions to flow in a logical sequence. For example, all questions about family go together, schooling questions go together, etc. Start with a question you **know** can be easily answered.
6. Listen to what your interviewee has to say so you can avoid asking a question that has already been answered - even if it is on your written list of questions.
7. You will probably want to finally ask if your interviewee has any idea about someone else you might contact. This is called networking.
8. Thank the interviewee for his or her gift of time. If you have an invitation with you, this would be an appropriate time to give it. (Otherwise, you can send it with the thank you.)
9. Send a letter of thanks after you get back.
10. After you get home, you will need to listen to the tape so you can take notes. Some of you will want to "transcribe" the tape (write or type out the dialog). Often, the interview is too long to transcribe and you will want to find another way to share your interview in your project. We will give you alternative ideas. You will be required to show evidence of your interview in your display.

Notetaking ideas:

Read. Look away from the text.

Think.

Write notes using your own words.

Make lists

Make an outline

Highlight important text on a printed page

Use a graphic organizer

Make notes on 3x5 cards and organize in a pocket chart

Use lined notebook paper

Draw a chart and fill it in

Create a web.

Use a program like Inspiration™ or Kidspiration™

Make notes in a word processor

Use a digital camera or video camera or tape recorder
(Then transcribe the information into a written form)

Optional Display Items*

(This is just a brainstormed list to start you off.)

Pictures (with handwritten captions)

Portrait

Diorama

Live demonstrations/entertainment

Timeline

Electric box

PowerPoint

HyperStudio

Banner

Poster

Game

Flap questions

Quotes

Video (created or edited by you)

Poem

Scrapbook

Maps/globes

Mobile

Countdown

Puppet

Wedge wheel

Whatever else YOU can think of - be creative and have fun!

*** Display Representations for Interviews**

Type exactly (transcription)

An audiotape of your interview

A videotape of your interview

Type the question/follow with summary of answer

Picture/caption poster

Scrapbook

Draw comics/bubble explanations

Fill out an interview summary card

Or come up with your own way!!!!