



MEDFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT 549C

The Career Exploration Paper Handbook

2011-2012



Introduction

The Career Exploration Paper is one of two options available to Medford School District 549C students that will satisfy the Senior requirement for graduation. **This paper is 6-10 pages in length according to Option #2.** Unlike the traditional research paper, the paper for the Career Exploration Paper requires research but is not driven by a thesis statement. Instead, students have the opportunity to investigate three careers they find interesting and then report their findings.

While writing the paper, students will be able to use a variety of sources to find the information they need: the Oregon Career Information System (CIS), several handbooks and reference works about career exploration, electronic databases and web sites, personal interviews, and college and technical school catalogs among them. Students will have the chance to discover information about job descriptions, earning and benefits, and required education and training.

Like the more traditional Senior Project path, the Career Exploration Paper requires that the student complete a project with the guidance of a mentor, prepare a portfolio, and present before a board of judges. What distinguishes the Career Exploration Paper from the more traditional Senior Experience path is that the information gathered can be put to practical use immediately. Students who complete the Career Exploration Paper have just that: a plan for where they are going and what they are doing during the years immediately after high school.

The Career Exploration Paper, just like the more traditional Senior Experience path, is a true capstone experience that allows a student to use a variety of skills learned in school: gathering and analyzing information, drafting and revising, public speaking, and answering questions. It's also a blueprint that will give you a head start as you leave high school and begin the next part of your life.



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The Senior Project

State of Oregon graduation requirements for 2011-2012 include proof of learning and planning for your next step in life. Successful completion of your senior project will satisfy that requirement. It is comprised of four major components: the Project, the Paper, the Presentation, and the Portfolio.

PAPER:

- The paper is a six-to-ten page research paper – with research-based thesis, claim, evidence, and commentary.
- Evidence is cited in accordance with MLA documentation and includes a works cited page.

PROJECT:

- Requires a *minimum* of 20-35 hours hands-on learning experience (see scoring guide)
- You will need a mentor – an adult over 21 years old who is not a member of your immediate family.
- Project *must* relate to your future and involve some community service or extended academic – learning experience.
- You will keep a project log: a reflection on what you are learning and doing.
- You will use a mentor check form – your mentor will sign regularly to certify your work and time.

PRESENTATION:

- This is an eight-to-ten minute presentation of your paper and project to a panel of judges.
- Includes a visual that may be a poster, Power Point, overheads, live performance, product, or a combination of any of these.

PORTFOLIO:

- A collection of documents that serves as your proof of meeting the state graduation requirements.
- It will include: a cover page, abstract or letter of intent, research paper, project log, mentor checks and verification, reflection essay and optional support documentation.

Your English teacher and/or other approved content area teacher will advise you throughout the process, though an advisory teacher may guide you through the project portion. We ask that students *and* parents read through this handbook, and sign and return the appropriate forms per English teacher and/or other approved instructions. Please note that items in **BOLD** in the timeline are items with absolute due dates. It is recommended the work be completed well before each deadline so that unforeseen events do not cause work to be late.

If you have any questions, please contact your senior English teacher and/or other approved content area teacher.

Sincerely,

The Medford School District

Senior Project 2011-12 Timeline

(Note: Individual teachers may set earlier due dates)

Before October 3	Introduce the project and hand out manuals, mentor consent forms, parent permission forms. Brainstorm research topics and possible projects. Hand out mentor check forms as needed.
October 27/28	Letter of Intent due; Parent Permission form due; Project Proposal due.
November 17/18	All research complete with outline, thesis statement. Source evaluations due. Mentor Consent form due.
December 1/2	PAPER: Minimum of three pages due. Typed!
October-February	Periodic Mentor checks
December 1 – January 20	Individual conferences on preliminary draft at teacher discretion. Teachers with three classes of seniors may begin earlier.
December 15/16	COMPLETE DRAFT DUE at beginning of English class.
February 1/2	FINAL DRAFT DUE at beginning of English class (must be turned in on time even if student is absent). My due date: _____
March 1/2	Rewrites for all papers due My revision due: _____
April 2/3	PROJECT DUE: Project Log, Final Mentor Check Sheet and Final Project Verification due at beginning of class (must be turned in on time even if student is absent).
April 19/20	PORTFOLIO DUE at beginning of English class (must be turned in on time even if student is absent and includes the reflective essay).
April 26/27	SPEECH OUTLINE DUE (must be turned in on time even if student is absent).
May 3/4	SPEECH VISUAL AID AND POSTER DUE at beginning of English class (must be turned in on time even if student is absent).
May 7 – May 30	Present speeches in class (attendance critical).
May 31/June 1 June 9	SENIOR BOARDS GRADUATION

Overview of the Project

The project is the first phase of the Senior Project. It allows the student to develop a **product** that reveals learning and exploration of a chosen career that will be demonstrated during their final board presentation. The project and its product must be related to their research. The product may be an object or physical creation, e.g. a piece of furniture, a portfolio of art work, a replica; a performance or event, e.g. a produced play, creation of an event, such as a fundraiser or after-school program; or thorough documentation of volunteer or learning hours, e.g. photographs, charts, scrapbooks, videos, and certifications. Whatever type of product is selected, it must clearly reflect the experience and learning of the entire project.

The project is conducted outside of school and **outside of school hours**, and students must enlist the aid of a mentor to guide and help them. The primary mentor must not be a member of the student's immediate family. In addition, the mentor must be an adult, at least 21 years old, who has expertise in the field and observes and signs off on the project in **all** phases of its development.

Written forms and physical documentation will be needed to verify the project. The written documents include the project proposal, the mentor agreement, a mentor mid-point check, the

mentor's final verification, and the project log.

PROJECT VERIFICATION

Senior English teachers coordinate several steps in verifying the project completion and assessing its quality.

All students are expected to keep a project log. **You should have a log entry for each occasion you work on the project.** Each entry of this log should begin with the date and end with the actual time (hours, minutes) spent on the project on that occasion. In addition, students should keep a running total of time spent. As well as describing what you did, the log must reflect your successes, failures, and growth. In other words, the log should be a record not just of time spent and work done, but of emotions, and reactions as well. A log entry could cover as little as a phone call to arrange an interview or as much as a day spent volunteering for a benevolent cause.

While your working log may be kept in a small notebook, the final copy needs to be on standard-sized paper and formatted according to the sample provided in this handbook. The log is crucial when teachers evaluate the finished project, and the final copy will appear in the presentation portfolio.

Getting Started

The first step in the Career Exploration Paper is to determine what three career areas interest you. To help you decide, you'll need to take three career surveys and interest inventories. These may be found on the Oregon Career Information System (CIS) website, <http://oregoncis.uoregon.edu>. You'll find that the CIS website is a treasure trove of useful information about career exploration. It's divided into three major parts: Occupations & Employment, Education & Training, and Exploration Tools.

Your teacher will help you access the website by giving you the required user name and password. Your teacher will also help you navigate the website so you'll become comfortable moving to different parts as you need to.

After you have completed the career surveys and interest inventories, you'll need to select sources to help you gather information for your research paper. These sources will include books, periodicals, and electronic data bases. Some of the more useful sources include the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, the *Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance*, and the website of the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics. In addition, you'll need to locate a community member who is knowledgeable about each career you choose. You'll then interview this person to gather additional information that you'll use in your research paper.

Only after you've finished these steps will you be ready to begin compiling your information and outlining your paper. Once you've finished these steps, you may begin drafting your research paper. If you have all of the information you need, you'll find that writing your research paper will be relatively easy.

Researching Information

Learn How to Gather Information

Become acquainted with the tools the campus library has available. If you haven't already done so, learn the setup of the campus library and the elements of the Dewey Decimal System. Know especially where the reference section is in the stacks. In addition, learn how to request journals, magazines, and newspapers which you may need during your research. Become familiar with the search stations so you can readily access the cataloging system. The campus library also has several computer terminals that may be used to access the Internet.

Become Familiar with Career and Vocational Materials

Many students will begin their search for information in the library by wandering the stacks, hoping that the right book will jump out at them. A more efficient way is to survey the reference section, which is really a library within a library. Besides the usual sources such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases, and biographical sources, the reference section has lots of information about careers. Another part of the library that will be helpful is the 331 section of the Dewey

Decimal System. In this part of the collection are several volumes of the Career without College series. For example, the volume titled *Careers without College: Music* includes information on becoming a musician, a singer, a composer, a songwriter, a recording engineer, a music equipment salesperson, and an audio maintenance technician. This volume also provides numerous publications that provide additional information on other aspects of music careers.

Compile a Working Bibliography

As you begin doing your research, it's important to be systematic and methodical about your actions. One of the biggest problems students have in the research process is needless repetition. One of the easiest ways to avoid this is to keep a **working bibliography**. For every source you examine, record the appropriate data on a 3 x 5 index card using the Modern Language Association format. If you do this, you will not only have a visible record of all your sources but also be ready to transfer this information to your works cited page, making life much easier when you write your research paper. Here are three examples of bibliography cards:

for a
book...

331.7
Gre

Greenwald, Ted. *Careers without College: Music*.
Princeton, NJ: Peterson's, 1992. Print.

call number (if
found in library)

Author's name.
Title of the book.
Publication
information.
Medium of
publication (Print).

for a
periodical...

Bach, P. D. Q. "Five Easy Steps to Becoming a
Musical Composer." *Journal of the Music
Department of the University of Southern
North Dakota at Hoople* 1 Apr. 2005: 665-68.
Print.

Author (last name,
first name). "Title of
Article." *Title of
Publication* Date of
publication (day,
month, year): page
number(s). Medium
of publication
(Print).

for an
Internet
source...

Schickele, Peter. The Peter Schickele/P. D. Q.
Bach Official Web Site. 1 Apr. 2005. Web.
12 Oct. 2009.

Author (last name, first
name). "Title of Article."
Title of the Web Site.
Publisher or sponsor of
the site. Date of Article
or Web site update.
Page numbers if given.
Web. Date accessed.

Use 4 x 6 Index Cards for Notes

As you begin reading your sources, take accurate notes. The easiest way to do this is to use 4 x 6 index cards. (Color is not important, but size is; in this way you can easily distinguish between your notes cards and your 3 x 5 bibliography or source cards.) Take your notes on cards rather than on sheets of paper for these two reasons: (1) you can record individual bits of information on separate cards; and (2) you can move your note cards in different patterns when you begin thinking about how to organize your draft. Note cards will give you maximum flexibility in rearranging your data whenever you wish. *Another option, **with your teacher's approval**, is the use of a Career Outline Form.

Quote, Paraphrase, and Summarize Accurately

You can take notes in three ways: **quoting** (taking information word-for-word from a source); **paraphrasing** (putting information from a source into your own words in about the same length); and **summarizing** (recording only the main idea from a passage in a source). Although there is no requirement for having a certain number of each type, try to have a variety of all three as you take notes. You will need about fifty note cards or three completed career outlines to write a six to eight-page research paper.

Direct Quotations

Direct quotes can be powerful if they are not overused. They are most effective to relate technical information that would be difficult to re-word, to use the evidence of an authority or expert, to eliminate any chance of misunderstanding, and to give highly disputable facts or opinions special treatment. **Direct quotes must be placed inside quotation marks.** These punctuation marks (“ ”) indicate that the information you’ve provided is copied word-for-word from another source. If any part of a quotation is left out, replace the omitted portion with an **ellipsis** (three periods with spaces between each and enclosed with square brackets like this: [. . .]). Don’t use an ellipsis at the beginning of a piece of quoted material; instead, develop an introductory phrase, also known as a **tag line**, for the quote. Consider this passage:

“Training programs usually use both classroom instruction and hands-on practice. In some technical and trade schools this training lasts six months to a year. In community colleges this training usually lasts two years. In addition to automotive training, it also includes other classes like math, English, and computers. When students finish this type of training, they get an associate degree or certificate.”

Since the third sentence isn’t crucial, you might use this quotation with the ellipsis. If you did, it would look like this:

“Training programs usually use both classroom instruction and hands-on practice. In some technical and trade schools this training lasts six months to a year. In community colleges this training usually lasts two years. [. . .] When students finish this type of training, they get an associate degree or certificate.”

If the end of a quote is omitted, place the ellipsis inside the square brackets before the period. In addition, avoid **naked quotes**. These are quotations that stand alone. You should provide an introductory or concluding phrase that connects the quote to material coming either before or after the quote. This phrase is called a **tag line**.

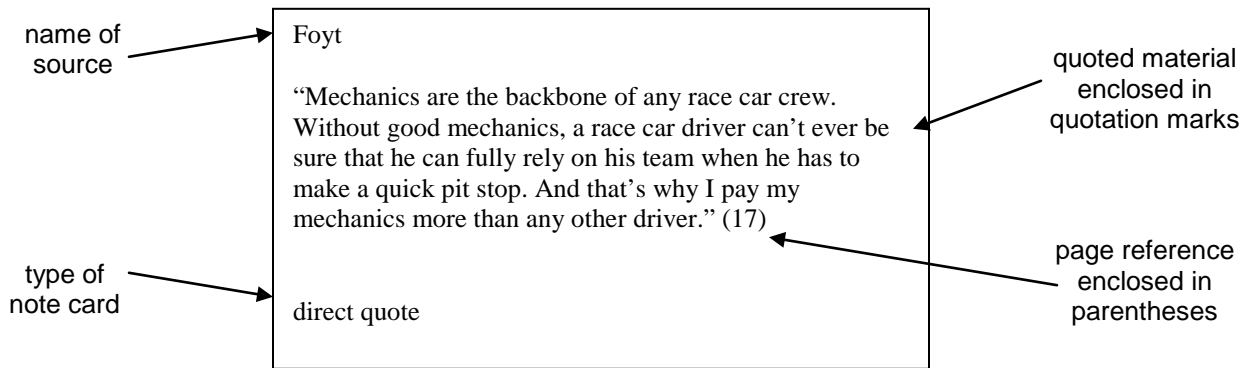
For example, this quote

“Automotive mechanics will become as specialized and dependent on computers as technicians in health care fields.”

should include a tag line or **attribution**. A better version would be

According to Barney Oldfield of the Automotive Training Institute, “Automotive mechanics will become as specialized and dependent on computers as technicians in health care fields.”

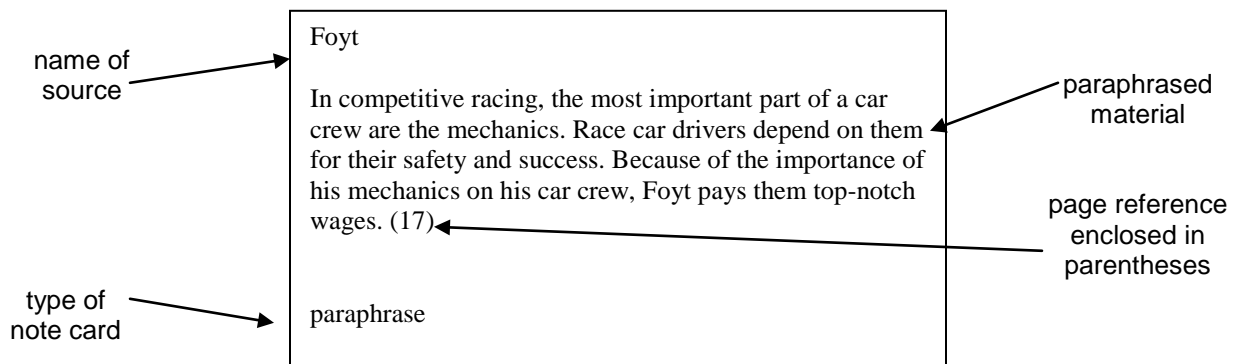
A direct quotation note card should look like this:



Paraphrases

Paraphrases can be extremely useful in your research. When you take an idea expressed in a source and put it in your own words, you have a paraphrase. Although you arrange the ideas in your own way, you must not change the meaning of the passage. The best way to write a paraphrase is to read the passage carefully until you understand its meaning. (This may take several attempts, depending on the complexity of the passage.) Then, without looking at the source, write your paraphrase. Check your version with the original to be sure it's accurate. Remember that a paraphrase is about the same length as the original.

A paraphrase note card should look like this:



Summaries

Like paraphrases, summaries are written in your own words. Unlike paraphrases, summaries are much less detailed. In essence, a summary is a cut-down version of what you are reading. It captures only the main point of a passage, leaving out the details. To create usable summaries, read a passage until you understand the meaning. As with paraphrases, this may take several times. Then use a single sentence to summarize the main idea of a paragraph. Look for key words and phrases to include in your summary.

Consider this passage:

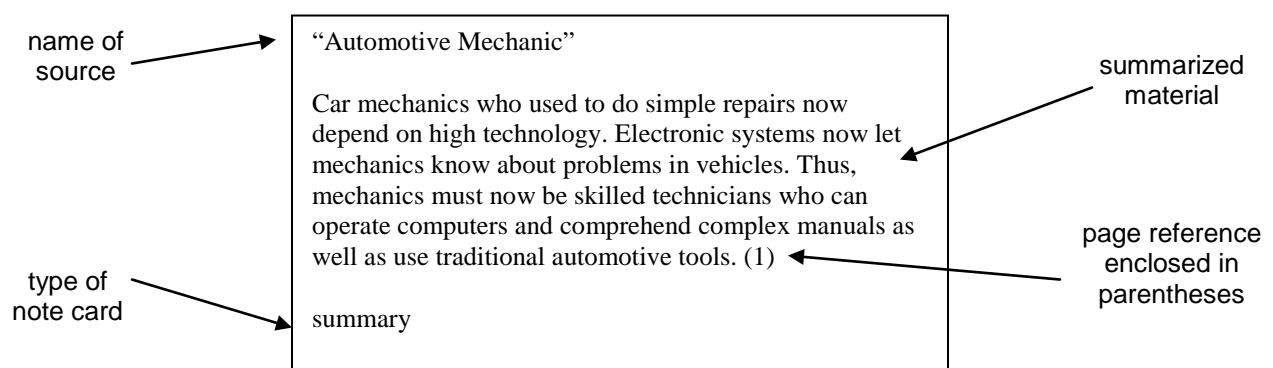
“The type of work they do has changed over the years. It used to be simple mechanical repair. Today it is a high technology job. Cars and trucks today are run by electronic systems and computers. The computers tells the automotive service technicians and mechanics how well the car or truck is performing. To do their job, technicians must know a lot about how complex parts of the car and truck work together. They must be able to work with electronic equipment that tells them what is wrong. They must be able to read and understand manuals that are computer-based. At the same time they must be able to use tools they have used in the past.” (118 words)

This could be summarized in this way:

Car mechanics who used to do simple repairs now depend on high technology. Electronic systems now let mechanics know about problems in vehicles. Thus, mechanics must now be skilled technicians who can operate computers and comprehend complex manuals as well as use traditional automotive tools. (45 words)

Please note that the original passage of 118 words has been reduced in the summary to forty-five words, well less than half the length of the original. The crucial idea of how car mechanics have had to gain new skills has been preserved while minor details have been omitted. Summaries are useful to convey major points when minor ones are unnecessary. Also note that the summary, like the paraphrase, does not include quotation marks.

A summary note card should look like this:



Please note that all three types of note cards—quotations, paraphrases, and summaries—have page numbers after the noted material. This makes finding the material easier if you have to look back to check on a fact in your note cards.

Interviewing Techniques

Interviewing an authority in person or on the telephone is part of the requirement for the Career Exploration Paper. Having a good interview, though, requires lots of preparation. Before you make an appointment with your subject, be sure you know something



about his (or her) background. Also, write at least five basic questions that will help answer the questions you have. What information does your subject have that you need for your paper? Be sure to be on time for the interview. Be prepared with paper and pen to record your notes. Have a back-up pen, just in case.

While you interview your subject, be sure to stick to the subject. Don't be afraid to ask a follow-up question if you need more information. Be courteous and friendly. Remember that the subject is doing you a favor by granting you an interview. When the interview is over, verify facts, direct quotes, and your general understanding. Ask if it would be OK to call the subject for any follow-up questions. Be sure to thank the person for taking the time to give you the interview. Revise your notes as soon as possible while the information is still fresh in your mind. Finally, take the time to write the subject a thank-you note. It's a sign of respect and manners.

Create Your Outline

The next step in preparing your Career Exploration Paper paper is to create an outline. The outline for the entire paper falls into seven parts. Here is a brief description of the seven parts you'll need to address in your paper.

Introduction

Your introduction consists of a single paragraph of four to six sentences. You should explain to your reader what your paper is about and why you chose to do this project. You should also explain what you hope to gain by doing it. No research is necessary for your introduction, but it should grab your reader's attention. You might wish to begin your paper with an interesting fact or statistic, a quote or a story that is somehow connected to your research. Ask yourself if you would find your introduction interesting enough to make you read more of your paper. If you can answer "Yes," then you're on the right track.

Autobiography

This section will let the reader know who you are. The information for this section may be taken from the autobiographical questionnaire you will receive. The autobiography section should be about a page and a half long and the writer may use the personal pronouns "you" or "I" when writing this section of the document.

Research about Three Careers

The third section will comprise the largest part of your paper. In this section you will share with your reader the results of your research about the three careers you chose to investigate. Cover one career at a time. Save your favorite career for last. In this way, you'll build a pattern for your reader. For each career, you'll need to address these five topics: job description, earnings, necessary education and training, advancement opportunities, and your evaluation of the career. This section of your paper should be four to five pages. Research requires the writer to remain objective. No use of the pronoun "you" is permitted in this section of the paper.

Your Plan

You'll use this part of the paper to explain to the reader the steps you plan to take to get a job in your chosen field. If you need any special training, this is the place where you will discuss how you will get it. Other topics to consider include where you will live, how long the training will take, how much it will cost, and how you will support yourself during your training. If you go to college, be sure to explain where and what you'll be studying. Discuss any scholarships, grants, financial aid, or work study opportunities you have learned about in your research. This section, which should be about two or three paragraphs long, is also a place you may use the personal pronoun "I" as you are discussing your plan, your training, and how you will achieve your goals.

Eight Keys to Employability

In this section, you have the opportunity to discuss the characteristics of a good employee. What kind of employees are employers looking for? How do you fit this profile? Use the document "The Eight Keys of Employability" in your discussion. This section, like the previous one, should be about two paragraphs long.

Budgets

The sixth section of your paper asks you to complete two budgets for your Career Exploration Paper. The first one shows how you will live immediately after graduation. The second one is a projected budget that shows how you will live after you get a job in the field of your choice, in about five years. This information will appear in the body of your paper in narrative form as well as in a chart following your text. The information for your budgets needs to be actual, realistic figures. For example, consult the classified section of the newspaper to determine rent. Call an insurance agent (or two) to get quotes for car insurance. Be sure to cite your sources. The narrative section about your budget should be two paragraphs long. Use the forms in the resource section of this booklet to prepare your budgets.

Conclusion

In this final section, remind the reader where you want to be in five years. Discuss your future from several points of view, including where you'll be geographically, what type of work you'll be doing, and what you plan to be earning. You can also explore what your personal life will be like, if you wish. Tell about how to plan to continue to improve yourself as a life-long learner. This section should be about a paragraph long.

General Guidelines

The length of the text for the Career Exploration Paper paper should be between six full pages and eight full pages, based on this breakdown by section:

- Introduction—no more than a half-page
- Autobiography—no more than a page
- Research about Three Careers—about four pages
- Your Plan—between a half-page and a full-page
- Eight Keys of Employability—no more than a half-page
- Budgets—no more than a half-page
- Conclusion—no more than a half-page.

In addition, you'll need to include a works cited page and two pages for your budgets. The works cited page appears on a separate sheet after the last page of your text. The two budgets follow the works cited page.

Mentor Letter

Dear Mentor:

Thank you for expressing an interest in aiding a senior in the culminating experience of the Medford School District Senior Project. The senior English teachers coordinate this project at the high schools. For the senior project, all senior students will write a research paper on an approved, self-selected topic; complete a hands-on or service-oriented project related to the research paper topic; compile a portfolio of coursework; and present findings to a board in a formal oral presentation at the end of May.

If you feel comfortable mentoring a student, please complete the attached Mentor Consent Form and send it back with your advisee. You may keep this letter for reference.

How might a mentor help a student with the senior project portion of this process?

All students need to complete **20-35 hours of documented work**. Project work, as well as a thorough project log, must be completed and submitted on April 2/3 (depending on which day the student has English class).

The teachers at the high schools request that each mentor/student team meet at least 3 times during the project phase of the Senior Project Experience. These meetings should be scheduled for the mentor's convenience. Recommended activities for the monthly meetings:

- ◇ Help the student pace him/herself to meet the deadline with ease
- ◇ Set upcoming goals
- ◇ Troubleshoot potential difficulties
- ◇ Discuss the student's accomplishments, discoveries, frustrations, questions, obstacles, etc.
- ◇ Review materials or artifacts the student gathered
- ◇ Suggest additional resources or contact
- ◇ Assist student in practicing their presentation speech
- ◇ **Read the student's project log**

Project work must be verified by the consenting adult mentor (there may, in some cases, be more than one mentor per project). Students must record the progress of their projects in their logs. Mentors provide verification of progress and project completion on the Mentor Check sheet and Final Verification Form. Students are aware that video footage, letter from supervisors, slides, photographs and certificates of course completion may all count as additional forms of verification.

How might a mentor help a student with his/her formal, oral presentation?

Students will present what they learned through the research paper and the project work to their classmates and teacher in class. This presentation is required practice for the board. Reviewing the content of the student's speech prior to this presentation may be helpful for the student. Mentors must sign the Mentor Consent Form (to approve cooperation on the project), Mentor Check Sheet (to verify monthly meetings and project progress), and the Mentor Final Verification Form (to verify project completion).

Mentors are welcome to attend their student's board presentation.

Please contact your advisee's English teacher at the Medford School District if you have any questions or concerns.

North Medford High School: (541) 842-3670

South Medford High School: (541) 842-3680

Central Medford High School: (541) 842-3669

Project Log Guide

Students: Maintain a neat, thorough, and well-organized record of your progress on your Senior Project. The final copy of your log **must be typed, properly formatted and submitted with your senior project on** _____. The log is part of your final presentation portfolio.

Keep in mind that you should PACE yourself. **It is helpful to take a look at a calendar with your mentor before you begin work.** Please take into account common obstacles to the project: costs, weather, and other commitments such as school, extra-curricular activities, work and family. **The project work should not take place during the regularly scheduled school day.**

You should **review your project log with your mentor each time you meet.** Your Project Advisory teacher may set periodic log checks.

Include the following information to track your progress. Answer only those questions that apply.

1. Describe what progress you made on your project this week. Please explain with specifics. (What did you do? Where did you go? Who did you speak with? What did you see?)
2. Did you meet the goals set with your mentor last time? Please review and explain the details.
3. What obstacles are you facing?
4. What within your project work has emerged as especially interesting? Explain.
5. What kinds of "risks" did you take? In other words, how did you stretch yourself by experiencing something new and different?
6. How much time did you spend working on the project this time?
7. Based on your responses to the above questions, how would you rate or grade your effort and progress this past week?
8. What are your next goals?
9. What education and skills are necessary to attain a job in this field? What is the job availability, recompense, and any geographic considerations? Speak with or research an exemplary practitioner. Gather background information about how they chose this career path and any recommendation they may have for a young person aspiring to enter this field.
10. Establish a preliminary calendar and, even though revision may be necessary, continue to set and achieve interim goals.
11. Discuss research you have conducted for your research.
12. Establish a work-group in which you discuss your progress, talk through problems, develop solutions, and adapt your project to benefit the growth and experience of others.

Sample Project Log: Format and Content

Student's Name
Senior Project Log 2012

Project: (Brief summary/description)

Total Number of Hours: (a running total)

March 23rd - I've decided that I want to explore early childhood education, so I contacted Headstart to see if I could find a project mentor. They gave me three names of teachers who have either associate degrees or bachelor degrees in early childhood education. After talking with all three of the teachers, I chose Aurora Phillips to be my mentor. Today, I spoke with Aurora, who is the head of the early learning program at Headstart. She agreed to meet with me on Wednesday to talk about my shadowing experience and to begin talking about how and when I will begin using reinforcement techniques to promote certain types of behavior and extinction of others.

It's exciting to think about experimenting with these preschoolers. Right now it is hard to imagine that conditioning will actually alter their behaviors. The first thing I will be doing is shadowing Aurora partially to see what types of techniques she uses (knowingly or unknowingly) and also to begin to identify behaviors that are manageable and that are specific enough to focus on. **(20 minutes)**

March 25th - Attending the 2-hour morning program at Headstart was an eye opener. The main thing I noticed was that reinforcement is heavily used already. The most common reinforcers with these young children are praise and attention. Also withholding those reinforcers is a way to try to extinguish behaviors! Some of those kids though are absolutely out of control. I'm thinking that a real challenge will be to select only three children to work with. On my next visit I will try to pick three kids with very different behavior patterns. This way I can plan on seeing if certain types of kids respond more rapidly to reinforcement techniques. I bet that kids with a short attention span will be the toughest to "train" since they will have a hard time sticking with even a short activity to get the connection with the reinforcement. I'm going to have to think of some very short bits to use with these kids. It's almost totally manipulation. I wonder if this is ethical (not that I'm doing anything wrong)? Oh well, maybe they'll make some positive gains from my efforts. I suppose that's what my mom and teachers did to me! **(2 hours 30 minutes)**

Sample Letter of Intent

1445 Main Street
Medford, Oregon 97501

December 8, 2011

Teacher's Name
South Medford High School
1551 Cunningham Avenue
Medford, Oregon 97501

Dear Mr./Ms. Teacher,

When I was eight years old, my father bought me a fishing pole. I have been hooked on fishing ever since. My favorite place to fish is on the Rogue River. This is something I hope I always get to do, and that I will be able to do with my own son (or daughter) some day. The results of my ASVAB test showed that I would be successful in an outdoor career. That is why I would like to pursue a career with the Bureau of Land Management, possibly helping to maintain healthy rivers.

That is why I would like to research how healthy our rivers are in Oregon, and whether or not there is too much pollution. From my initial research, I have found that fishermen are concerned about the effects of logging, sewage, and irrigation on fish. It appears there are many articles in EBSCO on this topic.

For my project, I plan on working with the BLM on a river clean-up project. My father has a friend who works for the BLM directing river clean-ups and who has agreed to be my mentor. I may coordinate a class cleanup project, or I may put together a brochure on how to care for the river and present it to a science class. I expect to put in about 30 hours working directly with the BLM and about 10 hours working with a class.

Sincerely,

Student's Name

I have read the above Letter of Intent, and understand my student's choice of research paper, topic, and project.

Parent's Name
Parent

The Career Exploration Paper Autobiographical Questionnaire

This sheet lists some questions you might wish to consider as you prepare the second section of your paper. You do not have to turn this form in. It's just for your convenience.

What is your name and age?

What are three adjectives that describe you?

What are things you most like to do in your spare time?

What are your favorite sports, hobbies, crafts, etc.?

What major goals are you working on right now?

Have you moved around much? Where have you lived?

What has been your family situation in the past?

How would your parents have described you as a child?

What were you most proud of as a child?

Who or what has influenced you in your development?

Where do you see yourself in five years? In ten or twenty years?

What hardships have you dealt with in life so far? How have you overcome them?

Are you content with yourself? Would you like to make changes? Explain.

The Career Exploration Paper

Career Outline Form

- I. Introduction (Which career are you discussing and why?)
- II. Job Description (What does a person in this career do? What are the responsibilities? What is an average day like?)
- A. Main point #1 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation.
1. Support your point with a quote, paraphrase, or summary.
 2. Support your point with a second quote, paraphrase, or summary.
- B. Main point #2 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation.
1. Support your point with a quote, paraphrase, or summary.
 2. Support your point with a second quote, paraphrase, or summary.
- C. Main point #3 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation.
1. Support your point with a quote, paraphrase, or summary.
 2. Support your point with a second quote, paraphrase, or summary.
- III. Earnings (What can a person make in this job? Does it vary? What are the variables? What is the range of earnings?)
- A. Main point #1 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation. Use two supporting quotes, paraphrases, or summaries as above.
- B. Main point #2 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation. Use two supporting quotes, paraphrases, or summaries as above.
- C. Main point #3 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation. Use two supporting quotes, paraphrase, or summaries as above.
- IV. Necessary Education and Training (What types of preparation or licensing do you need for this career? Where can you receive it? What does it cost? How long does it take?)
- A. Main point #1 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation. Use two supporting quotes, paraphrases, or summaries as above.

- B. Main point #2 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation. Use two supporting quotes, paraphrases, or summaries as above.
 - C. Main point #3 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation. Use two supporting quotes, paraphrases, or summaries as above.
- V. Advancement Opportunities (Is this a growing field? What are the chances to take on additional responsibilities?)
- A. Main point #1 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation. Use two supporting quotes, paraphrases, or summaries as above.
 - B. Main point #2 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation. Use two supporting quotes, paraphrases, or summaries as above.
 - C. Main point #3 in your own words. Be sure to include a citation. Use two supporting quotes, paraphrases, or summaries as above.
- VI. Career Evaluation (Is this a career that interests you enough to investigate it further? Why or why not?)
- A. Reason #1 in your own words.
 - B. Reason #2 in your own words.

The Career Exploration Paper

Eight Keys to Employability

#1—Personal Values

Valued workers

- are honest
- have good self-esteem and a positive attitude
- have personal and career goals
- demonstrate emotional stability
- exhibit a good attitude
- are self-motivated
- do not limit themselves

#2—Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Skills

Valued workers

- are flexible
- are creative and innovative
- can adapt to changing demands of a job
- can plan and organize work
- can reason and make objective judgments
- keep their mind on several parts of a job at a time

#3—Relations with Other People

Valued workers

- work well with peers
- accept authority and supervision
- accept constructive criticism
- are team workers
- are friendly
- are consistent in their relations with people
- are cooperative
- accept assignments pleasantly
- are tactful
- accept all types of people
- respect the rights and property of other people
- have leadership qualities

#4—Communication Skills

Valued workers

- ask questions
- seek help when needed

- notify supervisors of absences and the reasons for absences
- clearly express themselves orally
- listen well

#5—Task-Related Skills

Valued workers

- complete work on time
- can follow oral, visual, written, and multi-step directions
- are not distracting or distractible
- work neatly
- stick with a task and keep busy
- are precise and meticulous
- care for tools and materials
- are accurate
- constantly improve their performance

#6—Maturity

Valued workers

- work well without supervision
- are reliable and dependable
- accept responsibility
- don't let their personal problems interfere with their work
- are willing to perform extra work and work overtime
- are always prepared for work
- show pride in their work
- show initiative
- remain calm and self-controlled
- accept responsibility for their own behavior
- demonstrate maturity in thoughts, actions, and deeds
- evaluate their own work
- are patient
- use time wisely
- are assertive when necessary
- show self-confidence

#7—Health and Safety Habits

Valued workers

- observe safety rules
- maintain a good work pace and production rate
- practice good personal hygiene
- dress appropriately and are well groomed

- perform well under stress and tension
- have appropriate physical stamina and tolerance for the kind of work they are doing
- are in good health

#8—Commitment to a Job

Valued workers

- are punctual and have good attendance records
- consider their work more than a job
- observe all organizational policies
- are interested and enthusiastic
- want to learn more
- exhibit loyalty to the organization and its employees
- give their best efforts consistently and strive to please
- show concern for their future career with the organization

Appendix A

Samples of Senior Research Papers

Research Paper Examples

I. Example of research paper page showing citation of quotes and paraphrasing with Works Cited page for reference.

The diagram shows a research paper page with several annotations. On the left side, the author's name 'Cindy Serna', the instructor's name 'Ms. Doran', the course 'English 4/Block 3', and the date 'March 13, 2006' are listed. A box labeled 'heading (four lines, double-spaced, in this order)' has an arrow pointing to these four lines. In the center, the title 'My Career Exploration Paper' is written. A box labeled 'title (centered and set in 12-point Times New Roman)' has an arrow pointing to the title. On the right side, the text 'Serna 1' is written, with a box labeled 'pagination' and an arrow pointing to it. Below the title and annotations, the main body of the paper is shown, consisting of three paragraphs of text.

Cindy Serna
Ms. Doran
English 4/Block 3
March 13, 2006

heading (four lines, double-spaced, in this order)

title (centered and set in 12-point Times New Roman)

pagination

Serna 1

My Career Exploration Paper

The Career Exploration Paper helps students figure out a possible career by letting them research three careers. In researching careers, I found I am interested in being a physical therapist and a photographer, but the career that really attracts me is being a nurse practitioner. In this paper I have researched these three career possibilities.

I was born in 1985 in East Los Angeles, the second oldest of four siblings. Growing up in East Los Angeles was very difficult because of the violence. My dad came to the United States from Guatemala because he had to have a liver transplant. After two years of struggling to find a decent job, he met my mom, got married, and eventually had four children. I realized at an early age that this was not the kind of environment I wanted to live in. I had always had a dream of finishing school, buying my own house, and getting married.

My family moved to Medford, Oregon, seven years ago. Ever since I moved here, I have felt secure and happy. I have become involved in school and the community by participating in clubs, working with elementary children, serving as a summer school tutor, and raising money for the Kidney Foundation. Being involved in these activities has made me a better person. I also work thirty hours per week at Hometown Buffet.

One of my aunts is studying to become a doctor and the other is a psychologist. They are my role models and inspiration. On the other hand, I look at my other aunts who are on welfare and at their economic and family situations. Everything they are is everything I don't want to be. For example, one of my aunts is twenty years old, has three children, and does not want to work. She lives in a small bedroom in her mother-in-law's house and is supported mostly by the United States government. Her situation only serves to strengthen my desire to educate myself and get a good job. That is why I have researched the jobs of physical therapist, photographer, and nurse practitioner.

The first career I researched is physical therapist. A physical therapist usually starts the day by first checking the patient's referral given by a doctor. Then the physical therapist examines the patient and provides intervention and orthopedic care for such conditions as lower back and neck pain, headaches, and joint and soft issue problems (Swanson 201). For example, the physical therapist will examine muscle function and range of motion and other types of procedures depending on what the patient's illness is. Finally, the physical therapist will write a treatment plan for the patient.

Salaries for physical therapists are "usually from \$39,000 to \$45,000" a year (Ceremony). But salaries really depend on the experience, if one is self employed, or the type of employer. For instance, if a physical therapist works at a privately owned business or a health care agency, s/he is more likely to make more than a physical therapist that works in a clinic. Benefits also depend if s/he is self-employed, works in a doctor's office or a health care agency. Benefits usually include health insurance, retirement plans, vacations, and sick leave.

**parenthetical
citation with
page
reference**

**parenthetical
citation for
interview**

To become a physical therapist in Oregon, a person needs a high school diploma, 300 hours of massage training, 200 hours of science classes like pathology, anatomy, physiology, and two board exams. Oregon requires prospective physical therapists to complete 500 hours of training and science. All physical therapists must be licensed. In Oregon, the initial exam and licensing fee is \$435. The license must be renewed annually and costs \$75 (“Physical Therapist”).

***parenthetical
citation for
CIS entry***

There is a shortage of physical therapists in Oregon. Therefore, employment is “expected to grow much faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2010” (“Physical Therapist”). Being a physical therapist sounds like a good choice, but there is a high risk of injury.

Photography was the second career area I researched. Photographers produce images that paint a picture, tell a story, or record an event (“Photographer”). Photographers tend to specialize in areas: portraits, commercial, industrial, fine arts, and news. A typical day for most photographers includes composing background and lighting, taking pictures, developing film, making prints, purchasing supplies, keeping records, and billing clients.

News photographers generally earn more than any other type of photographer. In Oregon, a professional photographer will earn between \$16,745 and \$29,640 annually (“Photographer”). Most full-time photographers earn benefits including paid vacation, sick leave, and health insurance. Self-employed photographers must provide their own benefits.

The requirement for a photographer is a high school diploma or a GED. A college education is not required to become a photographer although college training probably offers the most promising assurance of success in fields such as industrial,

news, or scientific photography (“Photographer”).

The outlook for photographers is expected to grow slower than average. I would like to become a photographer only for a part-time job because the only way a photographer can support a family is by being a news photographer. That is why I have decided to become a nurse practitioner.

Nurse practitioners are registered nurses with additional knowledge and skills they use to evaluate patient needs and provide health care with somewhat less supervision than registered nurses (“Nurse Practitioner”). Nurse practitioners specialize in pediatrics, oncology, critical care, or primary care (“Nurse Practitioner”). The daily tasks for a nurse practitioner usually consist of doing physical exams, performing laboratory tests, prescribing medicine, counseling patients, delivering babies and teaching about primary health care. S/he may also work in schools, but this depends on the nurse practitioner’s specialty. S/he may also work in clinics and hospitals.

In Oregon, the average annual salary for a nurse practitioner is \$44,615. Wages vary by employer and location (“Nurse Practitioner” *ECVR*). For example, nurse practitioners that work in private practice average \$78,217 annually while those who work in hospital emergency departments average \$76,215 per year. Benefits, like salary, vary according to employer. Those who work for others usually receive health insurance, sick leave, and vacation time. Those who have their own practice must provide for themselves. They must also pay for their continuing education.

The prospects for nurse practitioners, especially those who specialize in geriatrics, are especially good because of the steadily rising age of the American

population. This is one reason I plan to become a nurse practitioner.

The first step in my plan to become a nurse practitioner is to graduate from high school. Next, I plan to enroll at Rogue Community College for two years and complete an associate of arts degree. I then plan to transfer to Southern Oregon University and complete a bachelor's degree in nursing. To pay for college, I will get financial aid and scholarships. Once I become a registered nurse, I will move out of my parents' house and go back to SOU for two years to earn a master's degree in public health. Once I have completed my nurse practitioner training, I plan to get married. I know that the training for this career takes about seven years, but this does not matter because it is what I really want to do.

After I become a nurse practitioner, I will need to show that I have good job skills. To show good job skills, one has to be honest, have good self esteem, positive image, and demonstrate emotional stability. It will be important to have these personal values because a nurse practitioner must demonstrate them while dealing with patients. Problem-solving and decision-making skills will also be important on the job because one has to adjust to changing demands of a job and keep one's mind on several parts of a job at the same time. For example, when I become a nurse practitioner, I will need to do several things in quick order: check appointments, perform exams, and write prescriptions.

Commitment to a job and communication skills will make me a valued worker because employers will know I am serious about the job. These traits will also show my employer that I should be kept on and even given regular raises. By notifying my supervisors of my absences, being punctual, and having regular attendance, I will increase the

chances of my being a valued employee.

Right now I will still work at Hometown Buffet to cover my personal expenses. I am not going to worry about paying bills because I will be living in my parents' house. My dad has agreed to pay off my car once I start college. The only expenses I will need to pay are gasoline, insurance, and personal expenses. My monthly budget consists of making my car payment (\$200), insurance payment (\$100), gasoline (\$40), and personal expenses (\$150 or so). When I get to college, my budget will change. For example, I will not have to make my car payment because my dad has agreed to do that for me. Though I will not have to pay tuition and books immediately, I will have to eventually because I plan to take out loans while I am in school.

After I finish college and get a job as a registered nurse, I will look for an apartment. I will have to pay rent (about \$405 per month at the Valley Pines apartment complex). In addition, I will have to pay for electricity (about \$48 per month through Pacific Power), telephone (about \$22 per month through Qwest), and cable (about \$16 per month through Charter). I also plan to budget money for food (about \$200 per month) and clothing (about \$80 per month). I will keep my car until I have finished my degree at SOU and get a full-time job as a registered nurse.

In conclusion, I will have finished a bachelor's degree in nursing in five years, but I will not be done completely with my schooling. I will need two more years of study to become certified as a nurse practitioner. I hope by then to be engaged and own my own home. The Career Exploration Paper has helped me to plan my future and set goals for myself. I have really learned a lot about a career as a nurse practitioner.

**"Works Cited"
centered and set
in 12-point Times
New Roman**

Works Cited

Serna 7

**each entry ends
with a period**

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**hanging
indentation for
entries having
two or more lines**

**all entries alphabetized
and double-spaced—
nothing single-spaced**

II. Example of Works Cited page.

Name 11

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