I-Search Packet

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Your next project will be an I-Search paper, in which you’ll investigate a topic of your own choosing to answer a question you have. We’ll work through the I-Search process together, discussing useful strategies and techniques. At this point, your most potent weapon is your own curiosity. Choose something that you have a real interest in; pick a subject you’re hungry to know more about; seek knowledge that will benefit you in some way. As Ken Macrorie (who invented I-Search) puts it, “The I-Search project asks you to scratch a genuine itch until you’ve quieted it.”

Your I-Search paper:

- **Must contain the information necessary to address the following:**
  - Introduction: “What I Know” and “Why I’m Writing This Paper”
  - Search Section
  - Conclusion: “What I Learned”

You do not need to use these section titles, or even separate these pieces of your paper physically, but the information in each section must be there.

- **Must contain at least one interview with a person who is in some way an expert in the field you are searching.**
  Interviews may be conducted in person, over the phone, or by email. Keep in mind that you may get more candid answers in a live interview than over email.

- **Must contain at least two text sources, of which at least one must be in the form of a book or article from a reputable magazine or publisher.**
  Text sources may include books, magazines, pamphlets, or newspaper articles. When using web sources, make sure the information presented is current and accurate. Your sources are important, so give them a great deal of thought and be diligent and creative in seeking them out. We’ll brainstorm ideas for sources together, and we’ll talk about evaluating reliable sources.

- **Must contain proper documentation of sources.**
  We’ll discuss the rules for proper citations in class. Until then, write down the title, author, publisher, and publication date of each book you use, the address and date visited of each website, and the full name of each person you interview, along with the date of the interview and the method (in person, by phone, etc.).

- **Must be typed (double-spaced, Times 11 or 12 font), proofread, and error-free.**

### I-Search Due Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 4/12</td>
<td>Question due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, 4/29</td>
<td>Draft of <em>Introduction</em> due for peer editing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 5/9</td>
<td>Half draft of <em>Search</em> section due for peer editing (two to three pages discussing at least two sources)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 5/12</td>
<td>Full draft of <em>Search</em> section due for peer editing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 5/16</td>
<td>Drafts of Conclusion and Works Cited due for peer editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, 5/17</td>
<td>Full I-Search draft due for peer editing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 5/18</td>
<td>Final I-Search paper due.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Since deadlines and peer editing are essential to the I-Search process, you should take all of the above due dates very seriously.

**Missing any of the dates will lower your grade one step (from an A+ to an A, an A to an A-, etc.)**
Some Successful Questions from Previous I-Searches

How can I become a better guitar player?
How can I deal with my high level of frustration and stress?
What do I need to do in preparation to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro?
What Chinese cultural values are the hardest to preserve in America?
What Chinese medicines can benefit a martial artist like me?
What is perfect pitch, how can it benefit me as a musician, and can I learn to acquire it?
Should I become a pharmacist?
How would my life be different if I went to a regional high school instead of Stuyvesant?
Does cramming work?
How can I overcome shyness and learn to make better conversation?
What is on the other side of a black hole? What happens to the things that go in?
Should I become an artist?
Can music be considered a language?
What religion should I be, and why should I choose it?
Why am I always so tired, and what can I do about it?
How do I get into car designing?
How can I become a better sprinter?
Should I get laser eye surgery?
What is the future of banjo playing?
What do you do if your car breaks down? How can I learn about buying a used car?
How does my CPU work?
Should I enlist in the armed services? If so, which branch?
Should I go skydiving?
Should I be a part-time bartender in the future?
What is quantum computing?
Why do people have nightmares?
Does spontaneous human combustion actually occur?
How can I learn to make good Chinese food?
How can I find a summer job?
How does cancer work? What are the methods used to treat it?
What makes people yawn?
Should I learn to play the drums and become a professional drummer?
Should I consider a career in politics? How do politicians start a campaign?
Should I take yoga or pilates?
How do criminal psychologists understand the criminal mind?
What causes kleptomania?
Do I want to become a narcotics officer?
How do I get started becoming a DJ?
Should I join the Stuyvesant wrestling team?
What are the basics of being a good breakdancer? How can I improve?
What do marine biologists do?
Should I stop getting sunburned? Will it really lead to skin cancer?
What was life like for European Jews in Europe outside of concentration camps? What happened to my grandmother?
Why do today’s teenagers smoke?
How does acupuncture work?
How do I become a professional tennis player?
What are the current working conditions in sweatshops? Have they improved?
DATABASES PROVIDED BY STUYVESANT AND NOVEL

These databases can be accessed from school or at home. It is now possible to access the links from the Stuy Library website. This is a work-in-progress but currently can be accessed by going to www.wix.com/stuylibrary/main. The database page provides links, but you will still need to use the username and password to log in. If you cannot access the databases on the website, use the address given below.

1. **JSTOR** – a database of academic journals and periodicals provided by Stuy. You must set up a personal account to use it.
   - Send an email with your email address to Ms. Brown or Mr. Cheng at stuylibrary@gmail.com requesting access. We will send you the link with instructions on how to set up your account. Typing the link does not work. It must be forwarded by email.

2. **GALE GROUP** – this database has access to newspapers, magazines and periodicals, both popular and academic.
   - [http://infotrac.galegroup.com](http://infotrac.galegroup.com)
   - Username: nysl_me_71_svhs (underscores, not spaces)
   - Password: empirelink

3. **EBSCO** – this database is mostly primary source documents and reference books online.
   - [http://search.ebscohost.com](http://search.ebscohost.com)
   - Username: stuyvesanths
   - Password: stuyvesanths
   - Choose “Primary Search via Ebscohost web”

4. **GROLIER ONLINE** – includes online versions of *Encyclopedia Americana, Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*, and *The New Book of Knowledge*. This is a good place to start if you're trying to narrow a topic or find sources or images.
   - [http://go.grolier.com](http://go.grolier.com)
   - Username: nystate361
   - Password: novelhome

5. **PROQUEST PLATINUM** – this includes popular magazines, professional and trade publications, and *The Historical New York Times*.
   - [http://www.proquestk12.com](http://www.proquestk12.com)
   - Username @ Stuy: 74-5165
   - Username off-campus: 74-5165REMOTE (case sensitive)
   - Password: bigchalk

We also have in-school access to *Science News* and *Scientific American Online*. Please see one of the librarians for the username and password.
HOW TO ACCESS NYPL ONLINE RESOURCES FROM HOME OR SCHOOL

1. Go to www.nypl.org/databases
2. For databases, choose "Databases available from home" with the icon from the left-hand menu.
3. Choose the database you would like and click on the link.
4. When prompted, enter the barcode on the back of your NYPL library card. Type all of the numbers and do not enter any spaces.
5. For websites that have been evaluated by librarians, use the left-hand menu to choose "NYPL Best of the Web." These do not require an NYPL barcode to enter.

SEARCH STRATEGIES

1. It is generally easier to move from the specific to the general. (However, if you are still searching for a topic, it's easier to go from the general to the specific.)
2. When possible, try to use two keywords to describe your subject. Also, try to think of different ways to describe the topic—for example, "teenagers" or "adolescents" or "young adults."

SOME DATABASES AVAILABLE FROM HOME

Academic Search Premier Provides full text for 4,000 scholarly publications covering academic areas of study including social sciences, humanities, education, computer sciences, engineering, language and linguistics, arts & literature, medical sciences, and ethnic studies.

Columbia Granger's World of Poetry This premiere poetry on-line resource contains 250,000 full text poems and 450,000 citations, as well as poetry commentary, poets' biographies, and literary glossary terms.

Custom Newspapers Searchable full-text of 300 plus newspapers, both national and international.

LearningExpressLibrary Test preparation materials and interactive practice exams that will help people improve their scores on academic, civil service, military, and professional licensing and certification exams.

Literature Resource Center Features information on literary figures from all time periods in such genres as fiction, nonfiction, poetry, drama, history, and journalism.

Mango Languages Learn a new language with this interactive database that provides step by step lesson plans for nine different languages. This database features ESL lessons for Brazilian Portuguese, Polish and Spanish speakers. A text translator is also provided.


ProQuest Platinum Periodicals covering a broad range of material: business, education, general reference, health, language arts, sciences, social sciences, and many other curriculum-specific subject areas.

CHECK OUT THE NEWEST NYPL BRANCH AT 175 NORTH END AVE., 2 BLOCKS SOUTH OF STUY. HOURS ARE MON WED 9:30 TO 9:30, THU SAT 9:30 TO 9:30, SUN 10 TO 6.
Web Search Basics

- **Keywords.** The more narrowed down you can get your Web searches from the beginning, the more successful your Web search usually will be. For example, if you were searching for "coffee", you'd get way more results back than you could use; however, if you narrowed that down to "roasted Arabica coffee", you'd be more successful.

- **Phrases.** If you're looking for an exact phrase, put it in quotes. Otherwise, you'll come back with a huge jumble of results. Here's an example: "long haired cats." Your search will come back with these three words in proximity to each other and in the order you intended them to be, rather than scattered willy-nilly on the site.

- **Use Basic Math.** Broaden or narrow your search efforts by using add and subtract. For example, you are searching for Tom Ford, but you get lots of results for Ford Motors. Easy - just combine a couple of Web search basics here to get your results: "tom ford" -motors. Now your results will come back without all those pesky car results.

- **Wildcards.** You can use "wildcard" characters to throw a broader search net in most search engines and directories. These wildcard characters include *, #, and ?, with the asterisk being the most common. Use wildcards when you want to broaden your search. For example, if you are looking for sites that discuss trucking, don't search for truck, search for truck*. This will return pages that contain the word "truck" as well as pages that contain "trucks", "trucking", "truck enthusiasts", "trucking industry", and so on. You can find out more about wildcard searches in my article titled How to Do a Wildcard Search.

- **Find the Word.** Sometimes you might get back a page that you have no idea why it was returned; especially if it's a long, wordy document. Just hit Ctrl (at the bottom left of your keyboard), then F (for find), and then type in the text you are looking for. Voila! Your word or phrase is now highlighted.

- **Guess.** If you have basic knowledge of how URL's are constructed, you can "guess" the location of a particular site. For example, commercial sites will be "sitename.com", college and university sites will be "sitename.edu", non-profit organizations will be "sitename.org", and so on.

- **Don't Give Up.** If you're just starting out learning how to search the Web, it's easy to be overwhelmed with just the sheer amount of information that is available to you, especially if you're searching for something very specific. Don't give up! Keep trying, and don't be afraid to try new search engines, new Web search phrase combinations, new Web search techniques, etc.

These tips, while pretty generic, will greatly increase your chances of having a successful Web search experience. Don't be afraid to try new methods; experiment a little with your Web search strings and see what happens.
Developing A Search Plan: How To Search More of the Web

By Wendy Boswell, About.com (http://websearch.about.com/od/internetresearch/a/searchplan.htm)

Even if you're just doing a casual Web search, it can be a good idea to identify exactly what it is you are looking for from the beginning, and if possible, narrow down your target to make it easier to find.

Developing a search plan is a good idea, especially when you are looking for targeted results-and who knows, sometimes you'll find you know more than you thought about a subject, which will make your search more efficient-especially useful when researching a complicated topic. Here are some questions to ask yourself:

Narrow Down Your Search Target

1. What do I understand about this already?
   - What are the key concepts?
   - Do I understand what it is I'm looking for?
   - How much information will I need?
   - How soon do I need to find this information?

2. What is my search topic?
   - What is my knowledge of this topic?
   - Do I need to consult dictionaries or encyclopedias?
   - What is my existing knowledge, and how can I expand on it?

3. What are the keywords or phrases?
   - Write out what you're looking for.
   - Brainstorm the most important key words.
   - Identify these words and use them in your search efforts.

Once you have organized lists of keywords, you can search quickly for the most relevant resources. Formulate your search question. For example: When was the Great Wall of China built?

Develop synonyms to your keyword list, or other words that might bring in relevant results in your search efforts. For example, "China history" might bring in broader results than just "Great Wall".

Helpful Google shortcuts (from http://websearch.about.com/library/cheatsheet/blgooglecheatsheet.htm)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Google Shortcut</th>
<th>Finds Pages That Have...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nokia phone</td>
<td>the words nokia and phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sailing OR boating</td>
<td>either the word sailing or the word boating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;love me tender&quot;</td>
<td>the exact phrase love me tender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>printer ~cartridge</td>
<td>the word printer but NOT the word cartridge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~auto</td>
<td>looks up the word auto and synonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>define:serendipity</td>
<td>definitions of the word serendipity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>how now * cow</td>
<td>the words how now cow separated by one or more words</td>
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<tr>
<td>site:(search only one website)</td>
<td>site:websearch.about.com &quot;invisible web&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>link:(find linked pages)</td>
<td>link:www.lifehacker.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daterange:(search within specific date range)</td>
<td>bosnia daterange:200508-200510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safesearch: (exclude adult content)</td>
<td>safesearch:breast cancer</td>
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I-SEARCH PAPERS: SOURCE DAY SHEET

MY I-SEARCH QUESTION:

MY SOURCE IDEAS:

GROUP SOURCE SUGGESTIONS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME:</th>
<th>QUESTION:</th>
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Andrey Tydnyuk, from “How do video games affect my mind?”

What do you think of when you hear the words “video gamer?” For most people, the answer is almost exactly the same. They think of a pale teenage boy, sitting up at 2 o’clock at night glued to the TV. There are bags under his eyes, and his skin seems like it has never been touched by the sun. He stares blankly at the screen and furiously moves his thumbs. Otherwise, he is as still as a statue. As scary as this sounds, there are actually plenty of people that are like this.

Believe it or not, I was one of those people once. There was a point when I was so interested in video games that I rarely even ate. I remember thinking, “Let me beat this level, and then I’ll eat,” and after I beat it, I thought the same thing again. That time was around six years ago, when I first found out about video games. I had just moved to a new house, and I was trying to make friends with the kids that lived in my neighborhood. The first person that I met was the one that introduced me to this new world. His name was Roman, and he invited me to his house to play N64. I was curious about what kind of thing this N-something was, so I came over. He explained how to play, and what to do, and soon I was hooked. It really did happen that fast. This was a new world that I had discovered.

I spent the next two years getting used to video games. I did not have a system of my own, so I went to Roman’s house and we played almost every day. I tried almost every type of game imaginable. There were shooting, racing, fighting, role-playing, and countless other games. There are more video game genres than there are book genres. My favorite was, and still is, fighting games. I loved that I could beat my friend at them. It was probably the main reason that I liked them. It grew on me, and I started playing fighting games more and more.

When I got my own system, I played a lot, so naturally my parents did not just sit back and let me. I got the “it rots your mind” speech every day for the next couple of years. Another thing that they got into the habit of doing, was telling me if there was anything videogame related in the news. Every time there was a story saying that video games will “eventually kill you,” I heard about it. Just recently, I stopped playing that much, because the Stuy workload is so big. This gave me time to think about why I play.

I never really listened to my parents, but the evidence against video games is overwhelming. It turns out that every time there is a shooting in a school, the perpetrator is an avid video game fan. There are many video games out that are not suitable for children, but are the games really responsible for putting the ideas in the heads of kids? If kids shoot a gun in a game, will they be dumb enough to shoot one in real life? The main question that I have is: How do video games affect my mind? I have wanted to research this topic for a while, and now is my chance.

Doron Shapiro, from “What is the Future of Banjo Playing?”

Part of the freshman orientation day at Stuyvesant High School involved auditions for the school band. While waiting on line in front of the band director’s office, a friend of mine from elementary school looked at my instrument’s case and asked me, “Is that a banjo?”

It was, I told him.

“Wow.” There was a pause.

“Could I see it? I’ve never seen one before.” I took it out and played a few notes. This whole scene wasn’t too strange for me, even if it was for my friend. By then, I was used to my friends being unfamiliar with my instrument. After all, there aren’t too many teenagers out there in New York City who play banjo.

So what am I doing here playing banjo? Way back when I was ten, I found one in my grandparent’s closet. My mom wasn’t quite sure where it came from, but she remembered it being there when she was a kid. She thought it had something to do with paying off a debt to my great-grandfather during the great depression, but my mom wasn’t sure. Well, for fun, I pretended to play it. It was sort of strange looking: four strings, a short neck, and this funny little drawing on the flat part on top, right next to these tuning pegs and the word “Stella”. On the back were a few circles with a little keyhole in the center, whose purpose I could never guess. My grandmother, as usual, thought I sounded like I had extraordinary talent and said I should get lessons. My mom, who wanted me to play some sort of instrument at the time, asked me if I wanted banjo lessons and I, not thinking that there was any reason not to, agreed. Then came the hard part. Who teaches banjo?

After a few years and false starts, we found Cynthia Sayer, a jazz banjoist. So, for the past few years, I have been learning early jazz on a tenor banjo. At this point, I have been playing the instrument for enough years to have learned a little about its very early history in the United States (it was brought here by African slaves and then gained popularity with minstrel shows). What I’m really curious about, however, isn’t history. At this point, it seems like outside of the banjo-playing world and especially among my friends, I am lucky to meet someone who has even seen a banjo. There is no major pop music that I know of with a banjo part, and I had a little difficulty trying to explain my musical experience to the director of the band at my high school (they don’t have a banjo section). While we both agreed that the banjo was something really cool, there just aren’t banjo parts written for the songs the band plays.

So when my banjo teacher told me that the banjo is having a revival, I start getting curious. Is this true? How are banjo players trying to popularize what could be called a dying instrument? Maybe more importantly, who is playing it now? I still have not met another banjo player anywhere near my age. Am I going to be the last one?

Ok, maybe not. But seriously, what is the future of banjo playing?
Maya Rose Goldman, from “Homosexuality: A Struggle for Equality”

I. “do you even know what that means?”

Did you know that it is “gay” for a boy to wear a sweater with the hood up? Apparently, it is also “gay” for a woman to have a high-pitched voice. Yes, somehow this everyday action and trait determine one’s sexual orientation -- at least, according to my classmates who responded to these behaviors with, “Oh, my god, that’s so gay!” Every day, I am surrounded by insults of “you’re so gay,” and “you fag,” and “[place any name here, because I’m sure many of us have been told this or have heard this at some point in our Stuyvesant lives], stop being so gay!” How is it that the term “gay” went from meaning happy, to being both a sexual orientation and an offensive synonym for stupid, or weird?

I decided to write my I-Search paper on what it means to be gay in the United States not only to further educate myself, but to further educate my classmates, as well. I am frustrated by the misinformed insults I hear daily, and I want my peers to know the history behind the words they use to describe others. A good friend of mine once made reference to a person he disliked, calling the man a “fag.” I immediately asked him to stop using that word, it was offensive. In response, he just looked at me blankly. He did not know that “fag” is commonly used to offend gays. How many people who use “gay” and “fag” as insults don’t know the meaning of what they are truly saying?

I am also writing this paper because, although I am a female Jew, I was born in a time and place where that group is not really oppressed. Furthermore, I am light-skinned, straight (right? Or will it change?), and come from a family with a stable economic background. My mom, on the other hand, possesses all of these qualities except one: she is lesbian. Growing up in the seventies amongst hostility and hatred could not have been easy, or even remotely enjoyable; I want to know more about my mom’s past, and what it was like growing up lesbian thirty years ago. As of now, this paper is an exploration of the difficulties and obstacles faced in the past, versus the ones that currently exist in today’s United States, and what the future seems to hold for the acceptance and rights of gay people.

I know some things about current gay rights, but my knowledge is hazy -- like a dilettante, I know a little about several issues. For example, I know there is a scale from zero to six (plus “x,” for asexual) called the Kinsey scale that measures 0-exclusively heterosexual, to 6-exclusively homosexual, and everything in between. I know that one cannot be a zero or a six, but must actually lie somewhere between the two. I know that as of a few hours ago (Thursday, May 15th, 2008), it is legal in four percent of this country for gay people to get married (in terms of two states out of fifty), while several other states have civil unions (about which I know very little). There are many other random facts I know, mostly from the news and first-hand family member sources, but I have many questions on the past and present condition of gay rights, as well as the history behind it all.

How did the words “queer” and “faggot” come to be derogatory terms for gay people? Where and how did homophobia and the oppression of gay people originate? Was it always like this? What factors/characteristics of society today encourage/lead to this oppression? Are gays considered a minority? Obviously, my curiosity is endless, and conducting this search will most likely just add to my repertoire of questions.

Lindsay Bauer, from “Destination: Mount Kilimanjaro”

“So where should we go on our next vacation?” my dad asked as we drove by Buckingham Palace in a traditional London taxicab.

“Belgium,” my sister screamed almost immediately, practically jumping out of her seat.

“Why Belgium?” I asked laughing.

“Duh, chocolate,” she explained with an eye-roll.

“No,” I groaned. “We’re not going to Belgium so you can eat candy. I don’t want to go to another city. I want to do something different and exciting, like hike up Machu Picchu.”

“That’s a very big trip,” my mom said before adding her usual excuse, “and your school vacations just aren’t long enough to do that. If we get an opportunity to go away for a couple of weeks we should use it to go to Africa.” Africa is where my parents went for their honeymoon. It was their dream trip and they have been talking about revisiting it with my sister and me for years, but it’s one of those things that constantly gets put off and hasn’t happened.

“What about hiking a mountain in Africa?” my dad asked, trying to please everyone.

I gave him a quizzical look to which he replied, “Mount Kilimanjaro.”

I don’t know very much about Mount Kilimanjaro. Actually, scratch that. I don’t know anything about Mount Kilimanjaro, except that it’s a really big mountain somewhere in Africa. I know that my dad’s proposal was just another thing to fantasize over, and I know that I will be in at least college before my parents get their act together to plan this trip, but I can’t stop thinking about it. I love hiking and the thought of hiking up a huge mountain in another country (even if it’s not Machu Picchu) excites and motivates me to make this fantasy a reality. Unfortunately, I don’t know how to do that. Despite my love for this hobby, my experience is fairly limited. Also, I get out of breath just going from the first to the tenth floor of school when all I’m carrying is a couple of notebooks. How am I going to climb a mountain while carrying all my gear? Also, what supplies do I even bring? I’m hoping that through this I-search paper, I will discover an answer to my real question: What do I need to do in preparation to climb Mount Kilimanjaro?
The Lunchroom Rebellion
by Burkhard Bilger

The lunch ladies of my elementary-school memories in Oklahoma are a stout, sweet-tempered breed. They wear cat’s-eye glasses and have beauty-shop perms, with hairnets drawn taut across their foreheads. They have gray uniforms and dishwater complexions, and stand in line dolloping out grayish food—boiled okra, spinach with vinegar, corn bread and black-eyed peas—smiling wearily, as if they knew that they were slowly killing us. I’m not sure what they would think of Ann Cooper, the new executive chef of the Berkeley public schools, in California. I suspect that she would make them nervous.

Cooper, who calls herself “the Renegade Lunch Lady,” was hired last fall to revamp the city’s dismal school-lunch program. She is small and tightly wound, with shoulders bunched from lifting weights. She has bright, defiant eyes, unruly brown hair, and a raspy alto that tends to break when she gets excited. In the kitchen, she moves with quick, stiff-legged strides, nipping at heels, barking out instructions, and sending her large, slow-moving colleagues into bewildered stampedes. She is, in short, a typical chef, landed in a world where real cooking is almost unknown.

Cooper is quick to admit that she’s making the worst food of her life. In her twenties, she attended the Culinary Institute of America and cooked on cruise ships. In her thirties, she owned her own restaurant, in Telluride, and was named an “up-and-coming chef” by Gourmet. In her forties, she transformed the Putney Inn, in Vermont, into a bastion of New American cuisine. Now, at fifty-two, Cooper has ended up where most chefs wouldn’t deign to begin: in an under-staffed, under-equipped cafeteria, trying to wean four thousand children from deep-fried chicken nuggets. “I spent my whole career making fancy food for rich people,” she says. “I’ve cooked for Hillary Clinton and Emmylou Harris, Jimmy Buffet and the Grateful Dead. I don’t want to do that anymore.”

Cooper’s first experience with cafeteria cooking was of a more utopian sort. In 1999, her work at the Putney Inn caught the attention of Courtney Sale Ross, the wealthy widow of a former chairman of Time Warner. Ross had founded a school for fifth to twelfth graders in East Hampton, New York. It had a progressive, ecologically minded curriculum, and she wanted its food to be equally enlightened. “At first, I said, ‘No way! I’m a chef, not a lunch lady!’” Cooper recalls. But when Ross showed her the school’s new, ten-million-dollar Wellness Center, where students could do yoga or dine overlooking a forest of silvery pines, Cooper agreed. Over the next few years, she hired a local poet-farmer to grow organic vegetables and sent students to help with the harvest. She lured sous-chefs from French and Asian restaurants in New York and wrote recipes linked to the curriculum—a feast of fifteenth-century dishes, for instance, for a course on the Renaissance. She made celery-root soup and green gazpacho, Caprese salad and fennel stew, and the children cleaned their plates, after a little cajoling.

People used to joke that the Ross School had the best restaurant in the Hamptons. Martha Stewart filmed a segment of her television show there, and a magazine for Lexus owners ran a story on it entitled “Haute Cafeteria.” But although Cooper had hoped that other cafeterias would adopt some of her methods, few could afford to do so. Elsewhere in America, one in five schools was selling fast food and less than half had working kitchens. The country was in the midst of an epidemic of childhood obesity, the Surgeon General had declared, yet eighty per cent of school lunches contained more fat than federal guidelines allowed. “I got tired of everyone telling me that what I was doing could only be done at the Ross School,” Cooper says.

Berkeley is her first attempt at cooking for the masses—at making private-school lunches on a public-school budget—but she is hardly alone anymore. America is suddenly full of people who want to save school lunch:
celebrity chefs like Jamie Oliver, who exposed the sorry state of British cafeterias two years ago and has threatened to do the same in New York; guerrilla documentarians like Morgan Spurlock, who championed healthful lunches in “Super Size Me”; and a swelling horde of angry parents, crusading cafeteria directors, and politicians with bitter lunchroom memories of their own. Last year, more than two hundred bills in forty states sought to ban sodas and junk food from schools, and in May the major beverage companies voluntarily agreed to remove non-diet drinks by the fall of 2009. Bill Clinton, whose foundation helped broker the deal, called it “courageous.”

Still, expelling junk food won’t do much to improve school cafeterias. In East Hampton, Cooper had twenty-seven employees for five hundred diners; in Berkeley, she has fifty-three for four thousand. In East Hampton, Cooper spent about twelve dollars per day, per child on breakfast and lunch. In Berkeley, she spends three and a half dollars for the same two meals. Can a decent lunch be made for so little? And, if so, will anyone eat it?

The Central Kitchen of the Berkeley Unified School District lies on a quiet side street in northwest Berkeley not far from the city’s foothills. It was built in the nineteen-fifties, as part of Jefferson Elementary School, and has survived periodic upheavals from desegregation, bilingual education, No Child Left Behind, and the Loma Prieta earthquake. The kitchen occupies a dingy, high-ceilinged room. It smells of stale bread and disinfectant, and is populated by hulking industrial machines: a steam kettle, a sautéing vat, a pair of convection ovens, and a Hobart mixer with a vaguely menacing air, like the hooded mother beast in “Aliens.” There is no blender, no food processor, no stovetop or grill, yet the kitchen produces food for thirteen of the city’s sixteen schools, including all eleven of its elementary schools. (The other schools have their own kitchens, which Cooper also oversees.)

On a Tuesday morning in May, the menu called for meat loaf—four thousand servings of it, with mashed potatoes and oven-roasted squash. In the kitchen’s walk-in refrigerator, thirty cylinders of government-supplied ground beef, each two feet long, five inches in diameter, and ten pounds in weight, awaited Cooper’s attention. She heaved two of them onto her shoulders and dropped them on a butcher-block counter. “Now you can see why I lift weights,” she said, then took a swig from a protein shake. She’d had braces put on her teeth in January to fend off gum disease, and this was the only breakfast that wouldn’t stick to them. “It’s a chef’s worst nightmare,” she said.

Cooper had been up since three-thirty, and cooking since five. She lives alone in a rented house in Moss Beach, an hour’s drive to the south, and commutes to Berkeley every day before dawn. Her crew is usually there when she arrives. The assistant chef, Alan Lyman, an amiable Englishman with the shape and blush of a Bartlett pear, was making a tub of coleslaw. He had spent ten years cooking in British hospitals and twelve in the Berkeley schools, but he was still getting used to Cooper’s pace. Across from him, a team of eight black and Hispanic workers was scooping chicken and noodles into take-out trays. The group was led by Cecelia Adams, the kitchen manager, a middle-aged black woman with a deep, easy voice and an unflappable manner. Because the other schools lacked proper kitchens, the food had to be prepared well in advance. The chicken had been made on Monday for Wednesday’s lunch; the meat loaf would be served on Thursday; and a truck outside was unloading Friday’s lunch—tamales and enchiladas made by a local company. Cooper had met the owners at a stand at a farmers’ market. “Do you think you could make four thousand of these a week?” she’d asked.

To make the meat loaf, Cooper dumped the tubes of beef into the Hobart’s bowl, then added ingredients one by one. The full recipe called for three hundred pounds of meat, seven and a half pounds of bread crumbs, three gallons of milk, ten pounds each of beaten eggs and Parmesan cheese, twenty pounds each of diced onions and shredded carrots, and nearly four pounds of garlic and spices. Cooper worked in batches, calculating the proportions as she went. She has always had a good head for numbers: growing up in Hingham, Massachusetts, she was kicked out of high school twice for smoking pot, but she passed her equivalency tests in a day when she needed them for culinary school. When she had finished adding ingredients, she set the dough hook spinning. “They never would have served meat loaf here before,” she said. Why not? I asked. “Because it’s food.”
She looked around for Adams, who was shuttling a row of take-out trays through a shrink-wrapping machine. “Cecelia! Get me one of those things you used to serve!” Adams gave her a long, heavy-lidded look. Like most of the staff, she had little formal training as a cook, but she’d worked in the schools for seventeen years and was getting tired of being reminded of her deadly, grease-dispensing history. She trudged off to the freezer and back, then thumped a rectangular object on the counter. Cooper pounced on it. “El Extremo Burrito!” she shouted. She flipped it over and pointed to the ingredients list, a block of small-faced type six inches wide and an inch deep. “They’d go into the oven just like that,” she said. “They didn’t even get opened until the kids ate them.”

When Cooper took charge of the Central Kitchen last fall, she began by banning heat-and-serve dishes. She then made a list of undesirable ingredients—trans-fats, preservatives, and foods with too much salt, refined flour, sugar, or high-fructose corn syrup—and began looking for substitutes. White bread gave way to whole wheat, canned fruits and vegetables to fresh, and generic hot dogs and hamburgers to ones made from grass-fed beef. “Those changes anyone can do,” she said. “I banned chocolate milk. Easy. I only accepted hormone-free milk. I banned vending machines. I banned fried foods. That is not brain surgery. The hard part is to get back to scratch cooking, and getting around the commodity program.”

Every year, the federal government buys nearly a billion dollars’ worth of raw and processed foods and sends them to schools for free. Many schools then have some of the food sent to plants to be turned into ready-made dishes. The commodity program provides about twenty per cent of the food in cafeterias. Last year, schools got about seven hundred million dollars’ worth of meat and dairy products, and less than two hundred and fifty million dollars’ worth of vegetables. Cooper blames this imbalance on the Department of Agriculture, which uses the program to buy up farm surpluses and stabilize prices. “The U.S.D.A. is the marketing arm for agribusiness,” she said. “It’s responsible for the national organic standards, and it’s responsible for school lunch. How many ways can you say conflict of interest?” Yet schools are free to choose their own commodities, and they can fill their quota with vegetables and other nutritious staples. The real problem for Cooper was that the items must be ordered months in advance, so she was still using food chosen by her predecessor, now the food-service director for a prison system.

“Look at this printout!” Cooper said, flourishing a long list of processed cheese, canned fruits, and condiments, laden with sugar and salt. Cooper couldn’t afford to throw out those items, so she tried to incorporate them into more nutritious dishes: “beef crumbles” went into spaghetti sauce, croutons into turkey stuffing, canned peas into split-pea soup, and canned apricots into a barbecue sauce. Just that week, she’d received twenty-six cases of cranberry sauce and eighteen cases of lo mein noodles. “Oh, what are we going to do with it?” she said. “I don’t want to use any more shitty food.”

The answer was coleslaw. When Lyman had filled a five-gallon tub with shredded cabbage and carrots, raisins, salt, and apple-cider vinegar, Cooper came over with a can of the cranberries. “It’ll be like a sweet vinaigrette,” she said, without much conviction. She measured out a pound of the sauce on a scale, dumped it into the tub, then slipped on a pair of rubber gloves and mixed it with her hands. When she was finished, the coleslaw looked as if someone had bled into it. “Ah, that’s lovely,” Lyman said after he’d tasted it. “But I do think it needs a little more salt.”

Feeding four thousand on a public-school budget is at best a loaves-and-fishes affair, and at worst the equivalent of a bad casserole—full of dubious proteins cleverly disguised. The federal government subsidizes meals according to a sliding scale: schools get two dollars and forty cents per lunch served to the poorest students, and as little as twenty-three cents for more affluent students. In Berkeley, the state contributes another fifty cents or so, but it doesn’t add up to much. “It’s impossible,” Cooper said. “It’s egregious. It makes me want to cry.” But she’s lucky to get any subsidies at all.

In 1946, when the National School Lunch Program was first proposed to Congress, the country still had fresh memories of the Depression, when children sometimes fainted from hunger in class. Yet plenty of politicians were leery of paying for their food with federal dollars. “It was a highly improbable program,” Janet Poppendieck, sociologist at Hunter College who is writing a book on school lunch, told me. “Congress was
looking at one of the largest deficits in national history—two hundred and eighty billion, in yesterday’s
dollars—and it was full of articulate conservatives who wanted to shrink government.” No one wanted to take
lunches away from needy boys and girls, the Republican whip at the time, Leslie Arends, declared. But, he
added, “the greatest thing that we can hand down to our children is a solvent government.” The bill was finally
signed by President Truman as “a measure of national security.” The country didn’t need healthier students, it
seemed, so much as stronger soldiers: more than a third of the conscripts who failed the Army’s physicals had
been malnourished at one time.

During the next thirty years, the program went from subsidizing seven million meals a day to twenty-seven
million, and its annual budget grew to more than three billion dollars. Then, in 1981, Ronald Reagan appointed
David Stockman as his budget director. Stockman had a simple plan for cutting subsidies: he redefined “lunch.”
A nutritious meal would now have to provide only an ounce and a half of protein instead of two, six ounces of
milk instead of eight, and half a cup of vegetables instead of three-quarters—a quarter cup of which could be a
condiment. To show how this would look on a plate, Patrick Leahy served his colleagues in the Senate a mock
school lunch. It consisted of a silver-dollar-size burger on half a bun, a box of milk, a squirt of ketchup, and six
grapes.

The Reagan Administration withdrew the new guidelines after thousands of letters of protest were sent to the
Department of Agriculture. But funding for child nutrition still fell by nearly a billion and a half dollars. (The
Carter Administration had previously cut it by four hundred million.) Grants for kitchen equipment were
eliminated, forcing districts like Berkeley to move their cooks into centralized facilities, and most schools
couldn’t afford to cover their cafeterias’ losses. They needed them to turn a profit. “The gospel was preached
that cafeterias should be operated like a business, and students as customers,” Poppendieck says. And these
customers wanted sodas and snacks.

In the late nineteen-eighties, when my former high school started offering Coca-Cola and Mazzio’s pizza
alongside regular lunches, I was more jealous than appalled. Fast food had yet to be demonized, fat kids were
still just fat—not the tragic victims of an obesity epidemic—and name-brand pizza sounded a lot better than the
cartilaginous stews we’d been served. Even in pure business terms, though, the new foods were often a failure.
The more snacks and sodas students bought from vending machines or fast-food lines, the less they spent on
regular lunches. Two years ago, when Texas banished junk food from its elementary schools and tightened
nutrition requirements for all grades, cafeteria sales increased so much that the state received an extra fifty
million dollars in federal subsidies—more than compensating for the loss in vending-machine revenue.

Berkeley first tried to reform its cafeterias in 1999, calling for salad bars in every school and organic vegetables
for all. Like many of the city’s social campaigns, the effort was both pioneering and impractical. It drew
mocking news coverage nationwide—the Washington Post accused locals of liking “to brag about how
progressive they are”—and the salads disappeared as soon as the grants that paid for them ran out.

When Cooper was hired, last fall, after working with the cafeterias for a year as a consultant, her plan was to
rebuild the system from the inside out. She wanted not only to improve the food but also to create a step-by-step
manual for lunchroom reform nationwide—complete with recipes, menu cycles, and staffing and ordering
guides. But she answers to three masters in Berkeley: the school district is her official employer; the U.S.D.A.
subsidizes her meals; and the Chez Panisse Foundation pays her salary (ninety-five thousand dollars, plus
benefits, a year). The first needs her to stay within budget; the second insists that she conform to its dietary
standards; the third wants her to hurry up and start a revolution. She may yet fail on every front. “We’ve got
union issues. We’ve got kitchens that don’t cook. We’ve got the same shit everybody else has,” she says. “This
is the reality of school food.”

Tuesday is pizza day at the Malcolm X elementary school. When the second graders arrive for lunch, they
bounce up and down and do little dances in line, chanting, “Oh, pizza! Oh, pizza! Oh, pizza! Oh, pizza!” The
school has four hundred students, from kindergarten through the fifth grade. About a fourth of the students are
white, a fourth are Asian and Hispanic, and close to half are black, and for many lunch is the best meal of the
day. Berkeley’s wealth, like its houses, is distributed on a steeply inclined plane, with the poor clustered below and the rich perched high in the hills. People at the two extremes have a twenty-year difference in life expectancy, a study in 2000 found. About forty per cent of the city’s students are eligible for subsidized meals. At Malcolm X, the children wear bar-coded payment cards around their necks, so that no one can tell who pays full price. They get a slice of pizza, some grapes or an orange, and the pick of a salad bar that Cooper recently installed, then hold their cards up to the scanner.

Cooper doesn’t have a problem with pizza. When it’s made right, it contains vegetables, protein, fibre, and calcium—a full meal. “A slice of pizza isn’t bad for you,” she says. “A diet of pizza is bad for you.” When she first arrived, the cafeteria’s pizza came in bags, like its burritos. The Central Kitchen had neither the staff nor the equipment to make it, so Cooper hired Karen Trilevsky, an old friend who owns FullBloom Baking Company, in nearby Menlo Park. Trilevsky put her staff to work in her test kitchen for the next three months, then called Cooper in for a tasting. The FullBloom pizza had a thick focaccia crust made with spelt and whole-wheat flour. It had homemade tomato sauce, skim-milk mozzarella, and a variety of sophisticated vegetarian toppings: zucchini, corn, and fresh tomato; blue cheese, walnut, and roasted onion. “It was fabulous,” Cooper recalls. “It was fresh. It was delicious.”

The kids couldn’t stand it. The toppings were weird, they said, the crust too bready, the cheese too brown and not cheesy enough. At Malcolm X and the other ten elementary schools, the trash cans overflowed with rejected slices. “It was across the board,” Cooper says. The cooks at FullBloom tried chopping the vegetables into tiny pieces; the complaints continued. They tried hiding the vegetables beneath the cheese; the children rooted them out. Finally, in January, the cafeteria manager from Malcolm X came to Cooper’s office with a tersely worded petition (“We do not like the veggie pizzas, nor do we like the pork roast with applesauce. . . .”) and a large sheet of butcher paper signed by more than two hundred students. Cooper hung it beside her desk, beneath a line of Tibetan prayer flags. In the bottom left corner, a girl named Shalika had drawn a frowny face. Next to that, her classmate Tajahniqua had written, “Veteteriyin pizza. I hate that food.”

Two weeks later, Cooper put on her chef’s whites and went to face her critics. They marched into the Malcolm X auditorium in three shifts, during recess, and listened politely to her explanations. Then they raised their hands and began the inquisition. “What happened to the double hamburgers?” “Why haven’t we had orange chicken lately?” “Where are our nachos?” Cooper told them that there was hardly any chicken in the orange chicken and no real cheese in the nacho sauce, but they didn’t care. “They were really pissed off,” she says. “I took away all the crap they liked.”

Children can learn to eat almost anything, given time. In Mexico, they consume fiery chilies; in Japan, whale meat; in Sweden, pickled herring. But a palate, once formed, isn’t easily expanded. At Penn State, the psychologist Leann Birch has tracked the eating habits of a hundred and sixty girls between the ages of five and fifteen, as well as various tortured attempts to improve their diets. The most common ploys tend to backfire: forbidding sweets instills a craving for them, and insisting on vegetables can instill an aversion. Labeling foods as “healthy” makes them taste worse to children, and offering sweets as rewards for eating vegetables makes the latter seem even less appetizing. (Birch also tried offering vegetables as rewards for eating sweets, but the children just laughed at her.) Peer pressure sometimes helps. When Birch had kids who hated peas eat at tables surrounded by kids who loved peas, the pea-haters switched sides within a week. But cafeterias tend to breed complainers. At the Ross School, Cooper served three or four entrees a day, two desserts, and two kinds of pizza baked in a brick oven. Yet a month after she arrived she was cornered by a gang of sulky fifth graders. They were going on hunger strike, they told her, until they got their grilled-cheese sandwiches back.

The best way to broaden a child’s palate is to start early. When mothers eat garlic or carrots while pregnant, recent studies have shown, their newborns have a taste for those flavors as well, and breast-fed babies tend to be less picky about solid food than bottle-fed babies. By the age of four or five, almost all children become “neophobic”: they develop an aversion to new foods, and to vegetables in particular—an ancestral memory, perhaps, of too many poisonous plants eaten by children in the past. To overcome this instinct, preschools in Minneapolis, New York, and other cities have lately experimented with hand puppets, gardening and cooking
programs, and color-coded vegetable charts. But there’s no real substitute for patience; the average five-year-old has to taste a new food between five and ten times, Birch has found, before he’ll accept it.

At the Ross School, Cooper could afford to wait: within a year, her students were happily eating jicama. In Berkeley, she had no food to waste. And so, in the month after the meeting at Malcolm X, the veggie pizza was slowly stripped bare. “They would call every week and say, ‘Take off the zucchini. Take off the corn. Take off the fresh tomatoes,’ ” a manager at FullBloom told me. “Within three weeks, all the vegetables were gone.” The crust was still rich in protein and fibre, and the cooks pureed some squash, carrots, and other vegetables into the sauce, where even the students’ X-ray eyes couldn’t detect them. But by and large the pizza began to look like pizza again.

The second graders at Malcolm X had made their peace with it. Across town, though, the fourth graders at John Muir were unconvinced. Not having had a meeting with Cooper, they blamed the food on their new principal, Mr. John, whom they suspected of being a vegetarian. “It’s all vegetable,” a small, apple-cheeked girl named Melika told me. She hunched her shoulders and shook her ropy braids: “Ooooooooo! That principal get on my nerves!” Her tall, skinny friend Naeemah was of two minds. The food was better for you, she said, now that it wasn’t extruded by “this big machine thing” anymore. But the pizza was still overcooked, and she missed all the meat from last year. She picked at her pink coleslaw. “I’m moving to Texas,” she said.

The low point of Cooper’s lunchroom crusade came in February. She had always known that her food costs would go up, but she had hoped that her revenues would rise as well. Fewer than half of the district’s ten thousand students ate school lunches: most of the high-schoolers went off campus, to places like Top Dog and Extreme Pizza, and many of the middle-and grade-schoolers brought their lunch. If Cooper could lure a few hundred of them back to the cafeteria, she would be able to pay for a lot of organic vegetables. By late winter, however, she was tens of thousands of dollars over budget, and cafeteria attendance had yet to go up. Then came the inspectors.

The Department of Agriculture has devised a welter of well-meaning regulations over the years to insure that schools serve healthful lunches. Its original scheme, which is still used by most schools, is known as “food-based menu planning.” It requires that elementary-school lunches contain at least six hundred and sixty-four calories and portions of meat, grains, milk, and fruit or vegetables. Less than thirty per cent of the calories can come from fat, but carbohydrates are unrestricted. This has led to some predictable perversities. Corn and French fries are by far the most popular vegetables in schools, followed by other potato dishes. To keep fat down, schools often ban whole milk and deep-fried foods, only to find that they’re not serving enough calories. “It’s really an Alice in Wonderland situation,” the sociologist Janet Poppendieck told me. “They can increase the size of entrées, but it’s hard to do that without increasing the fat. They would like to increase the vegetables, but that they can’t afford. So they end up adding dessert. Or they sweeten the milk with strawberry or chocolate. They’ve taken the fat out of it, then put the calories back in with sugar.”

In the mid-nineties, the U.S.D.A., led by a former health activist named Ellen Haas, introduced a more flexible alternative called “nutrient-based menu planning.” Cafeterias could make almost anything they liked, as long as a week’s worth of meals contained all the necessary nutrients. If Monday’s lunch was heavy on beef, Tuesday’s could be a stir-fry. The only drawback was that every recipe had to be entered into a database so that its ingredients could be broken down into vitamins, minerals, protein, and so on. The most common ingredients and processed foods were preloaded in the software, but Cooper was cooking from scratch and reworking recipes continually. She didn’t have time to analyze her dishes before serving them. So she didn’t bother. She hired a consultant to enter the recipes as she perfected them, but otherwise kept cooking. “I never met a rule I didn’t want to break,” she says. “Especially stupid rules.”

The three inspectors who came to Cooper’s office in February weren’t pleased with this attitude. They asked to see her recipes and her analyses. She did not have them. They asked how she knew that the children were getting enough calories. She said, “Have you looked at the obesity rate?” They told her that she was not in
compliance and was in danger of losing her federal subsidies. “I felt like a comet slamming into the side of a mountain,” she told me.

Cooper’s friend Kate Adamick, a corporate lawyer turned cafeteria consultant, sat in on one of the meetings. “I listened for a while, as they told Ann that she was doing everything wrong, that they were going to have to shut her down, and they hadn’t even tasted the food,” Adamick told me. “So I stepped in and said, ‘Would you rather Ann had spent a year getting the paperwork in place and then improved the food?’ And they said, ‘Yes.’ I said, ‘But the food they were serving was terrible!’ And one of the women said, ‘That is not true. They were using commodity foods.’”

As it happened, Adamick had recently attended a trade show in Los Angeles and had home pictures of the newest products being made for schools out of U.S.D.A. commodities. She called them up on the screen of her laptop one by one: corn dogs, pizza strips, and deep-fried cherry pies; grilled-cheese sandwiches, Texas cheese toast, and breaded chicken treats molded into hearts and moons and stars. “Look! Fried things in shapes!” Cooper joked, when she showed me the slides later. But, at the time, she was on the verge of losing her job. “Ann is basically fearless,” Adamick says. “I’ve never seen her intimidated by anything, ever. But these women made her seriously nervous. She would say, ‘We have a meeting with the mean people and they’re going to put me in jail.’”

As usual, Cooper’s cooking proved to be her most convincing defense. When the inspectors returned in March to examine the cafeterias, their attitude softened noticeably. Their report cited dozens of administrative and food-service infractions—“[the children] received 1/2 kiwi instead of the specified ‘1 each’”—but noted that the food was “very high quality and was visually pleasing as well as tasty.” Cooper was given until November to fix the problems. “They could have made my life miserable,” she told me. “They could have given me forty-five days to come into one-hundred-per-cent compliance, and in the end they didn’t.” She grinned. “I’m proud to say we co-opted the U.S.D.A.”

By this spring, Cooper’s outlook had improved markedly. Her staff was getting used to cooking fresh food again, the consultant was filling the database with recipes, and, in March, cafeteria attendance had finally begun to climb. At this pace, Cooper’s losses would level off at around seventy thousand dollars—an acceptable amount, given all that she’d accomplished. And yet when she picked me up for dinner one evening in her Toyota Prius she looked haggard. She’d been to see her orthodontist for another radical tightening session, she told me. “It hurt so much I wanted to throw up.” But her uneasiness had more to do with meat loaf.

Earlier that day, Cooper had gone to see Alice Waters, the chef and owner of Chez Panisse, whose foundation paid her salary. Waters was no fan of meat loaf. “I was really excited,” Cooper said. “I told her that we were going to serve it with fresh vegetables and mashed potatoes. And she looked at me and said, ‘Meat loaf? The kids can’t possibly like meat loaf!’” Cooper took a long sip from her protein shake. “I almost got into it with her,” she said. “I mean, what is a French country pâté? It’s basically meat loaf, only it’s steamed, right? But we can’t possibly eat meat loaf.”

Cooper and Waters had seemed like a perfect match. They met in the mid-nineties, when Cooper was writing an oral history of female chefs and Waters was breaking ground for the Edible Schoolyard—a vegetable garden on the site of an asphalt playground in Berkeley. Waters’s vision, which has given rise to school gardens across the country, was that students would spend an hour or two working the soil every week, then cook and eat what they grew—learning history, ecology, and healthful eating in the process. Cooper’s cooking was supposed to be an extension of this philosophy. “The whole experience of lunch needs to be completely transformed,” Waters told me. “It needs to be a place where you can experience the ritual of the table, a way to teach kids about stewardship of the land, about nourishing yourself and communicating with people, about this rich subject of ecogastronomy.”

A year later, here they were, serving meat loaf. Cooper had been as idealistic as Waters once, but the longer she struggled to feed the masses the more she appreciated mass production: centralized kitchens, mainstream
recipes, economies of scale. FullBloom, for example, had grown from a small bakery in the back of an espresso shop in San Francisco—the kind of soulful local enterprise that Waters adored—into a factory that made two hundred thousand pastries a day. That size allowed the bakery to spend months formulating pizzas for Cooper, knowing that they might recoup the investment later by baking for other local schools. “Alice doesn’t want to work with anyone as large as FullBloom,” Cooper said. “And I’m not sure I can work with anyone smaller. If I asked them to do the kind of R. and D. FullBloom did, they’d just say, ‘Get the fuck out of here.’”

Waters admitted that Cooper had made great progress—”We’re not sort of in the nacho place anymore”—but she felt that they still had a long way to go. Why couldn’t they serve vegetable curry, she wondered, or sauté dishes to order? Cooper, meanwhile, had decades-old refrigerated trucks that kept breaking down. Her produce sometimes looked as if it came from a compost heap. Her labor costs were fifty-seven per cent of her budget (in most restaurants, it’s less than forty), yet she couldn’t cut union wages. “Alice is a really wonderful visionary,” she said. “But this work is all about baby steps, and she can’t see baby steps. In her perfect world, she’d like to have the kids served bountiful baskets of fresh-picked berries. And you know what? It ain’t happening.”

When I was in the seventh grade, my father took a two-year sabbatical in southern France and put us all in public schools. My lycée was a glum, disagreeable place. The hours were long, the students anarchic, the teachers authoritarian, but the cafeteria nearly made up for it. We sat at round tables in groups of eight and were served three courses of some of the strangest food I’d ever seen—sautéed squid, boudin noir, rabbit with mustard sauce. There were no choices to make, no variable subsidies to claim, no bagged lunches or vending machines. Everyone ate the same food, and the food, I discovered, was wonderful. Thinking back on those meals when I was in Berkeley, I could understand Waters’s frustration. “What I’m imagining is happening all over the world,” she told me. “It’s not like we’re inventing something that has never been done before.”

For Cooper, too, the French system seemed an ideal model, if only she could afford it. A month before my visit, she had toured some cafeterias in the town of Challans, in the west of France. The lunches there were made in a central kitchen then trucked in bulk to the satellite schools, to be served family style, just as I remembered. “At one meal, the first course was raw beets in a vinaigrette,” Cooper recalled. “The second was braised salmon with lentils and leeks, and the third was a cheese course. That was school lunch.” The cost of food and labor came to about eight dollars a meal—more than three times as much as the average American lunch—of which every child paid about two dollars. (In Rome, which recently adopted a similar system on a much larger scale, the meals cost only about five dollars, and seventy per cent of the ingredients are organic.)

I asked Cooper, one morning, as we were driving to the Central Kitchen, how long it would take American schools to switch to the French or Italian system, if they had the money. “Two years,” she said. “There are three big issues: investing in kitchens, food procurement, and staff training. But I’ve made all these changes in six months without any money. You can’t tell me it’s going to take anyone else more than two years.” This sounded optimistic at best. The school-lunch program won’t be reauthorized until 2009, and it already costs the country seven billion dollars a year. To double the subsidies “would take a profile in courage,” one anti-hunger lobbyist to me. Then again, the program has always been a creature of implausible politics. “Come on!” Cooper said. “The war costs more than a billion dollars a week! Why don’t we say we’ll double what we spend on school lunch? Where are our priorities? Maybe I was high the day they explained that in school.”

It was well before dawn, and Cooper had to focus on the long, looping coastal road from Moss Beach. I could tell, though, that she was still running the numbers in her head. Politics, more than cooking, consumed her these days. “If I was getting up every morning at three-thirty just to make tuna-fish sandwiches, I’d jump off the Bay Bridge,” she said. She owns two houses on the East Coast, one of them with a former partner, but she said that she had no intention of moving back anytime soon. She had agreed to work in Berkeley for three years and was already looking further ahead—to reforming the cafeterias of Portland, Oregon, perhaps, or to some other, more subversive scheme. “I want to sue the U.S.D.A.!” I’d heard her say, her eyes gleaming. “I want Oprah to pick this up! I want school lunch to be an election issue in 2008!” But first she had a few thousand mouths to feed.
I-Search: Interview Techniques

Some tips adapted from Ken Macrorie, *The I-Search Paper*, and “Shut Up and Listen: The Keys to Good Interviewing,” by Dr. Ink (Poynteronline), and with a debt of gratitude to Ms. Thoms.

1. **Approach your subject (the person you want to interview) politely.**
   Briefly explain that you are writing a research paper for your English class, and ask if he or she would be willing to be interviewed. Explain what area of questioning you want to focus on: “I’d like to ask you about your experiences as a published poet.” “I’d like to interview you about how exactly sunburns cause skin cancer.”

   Schedule a mutually agreeable time for your interview. You may conduct your interview in person, over the phone, or via email. If you are writing email, remember to write it as a formal letter—don’t use IM slang. *In person interviews are best.* Phone interviews are second best. Both are vastly better than email.

2. **Be prepared.**
   Before you meet or speak with your expert, do some initial research on your topic, and write down your questions. Don’t ask an expert for simple answers that you can get with minimal research. It’s waste of your time and an insult to your expert!

   Be prepared to explain the assignment again, and then be ready to ask your questions. Write down both open-ended, introductory question, and more specific, detailed questions for later in the interview.

3. **Record the interview.**
   There’s no one right way to do this. Some interviewers work with a pad of paper and a pen; others bring a small recording device. (If you do this, be sure to ask your subject first if he or she minds being recorded.)

   Some important points about recording an interview:
   a. You do NOT have to write down every word your subject says. Don’t panic if you feel you can’t keep up. Think about *what’s being said*, not about how to get it down, and you’ll find you don’t need every word.
   b. If you don’t hear or don’t understand something, you can say, “Will you repeat that?” or “I’m not sure I understood what you just said.”
   c. Listen for the things that pertain to the focus of your profile. Write them down.
4. **Ask open-ended questions.**
Skillful interviewers make their subjects feel like opening up. They don’t ask, “Did you start working as a ____________ when you were very young?” That’s likely to produce a simple “Yes” or “No,” and a pause anticipating the next question. Try starting out with a How or Why question. Get your subject talking!
Some ideas:
   a. How did you get started in this area?
   b. Why did you get interested in this topic?
   d. If you were allowed to tell a beginner only one thing about this topic, what would it be?

5. **Shut up and listen.**

6. **Work from a list of questions, but veer off.**
   If your expert says or does something interesting, ask a follow-up question; don’t just go on to the next item on your list. Be willing to be surprised.

7. **Ask the most important questions more than once and in different forms.**

8. **If possible, interview your expert on his or her turf.**
   Why? For one thing, he or she may be more comfortable there, and therefore more willing to open up. For another, you may learn things you otherwise wouldn’t simply by being there! If you can, hang around to watch and record your expert’s interactions with others. Notice physical details about your expert and his or her surroundings. Be observant!

9. **Write down things you see, not just answers to questions.**
   See above.

**After the Interview…**

1. **As soon as possible, sit down with your notes and fill them in.** Add details you remember from the interview and thoughts that strike you as you gather information for your search. Think about how you’ll incorporate this into your I-Search.

2. **Underline the strongest pieces of dialogue** – pieces which contain important information, answer a question particularly well, or show something you want to convey about your expert (for example, enthusiasm, depth of knowledge, or sense of humor). Use these pieces in your I-Search.
A husband for Dil

Can tradition make a young woman happy?

BY PHILIP GOUREVITCH

FEW months ago, in the LeFrak City apartment complex in Queens, I met a young woman named Dilshad Ahamed, who said, “My typical husband would be someone I could come home, relax, sit, and watch ‘Mad About You’ with, and be totally fine.” Her father had recently announced that it was time for her to be married, but Dil, as she calls herself, did not want to be rushed. “I want my husband to like things that I like. I want him to enjoy sharing things that I do,” she said. “I’m going to spend my whole life with this person. I don’t want to have him just having his way. Why should I? Have I no rights? I mean, come on, that’s ridiculous.”

Dil is nineteen, a sophomore at Queens College; she is tall and dark-eyed, with long black henna-shined hair and a theatrically sculpted face. “Truthfully,” she said, “I have really never had a boyfriend—boyfriend.” But, she told me, “one guy I did fall in love with.” She considered this guy “perfect to marry,” and by perfect she meant that he met the essential criteria for her parents’ approval: same cultural background (Indian), religion (Muslim), and language (Urdu). “When I get into a relationship,” she said, “that’s the first thing in my mind—marriage—because I know it’s coming, sooner or later.” So Dil’s first love was a disappointment. “I was definitely very infatuated with the person, but the person was after one thing, and that’s all he wanted,” she said. “He just wanted the intimacy part, and that’s not something I could live by, because I know if that’s all you want, then there’s no future.”

Sometimes Dil watched Indian movies on video. The story was almost always the same—the guy falls in love with the girl and the girl’s in love with the guy and the parents are totally against it and there’s a whole bunch of fighting, and at the end, eventually, the couple gets together—a bit like “Mad About You” meets the Ramayana. Dil didn’t take encouragement from the formula. “It’s all about love,” she said. “Movies don’t really show what real life has to offer. That’s the sad part.” After all, she told me, “as far as boyfriends go, even if I did have one there’s no way that I could bring him home and say, ‘Oh, Mom, you know, this is just a guy that I like and we’re going out.’ It would be ‘Going out for what?’”

Dil’s parents immigrated to New York from India in 1976, three years before she was born, and her father now runs a beer-and-beverage store in rural Westchester County. They had come seeking opportunity, and they found a modest slice of it, but that didn’t mean they wanted to go native. Dil considers them “strict” and “old-fashioned.” She said, “It’s always you’re born, you stay single, and you’re a little Virgin Mary, and then—when it’s time that they find you a guy—you’re married.” That was the way in her family: marriage meant arranged marriage, and “the only guy that’s supposed to be in your life until then is your father.” For those who accepted this system, “it makes it all kind of easier,” Dil told me, but when her father invoked the customs of their country and said, “What we want should make you happy,” she wondered, “By fulfilling their happiness, would I really be happy?”

OUR LOCAL CORRESPONDENTS

MADAME PRESIDENT

What it takes to run a student government at a high school with troubles.

BY SUSAN ORLEAN
grades. Tiffanie’s most popular poster had a colorful background and the slogan “And You Don’t Know? Vote for Tiffanie Lewis and Crystal Belle.” The line “And you don’t know?” was the refrain from a hit song by rapper Cam’Ron; it didn’t actually mean anything, but everyone loved it.

When Tiffanie talks about winning the election, she chokes up. “I’m a very emotional person,” she says. “I don’t know why, but I just am. I cry at a lot of things. I cried at ‘Titanic,’ and I cried at the lunar eclipse.” She cried like mad when she found out that she had won the presidential election. I almost made her cry when we first met and I mistakenly wrote her name down as “Tiffany,” like the jewelry store, rather than “Tiffanie.” After she corrected me, I asked if people made that mistake often. “All the time,” she said, sounding melancholy.

Tiffanie is not a tall person, but she has a big body and a cute, booming voice. Her face is sweet and bright and has absolutely no angles. She keeps her hair chin-length and chemically straightened and usually wears it down, but when she sweeps it up in a mini-chignon she looks regal and much older than seventeen. I spent last Christmas Day with her family, and her mother and her sisters and her aunts are all beautiful, and I got the feeling that Tiffanie grew up being told that she was good-looking, but, more important, that she was smart. Her mother, Cynthia Tillman, is a supervisor at an insurance company. Tiffanie doesn’t know much about her biological father. Her stepfather, Anthony, is a store detective, but he isn’t working currently. Their house in Brooklyn is the first one the Tillmans have ever owned. It is a small two-family, with a little spit of a front yard, on a tranquil side street in Canarsie, a working-class neighborhood that used to be strictly Italian and Jewish but now has a growing black population. They had been eager to leave their apartment in Crown Heights, because the building had got run-down and drugs were sold on their street.

Everything inside the Tillmans’ house is gleaming and large—a large television set, a large dining table, large chairs—squeezed into smallish rooms. Tiffanie’s room has an oversized black lacquer bedroom set, a computer, and very little space for anything else. Because she is president of the student body, head of the school Step Team, and is taking extra courses to prepare for her Regents’ exams, Tiffanie spends very little time at home. When she is home, she is often in her room, E-mailing her friends or talking to them on the phone. A lot of her friends are boys, but she doesn’t have a boyfriend, and says that this is because she doesn’t have time. She says that she isn’t that interested in guys right now, anyway, but the most annoyed I’ve ever seen her was when someone suggested that her favorite male R. & B. group was gay.

President Lewis is self-possessed, and often quite bossy, as in: “Are you—all going to help me move the tables, or are you—all going to just sit there?” (To her cabinet members, before a Student Life meeting.)

“Crystal, I really, really like you, and you know you’re my home girl, but we got to get back on topic right now.” (To her vice-president, who had lapsed during a meeting into a discussion about reading her poetry at the talent show.)

“First, how about you say the idea, and then we’ll decide if it’s bangin’.” (To the chairperson of the school store, who announced that he had a really bangin’ idea.)

“So you’re on the seven-year plan? Let me ask you, Chickenhead: Are you proud of that?” (To a student known familiarly as Chickenhead, who asserted that he knew more about King than she did, because, as he had put it, “I been at this school since before you were in eighth grade.”)

One recent school day, I visited Tiffanie at the student-affairs office at King, and she told me the story of her campaign. “It was very controversial,” she said. Her voice started inching up her throat. “First, my friend Wellnthon and I were going to run together, but then he decided to run with Crystal, and everyone thought Crystal should run for president, because she’s such a beautiful person and everyone loves her, but she didn’t want all the pressure, so then Crystal and I decided to run together, and, oh God, candidates were tearing down each other’s posters and writing obscenities on them, and it just got very intense.”

A young man who had been sitting nearby listening to a Walkman took off his headphones and said, “Yo, I was Tiff’s campaign manager.”

“Robert, you were not,” Tiffanie said. “I mean, O.K., you were my manager at the end. But, first, Cherie Starling was my campaign manager. Then I had to fire her, because she was slacking.” Robert frowned, and then told me that his name was Robert Benton and that he was the chairperson of the school store, and also a master rapper named Spade, and that he was available for interviews. A moment later, Cherie walked into the room. Tiffanie waved her over and said, “Hey, Cherie, remember when I fired you?” Cherie is one of her many best friends and is now the chairperson of the School Improvement Committee.

“You did?” Cherie asked. She looked puzzled.

“From my campaign, girlfriend,” Tiffanie said. “Remember? You were slacking.”

“Oh, yeah,” Cherie answered. She shrugged her shoulders and glanced at the wall clock. “Come on, Madame President. Let’s go bust it out in gym.”
Questions to Ask When Evaluating an Internet Source

Accuracy
Almost anyone can publish a web site, and no standards for checking accuracy have been fully developed. Here are some questions to ask when evaluating for the accuracy of a site.

- Does the author cite the sources of information he or she used to develop the site?
- Is it possible to verify the legitimacy of these sources?
- Does the background of the author indicate knowledge of the subject covered?
- If the site is research-based, does the author clearly identify the method of research and the data gathered?

Authority
Because publishing on the Web is so easy, determining the author's expertise relevant to the topic covered is essential. Ask yourself the following questions to determine the author's credibility.

- Do you recognize the author's name?
- If you don't recognize the name, what type of information is given about the author?
- Position?
- Organizational affiliation?
- E-mail address?
- Biographical information?
- Was the site referenced in a document or web site that you trust?

Remember: If the author's name is not evident -- BEWARE! If the author's name is present, sometimes it is difficult to determine the author's credibility. Determine the level of importance the author's expertise is to the overall site.

Objectivity
Any published source, print or non-print, is rarely 100% objective. The Internet has become a highly utilized arena for all types of publishing. Determining the author's point of view or bias is very important when evaluating a web site.

- What is the purpose of the web site:
- Is it advertisement for a product or service?
- Is it for political purposes? Is it trying to sway public opinion on a social issue?
- Do you trust the author or organization providing the information?

Currency
Being aware of the currency of the information given on a web site is pertinent to the overall evaluation of a site. The currency of the information presented is crucial if the top covered updates rapidly, such medical or travel information. However, keep in mind that not all types of information need to be dated within the last 6-12 months.

- Is a date clearly displayed?
- Can you determine what the date refers to?
- When the page was first written? When the page was first posted on the Internet?
- When the page was last revised or updated?
- The copyright date? Find out more about copyright issues.
- Are the resources used and information provided by the author current?
- Does the page content demand routine or continual updating or revision?
- Do the links on the page point to the correct Internet site addresses?

Coverage
The last criteria included in this tutorial is coverage. This can be difficult to determine because the nature of a site's coverage may be different than a print resource. However, you should examine these points.

- Are the topics covered on the site explored in depth?
- Are the links in the site comprehensive or used as examples?
- In the site, are the links provided relevant and appropriate?
- How useful is the information provided for the topic area?
Critically Analyzing Internet Sources

So, everyone thinks that if it’s posted on the Internet then of course it has to be true! While I agree that the Internet has a lot to offer (and right in the comfort of our own home!), not all sources are equally valuable or reliable. It’s very easy to take information off the Web, but before you do...try to put these points into consideration.

Content and Evaluation

- Is the website claiming to represent a person, a group, an organization, an institution, a corporation, or a governmental body?
  - For the most part, this general rule comes in handy:
    - .com = Personal/Company – it is the most commonly used URL ending
    - .edu = Educational Institution
    - .net = Usually this is a network or a database or a Forum of some kind
    - .org = Non-profit organizations, theatres, clubs
    - .gov = Government owned

- Does the site refer to print or other non-Internet resources? Or does it only give you links to other websites?
  - If a selected list is offered as other sources, is an explanation given in terms of how the list was generated and how links were chosen?

- Does the site claim to describe or provide the results of research or scholarly effort?
  - If so, then are there sufficient references provided to other works, documents, assertions?
  - Are references cited FULLY?
  - Can the results be refuted or verified through other means – library card catalog?

- Is there any sort of third-party financial support or sponsorship evident?

- Is advertising included at the site and if so, has it had an impact on the content? Meaning, if you go to Discovery.com, are the advertisements about space, animals, nature, science, etc.? Or are the ads about losing weight in 2 weeks?

Source & Date

- Who designed the website? Was it an organization? The actual company? A person?
  - Let’s say you’re visiting a space exploration website. At the bottom it says, “Webpage brought to you by Spaceex, Inc. (a company that designs space vehicles) and Designed by DaxStudio Graphics.” If you click on “DaxStudio” and you are directed to DaxStudio’s website where you find information on how to contract their services to build your website.

  - However, let’s say at the bottom of the page, it just says, “Contact Webmaster”. You click on “Webmaster” and an email window pops open with the address as “Vader4u@aol.com.” More than likely the website is created by an avid Space (and Star Wars) fan.
    - Which website is probably more reliable?

- Is the site officially or unofficially sponsored or supported by particular groups, organizations, institutions, corporations, or governmental bodies?

- How up to date is the study, research, or actual website?
  - Meaning, if it’s May 25, 2011 and you’re researching genetic cloning and the website you’re visiting states at the bottom, “Last updated January 2000.” Well, how up-to-date will their information be?

Other

- Is there a fee for use of access to any of the information provided at this site? How little or how much do you have to pay and for how long is it valid? Is there a 30-day money back guarantee/Trial time period? Or is all the information free?

- Are there options for text only/non-frames or IE/Netscape views of this website?

- When it is necessary to send confidential information out over the Internet, is encryption available? How secure is it?

Does the website switch to “https” in the URL?

-Adapted and Modified from UCLA’s College Library Help Guides
  <http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/college/help/critical>
Is Wikipedia Reliable?
(http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/is-wikipedia-reliable.html)

The creators of Wikipedia are the first to admit that not every entry is accurate and that it might not be the best source of material for research papers. Here are some points to consider:

- **Look for a slant.** Some articles are fair and balanced, but others look more like the Leaning Tower of Pisa. If an article has only one source, beware.

- **Consider the source.** Even if an article cites external sources, check out those sources to see whether they are being cited fairly and accurately — and do, in fact, reinforce the article's points.

- **Look who's talking.** If you research the contributors themselves and find that they are experts in their fields, you can be more confident in the entry.

- **Start here, but keep going.** Wikipedia should be a starting point for research but not your primary source for research material.

In December 2005, the scientific journal *Nature* published the results of a study comparing the accuracy of Wikipedia and the printed Encyclopaedia Britannica. The researchers found that the number of "factual errors, omissions or misleading statements" in each reference work was not so different — Wikipedia contained 162, and Britannica had 123. The makers of Britannica have since called on *Nature* to retract the study, which it claims is "completely without merit."

When visiting controversial entries, look out for edit wars. Edit wars occur when two contributors (or groups of contributors) repeatedly edit one another's work based on a particular bias. In early 2004, Wikipedia's founders organized an Arbitration Committee to settle such disputes.

Wikipedia does have some weaknesses that more traditional encyclopedias do not. For example

- There is no guarantee that important subjects are included or given the treatment that they deserve.

- Entries can be incomplete or in the middle of being updated at any given time.

- The writers of entries often fail to cite their original sources, thus making it hard to determine the credibility of the material.

These issues should not deter you from using Wikipedia. Just weigh the limitations of Wikipedia — and, for that matter, reference works in general.
This short guide to MLA citation is adapted from the Purdue Online Writing Lab and the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers – 7th Edition. For more information, or to cite sources that do not appear on this handout, go to http://owl.english.purdue.edu.

**PARENTHEtical references in the text**

Parenthetical citation tells a reader what you borrowed from a source and exactly where in that source you found the information. As a general rule, each parenthetical citation should include the minimal amount of information required to lead a reader to the full citation, which will appear in the Works Cited list at the end of your paper.

**General Guidelines**

- The source information required in a parenthetical citation depends (1.) upon the source medium (e.g. Print, Web, DVD) and (2.) upon the source’s entry on the Works Cited (bibliography) page.
- Any source information that you provide in-text must correspond to the source information on the Works Cited page. More specifically, whatever signal word or phrase you provide to your readers in the text, must be the first thing that appears on the left-hand margin of the corresponding entry in the Works Cited List.

**What to Put in the Parentheses**

MLA format follows the author-page method of in-text citation. This means that the author's last name and the page number(s) from which the quotation or paraphrase is taken must appear in the text, and a complete reference should appear on your Works Cited page. The author's name may appear either in the sentence itself or in parentheses following the quotation or paraphrase, but the page number(s) should always appear in the parentheses, not in the text of your sentence. For example:

> Wordsworth stated that Romantic poetry was marked by a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (263). Romantic poetry is characterized by the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (Wordsworth 263). Wordsworth extensively explored the role of emotion in the creative process (263).

Both citations in the examples above, (263) and (Wordsworth 263), tell readers that the information in the sentence can be located on page 263 of a work by an author named Wordsworth. If readers want more information about this source, they can turn to the Works Cited page, where, under the name of Wordsworth, they would find the following information:


**In-text citations for print sources with known authors**

For Print sources like books, magazines, scholarly journal articles, and newspapers, provide a signal word or phrase (usually the author’s last name) and a page number. If you provide the signal word/phrase in the sentence, you do not need to include it in the parenthetical citation.

> Human beings have been described by Kenneth Burke as "symbol-using animals" (3). Human beings have been described as "symbol-using animals" (Burke 3).

These examples must correspond to an entry that begins with Burke, which will be the first thing that appears on the left-hand margin of an entry in the Works Cited:

> Burke, Kenneth. *Language as Symbolic Action: Essays on Life, Literature, and Method*. Berkeley: U of...
In-text Citations for Print Sources with No Known Author

When a source has no known author, use a shortened title of the work instead of an author name. Place the title in quotation marks if it's a short work (e.g. articles) or italicize it if it's a longer work (e.g. plays, books, television shows, entire websites) and provide a page number.

We see so many global warming hotspots in North America likely because this region has “more readily accessible climatic data and more comprehensive programs to monitor and study environmental change . . .” (―Impact of Global Warming‖ 6).

In this example, since the reader does not know the author of the article, an abbreviated title of the article appears in the parenthetical citation which corresponds to the full name of the article which appears first at the left-hand margin of its respective entry in the Works Cited. Thus, the writer includes the title in quotation marks as the signal phrase in the parenthetical citation in order to lead the reader directly to the source on the Works Cited page. The Works Cited entry appears as follows:


Citing Non-Print or Internet Sources

With more and more scholarly work being posted on the Internet, you may have to cite research you have completed in virtual environments. For electronic and Internet sources, simply include in the text the first item that appears in the Work Cited entry that corresponds to the citation (e.g. author name, article name, website name, film name).

COMPOSING A WORKS CITED LIST

Your Works Cited list must be labeled “Works Cited” and include full, accurate citations for every source you used, even if these sources are not directly quoted or paraphrased in your paper. (Thus, if you read an article that provided a good background view of your topic, that article should appear in your Works Cited list.) Always put your Works Cited list in alphabetical order, and note how the second and subsequent lines of each citation are indented.

CITING BOOKS

When you are gathering book sources, be sure to make note of the following bibliographic items: author name(s), book title, publication date, publisher, place of publication. The medium of publication for all “hard copy” books is Print.

The basic form for a book citation is:

Lastname, Firstname. Title of Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Year of Publication. Medium of Publication.

Book with One Author


Book with More Than One Author

The first given name appears in last name, first name format; subsequent author names appear in first name last name format.

Books by Unknown or Corporate Authors
List by title of the book. Incorporate these entries alphabetically just as you would with works that include an author name. For example, the following entry might appear between entries of works written by Dean, Shaun and Forsythe, Jonathan.


Remember that for an in-text (parenthetical) citation of a book with no author, provide the name of the work in the signal phrase and the page number in parentheses. You may also use a shortened version of the title of the book accompanied by the page number.

A Work in an Anthology, Reference, or Collection
Works may include an essay in an edited collection or anthology, or a chapter of a book. The basic form is for this sort of citation is as follows:


Some examples:


Poems or Short Stories
Place the title of short works in quotation marks, and the title of the longer book in which they appear in italics.


Holy Books
Give the name of the specific edition you are using, any editor(s) associated with it, followed by the publication information. Remember that your in-text (parenthetical citation) should include the name of the specific edition of the Bible, followed by an abbreviation of the book, the chapter and verse(s).


Government Publications
Cite the author of the publication if the author is identified. Otherwise, start with the name of the national government, followed by the agency (including any subdivisions or agencies) that serves as the organizational author. For congressional documents, be sure to include the number of the Congress and the session when the hearing was held or resolution passed. US government documents are typically published by the Government Printing Office, which MLA abbreviates as GPO.


Pamphlets
Cite the title and publication information for the pamphlet just as you would a book without an author. Pamphlets and promotional materials commonly feature corporate authors (commissions, committees, or other groups that does not provide individual group member names). If the pamphlet you are citing has no author, cite as directed below. If your pamphlet has an author or a corporate author, put the name of the author (last name, first name format) or corporate author in the place where the author name typically appears at the beginning of the entry.

CITING PERIODICALS

Periodicals (e.g. magazines, newspapers, and scholarly journals) that appear in print require the same medium of publication designator—Print—as books, but the MLA Style method for citing these materials and the items required for these entries are quite different from MLA book citations.

Article in a Magazine
Cite by listing the article's author, putting the title of the article in quotations marks, and italicizing the periodical title. Follow with the date of publication. Remember to abbreviate the month.

The basic format is as follows:

Author(s). "Title of Article." Title of Periodical Day Month Year: pages. Medium of publication.


Article in a Newspaper
Cite a newspaper article as you would a magazine article, but note the different pagination in a newspaper. If there is more than one edition available for that date (as in an early and late edition of a newspaper), identify the edition following the date (e.g., 17 May 1987, late ed.).


If the newspaper is a less well-known or local publication, include the city name and state in brackets after the title of the newspaper.


An Article in a Scholarly Journal


CITING ELECTRONIC PUBLICATIONS

Here are some common features you should try and find before citing electronic sources in MLA style. Not every web page will provide all of the following information. However, collect as much of the following information as possible both for your citations and for your research notes:

• Author and/or editor names (if available)
• Article name in quotation marks (if applicable)
• Title of the Website, project, or book in italics. (Remember that some Print publications have Web publications with slightly different names. They may, for example, include the additional information or otherwise modified information, like domain names [e.g. .com or .net].)
• Any version numbers available, including revisions, posting dates, volumes, or issue numbers.
• Publisher information, including the publisher name and publishing date.
• Take note of any page numbers (if available).
• Date you accessed the material.
• URL (if required, or for your own personal reference).

If you can’t find some of this information, cite what is available in this order, and separate all pieces of information using periods.

Citing an Entire Web Site
It is necessary to list your date of access because web postings are often updated, and information available on one date may no longer be available later. Be sure to include the complete address for the site. Remember to use n.p. if no publisher name is available and n.d. if no publishing date is given.

Editor, author, or compiler name (if available). Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher), date of resource creation (if available). Medium of publication. Date of access.


A Page on a Web Site
For an individual page on a Web site, list the author or alias if known, followed by the information covered above for entire Web sites. Remember to use n.p. if no publisher name is available and n.d. if no publishing date is given.


An Image (Including a Painting, Sculpture, or Photograph)
Provide the artist's name, the work of art italicized, the date of creation, the institution and city where the work is housed. Follow this initial entry with the name of the Website in italics, the medium of publication, and the date of access.


If the work is cited on the web only, then provide the name of the artist, the title of the work, the medium of the work, and then follow the citation format for a website. If the work is posted via a username, use that username for the author.


An Article in a Web Magazine
Provide the author name, article name in quotation marks, title of the Web magazine in italics, publisher name, publication date, medium of publication, and the date of access. Remember to use n.p. if no publisher name is available and n.d. if no publishing date is given.

An Article in an Online Scholarly Journal
For all online scholarly journals, provide the author(s) name(s), the name of the article in quotation marks, the title of the publication in italics, all volume and issue numbers, and the year of publication.

Article in an Online-only Scholarly Journal
MLA requires a page range for articles that appear in Scholarly Journals. If the journal you are citing appears exclusively in an online format (i.e. there is no corresponding print publication) that does not make use of page numbers, use the abbreviation n. pag. to denote that there is no pagination for the publication.


Article in an Online Scholarly Journal That Also Appears in Print
Cite articles in online scholarly journals that also appear in print as you would a scholarly journal in print, including the page range of the article. Provide the medium of publication that you used (in this case, Web) and the date of access.


An Article from an Online Database (or Other Electronic Subscription Service)
Cite articles from online databases (e.g. LexisNexis, ProQuest, JSTOR, ScienceDirect) and other subscription services just as you would print sources. Since these articles usually come from periodicals, be sure to consult the appropriate sections of the Works Cited: Periodicals page, which you can access via its link at the bottom of this page. In addition to this information, provide the title of the database italicized, the medium of publication, and the date of access.


E-mail (including E-mail Interviews)
Give the author of the message, followed by the subject line in quotation marks. State to whom to message was sent, the date the message was sent, and the medium of publication.


A Listserve, Discussion Group, or Blog Posting
Cite Web postings as you would a standard Web entry. Provide the author of the work, the title of the posting in quotation marks, the Web site name in italics, the publisher, and the posting date. Follow with the medium of publication and the date of access. Include screen names as author names when author name is not known. If both names are known, place the author’s name in brackets. Remember if the publisher of the site is unknown, use the abbreviation n.p.

Editor, screen name, author, or compiler name (if available). “Posting Title.” Name of Site. Version number (if available). Name of institution/organization affiliated with the site (sponsor or publisher). Medium of publication. Date of access.

What's new in MLA style?

The Modern Language Association (MLA) has updated its guidelines for college and high school writers. What follows is an overview of the major changes in MLA style in the 7th edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (2009).

**Italics**
- *Italics* is now used everywhere in place of underlining—for titles, for words, etc.

**Medium of publication**
- Every entry has a medium of publication designation, such as the following: Print, Web, Radio, Television, CD, Audiocassette, Film, Videocassette, DVD, Performance, Lecture, and PDF file.


**Issue numbers for journals**
- MLA no longer makes a distinction between journals paginated by volume and journals paginated by issue. All entries must have both volume and issue numbers for all journals.


**Online sources**
- MLA guidelines assume that readers can track down most online sources by entering the author, title, or other identifying information in a search engine or a database. Consequently, MLA does not require a URL in citations for online sources.
- MLA no longer requires the location of the database (the library name, for instance).
- MLA style requires a sponsor or publisher for most online sources. If a source has no sponsor or publisher, use the abbreviation "N.p." (for "No publisher") in the sponsor position.
- If there is no date of publication or update, use "n.d." (for "no date") after the sponsor.
- For an article in an online journal or an article from a database, give page numbers if they are available; if they are not, use the abbreviation "n. pag."

**Web site**


**Article on a Web site (no date)**

From Maya Rose Goldman, “Homosexuality: A Struggle for Equality”

I realize that not all of my questions will be answered by my interviewees, so I begin to think of what I want to search on Google, and how I want to go about doing so. I decide to start with some vocabulary. From experience, dictionary.com is not a very fulfilling source, but I do know that it gives links to outside dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc., such as the Online Etymology Dictionary. I begin with *faggot* (also spelled *fagot*), a word that, in my mind, is so filled with hatred and disgust. Every time I hear that word used, I cringe.

According to the Online Etymology Dictionary, the term *faggot* as it refers to a male homosexual originated in 1914. In 1591, the term was used in scorn of a female, especially one who was “old and unpleasant” (Online Etymology Dictionary). This use of the word came from the definition of *faggot* as a “bundle of sticks” (Online Etymology Dictionary). How faggot went from meaning a bundle of sticks to being used as a derogatory term for homosexuals is beyond me, and for a split instant, I feel the urge to laugh at whoever first began using the term in this new way.

My knowledge on civil unions is very hazy, and I am interested in knowing exactly which rights unioned couples receive, and how those differ from the rights of married and unmarried couples. I search for “what is a civil union” on Google, determined to avoid any Wikipedia sites. I get over twenty-two million results, among which is a link titled Vermont Secretary of State - Civil Unions. This looks promising, considering I know that Vermont has legalized civil unions. The link brings me to a very promising site, which is organized into sections such as *Who may be joined in civil union?* and *What are the legal consequences of a civil union?* The site was created by Vermont Secretary of State Deborah L. Markowitz.

I learn that in Vermont, civil unions are only available to couples of the same gender. This frustrates me; why don’t civil unions and marriage just become two options for couples? Why is it that different-sex couples only get one option, and same-sex couples only get the other? Since when has “separate, but equal” ever been true, and if two things are meant to be equal, then why separate at all?

To my surprise, under the heading about the legal consequences of a civil union in Vermont, there reads: “Parties to a civil union are given all the same benefits, protections and responsibilities under Vermont Law... as are granted to spouses in a marriage.” The site goes on to discuss these benefits, such as laws regarding child custody and support, and right to make medical decisions and to take family leave. Another law that “may apply to parties to a civil union” prohibits “against discrimination based upon marital status” (Markowitz). At this point, I realize that although these laws and rulings apply to Vermont, they may only be the findings of this one state, and other regions of the country -- and world -- which have legalized civil unions may describe one to be very different. I decide to resort to Wikipedia.

According to Wikipedia, same-sex marriage is legal in Belgium, Canada, Netherlands, South Africa, and Spain (in addition to the United States’s Massachusetts and California), while marriages performed in other countries are at least recognized in Aruba, Israel, Netherlands Antilles (islands forming a part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands), and the states of New Mexico, New York, and Rhode Island (however, these states and countries merely recognize the marriage, and have not actually legalized same-sex marriage). Apparently, Quebec, New Zealand, and Uruguay offer civil unions to both different-sex and same-sex couples. Suddenly, Vermont is not looking so liberal.

I also find a new term to define: *domestic partnership*. “In the United States, domestic partnership is a city-, county-, state-, or employer-recognized status that may be available to same-sex couples and, sometimes, opposite-sex couples” (Wikipedia, “Domestic”). A domestic partnership in the U.S. does not, however, grant a couple any of the 1138 rights given to married couples by the federal government. A domestic partnership is like a much lesser version of a civil union, and is still only recognized in certain states. So far, I am not seeing the plus sides to domestic partnerships, and I soon read something that deepens my confusion: “though they may [be] considered as spouses under the laws of some states, domestic partners do not have spousal rights to Social Security benefits... and will not be treated as spouses for purposes of any Federal tax law” (Wikipedia, “Domestic”). This new piece of information -- plus my previous knowledge that although a state may legalize and recognize same-sex marriage, the couple will not be considered married by the federal government -- makes me feel like, *what’s the point?* What’s the point of having any kind of union between two people if that union is not even recognized by the country of which they are citizens? Ironic, isn’t it, that the Pledge of Allegiance of the United States includes the words, “with liberty and justice for all.”

From Ben Wexler, “Allergy Attack- My Quest for Relief”

At exactly 5:15 PM, I stepped into the office of Dr. Barney Softness (yes, that’s his real name). I took my seat on the cushioned bench, which was embroidered with elephants and maps of Africa, and waited for him to be free. As I waited, a little boy, maybe three or four years old, stacked five stickers on top of a blue and red stuffed camel. He lifted the camel in the air, and said “Wow, amazing!” five times before throwing the camel on another boy in the waiting room. He then went up to his mother and asked, “Can I pee in the cup again?”

At this, a nurse came and led me into one of those little rooms (I don’t know exactly what they’re called. Doctor’s rooms? Patient’s rooms? Treatment rooms?). I sat up on the waxed paper-covered doctor’s bed and waited for him to come. When he finally did, I started to get a little more nervous. He had forgotten the context of the interview, and I reminded him of the I-search and what I was asking. He then explained the basics of allergies, which I already knew, but I didn’t tell him this to be polite. I then asked him to describe the steps he would take to prescribe me a medicine. “I would suggest three medicines,” he explained, “Claritin, Zyrtec, and Allegra. Allegra probably works the best, but it’s a twice a day medicine, which would be inconvenient for most teenagers like you. Claritin and Allegra have basically the same effectiveness, but Zyrtec has a little more anti-inflammatory, so that’s what I would prescribe” (Softness).
He told me that most of the name brands of allergy medicine are basically the same, and there are only minor differences between them. Benadryl, he said, causes the most side affects, usually drowsiness. One other thing I found interesting was that “Alternative medicine can work too. You know, homeopathic medicine, acupuncture, Chinese medicine. Yeah, those things can work.” With that, he prescribed Zyrtec for me and renewed my prescription for Flonaise. He said he was in a rush to get somewhere, and of course I didn’t ask any more questions.

From Doron Shapiro, “What is the Future of Banjo Playing?”

Cynthia Shapiro, throughout our discussion, emphasized the point that the banjo is continually evolving. She pointed out both Béla Fleck and Ryan Cavanaugh as “torch holders” who are bringing the banjo to audiences that might not otherwise listen to the banjo by using it differently than these audiences might otherwise expect. In fact, she thinks that the whole “demise” the banjo has had is caused by a general lack of knowledge about the instrument (Sayer).

How did this happen? In the middle of the 1900’s, the banjo became immensely popular, a trend attributed to things like the documentaries of Alan Lomax, as well as players like Earl Scruggs and Pete Seeger (Wall). In fact, as I was looking at reasons why certain musicians even started playing the banjo, players and bands from this era seemed to be one of the more inspiring factors. Anyway, during this period, highly social “banjo sing-alongs” became popular. At these sing-alongs, certain songs became very traditional to play, but like all fads, this soon lost popularity and became looked at as “old fashioned” and “corny.” However, the banjo was stuck with being associated with these songs and this type of playing. This idea is even now continually being hammered in through the somewhat stereotypical, or even downright goofy, use of banjos in advertising (Sayer).

This was an interesting claim, so I briefly looked it up. It wasn’t that hard to find an example. Just a few months ago, General Electric debuted a television ad starring a group of cute little animated power lines playing a rendition of Dueling Banjos, the anthem of banjo music. Goofy? Yeah, definitely. The point of the ad was to show that GE’s power lines could “play” something as complicated as banjo music together (theinspirationroom.com). Wait a second… Banjo music is overly complicated?

Cynthia emphasized that in order for the banjo to continue to grow, both in terms of popularity and style, people need to move away from the idea of banjos playing “banjo music.” The fact that my school band doesn’t have sheet music with the word “BANJO” printed in the upper left hand corner shouldn’t mean that the banjo can’t play their music. Well, back to what Ryan was saying, it’s people who can get past these stereotypes who will be the future of the banjo.

From Stephanie Lim, “A Dream Worth Reaching For?” (To be or not to be a pharmacist)

I take a quick trip to the library to see what I could dig up. I ask one of the librarians for books on the pharmacy, or on the actual career of a pharmacist. He recommends the Occupational Outlook Handbook, which has extensive information about many professions. I look up “pharmacist” and I find a large section. Firstly, although I do know what a pharmacist is, I want a direct definition. According to the handbook, pharmacists are health professionals that are trained to prepare and distribute medicine and give information about them. Since the role of a pharmacist doesn’t change where he or she goes, they’re versatile to work wherever medicine is needed—from a retail drugstore, hospital, or a personal business. Wherever the case is, the role is basically the same (U.S. Department of Labor 292).

One of the first questions I want to answer is what a pharmacist needs to do besides the general drug dispensing. I once again turn to the library and also add another source: the internet. Pharmacists advise physicians on the dosages and side effects of certain medications to a patient’s health. They monitor health and the process of the patient in response to the drugs. Besides telling the patients certain information about the medications, pharmacists also advice them about diets, exercise, stress management, and health care supplies as well as provide services to those who have illnesses which need attending to, such as diabetes and high blood pressure (U.S. Department of Labor 292-293). “Responsibilities vary…the bottom line is that pharmacists help patients get well” (http://www.aacp.org). That seems quite reasonable and now I can see that this is why pharmacists are needed and valued so greatly. I love helping people who need my help; it’s quite beneficial to both me and the one I’m helping.

As I was researching more about the role of a pharmacist, I found an astonishing detail that caught me off-guard: “Compounding—the actual mixing of ingredients to form powders, tablets, capsules, ointments, and solutions—is a small part of a pharmacist’s practice” (http://www.bls.gov). I always thought that was the main part of a pharmacist’s job but in reality, most medicines are produced and packaged in a standard dosage by pharmaceutical companies (http://www.bls.gov). Very interesting. So actually, pharmacists are just the distributors of drugs, and not the ones making them.

After I got what pharmacists really do, I turn to how. The next question involves the education I will be required to go through if I were to become a pharmacist. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, a license is required in parts of the U.S. Well, of course. Everything these days needs a license. I also discover that I must graduate from a college of pharmacy, pass the North American Pharmacist Licensure Exam (to obtain my license), pass the Multistate Pharmacy Jurisprudence Exam (which tests pharmacy law), and get a Doctor of Pharmacy degree, also known as Pharm.D. Before even trying to acquire all those things, I would have to take courses such as math, natural sciences, humanities, and social sciences (U.S. Department of Labor 293-294).
Use the following three correct examples to derive the major rules of proper formatting for quotations, and for parenthetical citation, both of which you must use correctly in your I-Search paper.

1. “Truthfully,” she said, “I have really never had a boyfriend-boyfriend.”

2. After all, she told me, “As far as boyfriends go, even if I did have one there’s no way that I could bring him home and say, ‘Oh, Mom, you know, this is just a guy that I like and we’re going out.’ It would be, ‘Going out for what?’”

3. Creative criminal investigative psychologists can “put themselves in the mind of a killer at the scene of the crime and from there on work out the details leading to the killer’s identity” (Douglas 30).

4. According to Douglas, “A good profiler must first and foremost show imagination and creativity in investigation” (30).

When formatting/punctuating a quotation…

When formatting/punctuating a quote within a quote…

When formatting/punctuating a parenthetical citation (note both options)…
Some Successful I-Search Conclusions

From “Let’s Start Campaigning,” by Zoe Wu (I-Search Question: How do politicians start a campaign?)

I already loved politics before I began this I-Search. But this I-Search has turned my love of politics into more of a sense of admiration. I used to think that politicians run for public offices purely for their personal ambitions to bring themselves wealth and fame. I thought that the only reason public officials actually try to do anything for the people whom they represent was because they wanted to win their next election. After learning about the grueling process of starting a successful campaign, however, I am beginning to feel otherwise.

After all, is it really worth it to spend more than eight exhausting months on the campaign trail, listening to criticisms from the opposing campaign each day, just for wealth and fame? Besides, as I have learned from my interview with Dr. Fuchs, many politicians are already wealthy before they start running for an office (which is probably why they are able to start their campaigns in the first place), and they certainly have no reason to go through the tiring process of campaigning just to earn more money that they do not even need. As for fame, just think about how many politicians currently in office you can name. For many people, the answer probably does not exceed 30. Even if you are someone who watches the news, you’ll probably be lucky to get to 50. Moreover, I have found, after talking about politics with the people around me, that a more than half of the people cannot even identify the politicians who represent them at a local level. In fact, many of these people whom I have talk to do not even know what are the local offices and their tasks.

So why then do politicians bother to start a campaign? I guess behind those unpleasant images that people often portray politicians in, these politicians do have at least a bit of goodness and passion as their motivation. Although this was not what I had expected to come out of my I-Search, the results of my search have inevitably make me appreciate the art of campaigning even more and strengthen my commitment to follow future elections.

As for pursuing a career in political consulting? Well, it is still on my frequently-changing list of career goals. What I do know is that if I ever want to become a political consultant, then I still have much to learn. The formula for starting a successful campaign, as I have come to realize, is as much as setting up a cohesive campaign team and developing a solid strategy as it is about laying out brilliant policies. People complain all the time that the format of elections is flawed in that the candidate with the best policies does not always win. While it has been historically proven that the candidates who win elections are not always the best leaders, it is still my strong belief, especially after learning the organization required to start a campaign, that the process of campaigning can give voters a good look at candidates’ leadership – that is, if voters are willing to take a good look at the campaigns and carrying out their responsibilities on the Election Day.

From “A Dream Worth Reaching For,” by Stephanie Lim (I-Search Question: Should I become a pharmacist?)

―Dropping off your prescription?” she asks kindly.
―Yeah,” the patient answers.
―Name? Date of birth?” she questions again.

With my search complete, I hope to be the person behind the counter, and not in front of it. Answering the questions and not the one asking. The one helping and quite possibly saving a life. Honestly, I never really thought about it but that person could truly be me one day.

Throughout this life-changing journey, I learned what a pharmacist goes through in terms of education, responsibilities, commitment, and of course, rewards. Although it takes a lot of hard work to earn a pharmacist degree and level of respect, the rewards, such as helping someone that needs the help, will definitely be worth it. Before this, I had doubt in myself that I could make it to the top to become a certified pharmacist. But now, I have an undeniable confidence that can’t be broken, a will that can’t be crushed. We all determine our own path in life, and I think I determined mine through this essay. Now, it no longer is a question about should I become a pharmacist, it’s about ―Yes, this is what I want.” This project was more than finding out information about my potential career; it was to cease that small, but important uncertainty in the back of my head. I learned that it isn’t all about mixing chemicals and drugs to form medications, it’s about the people you meet and help. It’s about doing something for a good cause. And most importantly, it’s about doing something you love.

In the near future, I do hope to become a pharmacist. I can’t say when that will happen—but when it does—I hope to look back on my childhood, which was the starting point for this all. The one filled with a burning curiosity and the one filled with experiments that went completely wrong.
From “Destination: Mount Kilimanjaro,” by Lindsay Bauer
(I-Search Question: What do I need to do to prepare to climb Mount Kilimanjaro?)

When I was first brainstorming a topic for my I-search, I was almost positive that I was not going to choose this one. I am curious about so many other things, whose answer would actually impact my life now, whereas this is something to prepare me for the future. After days of going back and forth between topics I finally settled on this one because I’m constantly blaming my parents for us not going, but I’m partially responsible too. If climbing this mountain is something that I really want to do, which it is, I stand a better chance of making it happen by doing as much research as I can.

I had at first envisioned myself gathering information such as what brands of clothing and hiking equipment were given the most stars by reviewers, because I honestly didn’t think that I would be able to gather enough information to write six to ten pages without going into specifics such as that. However, when I discovered that I was wrong, I decided to change the focus a little bit and gather mainly the basics. Because of this search, I now know when I want to climb Kilimanjaro (July), how to train, what kinds of weather, animals, mountain conditions and food to expect, as well as what the essentials are that I need to bring. This is what I tell my parents when they ask what I’ve learned through this writing process. “That’s good,” they respond as they show me four plane tickets. “Then you’ll be all ready when we go next summer.”

From “Should I Support the Legalization of Marijuana,” by Laura Bush

Throughout my search, I drew quite a few conclusions. For example, marijuana has many positive aspects like medicinal and economic possibilities, but at the same time, should only be used for specific reasons. I got a pretty wide variety of opinions, from someone who was entirely against legalization and weed in general, to someone who smoked on a regular basis. One of the main conclusions I came to (mostly based on my last interview), was that, whether or not I would support legalization, I wouldn’t smoke myself. Talking to Dana made it clear that I didn’t want to end up like that. When I read the books, I figured they would influence my conclusions a lot because I could trust them; they were published and printed, whereas the interviews were with people who have biases and incorporate opinions. But when I thought about it, I realized who writes the books: people. People with the same biases and opinions as in the interviews. Who should I believe? Well, I’m not sure, but I do know that I’ll continue to search and look for answers, whether or not I ever find what I’m looking for.

Another thought that crossed my mind was that weed could possibly be legalized but regulated in some way. For starters, have an age regulation like cigarettes, and like in bars, only be able to sell so much, as well as not being able to sell to someone who is high (selling alcohol to someone who is intoxicated is illegal, though it happens all the time). Things like driving laws and drug tests could also be put into effect. The real problem with the war on weed seems to be that it is ongoing, with no solution. The only people who are involved with the war are people whose opinions are strong one way or another. With no people declaring neutrality, it is harder to sort things out or compromise. The stubbornness of human nature creates a mind block on new ideas, and breeds closed-minded people. If people fighting for legalization looked at the arguments against legalization, or vice versa, the issue may be easier to solve.

Along my I-Search, I came across one quote that sticks in my mind. “Drugs may be the road to nowhere…but at least it’s the scenic route” (anonymous). The quote sort of represents my I-Search, although I don’t think it was a road to nowhere. My I-Search most definitely turned out to be a scenic route, with a few good interviews, interesting books, and funny experiences. I’m not sure I’ll ever be really clear on the topic of legalization or ever have a real opinion, but I did learn a lot in the process. When I started out the search, I thought my goal was to find an answer to my question. I was wrong. If that remained my goal, my search would have been a failure, but it wasn’t. It was actually pretty successful.

From “Why Am I So Sleepy?” by Willa Beckman (Question: “Why do teenagers get so tired?”)

When I began this I-Search all I knew was that I was tired. Not only that, but I was sick of it. I didn’t know why I was so tired or what I could do about it. When I began my search I learned that most people don’t get as much sleep as they are supposed to, especially teenagers. Also I learned that so many terrible things can happen to you if you don’t get enough shut-eye. And that I’m not a freak for needing so much sleep – that’s just the way I was born.

But more importantly, I learned how to fix this; how to finally get enough sleep. Thanks to this paper (thank you, paper!) I now have a specific method that will help me get enough sleep in future years. Not only that, but like the sleep researcher Leila Tarokh said, I now have the motivation I need. My “BEDTIME: 9:30!” poster is still hanging up on my wall. And tonight, I am happy to say, I am going to bed at 9:15.

So I guess this is a happily-ever-after ending. I learned more than I set out to learn in the beginning and I can use what I found to help me in the future. I now know how to get enough sleep; to completely change my lifestyle and make me a happy, functioning, well-rested teenager.