January 31, 2013

Dear Parents or Guardians,

Based on your child’s exceptional performance in social studies during the first half of the school year, I would like to recommend your child for an advanced Independent Research Project (IRP) during our next unit on Ancient Japan. This project is designed to challenge your student to extend their problem solving and critical skills. The research process will also help prepare your child for 21st century challenges in high school and beyond.

Students that choose to participate in the Independent Research Project will be exempt from all classroom activities and the project grades will take the place of traditional in-class and homework activities. In order to be eligible for the Independent Research Project, students must first “test out” of regular classroom activities by completing the Ancient Japan test with at least 90% accuracy. Students are responsible for preparing for the test during their own time. Students will be provided with class notes and “I Can Statements” to help them prepare for the test; however, learning the content will ultimately be the student’s responsibility.

As for the Independent Research Project: even though all work must be done by the student, assistance may be provided by parents, family members, and community experts. It is difficult to work alone without the exchange of ideas, so I encourage you to brainstorm with your child on different ideas and possible topics they may want to pursue. Students may also require help and encouragement in setting attainable goals and work schedules to complete all components of the research in a timely manner.

Please take a moment to review the project requirements in order to determine whether the Independent Research Project is an appropriate fit for your student. Independent Research Project Commitment Statements and Topic Proposals, signed by parents and student, are due to Ms. Vetrov by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I ask that this signed form is returned, even if you and your child decide to opt out of the IRP. In doing this I will know that you were aware of the project opportunity.

I am looking forward to working with your student to make this a valuable learning experience. I appreciate your support, and if you have any questions or concerns please contact me at [olga.vetrov@riversideschools.net](mailto:olga.vetrov@riversideschools.net)

Sincerely,

Ms. Vetrov

**Final Project Components:**

1. Research Proposal- 2 points
2. Annotated bibliography- 8 points
3. Research Report Outline- 5 points **Total Points Possible:**
4. Written Report (minimum 5 paragraph essay) – 15 points **40 points**
5. Creation- 5 points
6. Oral Presentation- 5 points

**Additional Requirements:**

* Students that chose to participate in the IRP will need to have access to a computer outside of school hours.
* Students must make at least 3 appointments with Ms. Vetrov before school, after school, or during lunch to discuss progress. (At least 1 meeting must be before of afterschool. Bussing will not be provided.)
* Students must have their paper edited by at least 2 people, one of which must be a peer and students must edit at least 1 peer’s paper.

**Independent Research Procedures:**

Step 1: Read and study Chapter 8, Lessons 1,2,3. Review class notes and “I can statements” in preparation for the Ancient Japan Test. You must pass the test with a 90% or higher in order to begin the Independent Research Project.

Step 2: Select a research topic: Students must select a topic to research. Topics must have a connection to Japan’s history or modern day Japan. Pick a topic you are interested in, a boring topic will make for a boring research project! I would recommend doing a search on google, or a national newspaper or news station for possible topics.

Step 3: Find your sources. Students must find at least 4 reliable sources on their topic. I would recommend finding several sources before settling on a topic to ensure that enough information is available to compile a decent project. (At least 1 source must be a book)

Step 4: Meet with Ms. Vetrov to create a timeline for completion and discuss your topic

Step 5: Create an annotated bibliography for your sources

Step 6: Create a research outline for your written report. Template is provided

Step 7: Write a research report, following APA citation procedures. (More instruction will be provided.)

Step 8: Create a Powerpoint, Prezi, GoAnimate, Video, 3D Artifact, etc. to support your written report.

Step 9: Create a brief (no more than 5 minutes) presentation about your topic. Be prepared to present to a group of peers, school personnel and parents.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_’s Independent Research Project Commitment and Project Proposal Form**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the project description and requirements and I **would** like to participate in the Independent Research Project. *I understand that in order to be able to complete this project, I must first “test out” of the class activities by preparing for the Chapter 8 Ancient Japan test and scoring at least a 90% or better on the test.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the project description and requirements and I **would NOT** like to participate in the Independent Research Project.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_

Student signature Parent signature date

My Top 3 Research topics are:

1. \_
2. \_
3. \_

After discussing this project with my parents, one personal goal for this project is:

Ms. Vetrov is available for a meeting after 7:00am most days, during lunch on Wednesday and Thursday, and afterschool between 2:15-3:00 everyday. Three dates and times that I would be available to meet with her to discuss my action plan are:

Top Choice:

Second Choice:

Third Choice:

**Annotated Bibliography Requirements**

**You must submit a typed document including a minimum of four (4) sources (with at least 1 of those print-non-web-sources).**

Annotated Bibliographies require:

1. Author or editor name(s) if available
2. Article name in quotation marks (if applicable)
3. A one-sentence (minimum) summary (**in your own words**) of the general subtopic that is addressed
4. At least one direct quotation (**you must record the page number** if this is your print source)
5. Title of the Website, project, or book in italics
6. Publisher information, including the publisher name and publishing date
7. Take note of any page numbers (if available)
8. Medium of publication (web or print)
9. Date you accessed the material
10. URL (for websites)

If this is a quotation in your source, record **who** is saying it!

#### A REMINDER ABOUT EVALUATING RESOURCES

This is a checklist of questions to ask yourself if you are having trouble deciding how appropriate a source is. You are not required to hand in answers to these questions; they are for your use only.

* Check for a list of references or other citations that look as if they will lead you to related material that would be good sources.
* Determine the intended audience. Are you the intended audience? Consider the tone, style, level of information, and assumptions the author makes about the reader. Are they appropriate for your needs?
* Try to determine if the content of the source is fact, opinion, or propaganda. If you think the source is offering facts, are the sources for those facts clearly indicated?
* Is the language objective or emotional?
* Are there broad generalizations that overstate or oversimplify the facts?
* Does the author use a good mix of primary and secondary sources for information?
* If the source is opinion, does the author offer sound reasons for adopting that stance? (Consider again those questions about the author. Is this person reputable?)
* Check for accuracy.
* How timely is the source? Is the source 20 years out of date? Some information becomes dated when new research is available, but other older sources of information can be quite sound 50 or 100 years later.
* Do some cross-checking. Can you find some of the same information in at least two other places?
* How credible is the author or the organization that created the website?
* Are arguments very one-sided with no acknowledgement of other viewpoints?
  + 1. .edu-education sites
    2. .gov-government sites
    3. .org-organization sites (be wary)
    4. .com-commercial sites (avoid)

# IRP Research Outline

# Before students begin writing their research paper, an outline must be created that breaks down the 5 (or more) paragraph essay. The following template may be used:

**Essay Outline Template**

I. **Introduction**

A. **Introductory statement** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Thesis statement: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

II. **Body**

A. **First Supporting Idea (Topic Sentence): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

2. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

3. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

B. **Second Supporting Idea (Topic Sentence): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

3. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

C. **Third Supporting Idea (Topic Sentence): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

2. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

3. **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

III. **Conclusion**

A. **Closing statement\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

B. **Reworded thesis:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

# \_\_\_\_/5

# IRP Presentation and Creation Guidelines

*Once you have written your IRP, you need to create a presentation for it.*

**A Presentation:**

Student Presentation will be judged on the following criteria:

* 1. Student presentation are rehearsed, prepared presentation, not read reports
  2. Students involve the creation in their presentation yet they do not just read directly off the presentation
  3. Students speak loudly and clearly
  4. The information is presented in such a way that prior knowledge is not necessary to understand the content of the presentation.

**A Creation:**

* This can be anything: something you construct, a demonstration, a performance, a set of drawings, video, Prezi, etc. (Don’t put it together in 5 minutes, you need to plan what you will be doing!)
* You need to create, or significantly enhance something. Do not copy somebody else’s work or simply put together pre-existing images. All pictures and information must be cited!
* The connection between your creation and presentation must be obvious. Students must reference their creations in their presentations

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# Independent Research Project

**Time Line of All Requirements**

**Friday 2/1**-Introduce Project. Establish guidelines and timeline. Students should begin studying for the test over the weekend so they can take the test next week. Students must show their IRP proposal and get it **signed by a parent**.

**Monday 2/4-**Students must bring in signed commitment and proposal form. Students will study for the Chapter 8 Ancient Japan Test.

**Wednesday 2/6**- Deadline to complete Chapter 8 Test. Finalized Research Topic due.

**Monday 2/11**- Student must have 4 approved sources with at least one non-internet. They will submit a working (typed) annotated bibliography.

**Wednesday 2/13**- Student must have 15 facts (**evidence**) and main subtopics for an outline of the paper. They must also have decided on their “creation” item.

**Friday 2/15 Final copy of annotated bibliography and outline due.** Students must have first draft of written document and creation should be close to completion. Students will peer edit first draft in class. Students should also begin preparing presentation speech.

**Monday 2/18** Students will have second draft of written document and creation should be entirely finished.

**Wednesday 2/19 Students will have final copy of written report and creation completed.**

**Presentation Day and Time is TBA**

**\*This is a tentative schedule, subject to change due to weather or unscheduled events.**