**Dual Credit English: Problem/Solution Research Paper Guide**

**Topic Parameters**

I encourage you to stick with a topic explored in your Current Events Research OR your *Frontline* analysis and to solve a problem identified there, but you may focus on a new topic if you prefer.

**Proposal arguments are among the most common arguments you’ll be called on to write!**

**Specific Requirements for this Research Paper**

* The final draft of the paper must be typed and saved by the student on a computer. It should be double-spaced and typed in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1” margins.
* Using a variety of reference materials is encouraged. Sources need to be reliable and current. Once in college, each major may have different requirements regarding the sources used in that area’s papers. Students are encouraged, and in some cases required, to utilize sources of information found outside of the school.
* The paper shall be six to eight pages in length. Papers surpassing nine pages in length will only be graded through the ninth page. The number of pages reflects the introduction, body, and conclusion of the paper only and does not include the outline, works cited page, and/or visuals (if used).
* Successfully completing requires independent and efficient work as well as the ability to follow directions and meet deadlines.

WILL YOUR SOLUTION BE PRACTICAL OR POLICY-ORIENTED?

**Either way, your proposal should include (1) a description of the problem; (2) a well-researched proposed solution; and (3) a justification for the proposed solution. The proposal must also address a particular audience.**

Think of a problem that genuinely concerns you and for which you have a solution to propose.

Write a 6-8 page paper, supported by research, that proposes this solution to a particular audience. In planning or writing your proposal, **consider the following questions:**

• Do you need to convince this audience that the problem is a problem?

• How will you introduce the problem?

• What kind of solution are you proposing: a specific action, policy, or change of outlook that will lead to policy or action change?

• How much detail regarding the solution will you need to provide for your intended audience?

• What kind of evidence will you need to provide to persuade your audience of your proposal’s feasibility and benefits?

• What kind of arguments or combination of arguments will you use in your justification section?

• What objections might your audience have and how will you address those objections?

• What alternate proposals exist and how will you support your claims that yours is the better solution?

**Example Case**

When it comes to the big idea of **traffic**, the problem may be **gridlock**, **pollution**, or the **high cost of fuel**. The solution should attend to the nature of the problem AS *YOU* IDENTIFY IT.

**REQUIREMENTS, SCORING, ACTIVITIES, & DUE DATES**

On this page you will be able to read about the logistical details of the assignment. The required components, scoring, due dates, and class activities are listed.

**Essential Components--Criteria**

Your proposal should include the following elements:

1. A claim that 1) proposes a practice or policy to address a problem or need and 2) is oriented toward action, directed at the future, and appropriate to the audience you are addressing. [action and causal claims]

2. An explanation of both the problem and the significance of your proposal. [existence, value, and causal claims]

3. Statements that clearly relate the proposal claim to the problem or need. [causal claim]

4. Evidence that the proposal will effectively address need or solve problem, and that it is

feasible. [causal, evaluative claim]

5. A consideration of the alternative proposals and conditions for rebuttal. [ethos—willing ability to consider alternatives and anticipate rebuttal]

Because it is difficult, maybe impossible, to compose in a specific structure, the following

questions are designed to help you get started writing and generating ideas, without worrying initially about the order or sequence of ideas.

**1.** **Select and Explore a Problem**

• After selecting a problem you want to write about, define it extensively, in as much detail as you can.

• Why is it controversial? If everyone agrees, there is no need for argument.

• What is the history of this debate? When did the problem begin? What changes took place that influenced the development of the problem?

• Examine the problem’s severity. Provide and analyze evidence that the problem exists to the degree you claim it does.

**2. Analyze Causes and Relevance of Problem**

• Suggest a minimum of five potential causes of the problem.

• Diagram or brainstorm some possible causes and effects of this problem.

• Rank or organize the causes: show why one or two of these are primary in contributing to the problem, OR designate a primary cause as the cumulative effect of a number of causes which, on their own, could not precipitate the problem.

• Argue against other causes being potentially primary.

• Why is your argument important and why will your readers care about it?

• What are its implications?

• For whom is it important?

• What information is necessary to help readers understand your position?

**Required Elements**

• Power Pitch Research Proposal (25 pts)

• Annotated Bibliography—at least 10 sources (50 pts)

• First Draft (25 pts)

Peer Review(s) as explained in class (10 pts each)

• Conference (in class on provided work days TBA or before/after school) (15 pts)

• Final Draft, properly formatted, with MLA works cited page—6 sources of different types

(100 pts)

**THE POWER PITCH RESEARCH PROPOSAL:**

You will use a Powerpoint presentation of 6 MINUTES OR LESS! Include each of the following on a labeled slide: (you will be cut off at 6 minutes!)

Title (with your name)

Problem

Make sure to mention who it affects

A Current or Personal Connection

Explain how this matters to you or us

Possible Solution(s)

Propose AT LEAST 2 possible solutions FROM YOUR RESEARCH, correctly citing your sources

3 Sources

Show us that it is possible to find QUALITY/RELIABLE sources on this topic AND that you have read them by explaining (BRIEFLY!) what each source provides

**Activities & Due Dates**

**(\*due dates are tentative; may move BACK, never FORWARD\*)**

• Week of October 20: Introduce Assignment; begin research

• Thursday, October 30: Power Pitch Research Proposal **DUE**

• Monday, November 10: Annotated Bibliography **DUE**

• Wednesday, November 19: First Draft for Peer Review **DUE**

• November 19-December 10: Conference before/after school or during class work days (schedule will be posted in classroom; MUST provide HARD COPY 24 hours before conference)

• Friday, December 12: Final Draft **DUE; hard copy, turned in at BEGINNING of class or late!**

**\*\*All assignments will be deducted 10% for each day late!**

**Welcome to personal responsibility! Cannot complete large tasks without managing the small ones!**