

Appendix 1

YELL AS A SENIOR RESEARCH PROJECT



Applying the YELL curriculum as a senior research project provides students with the opportunity to explore an area of personal interest and to demonstrate skills and knowledge gained during their high school years. Typically a senior research project is a major undertaking that must be successfully completed as part of a student's graduation requirements.

This appendix frames YELL Unit 3 as an individual project. While originally developed for seniors in one high school in West Oakland, this appendix can be adapted as a classroom project for either high school or middle school students. What is presented here is meant to serve as a sample or launch point for work that fits with the goals and needs of your particular school.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

- ✓ Work Records
- ✓ Community Connection
- ✓ Academic Paper with Cross-Curricular Connections
- ✓ Final Product
- ✓ Presentation

MAIN STEPS TO A SENIOR RESEARCH PROJECT

- ✓ Select a Topic and Develop a Research Question
- ✓ Create a Research Plan
- ✓ Develop Research Tools and Collect Information
- ✓ Analyze Information and Write a Paper
- ✓ Present Findings

Senior Research Project Support Structure

Senior Research Project Cohort (SRPC): The SRPC supports seniors with organizing their time, developing their skills, writing their report, and planning their final presentation. Depending on the number of seniors and faculty at your school, each faculty member should be assigned a group of five seniors. Each SRPC meets every month, with faculty providing structure and support for seniors in planning and completing their projects. Each student is assigned to a SRPC by the beginning of the spring semester of their senior year. Specifically, the SRPC structure provides students with the following:

- **Peer Resources:** Within each SRPC, students work together to understand and implement the steps and requirements of the project and address any problems that arise. Youth can use the structure for peer reviews of work, topic identification brainstorms and other feedback formats.
- **Faculty Advisors:** Students work under the guidance of faculty members who serve as Senior Research Project Cohort guides and advisors. Faculty are assigned a core group of students for one-on-one advising and support.
- **Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement:** Students are required to get a parent or guardian signature for each step of their project. This encourages communication about the project and provides a system for keeping parents or guardians informed of the project requirements.

Working with the support of their SRPC, and under the supervision of faculty, students will develop and complete substantial projects. Although various forms of assistance will be made available, the primary initiative for completion of the project lies with the student. Selection of a project topic will be the responsibility of each student, based on such factors as interest, knowledge, and career goals. Topics must be submitted to the student's faculty advisor for approval. Students may choose to include service in their project to meet a service learning graduation requirement. Parents and caregivers are encouraged to discuss project topics with their children and to be supportive during the year as the project develops.

Letter from the Principal - Example

Dear Parents and Guardians of Seniors:

Graduation requirements for members of this year's class include a senior research project. The senior research project gives each senior the opportunity to demonstrate her or his years of educational experience in thinking, reading, writing, speaking, accessing information, self-discipline, problem solving, and organization. These skills will be showcased in a five-part process consisting of the following requirements:

- **Work Records:** A collection of all the written material that results from the project, including a process journal, reading list, annotated bibliography, notes of research, response forms, and letters generated as part of project work.
- **Community Connection:** Research (interviews, surveys, or focus groups) with community members.
- **Academic Paper with Cross-Curricular Connections:** A 10–15 page paper that demonstrates use of skills and knowledge from several areas of study.
- **Final Product:** A service, performance, activity, object, or work of art created by the student as a result of the exploration of a chosen topic.
- **Presentation of Learning:** Final presentation to a panel of evaluators composed of parents, students, teachers, and community members.

For successful completion of the senior research project, your student cannot rely solely on what she or he already knows, but must demonstrate an aspect of new learning and growth. A successful senior research project experience involves your support and teacher support as well as student initiative and self-discipline. Each student has been informed of the deadlines and requirements of the project. Please review the planning packet and become an active participant in this exciting learning experience with your student.

We are looking forward to working with our students through this process and to the end of the school year when we will see the wonderful array of projects they create. If you have any questions, please call.

Sincerely,

The Principal



Steps to a Senior Research Project

1. PICK A TOPIC AND DEVELOP A RESEARCH QUESTION

Topic selection can be based on your interest, knowledge, and career goals. Topics must be submitted to the faculty leaders of the Senior Research Project Cohort for approval. You may choose to include service in your project in order to meet service-learning graduation requirements.

What is the community-based issue or topic that you want to address? What is your primary question?

2. CREATE A RESEARCH PLAN

Create a timeline and work plan for your senior research project.

When is each part of the project due? What do you need to accomplish by when to stay on track?

3. DEVELOP RESEARCH TOOLS AND GATHER INFORMATION

Explore the history, politics, and root causes of the issue you want to address. Use newspaper articles, books, government reports, journal articles, and the Internet. Learn to use surveys, interviews, and focus groups to better understand the surrounding community.

Who is impacted or involved in the problem you are addressing? What is the best way (interviews, surveys, focus groups) to get information from these people?

4. ANALYZE INFORMATION AND WRITE A PAPER

This is your opportunity to write about your findings and share what you learned about your topic.

What did you learn? What are the major trends or themes that come out of what people have said?

5. PRESENT FINDINGS

Present your ideas and share your work with people who could use your information to make change in your community.

Who should know about your topic and what you learned? How will you share this information with those people? Invite these people to your presentation and put up flyers or posters about your final presentation.

Senior Research Project Planning Packet Contents

PARENT OR GUARDIAN ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SENIOR RESEARCH PROJECT PLANNING PACKET CONTENTS

I have read and discussed the senior research project planning packet with the student below. We understand that the senior research project is required for graduation from high school and that work on a successful senior research project begins in the very beginning of the spring semester and keeps to the timeline.

Parent or Care Giver Name (please print) Student Name (please print) Date

Parent Signature Student Signature

Daytime Telephone Number



Senior Research Project Requirements

1. WORK RECORDS

The written record of the senior research project serves as a guide and a history of your work of the project. It should include but is not limited to:

- A letter of intent that identifies your senior research project topic.
- A reading list of 10 documents (at least five pages each) that you will read.
- An annotated bibliography that organizes and shares what you learn from your reading.
- Note cards from your research.
- The Senior Research Project Sign-off Sheet, which is a list of tasks with due dates that must be signed by a Senior Research Project Team Leader on the appropriate date.

2. COMMUNITY CONNECTION

The senior research project is an opportunity for students to take their learning beyond the school boundaries. Students must complete one of the following research activities with community members:

- One focus group with at least 10 participants who have a discussion on your topic for an hour.
- Five interviews, each at least a half an hour in length.
- 20 surveys.

3. ACADEMIC PAPER

The final paper for the senior research project must be 10-15 pages in length, double spaced, in 12-point font. The senior research project paper and product must show evidence that the student has used skills and knowledge from several areas of study, such as English, mathematics, social studies, public speaking, art, world languages, science, or music to enhance and complete the work. (See Rubric at the end of this section.)

4. FINAL PRODUCT

The product component of the senior research project develops as a result of the exploration of the chosen topic. Depending on the topic, the product might be:

- A service that is substantial and meets a real community need. For example: Tutoring younger students in math over a semester or organizing a neighborhood or park clean-up. (You must make a PowerPoint presentation or other way of showing what you did at your final presentation).
- A video documentary.
- A work of art.

5. PRESENTATION OF LEARNING

Presentation of Learning is the public sharing of the senior research project – both the product and ideas from the final paper. Assessment occurs with students sharing their product and getting constructive feedback from their Senior Research Project Committee.

Senior Research Project Timeline

MONTH ONE

- LEARN about the senior research project and review this packet.
- HAVE YOUR PARENTS or GUARDIANS sign the acknowledgement form.
- WRITE YOUR LETTER OF INTENT that explains what topic you have chosen for your project. Your parents or guardians will be contacted if you do not turn in your letter.
- GET TRAINING on how to do research.
- CREATE A READING LIST that outlines all of the books and articles that you will read about the issue you've chosen.
- START READING and create note cards that will help you write your annotated bibliography.
- WRITE YOUR ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY.

MONTH TWO

- SET GOALS FOR COMPLETING YOUR PROJECT and create a personal time line that includes details specific to the individual project.
- COLLECT ALL YOUR INFORMATION and do your research in the community. Write up your preliminary findings.
- WRITE SECTIONS 1, 2, and 3 of your paper. Your parents or guardians will be contacted if you do not turn in this draft.

MONTH THREE

- WRITE SECTIONS 4, 5, and 6 of your paper. Turn in to your English advisor for feedback.
- REVISE YOUR PAPER based on the feedback you get from your teacher.
- START WORKING ON YOUR PRODUCT.
- RECRUIT community members and other students to be on the committee that will score your project.
- TURN IN YOUR FIRST DRAFT OF ALL SECTIONS of your paper, based on your teacher's feedback. Your parent or guardian will be contacted if you do not turn in this draft.

MONTH FOUR

- TURN IN YOUR FINAL DRAFT of your paper, based on your teacher's last feedback. Your parent or guardian will be contacted if you do not turn in your paper, and you will not be able to graduate.
- FINALIZE YOUR PRODUCT and prepare for your presentation.
- PRESENT YOUR PROJECT to your committee and the public.



Senior Research Project Letter of Intent

The Letter of Intent communicates to your Senior Research Project Cohort your ideas about the topic and process for your senior research project. Please follow the instructions below and use the format provided. If you have any questions about the Letter of Intent, particularly about the paragraph on plagiarism, please be sure to ask your Senior Research Project Cohort leaders. Your Letter of Intent must be typed. You will turn in your letter to your team leaders, who will evaluate your proposal. Good luck!

FORMAT

Jamaal Jones

(your name)

234 Chávez Drive

(your address)

Kenwood, CA 12345

(double space)

February 5, 2008

(date)**(double space)**

Senior Research Project Team A

(teacher's name or team name)

396 Ferndale Ave

(school address)

Kenwood, CA 12345

(double space)

Dear Cohort Leaders:

(double space)

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that I intend to learn about and create a project about childhood obesity in Kenwood. My plan for learning includes using the public library, the Internet, interviews, mapping of food and grocery resources in our neighborhoods, as well as data on children and youth in Kenwood. I intend to volunteer in a nutrition class for elementary age children and produce a short documentary about childhood obesity in our community.

(double space)

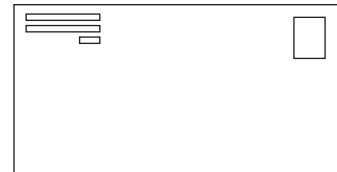
I understand that plagiarism is the unlawful claiming of another's work as my own. I also understand that plagiarized work will result in my failing the senior research project graduation requirement. I will do my best to come up with original thoughts and to cite others' work when I find it necessary to use their ideas.

(double space)

Sincerely,

(four spaces – sign your name here)

Jamaal Jones

(type your name here)

Senior Research Project Paper Outline

INSTRUCTIONS:

All papers must include the following sections (please use the given titles for your outline headings). For each section you must use the information you gather from people in the community, and from books and articles, to support your ideas.

Paper Length: 10-15 pages. Each page should be in 12-point font and double spaced.

1. Historical Context (2-3 pages)

You must research the history behind your topic. Consider such questions as: How long has our community faced this problem? What attempts have been made to address this issue here and in other communities? Were there any major political, historical, or economic events that affected the issue? Has the problem increased or decreased?

2. Personal & Present Day Analysis (3-4 pages)

How has this issue impacted you personally or the people around you? Research and analyze the current condition of your issue. Consider such questions as: What role does the issue play in the condition of our community today? What are some specific examples of how this issue is played out? What are people or organizations doing to address this issue?

3. Root Causes (1-2 pages)

Discuss some of the causes of the community problem you are addressing. What have you come across in your research? Include both historical and current issues. Remember that this has to be clear in order for your proposal to have any validity. You must ground your proposal here by clearly explaining what you have found the root causes to be.

4. Proposal or Solution (2-4 pages)

Here you must present your proposal. In other words, what realistic idea have you come up with as a way of addressing or solving the issue? Did the people you talked with give you any ideas or did you find examples of solutions in other communities? Once you have the basics of your idea, try to imagine what some strong arguments (and counterarguments) might be and include how you plan to address those responses.

5. Implementation (1-2 pages)

How do you propose to implement your idea? Rather than simply propose an idea, you want to also propose how to make this idea become a reality. You will not have all the answers, but you should have a general idea of how things can get started. Be sure to include other resources, such as other organizations you have come across that are already addressing this issue and ways in which to take advantage of them.

6. Reflection (1-2 pages)

Reflect on your project and how it has affected you as a person, as a student, and as a member of the community. Here is the opportunity for you to include your own individualism and personality.



How to Write a Reading List

DEFINITION:

A reading list compiles at least 10 documents (e.g., books, articles, Web sites), each at least five pages long, that you are going to use as sources for your senior paper. Eventually it will be your annotated bibliography at the end of your paper!

PURPOSE:

A reading list will help you focus on finding the material you need to help you write your final paper. The reading list will show your senior advisor that you have started working and will give your advisor a chance to point you toward better resources when appropriate.

REQUIREMENTS:

A reading list looks just like a bibliography. You must list at least 10 documents that you will read as research for your final paper. Your advisor may have their own style that they prefer you use, and there are a number of examples with the popular styles (such as APA or MLA) online at www.docstyles.com. These documents will provide you with the information you need to write each section of your final paper.

SAMPLE READING LIST:

Dworkin, J.B., Larson R., & Hansen D. (2003) Adolescents' accounts of growth experiences in youth activities. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*. 32: 17-26

Greenberg, M.T., Weissberg, R.P., O'Brien M.U., Zins, J.E., Fredericks L., Resnik, H., & Elias, M.J. (2003) Enhancing school-based prevention and youth development through coordinated social, emotional, and academic learning. *American Psychologist*. 58: 466-474.

Larson, R. (2000). Towards a psychology of positive youth development. *American Psychologist*. 55: 170-183.

McLaughlin, M. (2000). *Community counts: how youth organizations matter for youth development*. Washington, DC: Public Education Network.

Roth, J.L. & Brooks-Gunn, J. (2003). Youth development programs: risk, prevention and policy. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. 32:170-182.

Werner, E. (2005). Resilience and recovery: findings from the Kauai longitudinal study. *Focal Point: Research, Policy and Practice in Children's Mental Health*. 19: 11-14.

How to Write an Annotated Bibliography

DEFINITION:

An annotated bibliography is an organized list of your research sources (e.g., books, newspapers, magazines, Web pages) each of which is followed by a brief note or “annotation.”

PURPOSE:

An annotated bibliography helps you organize your research and keep track of the main ideas you find.

REQUIREMENTS:

Your annotated bibliography must include at least five sources (e.g., articles, books) that you have used in your research.

How does an annotated bibliography look? You write and arrange the bibliographic entries just as you would any other bibliography. They are usually arranged alphabetically by the first word, which is typically the author’s last name. The short note, or annotation, then immediately follows the bibliographic information.

Each annotation consists of:

- A description of the content and focus of the book or article.
- Analysis of any conclusions the author(s) made.
- Your reaction to the document and its usefulness.

Sample Annotation (an annotated bibliography is a page of entities like this):

London, Herbert. “Five Myths of the Television Age.” *Television Quarterly* 10 (1) Spring 1982: 81-89.

Herbert London, the dean of journalism at New York University and author of several books and articles, explains how television contradicts five commonly believed ideas. He uses specific examples of events seen on television, such as the assassination of John Kennedy, to illustrate his points. His examples have been selected to contradict such truisms as: “Seeing is believing;” “A picture is worth a thousand words;” and “Satisfaction is its own reward.” London uses logical arguments to support his ideas which are his personal opinion. He doesn’t refer to any previous works on the topic.

Annotated Bibliography Work Sheet

1. ARTICLE NAME: _____

What was the main point of the article?

What is something new you learned from the article?

Do you agree or disagree with what people said in the article? Why or why not?

2. ARTICLE NAME: _____

What was the main point of the article?

What is something new you learned from the article?

Do you agree or disagree with what people said in the article? Why or why not?

3. ARTICLE NAME: _____

What was the main point of the article?

What is something new you learned from the article?

Do you agree or disagree with what people said in the article? Why or why not?

4. ARTICLE NAME: _____

What was the main point of the article?

What is something new you learned from the article?

Do you agree or disagree with what people said in the article? Why or why not?

Senior Research Project Sign-Off Form

This form is to be kept with the senior research project planning packet and presented to a Senior Research Project Cohort leader for sign-off on the appropriate dates. The completed form is a part of the final senior research project presentation.

TASK	DATE	SIGN-OFF
1. Attendance at Senior Research Project Cohort Meeting		
2. Return of Signed Parent/Guardian Letter		
3. Submission of Letter of Intent		
4. Attendance at Senior Research Project Cohort Meeting		
5. Submission of Reading List		
6. Submission of Annotated Bibliography		
7. Attendance at Senior Research Project Cohort Meeting		
8. Submission of First Three Sections of Paper		
9. Attendance at Senior Research Project Cohort Meeting		
10. Submission of Last Three Sections of Paper		
11. Submission of First Draft of Paper		
12. Attendance at Senior Research Project Cohort Meeting		
13. Submission of Final Draft of Paper		
14. Final Presentation of Product and Paper		

Senior Research Project Presentation Evaluation Form

STUDENT PRESENTER: _____ **DATE:** _____

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: _____

PANELIST NAME: _____ **AFFILIATION:** _____

TIME FRAME FOR PRESENTATION:

- 1. Set Up for Presentation 3 minutes
- 2. Introduction of Student 1 minute
- 3. Essential Question 2 minutes
- 4. Historical Context/Root Causes } 10-12 minutes
- 5. Research Methods } 10-12 minutes
- 6. Findings and Recommendations } 10-12 minutes
- 7. Questions from Panelists 7 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 25 MINUTES

Panel Discussion and Scoring (without student present) 5 minutes

RUBRIC ELEMENTS (SEE RUBRIC)	INDIVIDUAL SCORE (1-4)	PANEL CONSENSUS (1-4)
CONTENT States essential question, identifies root causes, explains historical context, presents solution, and articulates relevant and important information		
PRESENTATION MATERIALS/MEDIA Presentation is engaging and relevant to the essential question, the multimedia is clear and/or audible, text is accurate/easy to read, and the use of multimedia serves to enhance the oral presentation		
RESEARCH, METHODS, AND REFLECTION Student communicates clearly the elements of his/her research, illustrates the methods and findings (surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.), and reflects on what was learned		
ORAL PRESENTATION Presenter voice is audible and engaging, makes eye contact with panelists, uses formal conversation, appropriate dress and body language		
TOTAL POINTS (4-16)		

Comments/Remarks/Questions:



Sample Questions for Student Presenters

1. What made you choose this topic? How does it connect to you personally?
2. Please reflect on how your proposed solution would be implemented.
3. From which sources in your research did you gain the most information?
4. In what ways did this project change your relationship/understanding of your community?
5. What have you learned about what it takes to create change in your community?
6. What would you like to see the next generation of students do related to your topic?

PANELIST COMMENTS/REFLECTIONS:

INDIVIDUAL SCORE: _____ (Total)

PANEL CONSENSUS SCORE: _____ (Total)

I RECOMMEND THIS PRESENTATION:

_____ Passes with distinction (13-16)

_____ Passes (10-12)

_____ Passes with reservation (7-9)

_____ Does not Pass (4-6)

Senior Research Project Rubric

A. CONTENT			
EXCEEDS STANDARD 4	MEETS STANDARD 3	APPROACHES STANDARD 2	BELOW STANDARD 1
Impressively answers and powerfully organizes the information to their essential question	Sufficiently answers their essential question and identifies root causes in an organized and coherent manner	Some information is provided to answer the essential question, lacks organization and/or important detail	Does not answer the essential question Not versed in the subject matter related to essential question
Demonstrates mastery and knowledge of the topic	Demonstrates fluent knowledge of the topic, organizes the information in a coherent manner	Somewhat fluid in the subject matter/topic; breaks and gaps in the presentation of information	Communicates very little significant information related to root causes or historical content
Presentation "teaches" panelists something new	Presents important and relevant historical analysis using statistics, experiences, graphs and/or cites resources	Able to present some historical analysis using statistics, experiences, graphs, and/or cite sources	Not able to present relevant and important information with statistics, experiences, graphs and/or cite sources
Able to confidently answer panel questions relevant to their historical analysis and root causes	Able to answer relevant questions from panelists	Demonstrates some difficulty in answering questions related to their essential question and/or root cause	Unable to answer any questions related to their essential question and/or root cause
Articulates a community solution that is well crafted and plausible	Articulates a thoughtful community solution	Presents a superficial and/or unrealistic community solution	Does not propose a community solution
B. RESEARCH AND REFLECTION			
EXCEEDS STANDARD 4	MEETS STANDARD 3	APPROACHES STANDARD 2	BELOW STANDARD 1
Presents all findings and research methods clearly and consiely	Strongly communicates findings and research methods from the project	Minimally communicates the findings and research methods from the project	Does not adequately communicate any findings nor research methods
Presentation clearly demonstrates that the student exceeded project requirements in terms of data collection, and depth or research	Completed research and fieldwork is evident	Research and/or fieldwork seems incomplete, tacked on, or rushed	Only demonstrates beginning stages of research
Communicates a rich learning experience	Communicates thoughtful reflection and learning experience as a result of doing project	Communicates a superficial learning experience	Unable to communicate any significant learning as a result of the project
An interesting, original solution, product, or experience is presented	Identifies the social impact (relevance) of the community issue/essential question being addressed	Partially addresses the social impact (relevance) of the community issue/essential question being addressed	Unclear of what community issue or essential question is being addressed

Senior Research Project Rubric

C. VISUAL PRESENTATION			
EXCEEDS STANDARD 4	MEETS STANDARD 3	APPROACHES STANDARD 2	BELOW STANDARD 1
Multimedia form is exciting and draws in the audience	Multimedia form is engaging and interesting	Multimedia form is somewhat interesting	Multimedia form is not engaging or interesting
Visuals are thoughtfully organized, aesthetically pleasing, and flow seamlessly with the presentation	PowerPoint has no more than 30 words per slide, no grammatical errors All text is clear and easy to read, appropriate choice of font, color, size, and background	PowerPoint has more than 30 words per slide, less than 40, some typos and/or grammatical errors All text is readable but distracting because of font size, background, or color	PowerPoint has too many words per slide (more than 40), typos, and/or grammatical errors Text is extremely difficult to read because of font size, color, or background
Product includes video and/or audio clips that deepen panelists' understanding of the essential question	Does not distract from presentation Use of video/visuals enhance the presentation Clear uniformity of slides/video/audio	Visuals/video/audio distracts from presentation Some use of video, pictures, or graphs, but they do not enhance the presentation Some uniformity of slides/video/audio but majority lack organization	Visuals/video/audio takes away from the presentation or takes too much time Few pictures or graphics No uniformity of slides/video/audio
D. ORAL PRESENTATION			
EXCEEDS STANDARD 4	MEETS STANDARD 3	APPROACHES STANDARD 2	BELOW STANDARD 1
Presenter's voice has dynamic inflection and pausing	Presenter's voice is audible and engaging	Presenter's voice is mostly audible, low volume may distract panelists	Presenter's speech is muffled or consistently difficult to hear
Completely controls the room when he/she speaks	Presenter makes eye contact with the panelists	Presenter makes some eye contact, may be reading from notes	Presenter makes little or no eye contact
Uses body language to enhance presentation	Use of appropriate speech, dress, and body language to address panelists	Mostly appropriate speech, dress and/or body language	Presenter demonstrates inappropriate speech, attire, or body language for a public audience
Delivery is confident, eloquent, and passionate	Presentation is well organized and prepared	Presentation is somewhat structured, may jump around	Presentation is unorganized and unrehearsed