Preparing for AP Research

So you've signed up for AP Research…this will be an adventure, but a good one, we're all in this together!

The first thing I need you to do is **sign up for Remind101**: text **@fd3ec3** to 81010

Then **get a Wake County Library card** (if you don't already have one). They have access to academic databases that we we can't through school. I'll ask to see the card on day one. If you go there to get the card, ask them about access to academic databases.

The big thing you need to actually *do* over the summer is to **think about what you might want to research**. Realize that you will be working on this all year so you need to think about topics and issues that really concern you and work on something you are *actually* interested in. If you do that, it won't necessarily be easier, but it will definitely make the work more satisfying. **Since you are all applying to colleges in the fall, you may want to think about what you intend to major in and let that guide you**. Start broad and the initial research in Sept./Oct. (literature review) will help you find the gaps and unanswered questions so you can find your specific focus.

Things to think about with respect to initial research project ideas (in no particular order):

- What discipline you wish your research to be in (science, history, art, etc.)?
- What are some current issues/problems/questions within the discipline? (Think about life/society/current events/etc.)
- Are you thinking local or global? (Do you want to save the world or just save Wake Forest?)
- Is this something that can be *realistically* investigated as a high school student over the course of a few months? (this is a big one, previous students have had great ideas, but they weren't feasible research projects for high school students)
- What kind of resources will you likely need (academic research studies, statistics, primary documents, run your own experiment, etc.)?
- Where might you look for an expert advisor?

Create a document with your initial ideas based on the questions above (or keep notes an ideas in a written notebook). I will be looking for these on day one!

It would be helpful for you to do some preliminary research just to see what is out there in the field. I'm not going to be looking for notes yet, (but if you take some, you'll have a head start…), but you do need to see what kind of credible sources are out there. If you can't find any information related to the topic/issue it might not be something worth pursuing.

General timeline: (We'll discuss specifics when the class actually starts)

Aug. - Sept: Choose a topic, preliminary research/literature review

Sept. - Oct.   Complete & write literature review, work on research proposal, seek out expert advisor

Oct.- Nov.   Finish writing lit review, design inquiry & Research methods.

Nov. - Dec.   Research proposal approved. Implement Research methods.

Jan. - Mar.   Complete Research, analyze results, write & peer review academic papers

Mar. - Apr.   Complete final papers (**Due 4/30**), prepare and deliver oral presentation & defense.

We will be using Trello to organize sources and notes, create outlines, do peer reviews etc. **Go to trello.com and create an account** before school starts then add me as a member (tgunsher@wcpss.net). It is possible to connect this to Google Drive, as well as upload other documents, so we should be covered no matter how you want to do your work.

Other stuff…
Mr. King and I will be hosting an AP Bootcamp for the rising Sophomores in August, on the same day as the Freshman Early Start day. We would love for some of you experienced, successful, AP students to help out. I'll let you know through Remind when it will be, and if you are interested you can let me know then, it shouldn't be more than a two hour commitment. Start earning some service hours early!

Have a great summer, see you in August!
Mr. Gunsher

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Some quotes from previous AP Research students:

"I feel more prepared in my future academic adventures as I have been exposed to the official process of research." - MW 2018

"The challenges stretched my thinking and creativity because I was responsible for the results and implementation." - PL 2018

"I learned a lot of life skills throughout the research process, specifically time management and how to complete a project that I am doing entirely independently." - SQ 2018

"Through this whole research process, it taught me how to properly contact people and to face the fear of public speaking for the big presentation, both of which can be very helpful in the future."
- AB 2018

"Part of my major requires me to conduct my own research in order to graduate so I'll be able to use this process throughout college." - AR 2018

"The biggest advantage of this class is actually not the Capstone Diploma, or the credit that one would receive, but rather the experience that I have acquired for future research in college such as a senior thesis. It was a valuable experience of true learning because it was up to us to either succeed or fail and it was up to us how to manage our time. The independence that is required was a breakthrough in the learning process." - MC 2018