

Expert Project Assignment #11

Thursday, November 29, 2018

In Class:

1. How To Conduct an Interview
2. Discuss this week's interview assignment. Design questions.
3. Clarify research/note-taking tasks

Homework:

Part I. Prepare 20-40 research note cards.

I am going to research these sub-topics:

notecards (est.)

- | | | |
|----|-------|-------|
| a. | _____ | _____ |
| b. | _____ | _____ |
| c. | _____ | _____ |
| d. | _____ | _____ |

This week I hope to **finish** researching these sub-topics:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

Part 2: Interviews

- **Conduct** the Adult Interview with a family member or friend over 25. Complete the "Adult Interview Basics," draft questions, record notes, and complete the "After Interview Processing Questions." All parts of the adult interview must be completed by **Thursday, December 6.**
- **Set up** an interview with a specialist in your topic. "The Specialist Planner" is due by **Thursday, December 6.**
- **Conduct** the specialist interview by **Thursday, December 20.** Then send a thank you note to your interviewee and turn in your reflection.

Sample e-mail or phone introduction:

Dear _____,

I am a sixth year student at Maria Montessori Academy in N. Ogden, Utah. I am conducting an independent research project on _____. I have some questions about _____ that I would like to ask you. Would you be willing to meet me or talk to me some time next week? It should take about _____ minutes.

Thank you for considering my request,

Notes on Using Specialists

Conducting an interview is a valuable way to gather information on your topic. Here are some steps:

- Contact your expert; explain the nature of your project and ask if he/she would be willing to speak to you.
- Draft interview questions; think carefully about what you want to find out. Plan to ask your biggest thinking questions toward the end of your interview, so you can get his/her opinion on what you feel are the hardest questions to answer.
- Set up a time to meet your expert; find a distraction-free place to meet and estimate the amount of time you will need to ask your questions.
- When you conduct your interview, take notes on the basic ideas; however, if your interviewee says something really key, ask, "May I quote you on that?" If he/she agrees, write that statement down word for word. If you choose to record the interview, be sure you ask the person for permission, before you begin.
- Right after the interview, review and correct the notes you took and **write a reflection** to be turned in on Thursday, December 20th. The reflection will be helpful later when crafting your introduction and conclusion sections of your final paper.
- **Send your specialist a thank you note**, showing your appreciation for the interview.

Adult Interview Basics

Name of the person you are interviewing: _____

Describe your relationship to the interviewee: _____

Date and time of the interview: _____

Duration (How long the interview took): _____

After-Interview Processing Questions

1. Review your notes and make corrections. Attach them to this paper.

2. What was the most challenging part of conducting this interview?

3. How did your type of questions affect the type of answers you were given? Which types of questions were most informative?

4. What did you learn from conducting your interview with your adult? Please describe below.

How to Conduct an Interview

Research, preparation are the keys to interviewing like a pro.

One of the hardest skills for a young reporter to master is interviewing. It takes preparation and persistence to conduct a good interview. Follow these steps and learn how to interview like a pro!

STEP 1: Research, research, research. Then research some more. The only way to come up with good questions is to know everything there is to know about your subject.

STEP 2: Contact the person you wish to interview. Ask when a good time would be to do the interview. Be polite! Say "please" and "thank you." Try to set up the interview in person. If this isn't possible, then set up a phone interview.

STEP 3: Read over your research and brainstorm a list of 15 questions. The more specific your questions are, the better! And never ask questions that can be answered with a simple yes or no. Make your interviewee talk!

Be sure to write all your questions down in a notebook, then practice asking them with a partner. Become very familiar with your questions before you go into the interview.

STEP 4: Come prepared with:

- A pencil
- A notebook
- A list of good questions
- A recording device (always ask permission before recording an interview)

STEP 5: Be on time! Arrive at your interview with plenty of time to spare. If you've never been to the place where your interview is taking place, go early and scout it out. There is nothing more unprofessional than a reporter who is late.

You can also use the time you are waiting to make notes about the surroundings. You won't remember details later, so write them down.

STEP 6: Conduct your interview in an organized, timely manner. During the interview:

Be courteous to your subject. Always take time to ask for an explanation about things you don't understand. Don't be afraid of uncomfortable silences and pauses. Let the interview take its natural course. Look the person in the eye when asking questions.

Always listen carefully to the answers. Each answer could lead to more questions or include an answer to a question you haven't asked yet. Don't ask a question that has

already been answered. Your subject will know you weren't listening and be insulted. Don't read through your questions one right after another like you can't wait to be finished. Conduct your interview like a conversation. One question should lead naturally into another. If you are LISTENING to the answers this will come naturally!

Also, take notes on what the person looked like, what the person was wearing, where he or she sat. If the interview is in an office, make notes of what is on the walls and on the desk. The objects people surround themselves with hold important clues to their personalities. Ask about any object that interests you. You'll find some good stories!

STEP 7: Even if you are recording an interview, take notes. Don't try to write every word said. It will slow down the interview. Just take down the highlights.

After the interview, while the details are still fresh in your mind, write everything down you can remember about the person you interviewed. Don't forget to make note of the sounds in the background. Take note of what was happening around you. Write it all down as soon as possible.

At home, expand your notes by following up on things you learned in your interview with more research!

STEP 8: Review your research and your interview notes. Circle or highlight quotations that you think will be good for your article. Now you're ready to begin writing!

Specialist Interview Planner

- Person's name and title: _____

- Contact information (phone, email): _____

- Interview Questions:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

- Record of Contacting the Specialist:

- Date _____

- Time _____

- Result _____
(i.e. left a message, set an appointment)

- Appointment:

- Date _____

- Time _____

- Location _____

- Help I may need _____
(no siblings around for a phone interview or a ride to a location for an in-person interview) I have asked _____ to help me/ take me.

- I am taking notes on _____

- I will (will not) record the interview using _____