

The I Search



**Grade 7 English
Wellesley Middle School
Cluster M - Ms. Lee**

Name: _____

Period: _____

I Search Due Dates

Tuesday 2/26	Topics Due
Wednesday 2/27	Proposal Organizer Part I
Friday 3/1	Proposal Organizer Part II
Thursday 3/7	Proposal Due
Tuesday 3/13	Proposal Rewrites due (if required)
Friday 3/15	First Page Due
Monday 3/18	Source Check (2 books, 2 internet), Interview Confirmation & Questions
Thursday 3/28	Interview transcripts
Tuesday 4/2	First Draft of Search portion
Thursday 4/4	Conclusion Worksheet due
Friday 4/5	Bibliography Due
Friday 4/12	Final Copy (cover page, proposal, search, conclusion, bibliography, reflection worksheet)

What is the I Search?

The I Search is a research paper given to all 7th grade students at WMS. Students are asked to choose a topic with a focus on a particular issue that interest them, develop an essential questions and proposal and research the issue using primary and secondary sources (books, interviews, magazines, newspapers, internet).

The chart below describes how the I Search differs from a traditional research paper (expository writing):

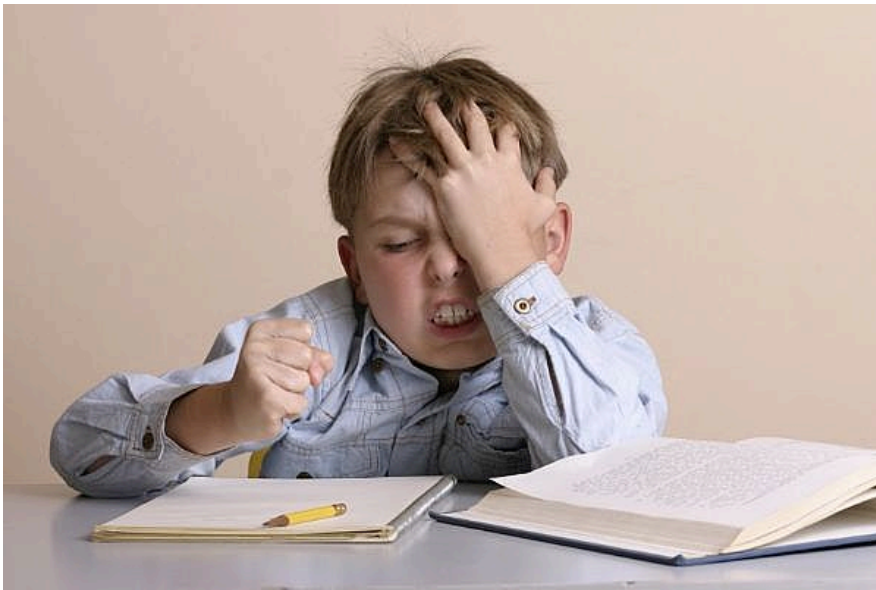


I Search is a research paper that...	Traditional research papers...
Relies heavily on primary sources	Relies on secondary sources
Based on a question/issue that the student is interested in	Research a “school subject”
Has a “voice” that is more informal (first person)	Have a formal “voice” (3 rd person, omniscient)
Has a writer that is present, telling the story (anecdotes) of information gathered as well as reflections on one’s own thought processes	Have a writer that presents information and analysis
Has a dialogue that may be present	Do not usually contain dialogue

How is the I Search organized?

The **I Search** is composed of 6 parts (7 - 10 pages):

- Cover page (picture, title, name, date & period – 1 page)
- Proposal (1 - 2 pages)
- Search (3 - 5 pages)
- Conclusion (1 page)
- Bibliography (1 page)
- Reflection Sheet (1 page)



The Proposal (1-2 pages)

The first section of your I Search will be titled ***The Proposal***. The proposal is a statement discussing what topic and essential question you would like to research and why.

Your proposal includes 3 parts:

1. **Introduction:** Begin your proposal by introducing your topic and issue in a fun and exciting way. You may start with

- A story or event (real or imagined)
- A question or series of questions
- A surprising or unusual statement
- A description or explanation of a situation
- Something that involves the reader (Imagine you are...)
- A conversation/dialogue that leads to your interest in a topic.

2. **What I Already Know:** In this section you simply tell the reader everything that you already know about your topic. It does not matter if you know a little or a lot. Tell the reader everything.
3. **What I Need To Know:** You will end your proposal by stating the essential question you are trying to answer. In other words, what issue do you want to research? After stating your essential question, create little questions you will need to answer to address your issue. Remember: who, what, when , where, why and how. No yes/no questions.



Your proposal must be approved by me before you can move forward.

Proposal Organizer

Due: _____

Answer the following questions in complete sentences. Be thoughtful!

Part One: Generate ideas

1. What topics are you interested in? List at least 3 topics.

2. For your top two topic choices, what possible essential questions can you ask about your topic?

For example, if you enjoy football, maybe your question could be: What is/will be the impact of recent concussion research on the NFL?

3. For those 2, what do you already know about the topics you have chosen?

4. For those 2 topics, what resources are available that would help you answer your essential questions ?

Proposal Organizer

continued

Part II: Decision making time

1. What is your essential question?

2. What specific information will you need to learn in order to answer your essential question. (I need to know.. I want to find out).

3. How will learning this information help you? _____

The Search (3 - 5 pages)

After your proposal has been approved, the second section of your I Search will be entitled ***The Search***. The search is the longest portion of the project, but most of you will find that you have much more than five pages of research. Now you have to decide what information to include and what to leave out. After working so hard to gather all the research, many students will find it difficult to figure out what to include in the final paper.

In this section you should try to answer the following questions:

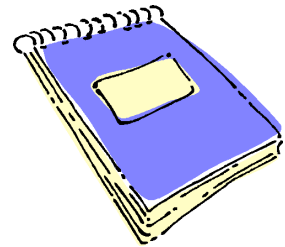
- What did you find out from your resources?
- What questions were you able to answer from the ***What I Need To Know*** section of the proposal.
- Who did you interview?
- What did you read?
- What did you discover about your topic accidentally?
- What problems did you have in completing your research?
- What information surprised you?

Remember, you must use the first person pronoun ***I*** when writing your research. Using the first person will help you infuse your voice into the paper.

Sources

You must have a minimum of 5 sources total:

- ✓ 2 books
- ✓ 2 internet sources
- ✓ 1 interview



Of course, you may use as many sources as you need to answer your questions, but you must meet the minimum requirement.

In addition to taking notes, you must record the following information for **every** source:

Books, magazines or internet sources	Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Author•Title•Place of publication•Website address•Publishing company•Date of publication•Pages used	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Interviewees first and last name•Interviewees job title•Date of interview•Place of interview

In the *Research Source and Notes Packet (passed out in class)*, write down what you figured out from your source, what you figured out after some thought/analysis, what you discovered accidentally, what problems you had, how your research evolved, and what surprised you.

You may also use GoogleDrive as a way of keeping track of notes.

Interviews

Here are some essential points for your interview:

- You should avoid interviewing immediate family members. You may ask a family member to suggest another person in the field.
- Your interviews may happen in person, through email or over the phone.
- Plan ahead, make appointments and make sure you have confirmations from your interviewees by the required due date.
- Don't assume the person you want to interview will be available when you are. People are busy and they are doing you a favor.
- Leave plenty of time, and be ready to accommodate their schedule.
- Don't assume the person will or can grant you an interview because you asked.
- Be very clear about the time, place and date when you confirm the appointment.
- If you are conducting an interview in person or by phone, you need a transcript of the notes you took during the interview.
- If you have the answers in an e-mail, the printed version of the e-mail responses can serve as a transcript.
- Remember, within 24 hours of completing each interview, write a thank you note expressing your appreciation for the person's time and help with your research.

Potential people to interview:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Writing Effective Interview Questions

Remember that you are talking to REAL people with experience and feelings. This means that you want more than just information from them. You want their STORIES, THOUGHTS, IMPRESSIONS and OPINIONS.

Here are some techniques you can use to get the most from your personal interviews.

1. **Open Ended Questions:** begin your questions with words such as:

1. Explain...
2. Describe...
3. Tell me about...
4. What do you think about...

2. **Connections:** Try to strengthen the connections between the person and the topic of your search. Try some of these openers,

1. In my search I read that...
 - Can you tell me more about that?
 - What do you think about that?
2. I have always thought/wondered...
 - Can you tell me more about that?

3. **Follow Up Questions:** Most follow up questions cannot be planned in advance, you must be a good listener to be an effective interviewer. If you don't fully understand something the person has said, you must ask for clarification in order to be able to write about it.

You said...

- Can you tell me more about that...
- Can you give me an example of...
- Can you explain...

Interview Confirmation & Questions

Person to be interviewed: _____

Job Title: _____

Why do you want to interview this person? _____

Interview format: _____
(email, in person, telephone)

Date of interview: _____

Questions: You may have more than 5, but I want to see your BEST five.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Getting Organized

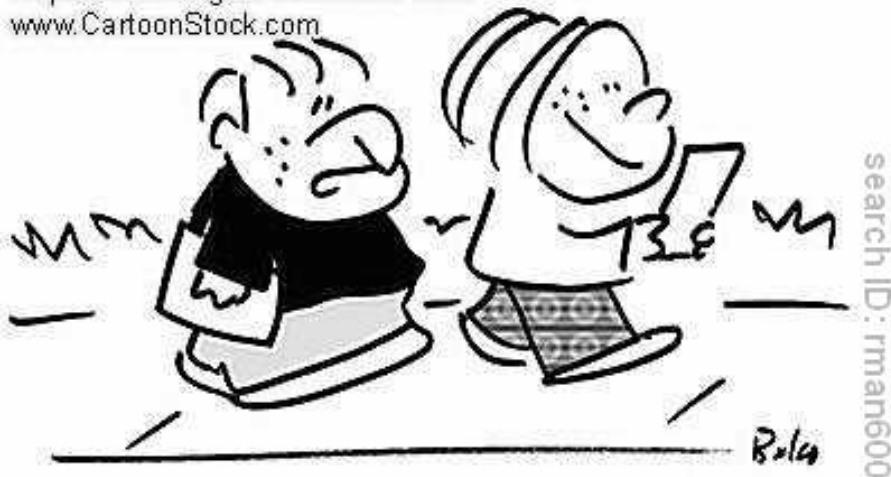
When you have completed all your research, you need to decide what information to include and how you are going to organize the final paper. Here are some suggestions:

- Gather all your notes from your research.
- Think about how you are going to organize the I Search portion of your paper. Read the examples below and decide which plan will work best for your topic. Examples might be:
 - Definitions, causes, effects, future predictions
 - Definitions, symptoms, causes, treatments, current research, future prognosis.
 - Definition, brief history, current situation, future trends,
 - History, various points of view, effects on society/culture/people, connection to today
 - Definition, history, current uses, future possibilities.
- Choose which pieces of information you want to include in each section. Use different colors to highlight, underline, or check off the most relevant and interesting information to include in each section of your paper.
- Length requirements matter! Be prepared to reorganize, combine, delete or expand to achieve those requirements.
- **Keep all research until your final copy is submitted.** You may decide you want to include or check something later.

The Conclusion (1 page)

- The third section of your paper will be titled ***The Conclusion***. In this section you will tell the reader whether or not you have answered your essential question. You may find that some of the little essential questions you originally asked were not right or relevant. Explain what happened. Are you satisfied with the information you found? Why or why not? How will the information be useful for you now?
- Before writing your conclusion, please complete the conclusion worksheet for homework.

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"You got *straight* A's? -- I thought that A's were little trianglerly things."

Conclusion Worksheet

Due: _____

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Did you find the answers to all of the questions you asked in your proposal? If no, what do you think went wrong? What obstacles did you face? If yes, was it easy or difficult? Did you enjoy the process? Why or why not?

2. What decisions or conclusions have you come to about your topic?

3. How did your research help you come to these conclusions?

4. What was your favorite part of your research? What was your least favorite? Explain your answers.

5. What will you remember about this experience? Do you have a funny, amusing or even sad anecdote you can share?

The Bibliography (1 page)

- The last section of your paper is the bibliography. It is a list, in alphabetical order, of the sources you have used in your research. You must label your page **Bibliography**. For each type of source there is a particular way to list information. It is confusing, therefore, ask me or Ms. Chessman for help.

- Organize sources as follows:
 - Books
 - Magazines
 - Internet
 - Interviews

- Easybib.com is an excellent resource for creating bibliographies. Check it out.

I Search Reflection Sheet (1 page)

Please type the answers to the following questions. Attach your answers to your I Search, putting it after the bibliography.

1. To what extent does this piece of writing demonstrate your abilities as a writer? What did you do well in this paper?
2. How did you attempt to hook your reader? What type of lead did you use?
3. What or who was your single best source of information? Why?
4. What was the most difficult thing about writing and/or researching for this paper? Why?
5. What would you do differently if you were to do another research paper?
6. What was one good thing that came out of doing this paper?
7. I'll assume that you have learned a lot about your topic from doing this paper. What have you learned about yourself as a writer? Your own processes for putting this paper together? Where/when/how you write best?
8. What would you like me to know when I am grading your paper that isn't in your paper?
9. What letter grade would you give yourself for this assignment? Why?

Peer Editor: _____ Author: _____

Peer Editing First Draft of Search

Ask a classmate to read through what you have written. Check off the box next to each question and write a comment that will help improve the writing.

	Yes	No	Comment
1. Is there a title?			
2. Is the title capitalized?			
3. Does the title fit the piece?			
4. Are paragraphs used to organize information?			
5. Is the main idea clear, with a sense of purpose?			
6. Is information placed in a logical order? Is the writing well organized?			
7. Is there enough evidence? (sources)			
8. Does the writer stay on topic?			
9. Is the writing interesting?			
10. Is the word choice appropriate?			
11. Does each sentence begin with a capital letter?			
12. Are there words that should be capitalized?			
13. Is each sentence a complete thought?			
14. Are there any spelling errors (underline)?			
15. Does each sentence end with proper punctuation?			

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

I Search Examples

Read one I Search example, then answer the following questions.

1. What is the title of the I Search sample you read?

2. What is the essential question of the I Search?

3. List 2 minor questions the person needed to reach in order to answer the essential question.

4. How was the I Search organized?

5. What was one interesting fact you learned from the I Search you read?
