Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ McAlpine Comp

I-Search Proposal:

Express & Reflect

Selecting a topic for research is of utmost importance. If you select something you are not passionate about, you risk losing interest and drive to complete this project. If you select something you know a lot about already, you will have a difficult time finding sources that teach you something new. You also need to examine a topic that is argumentative, meaning there should be at least two sides to the debate. You will know the topic is argumentative if you can easily look up information that conflicts. It is important that you keep an open mind about your topic and try not to just find information that aligns with your opinion. Part of presenting research is building your own credibility.

**Proposing a Topic: The I-Search Proposal**

The I-Search portfolio begins by investigating what interests you most and thinking critically about how and why it interests you. Here are some ideas to consider when developing your topic:

1. Think of a variety of possible topics. Ask family members, friends, or teachers for help if you can’t think of a topic.
2. Avoid committing yourself to the first one that comes to mind. Think about how this topic will be one you will spend the bulk of your semester on, so what genuinely gets you thinking might be the best idea.
3. Remember that you will gather information not only through typical research sources, but also through interviews, a survey, and a focus group.
4. This topic should be meaningful, important, and not frivolous. Also, select a topic that requires you to learn new information, not a topic that you already know extensively. This project is meant to be a learning experience, not a waste of time.
5. Your topic will eventually need to be fully developed. You will need to answer either why or how your topic is significant.

What is unique about this project is that you can do with it what you please in an effort to make it meaningful to you and your academic career. Our goal in assigning you this project is to challenge you to think more critically about a topic of interest to you, and push you to apply the information you learn in a productive and civically responsible way (your presentation). If you would like to understand cause and effect, go ahead. Want to define a problem and propose a solution? We won’t hold you back. Ultimately, we want you to make this project matter, so, impress us.

Once you’ve thought about what you are genuinely interested in, you will be challenged to develop a proposal for your topic. The proposal will be defended to your classmates and approved by your teacher.

**ASSIGNMENT REQUIREMENTS**

* 450 to 500 words arguing what you would like to immerse yourself in for your I-Search Portfolio, the capstone project of your high school career.
* MLA Formatting and Citations
  + Proper MLA header (Name / Teacher / English IV: Composition / Due Date)
  + Proposed Paper Title // Include word count in paper title (ex: Paper Title | 492 words)
  + MLA running header (Last Name #)
  + If you identify and cite any research in your proposal, you must include a properly formatted works cited page

The I-Search proposal should first be a personal statement that reflects on the following areas. It will help to develop a strong paragraph or two for each of the points listed below:

**Part I**

* Include your proposed research question
* Identify and explain your topic of interest
* How does your topic impact you? (Express)
  + What is your connection with and interest in this topic?
  + What do you already know about the topic?
  + How did you go about learning about this topic?
  + What motivates you to study this more intently?
* Define your purpose. (Reflect)
  + What do you want to do with this research?
  + Which is your purpose: to inform, to persuade, or to entertain?
  + Identify which type of purpose you have for your research and then explain why this is the case to your audience.
  + Why is the topic important to study? One of the coolest things about research is that you get to contribute your voice. What you also need to do here is tell your audience why we should care about your topic of interest. Answer the question, “so what?”

**Part II**

The second part of your proposal should include the following (which can be written in a bulleted list):

* Two to three people you plan to interview and questions you intend to ask them. At least one of these people must be an expert in your area of interest. Explain why you plan to interview each person.
* A list of five to eight participants in a focus group, themes/topics you’d discuss, and a list of potential questions you’d use; or propose an experiment and provide details of what you would like to do and why.

*The proposal of the project will ultimately evolve into a portion of your I-Search Portfolio, as well as prepare you for conducting your primary research needed for this project. How much you put into this proposal will certainly assist you in being successful in your paper.*