

## **Social Science (Ms. Polatsidis and Mr. Klopp):**

Social Science Research can be an exciting and rewarding experience for students. **Giving pre-existing research a new angle** that is of personal interest to you is the foundation for a thesis and affords the student an opportunity to make discoveries and analyze problems that may affect people from all walks of life. This is the primary goal of Advanced 10 Research. As such, your summer assignment is designed to put you in a position to be ready with an interesting and relevant topic for your research project next year.

Use what you learned about the Social Sciences in your ninth grade science class, and apply it to this summer activity to help you hone in on a topic that INTERESTS YOU. Once you consider a topic, examine news coverage related to the topic to broaden your knowledge of it by reading *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Time Magazine*, or by watching CNN or other reliable news sources. Then, record citation information for each story or article you read or watched, as well as reflections on the story or article. This will become your LOG BOOK for the progression of your research for the 10th grade Advanced Research year.

**The Social Sciences consist of studies in: Anthropology, Economics, Education, Finance, Geography, History, Language, Literature, Political Science, Public Policy, Psychology\*, Sociology, and Women's Studies [see last page for more specific subtopics].**

**\*Note: Tenth graders are limited in the kind and scope of research they may conduct, and certain topics will not be approved because of risk factors. For example, tenth grade researchers may NOT study eating disorders, bullying, depression, autism, and personality disorders. Additionally, any topics that would require a PhD to sufficiently study will not be approved.**

**The Summer Activity consists of maintaining a log book and completing the following tasks:**

### **Part One**

- **Buy** a black and white marble notebook in which to keep exploratory notes this summer. Begin this log book in July, and continue its use throughout the summer. Bring this notebook to school in September because it will become your **Research Log Book** for the entire year.
- **Read** the 3 articles that we selected ([linked here](#)), representing various social science topics. **Annotate** these articles with particular consideration to the following: 1. the variety of professionals cited, 2. where the data was collected from and how, and 3. how the writers derive new meaning from existing data.

### **Part Two**

- **Choose** one of the Social Science fields listed above that interests you. Notice this topic in media coverage, such as news articles and magazines. For the application of your topic in the larger world, write reflections in your log book frequently, dating each entry.

- Find two news articles relating to your specific area of interest. **For each**, answer the following questions:
  - How did this writer's use of data provide you with new knowledge or new understanding?
  - What did you find clever or insightful about the way in which (s)he used the data?
  - Compose a question for the writer about his/her data or research.
- Next: Read & annotate a scholarly **journal article** related to your topic.
- Finally: Compose a **researchable question**, a question that can guide a study.

## **JOURNAL ARTICLE:**

- ❖ Find and read 1 article from the Scholarly Journal Archive (JSTOR) and/or from Science Direct, both available through the High School Library online. You can access these rich sources of Social Science material through Syosset High School's website by clicking on the Library tab and using the password as indicated.
- ❖ Annotate the article, marking interesting concepts and areas of inquiry. Then, write a brief summary for the article in your log book (including the full citation)..
- ❖ Additionally, compose some thoughts of your own on how you can extend the topic by asking yourself about what you would like to know more. If the author left you with some unanswered questions about the topic, what research could you do to answer those questions? In other words, what data could be collected in order to answer these questions? And where/how would one get this data?

## **RESEARCHABLE QUESTION:**

This question should be derived from the reading of the articles from your field of interest (the two news articles and one journal article). The point is to find a gap in the coverage of your topic that needs to be filled. The answer to the question should fill that gap. What is a researchable question? A question to which you could pursue the answer by identifying, gathering, and analyzing data (within the limited parameters afforded a 10th grade student at Syosset High School).

- **Bring the marble notebook that contains all of your completed work (Part One and Part Two), and be prepared to discuss on the first day of class.**
- **Have a spectacular and safe summer!**

## **Potential Topics for Advanced Social Science Research**

There are countless interesting and meaningful social science research topics that one may pursue that do not require a survey of human subjects. Though interesting, students often run into difficulty trying to find enough reliable data when conducting survey research due to time constraints, a limited pool of available subjects, and school rules (some topics can't be surveyed). That being said, it is still possible to conduct survey research if you are truly interested in survey relevant questions. However, see below for a starter list of other topics that are currently in the public discourse:

Election comparisons  
Gerrymandering  
Voting rights/ voter suppression  
Ranked voting instead of winner-take-all  
Supreme Court decisions  
Racial profiling  
Unemployment vs. Underemployment  
Privacy / and Social Media companies  
Social Media & language evolution/devolution  
Abortion rights  
Immigration reform(s)  
Political asylum policies

Gun Control/ comparative policies  
Is recycling still cost effective?  
Climate change issues  
Corporate boycotts (effectiveness?)  
Education funding  
State - federal relations  
Rural economies  
Workforce diversity  
Redistricting  
Student debt  
Food assistance programs