

## **Introduction to the Senior Project**

At last! This is the year that you have waited for. And now you have the opportunity to create a memorable Senior Project. You may have already heard rumors about the Senior Project. Some of you have already gotten a head start by having your project approved in the spring of your junior year. Some of you have yet to begin but see it as a wonderful challenge to your abilities while still others of you may have negative feelings about this assignment. You may still be uncertain about what the Senior Project entails, so let's clear up any misunderstandings that you may have and explain exactly what the Senior Project is.

First of all, the Senior Project is ten (10) percent of your English grade. If you wish to obtain the full points possible for your English class, then you must complete a Senior Project. Secondly, you may not opt out of English 12 by taking a community college class or English at Adult Ed. Finally, the Senior Project involves your completion of four project components over the course of a year.

For your research paper, you will create a thesis statement (which must be approved by your teacher) that will guide your seven-to-ten page research paper, following the conventions of MLA format. Do not worry if you do not know what this is now; your English teacher will talk about this in class. Based on your research, you are expected to draw some conclusions about your subject matter which will provide you with the background you will need to give an informed presentation. The topic of your research paper must relate to the project you will undertake. (If your project entails an advanced science project of some kind, speak with your English teacher about the possibility of a lab report in lieu of the research paper.)

To complement your research paper, you will complete a minimum of twenty (20) hours of fieldwork outside of the classroom on a project of your choosing that your TAP and Senior Project coordinators must also approve. The project must relate to the topic of your research paper. For example, perhaps you are interested in preschool being free for all families. For your research paper, you might decide to prove that children who go to preschool are more prepared for the rest of their academic life. For your fieldwork project, you could assist in tutoring and in creating lessons for children at a preschool.

In addition to your research paper and your fieldwork, you will create and maintain a portfolio of all of your Senior Project activities. This portfolio will contain a variety of documents including a personal résumé, which will provide to the judges an overview of your senior project work. Once you have completed the research paper, the fieldwork, and the portfolio, you will give a seven-to-ten minute presentation to a panel of judges, made up of Santa Susana High School faculty, junior SSSHS students and members of the community, who will then evaluate the quality of your presentation and your project.

Seniors, approach the Senior Project with a positive attitude. You should see this as a chance to grow, to explore, and to demonstrate the skills you will need to exhibit once you enter college or the workforce. Your senior year happens only once and you will have only one chance to leave your legacy behind. Therefore, choose a research thesis and a fieldwork project that you really want to pursue. Remember, this assignment must sustain your interest over the year.

The staff of Santa Susana High School wants this to be a fun and memorable year for you. We will do everything within our power to help you create an impressive Senior Project that you can look back on with pride in the years to come.