Name: _____

Pop. Culture Research Paper

Length Requirement: 4 - 8 pages
Font: Size 12, Times (or something comparable)
Formatting: Double-spaced; 1" margins, page #s
Footnotes & Bibliography: MLA Style

Sources: At least 6 reputable academic sources:
  * A minimum of 2 primary sources
  * A maximum of 1 encyclopedia source
  * Websites need to be scholarly & reputable
    (NOT Wikipedia, blogs, etc.)

Important dates to keep in mind:

Block 2	Block 5	Block 6
Mon. & Tues, Dec. 5 & 6th: Research in library. Topic & area of focus due by the next time we go to the library (Dec. 12).	**Tues. & Wed., Dec. 6 & 7th:** Research in library. Topic & area of focus due by the next time we go to the library (Dec. 13).	**Mon. & Tues, Dec. 5 & 6th:** Research in library. Topic & area of focus due by the next time we go to the library (Dec. 12).
Mon. & Tues., Dec. 12 & 13th: Research in library. Central question, thesis statement and inquiry questions due by the end of class Friday, Dec. 16. *(5 points)*	**Tues., Dec. 13th (library) & Wed., Dec. 14th (classroom):** Research. Central question, thesis statement and inquiry questions due by the end of class Friday, Dec. 16. *(5 points)*	**Mon. & Wed., Dec. 12 & 14th:** Research in classroom. Central question, thesis statement and inquiry questions due by the end of class Friday, Dec. 16. *(5 points)*
Mon. & Tues., Dec. 19 & 20th: Research in library	**Tues., Dec. 20th (library) & Wed., Dec. 21st (classroom):** Research	**Tues. & Wed., Dec. 19 & 20th:** Research in library
Friday, Dec. 23rd: Notes check #1 (Min. of 3p of notes due.) *(15 points)*	**Friday, Dec. 23rd:** Notes check #1 (Min. of 3p of notes due.) *(15 points)*	**Friday, Dec. 23rd:** Notes check #1 (Min. of 3p of notes due.) *(15 points)*
Tues. & Wed., Jan. 3 & 4th & Mon/Tues, Jan. 9 & 10th: Time to work on notes/outline in classroom	**Tues. & Wed., Jan. 3 & 4th & Mon/Tues, Jan. 9 & 10th:** Time to work on notes/outline in classroom	**Wed. & Thurs., Jan. 4 & 5th & Mon/Tues, Jan. 9 & 10th:** Time to work on notes/outline in classroom
Wed., Jan. 18th: Preliminary outline due by the end of class (class time to complete.) *(5 points)*	**Wed., Jan. 18th::** Preliminary outline due by the end of class (class time to complete.) *(5 points)*	**Wed., Jan. 18th:** Preliminary outline due by the end of class (class time to complete.) *(5 points)*
Friday, Jan. 27th: Notes check #2 (*At least* 6 pages of notes done by the end of the day. You should be done taking notes.) *(15 points)*	**Friday, Jan. 27th:** Notes check #2 (*At least* 6 pages of notes done by the end of the day. You should be done taking notes.) *(15 points)*	**Friday, Jan. 27th:** Notes check #2 (*At least* 6 pages of notes done by the end of the day. You should be done taking notes.) *(15 points)*
END OF QUARTER	**END OF QUARTER**	**END OF QUARTER**
Week of Feb. 6-13th: class time (4 blocks) to work on detailed outlines & intro paragraph	**Week of Feb. 6-13th:** class time (4 blocks) to work on detailed outlines & intro paragraph	**Week of Feb. 6-13th:** class time (4 blocks) to work on detailed outlines & intro paragraph
Friday, Feb. 17th: Intro paragraph and detailed 4-5 page outline due *(30 points)* - NOTE: outlines submitted after Wed., March. 1st won't be eligible for re-writes!	**Friday, Feb. 17th:** Intro paragraph and detailed 4-5 page outline due *(30 points)* - NOTE: outlines submitted after Wed., March. 1st won't be eligible for re-writes!	**Friday, Feb. 17th:** Intro paragraph and detailed 4-5 page outline due *(30 points)* - NOTE: outlines submitted after Wed., March. 1st won't be eligible for re-writes!
Week of March 6-13th: class time to work on draft & conferences	**Week of March 6-13th:** class time to work on draft & conferences	**Week of March 6-13th:** class time to work on draft & conferences
Friday, March 17th: Final papers due *(100 points)*	**Friday, March 17th: Final papers due** *(100 points)*	**Friday, March 17th: Final papers due** *(100 points)*

STEP 1: Choosing a Topic

Your topic can be anything that relates to **U.S. popular culture** from 1900 to the 2010s.

Where should you start? Play to your own interests – this is your independent project, and it is an opportunity to make something uniquely yours.

Here are a few suggestions about how to get started selecting a topic:

1. Think about what you enjoy doing for fun and use that to guide your selection.

    o   If you like sports, who are some sports icons or events which defined the era?

    o   If you are a comic book aficionado, is there a character who particularly defines an era?

    o   If you're a movie buff, consider how a specific film spoke to the time period and reflected or shaped how people thought or acted.

    o   If you like music, think of a particular genre of music or time period you find most interesting and consider how the music reflected or shaped the time in some way.

2. Talk with your family or other friends or adults in your life – they might have great suggestions from their own interests.

3. Think about how you learn best. If you are more of a visual learner, try to choose a topic where your resources are more likely to be visual. If reading is more of a struggle, consider topics that have a lot of audio-visual resources. If you choose to write about a tv show or film for instance, your primary research will involve *watching* the show or movie. If you're writing about music, you're going to have to *listen to* the music, listen to interviews with your musician, etc. as evidence. Regardless of what topic you choose, you WILL have to look at print sources of some kind but there is room for research outside of text sources and even more so depending on the topic you choose.

STEP 2: Writing Your Central Question & Thesis

Your research paper should be based around a central question that will ultimately be answered by your thesis statement and elaborated upon in your body paragraphs.

The **<u>central question</u>** is the question you have in your mind about your topic that you want your research paper to answer. Keep in mind that the answer to your central question cannot be factual or descriptive. It should be something that can be *argued* or *interpreted* and supported with evidence.

A good central question will place your **topic** into a larger **historical framework**. This context is critical and explains why a topic is significant and is worthy of scholarly attention. Writing a good central question requires some initial research.

You will start with your topic. As you read up on your topic, you'll start to take note of some of the things that are interesting, noteworthy, and arguable about your topic. Those areas may be something you can ultimately formulate a question about.

Here are some examples:

TOPIC & RELATED SUBTOPICS	INEFFECTIVE CENTRAL QUESTIONS	EFFECTIVE CENTRAL QUESTIONS
Jackie Robinson - started in Negro Leagues - 1st black player to integrate MLB - Experienced profound racism - Connection to early civil rts mov.	What was Jackie Robinson's life like?	How did Jackie Robinson's struggle to integrate Major League Baseball reflect the larger struggle to integrate American society?

Your **<u>thesis statement</u>** is not only the answer to your central question, but it is also a roadmap to the argument you will then proceed to make throughout your body paragraphs. Your thesis statement should give your reader a good idea of what you are going to argue and exactly how you are going to argue it. Let's take the above effective central questions and transform them into thesis statements.

CENTRAL QUESTION	ANALYTICAL THESIS STATEMENT
How did Jackie Robinson's struggle to integrate Major League Baseball reflect the larger struggle to integrate American society?	Jackie Robinson's struggle to integrate Major League baseball foreshadowed many of the issues that would be dealt with during the civil rights movement, but also reflected some of the movement's successes.

When writing a thesis, be aware that frequently you will find as you research that your original thesis is no longer as valid as you thought. You should review and revise your thesis, if necessary, to reflect what you have learned.

STEP 3: Finding Sources

What is expected in terms of gathering and using sources?

- I expect you to use at least **SIX** sources. Those sources will include a mix of secondary and primary sources.

  o At least 2 of the sources must be primary (i.e. first-hand accounts from the time period), and may include: newspaper articles, interviews, tv episodes, poetry, literature, letters, speeches, etc..

  o The other sources should be secondary, and may include: books written by historians, scholarly articles, newspaper or magazine articles, interviews (oral or written) with historical/cultural figures, etc.

  o It is unrealistic to not use the internet as a source, HOWEVER, vet your sources (except for scholarly sources obtained through the L-S databases - those are always ok.)

  o Encyclopedias may only account for 1 of your sources.

- **In any research paper, the more a researcher exposes his/herself to a variety of sources, the more informed, analytical, and nuanced the paper will be.**

A few tips:

- **You need to use a range of sources in the body of your paper** You do not want to rely too much on one source as this would not be a true research paper. **The more sources the better – you will gain a broader understanding of your topic.**

- **DON'T wait until the week the paper is due to scrounge for your sources!** DON'T write the entire paper *before* finding your primary sources. You should ideally gather all/most of your sources *before* beginning the writing process.

STEP 4: Note-Taking

Writing a research paper and all that goes into it can feel overwhelming. At its base though, what I'm asking you to do to start note-taking is this:

1. **Find <u>ONE</u> article/source.** (You can do this in either an LS Library database like US History in Context or Pop Culture Universe <u>OR</u> go to Google and type in your topic.)
    a. If you're not sure a source is solid, ask Ms. Shen or try the SCRAP test we went over with the librarian last week.
2. **Print the article.**
3. **Read it & highlight** information that seems important.
4. Open your notes document and, **in bulleted form, write down the highlighted info in your notes** (in your own words.)
5. **Repeat** those steps with another article.

<u>Goal for each week:</u> find 1 source in class each day, print it, highlight and take notes.

<u>Things to keep in mind when note-taking:</u>

- **DON'T WRITE DOWN EVERYTHING YOU READ** - read a paragraph, pause to ask yourself what's important and worth writing down. Try to be a <u>critical</u> reader and note-taker.
    - **YOUR NOTES SHOULD BE A <u>SUMMARY</u> OF WHAT YOU READ. IF YOU ARE TAKING SOMETHING DOWN VERBATIM, BE SURE TO PUT IT IN QUOTES AND MAKE IT CLEAR WHAT THE SOURCE WAS (website, page #, etc..)**
- Using headings and subheadings will help you organize your notes
- Underline key concepts, people, terms
- Consider using color strategically (to differentiate where one source begins or ends, to highlight key terms/concepts, to call attention to quotes, etc.)
- Make sure to write the source info at the top of each section of notes. It is MUCH harder to write the paper with citations if you don't keep track of the sources as you read and take notes. Get in the habit of writing the source info at the top of the page when you take notes.
- A big part of successful research is finding the right keywords that yield results. As you learn more about your topic, you will get more ideas for keywords so you might want to keep a running list of keywords for your topic.
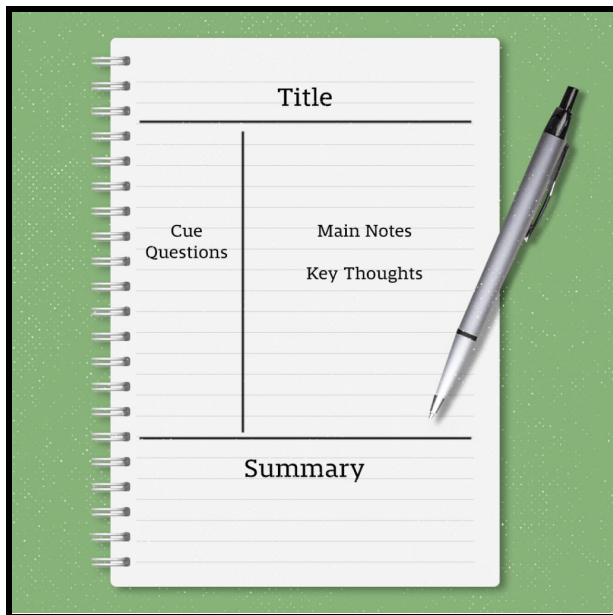
OPTIONS FOR NOTETAKING:

1. Outlining
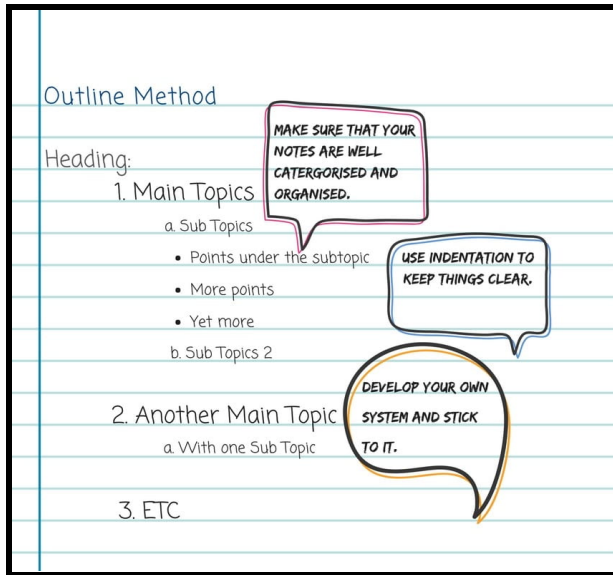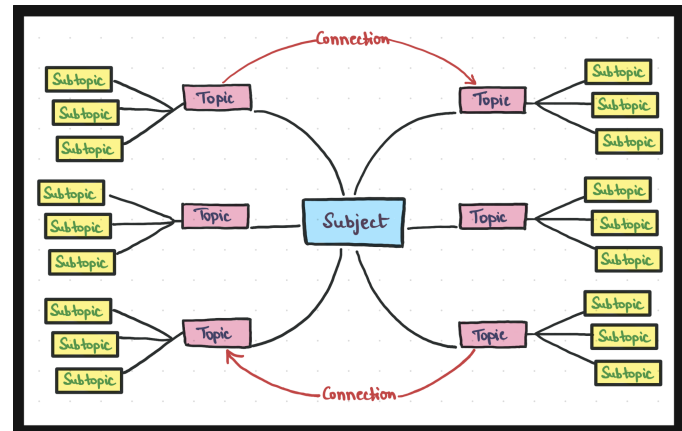
2. 2 column notes or the Cornell method

3. Concept maps

4. Paraphrasing or summarizing in a list (taking notes in the order they appear in the source - could be short phrases, summary of complete paragraphs or descriptions of ideas, etc.)

Using Footnotes

1. A footnote is a note that includes specific information about which source was used to locate a piece of information. Because page numbers are included, these notes are more exact than bibliographic citations. However, they do not replace the need for a bibliography.

2. Footnotes should be inserted immediately *after* the period at the end of your sentence – NOT in the middle of a sentence! Additionally, footnotes should be placed AFTER punctuation AND quotation marks. For example, "This is how you do it."[1]
   a. "This is an example of what it should NOT look like.[1]"
   b. "This is another example of bad footnote use"[1].
   c. "I think you get the point[5]."

3. Footnotes are single spaced and appear at the bottom of the page where the citation is found.

4. Footnotes should be incorporated in the paper after the following scenarios:
   a. After using a direct quote from a text, person, or other resource.
   b. After including important specific information, ideas, or arguments obtained from another resource or text (i.e. statistics, factual information, author's interpretation of an event, etc.)
   c. Citations should NOT be used for quotations which are familiar to any educated reader, ideas that are generally accepted, or facts that are well-known and undisputed.

5. Your quotations should be integrated smoothly into the flow of your text. They should not stand alone. The person or source responsible for the quotation should ideally be identified.
   a. GOOD: "Quotations should always be integrated smoothly into the flow of the text," wrote historian and grammar expert Melisa Shen, "or else your reader will be confused."[1]
   b. GOOD: According to grammar expert Melisa Shen, "Quotations should always be integrated smoothly into the flow of the text."[1]
   c. BAD: Students in Ms. Shen's history class seem to think that it is okay for quotes to stand alone. "What these people don't know is that it looks bad and is confusing for the reader."[1]

6. HOW TO INSERT A FOOTNOTE IN GOOGLE DOCS: Put your cursor either at the end of the sentence or just outside the quotation marks. Go to "Insert", scroll down to "Footnote." This will insert a little number where your cursor was and a matching number at the bottom of the page. Put your citation info next to the number at the bottom of the page. The citation should be cited properly in MLA format. (See info below on how to do citations.)
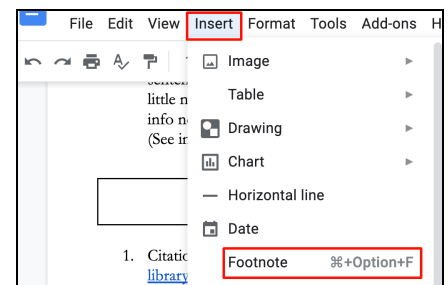
Using Google Docs for Citations

1. Citations should be done in MLA (8th ed.). You can either use one of the citation generators posted on the library website OR use the new citation feature in Google Docs.

2. To access the citations feature on your draft in Google, go to "Tools", scroll down to "Citations."
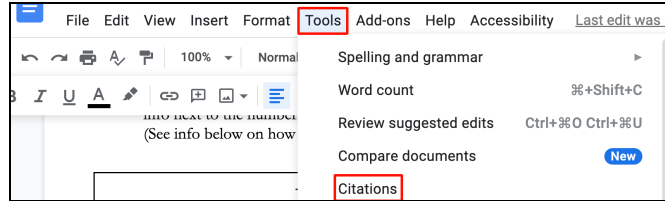
3. This will open a sidebar for the citation generator. In the sidebar, it should be automatically set to cite in MLA (8th ed.), if not select that. Then click on "Add citation source" and where it says "source type," choose the kind of source it is. Then choose the option that reflects where you accessed that source (print, website, or online.) If you've used a website, plug in the URL and hit "Search." Depending on how complete the info given, it may ask you to fill in some additional information on the source (for example author, publication date.) If you can find that info, add it in and if you can't. you can skip it. Once you're set, click "Add citation source."

4. If you are looking to cite that info in a footnote, put the cursor next to the footnote at the bottom of your page and hit "cite" by the source you're trying to insert. This will add the info you need, correctly cited, to your footnote.
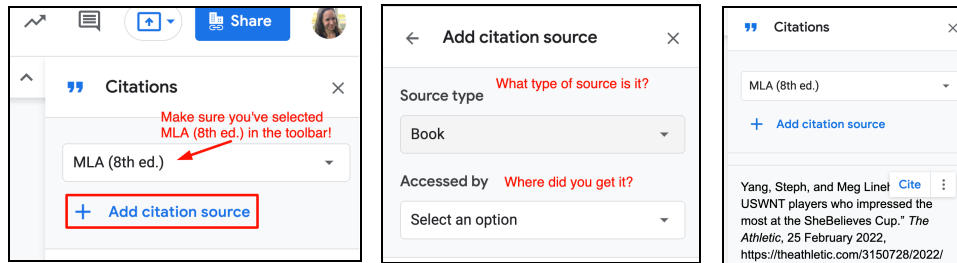
5. When you're ready to do your works cited page, go to the end of your paper. With the citations sidebar open, you should see a blue "Insert Works Cited" button. Click on that and all of your sources will be alphabetized and inserted.

Research Paper Checklist

Directions: Before handing in your finished paper, you should proofread it and check your work to make sure it meets the following criteria. I will be looking for these things when I grade your papers.

FORMATTING √LIST

Meets minimum length (4 pages) and does not exceed maximum length (8 pages)	
Font size 12, plain type	
Pages are numbered -- not handwritten.	

CITATIONS

All quotes, specific info, and others' ideas are cited with proper citations.	
Paper does not rely on 1 or 2 sources!	

QUOTATIONS

Quotes are chosen and used well (i.e., quotes do not do the explaining for you. Rather, they are said in a way that you could not do effectively in your own words).	
Quotations are properly introduced before and analyzed after so that the *significance* of the quote is clear to the reader.	

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliography begins on a separate page from the text of your paper.	
All entries are double spaced and alphabetized.	
There are a minimum of 6 sources.	

STYLE MECHANICS

The writing is clear & *f-l-o-w-s* (e.g., transitions b/w points and ¶s, varied sentence structure, etc.)	
The tone and style are your own.	
Technical errors (spelling, capitalization, verb tense, complete sentences, punctuation, etc.) are kept to a minimum.	

CONTENT/ANALYSIS

The introduction grabs or hooks the reader's attention and "sets up" what the paper will be about.	
Paper has a clearly stated argumentative Thesis Statement.	
The intro introduces the main arguments that you will make to prove your Thesis Statement.	
Thesis Statement is supported throughout. Don't simply "tell a story" - analyze info and prove an argument.	
Paper provides enough historical background to understand your topic.	
Each ¶ begins with a topic sent that states the main idea of the ¶.	
¶s are organized logically.	