

I Search Papers

An I-Search paper is the story of your search to *answer a question that has aroused your curiosity*. You are the main character in the story of your search. Make sure you clearly state your question early in the paper. Tell where you looked, why you decided to look where you looked; make it entertaining—come up with an interesting or clever title. Your paper, however, should give information that you found that helped answer your question. We need facts. In the end, you should have answered your question or come darn close.

An I-Search paper is an informal paper. The word informal does not mean you can write it on a napkin in incomplete sentences. It means that you can take a *relaxed tone and use the first person “I.”*

An I-Search paper is a *research paper*. You must cite at least two periodicals, two books, two non-periodical internet resources and one interview. (“to cite” means that you use information from the work in your paper and you say in your paper where this information comes from. The MLA book shows you how to cite a text in your paper.) This paper should be the middle step between a high school essay and a research paper.

An I-Search paper should be at least *five pages long, typed and double-spaced in 12-point, Times New Roman Font*. You will use the Modern Language Association (MLA) format. That means the format of the paper will be very formal.

When you find a source with some information relevant to your question, write it down or make a copy so you can include it in your paper. The best kind of information is a direct quote—make sure you quote it exactly, word for word. When you do use information from a source, at the end of your citation put the author’s name and the page number on which you found the information in parentheses, like so: (Lang 45). Always put the period *after* the citation. This is called *parenthetical documentation or parenthetical citation*. This lets me know where your information came from. You will be using this method next year in your junior research paper.