

Island History  
Research Paper Project

2007-2008

Mr. Wilson

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### RESEARCH PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Over the course of the next few weeks you will plan, research, write and annotate a paper of five to ten pages. The topic you select should be one that interests you: the paper you write will be your personal contribution to the study of that subject. The assignment will be broken down into a series of steps, each with its own due date. Staying on schedule will require discipline and consistent effort on your part. The steps in the process are as follows:

1. Selecting a topic
2. Formulating a research question
3. Preliminary investigation
4. Thesis statement
5. Making an outline
6. Researching your topic and preparing note cards
7. Writing the first draft
8. Revising and typing the draft
10. Documentation (notes/bibliography)

#### What is a research paper?

A research paper is a documented essay, and differs from a simple report. In a report you basically compile information from experts. In a research paper, you play an active role. You select a topic that is open for debate, and formulate and support your own position. You are actually adding to the body of knowledge in the area of study.

#### How do I choose my topic?

Of all the steps listed, probably none is as important as selecting the topic. Too broad a topic will leave you overwhelmed by the sheer amount of available data. Too narrow a topic will leave you frustrated by a shortage of material. A good rule of thumb is, "Select a topic that is of interest to you, but be flexible." All topics must be approved in advance.

#### What if I can't find enough information?

As long as you have been careful in choosing your topic, you won't have any trouble as long as you expend the required effort. In addition to your school and public library, there is dial-up access to large institutions available as well as the Internet.

Your grade in this assignment will depend on, 1) the quality of your thinking and planning on the topic, 2) the quality of your research, and 3) Your skill and fluency in the writing and documentation of the paper.

#### Due dates:

Topic, question, and thesis due \_\_\_\_\_

Outline and note cards due \_\_\_\_\_

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## Research Paper Topics '07-'08

This year *Island history* is the main subject for research papers. Consider any of the following lines of investigation. Feel free to suggest additional topics if you like (advance approval required).

Wampanoag culture

Gosnold's expedition

First settlers

Important structures (houses, churches, hotels, etc)

Portuguese settlement/influence

Famous writers on MV

Important Islanders (Thomas Mayhew, Nancy Luce, Jeremiah Pease)

Whaling industry

Boats and boatbuilding

The island in wartime (American Revolution, Civil War, World War II)

Heath hen

Great hotels

Tourism

African Americans on Martha's Vineyard

Transportation (cars, trains, ships, planes)

Your family/town's history on Martha's Vineyard

Agriculture/husbandry

Lifesaving/lighthouses

Disasters

Shipwrecks

Slavery

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Research Paper Topic and Thesis

For my research project, I have chosen to research the following topic:

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Based on preliminary research, my working thesis will be:

Thesis: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: (author) \_\_\_\_\_

(title) \_\_\_\_\_

(publisher) \_\_\_\_\_

(date) \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

## Island History Research Sources

### I. Secondary sources:

**Books:** \_\_\_\_\_

_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author

### **Periodicals (magazines and newspapers):**

_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author

**Electronic sources (websites and databases)**

_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author

II. Primary sources (maps, letters, documents, drawings, interviews, etc.)

_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author
_____	_____
title	author

Note: Honors classes need a a total of 10 at least sources; College I, 8 sources; College II, 6 sources.

## Making Note Cards

The following note cards represent key **facts, terms, quotes or ideas** for a research paper on Scottish history. Your own cards should follow this format. All of the examples come from the source card #1 (shown at right). Note that each card also has a **topic heading** that is part of the writing plan.

### Industrial Revolution ①

"In the decade of the 1760's, Scotland began to experience a social and economic transformation unparalleled among European societies of the time in speed, scale and intensity" p. 107

"An Industrial and Agricultural revolution" p. 107

← This card records a key quote to be used in the paper.

### Jacobite Rebellion ①

When the army of Prince Charles retreated to the highlands, it lost its ability to raise the necessary funds to sustain his army. p. 44

(source card)

Devine, T. M. The Scottish Nation: A History 1700-2000. New York: Viking, 1999.

①

← The middle card summarizes a key idea.

### Parish Life ①

Kirk session - "permanent committee of lay elders." p. 84. Elected for life. Session clerk was usually the parish schoolmaster. p. 84

Session over saw "poor funds" school, and public morals (social, educational and judicial function). The session acted as the lowest court from which more serious offences could be referen-

← This card defines and explains a key term

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## MLA Style Documentation

Your research paper should be in MLA style format. This increasingly popular format does away with the need for old fashioned footnotes or endnotes. Instead, the "Works Cited" page (what is sometimes called a "bibliography" does the job of both.

**First** you make a works cited page at the end of your paper as below. Note that the examples include book, magazine, newspaper and internet sources.

### Works Cited

Banks, Charles Edward. The History of Martha's Vineyard. Edgartown: Dukes County Historical Society, 1966.

Railton, Arthur. "The Story of Martha's Vineyard and How We Got Here." Dukes County Intelligencer. November, 2005.

Lovewell, Mark. "Georges Bank Fishing Stocks Still Low." Vineyard Gazette. September, 2003.

"Swordfishing on Martha's Vineyard." Fishing Net.  
[www.fishingnet.org](http://www.fishingnet.org)

**Next**, any time you use a quote, fact, or idea from one of these sources, **YOU MUST CITE IT IN THE TEXT** by making an abbreviated reference in parenthesis at the end of the sentence (include work and page number). The following sentence examples have correct MLA style references to the works cited page.

When the English settlers arrived, they found that the natives used stone wiers to trap fish (Banks 26).

In those first fragile years, "the settlers could not have survived without the codfish they caught" (Railton 14).

In spite of all the regulations that have been passed, Georges' Bank fishing stocks are still declining (Lovewell).

One swordfish can yeild 500 pounds of meat ("Swordfishing").

Now, using the example of the sources that follow, write the correct information in MLA style in the parentheses:

Mayhew, Eleanor Ransome. Martha's Vineyard, A Short History by Various Hands. Edgartown: Dukes County Historical Society, 1962. *\*quote on page 78*

The island is 26 miles long and seven miles wide ( ).

"Edgartown School News." Vineyard Gazette. October 3, 1996. *\* fact from page 2C*

Mr. Jerome beamed. "This is the smartest group of kids I've ever encountered," he said. ( ).

Gannon, Ross and Benjamin, Nat. "Building the Perfect Catboat." Wooden Boat Online. January, 1992. www.woodenboat.com. *\* fact in an unpaginated article*

Over four hundred board feet of South American mahogany went into the boat ( ).

"First Wharf in Tisbury." Dukes County Intelligencer. August 1972. *\* idea on page 37*

Unloading freight requires a wharf ( ).

Allen, Joseph Chase. Spinning Yarns. Oak Bluffs: DaRosa Publishing, 1988. *\* quote on page 4-5*

"So I said. . . Why don't you try spreadin' some lard on a cookie sheet and using that for a sled!" ( ).

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## Research Paper Due Dates 2007- 2008

<u>Step</u>	<u>Due A &amp; D Periods</u>	<u>Due H period</u>
Topic selection	11/30/07	11/29/07
Sources	12/10/07	12/11/07
Index cards	12/18/07	12/17/07
Outline	1/8/08	1/7/08
Bibliography	1/10/08	1/11/08
Final draft*	2/5/08	2/4/08

\* Individual page draft due dates will be assigned later