Performance Task #1
(IRR and TMP)

(Revised/adapted from Write Anything: A Complete Guide by Laura Brown.)

Date: 4 September, 2019

The Individual Research Report (IRR)

- The first part of PT#1 is the IRR.

- For our purposes, research generally falls into two categories: (1) argument and (2) analysis. In the first category, you stake out a position on a topic and construct a thesis that clearly articulates your position and how you intend to prove it. Your research then does the work of proving the thesis. In the second category, you start with a problem statement. Your research is more exploratory in nature and seeks to better understand a problem through a variety of lenses and perspectives. Having established the context and relevance for your research, you will evaluate the credibility of sources and report back on relevant evidence from sources that support or advance a solution to the problem. Your response to the problem statement should “demonstrate an understanding of the reasoning and validity of the sources' arguments” as “evidenced by direct explanation or through purposeful use of the reasoning and conclusions in the underlying documents” (IRR Rubric, lines 2 and 3). The solution to the problem statement should be a viable and realistic solution that is represented by the research.
● The IRR falls into the latter category in that the work you do to build the IRR is exploratory (and for AP Seminar, collaborative) in nature. In this case, each group will select a topic that they are interested in.

● Let’s say your group is interested in the general topic of the American Dream:
  ○ (1) The group will collectively brainstorm to formulate a research question around the topic of interest (The American Dream). After contextualizing the problem, your group’s research question might look something like this: Is the American Dream equally accessible to students on both the optional track and the traditional track at WSHS?
  ○ (2) Your research question will address a problem, concern or issue with the American Dream that as a group you will seek to answer by conducting research (review of research) that represents a variety of lenses and perspectives on the issue and puts those perspectives in conversation with each other. In this case, your group could consider economic, political, cultural, and futuristic lenses. Within those lenses, you might consider the perspectives of students, parents, educators, politicians and policy makers, college admission officers, etc.
  ○ (3) In the process of exploring the topic/issue/problem, your group will determine a solution that is viable and credible. The solution must address the issue your group identified in the research question and must explicitly consider the implications and limitations of the solution as represented by the research. Here, your group might consider the difficulty of coming up with an adequate definition of The American Dream, systemic advantages or disadvantages to either group of students, or outlier possibilities like individual students who defy the expectations of either track.

**The Team Media Presentation (TMP)**

● The second part of PT#1 is the TMP.

● Throughout the task process, each group remains in close collaboration. This means that your group will have to develop a system for checking in with each other and for holding each other accountable for work products and deadlines. Remember, you will receive a TEAM SCORE for the TMP. After reviewing the expectations of the rubric, your group will build a team media presentation. Each member of the team will be responsible/have a role to play in presenting the problem and any proposed solution. Each student on the team will be required to answer an oral defense question about the collaborative process, which will be a part of the team score.
More about the IRR...

- It is important that your team spend time in collaboration to come up with a carefully constructed research question and strategies for how you will go about answering the question.
- Each student should be aware of the lens/perspectives for which he/she is responsible and group members should stay in conversation throughout the research process to ensure that each person is clear about the team goal and his/her role in achieving the team goal.
- The team solution must be built on RESEARCH. This means that students will have to use EBSCO or a similar database to find peer-reviewed articles that address their problem. News articles, while helpful in providing context and incentive for research, are not in themselves research.
- Build an annotated bibliography from Day 1. Share the findings of your research with team members so that you can maximize your efforts in the collaborative process.
- Do not think about building the TMP until the research has been conducted and the path forward to a solution is clear.

What is an Annotated Bibliography?

- Please refer to class notes on Annotated Bibliographies.