**President — Research Paper**

**Basic Requirements**

Note: More detailed information will be given in class—be sure to actively listen (sigh—split infinitive ☹)—be sure to listen actively when we discuss this.

**Note-cards** —a minimum of 10 cards

**Title page** — The title page may be colored, illustrated, or otherwise decorated but must clearly include

* Title of report
* date
* class
* your name

**Body of paper** — Based on the six writing traits

* opening paragraph that engages the reader
* middle paragraphs should flow logically from one idea to the next
* closing paragraph that ties everything together and ideally reflects back to your opening paragraph
* be hand drawn and should be done with care and presidentically presented

**Works cited page**

* a list of all resources used, (examples will be given in class)
* a minimum of three sources, one of which must be non-web-based (not an internet source)

**Grading**

* Separate grades will be given along the way for meeting due dates for note-cards and working drafts.
* Grading of the final paper will be based on meeting all of the above requirements, the six-traits of writing, depth of research, creativity, neatness, and presentation.

**President—Research Paper—Part One: Research**

* **Step 1 – Choose your President**

Consider various sources of information for your president. A source is a piece of information about your topic and can include books, encyclopedias or other reference books, Internet sites, personal interviews, and/or magazine articles. [These steps work for any research project.]

* **Step 2 - Asking Questions**

To do any research project, you need to figure out what is important to know. To do this, you should come up with a list of questions to try to answer [consider biographical information and style or type of art]. Remember this just gives you a starting point for doing research. As you do your research, you will add questions/information that you did not have on your original list.

* **Step 3 - Creating Note-cards**

Once you have created a list of questions, you should then take a stack of note-cards and place one question on a note-card [and, of course, have a few extra note-cards for additional questions].

* **Step 4 - Citing Your Sources**

Now it is time to begin answering the questions you put on each note card. For each source you use, the first thing to do is to write on the back of the note-card all of the works cited information you will need. [See attached information on Works Cited and be sure to listen actively in class when we cover this information.]

* **Step 5 - Answering Questions**

After you have put the source (works cited) information on the back of a note-card, answer the question [using complete sentences now will be helpful later). If you copy information directly from your source—for possible use as a footnote/endnote—it is imperative that you put quotation marks (large quotation marks) around it so that later you can appropriately cite your source. [Refer to information on plagiarism and, again, be sure to listen actively in class when we cover this information.] Reminder: you must have at least two footnotes/endnotes in your paper and a ‘Works Cited’ page.

* **Step 6 - Sorting the Note-cards by Topic/Sub-Topics**

When you are finished with all your note-cards (this could take quite a long time gathering the information), you should then take out paper and list sub-topics that your information can be sorted into, and then spread the topics out on a table. Read each note-card and decide which category it would best go in. Place that note-card next to that category slip—continue with each note-card. If a note-card does not seem to have a category, create another category (sub-topic) to fit a note-card as you go along. When you are done, put an abbreviation or symbol on each note-card in a stack to show that it belongs in a category. [This will be extremely helpful in the unlikely (highly unlikely) event that you (your less-than-organized self) were to accidentally mix-up your well-ordered cards. In fact, it might also be a good idea to put a rubber band around each stack of note-cards at this point.]

* **Step 7 - Organizing the Note-cards**

Take one stack at a time and decide which card would best be presented first. [Refer to your six-trait writing packet—The Importance of Organization.] After you decide on a first card, put a 1 next to your abbreviation or symbol for that category. Place a 2 on the next card and continue until all the cards have been numbered. When you have finished the first stack of cards, do the same for the next stack until all your stacks have been ordered and numbered.

**President Research Paper—Part Two: Writing Your Paper**

* **Step 8 - Creating a "First Draft"**

All your hard work following the steps above will make this part much easier — creating the ‘First Draft’. Decide which stack/category you think would best be presented first in your paper. Using paragraph form, copy down the first note-card answer on the paper. Then go to the next card and copy the answer down. (This will be easy IF you wrote your answers in complete sentences.) Once you have finished a stack, begin a new paragraph and start copying down the note-cards from the next stack. When you are done, you will have one paragraph for each sub-topic or category you created. Now you have your first working draft.

* **Step 9 - Revising Your "First Draft"**

When you go back and reread your first draft, you will inevitably find that parts of it do not flow smoothly—some revision is clearly needed. Blend the sentences together by rewriting some of them so that each sentence naturally transitions into the next and makes sense together. Some sentences can be combined into one sentence or broken apart into two sentences to be clearer or flow better.  [Once again, refer to your six-trait writing packet and be sure to listen actively in class when we cover this topic. ☺]

* **Step 10 - Creating an Introduction**

The introduction should be impressive enough to induce continued consideration—it needs to be both creative and bold. Introductions get your reader interested in what you have to say. It is best to write your introduction after you have written a draft of the body of your paper. There are several creative ways to write an interesting introduction, which we will cover in class [during which time, you will, of course be listen actively].

* **Step 11 - Writing a Conclusion**

A conclusion ties up what you have found up in an interesting way. Writing a good conclusion can be difficult. It should restate some important points you have found out in your research in the way of a summary—without being redundant, reflect back to your introduction (remember the introduction and conclusion serve as ‘bookends’)and bring closure to the reader.

* **Step 12 - Revise**

Now that you have a completed working draft, it is time to revise. ☺

* **Step 13 - Revise**

Now that you have a completed, revised working draft, it is time to revise again. ☺

* **Step 14 - Revise**

Now that you have a completed, revised, revised working draft, it is time to revise again. ☺

* **Step 15 - Revise**

Now that you have a completed, revised, revised, revised, working draft, it is time to revise again. ☺

* **Step 16 - Revise**

Okay, I am running out of space, but you get the idea. ☺

**Grading and scoring notes**

**5 - Accomplished** — Only the best papers earn a 5. They:

* capture my attention
* are engaging and say something interesting
* are well-organized and well-written
* show real elegance and grace
* are daring or unexpected
* teach me something new

**4 - Effective** — the paper

* makes no major errors
* develops well
* has plenty of insight
* is well-written
* is not marred by any serious mechanical problems

**3 – Proficient** — the paper

* is nice, but not unique
* has some strengths but . . .
* lacks one or more of the essential ingredients for an effective paper
* has some noticeable style and mechanics errors, although that alone will rarely doom a paper

**2 – Emerging** — I do not give many 2s. Only those with more than one serious problem deserve that sort of treatment. A paper with only a superficial grasp of the text, and poor expression, for instance — is 2s territory. If you are earning 2s (60-69% final grade) in my classes, you should certainly talk to me.

**1 - Novice** — Here's my bargain: I won't fail any paper that shows honest effort. That means 1s are reserved for papers that show no effort (as if it were dashed off the night before it was due, for instance), and for those that are not honest.

**Plagiarism** **will always earn you a zero**, and might even result in disciplinary action — it is serious stuff.