Dear AP Research student,

We are so glad you've chosen to use the skills you learned in AP Seminar and to apply them to challenge yourself for the second half of AP Capstone. The skills you have and will continue to acquire in the Capstone program are paramount to your post-high school success.

The following summer work is meant to get you thinking about potential research topics and research questions. We will continue with the QUEST Framework (College Board). Because you've mastered the skills to analyze and evaluate sources to synthesize an argument, you will begin work on designing an inquiry original to you and your interests. AP Seminar ended with your synthesis of an argument based on reputable and relevant sources, and this is where AP Research begins. Know that you will be asked to dig deep, so please start now.

It is a good idea to work on these assignments throughout the summer. This work will provide a foundation for your success in AP Research. Arriving in August with an idea of topics that interest you is the best way to start. To do that, you will have to spend some time researching your initial topics of inquiry.

The tasks that follow are tools to help you do this in an efficient, systematic way. If you feel concerned or overwhelmed, please do not hesitate to contact me. I am here to support you. I will be checking my email periodically throughout the summer, so feel free to email me.

Mrs. Gurnard
gurnardk@kennedyhs.org

TASK 1: Research Topics and Questions - Due the first day of school- August 21, 2026
Creating an effective research question is difficult, but immensely important, as a poor research question leads to poor research. You don't have to find the perfect question right away. This task will help you get started. The following concepts (focus, scope, value, and feasibility) are essential when building a research question. You may need to read more about these concepts that have been briefly described in the second chart below.

The topic you decide to work with must hold your interest for the entire year, so you want to choose something you are interested in/passionate about/not going to hate in a few months. As a first step, answer the questions listed below. These questions might help you identify your interests.

AREAS OF INTEREST: QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER. PLEASE JOT DOWN NOTES AND/OR OBSERVATIONS FOR EACH QUESTION. THESE NOTES CAN BE HANDWRITTEN OR TYPED.
Look up topics related to art or culture (music, literature, film, theater, etc.). What interests you?
Look up topics related to the economy – U.S. or another country. What interests you?
Look up topics related to the business world. What interests you?
What are some current political issues in the U.S.?
What are some current political issues globally?
What are some historical topics that interest you?
What historical topics relate to a current issue today?
What are some health/medical related topics that interest you?
Which kind of science most interests you? What are some topics in that field?
What are some current ideas/issues happening in the world of technology?
What place interests you?

What is your favorite book? Movie? Why?
What career are you considering pursuing?
In what ways do people surprise you?
What are some current issues in education?
Spend one day (include the date) observing as you go about your day (brush your teeth, drive around, walk, shop, interact, travel, etc.) What are some interesting things you notice? What do you wonder? What surprises you?

Next, complete the following reflection questions. The following elements are critical when attempting to build your research question. Be sure to incorporate the four major concepts (focus, scope, value, and feasibility) into your reflections. After answering the questions in this chart, attempt to write a research question for two different topics. These are initial questions related to your topics and don't have to be "perfect."

Responses should be a minimum of one paragraph per question and should exhibit your ability to provide an in-depth discussion. Remember to proofread for spelling and grammatical errors. The reflections should be in MLA format (typed, TNR 12-pt font, double-spaced). In addition to answering the questions from the chart, please include your two topics and a preliminary research question for each topic.

Concept	Description	Reflection Questions to Answer (Required)

Focus
Research Discipline and Topic
	• *Discipline*: Lens or section of focus
	  ○ Art
	  ○ History
	  ○ Humanities
	  ○ Hard Sciences
	  ○ Social Sciences
	  ○ Mathematics
	• *Topic*: Specific interest within a discipline that creates the basics of your research question
		• What discipline do you feel you are most successful in at school?
		• What discipline would you enjoy working in during your research?
		• What details can you add to your discipline to shape your topic interest?

Scope **Depth and Size of your Research Project**	• *Context*: The specific setting of your research • *Variables*: The items/people/situations/ issues/concepts being studied and/or manipulated	• What specific things would you like to study? People? Animals? Things? Concepts? Theories? • What type of information do you want to gather or how do you plan to work with the above? (measuring, testing, gathering opinion, etc.)

Value **Contribution to the Body of Knowledge**	• The value of your research is determined by how your contribution enhances what is already known about the topic. You are expected to either add to the current conversation of a discipline or use multiple discipline conversations to create new knowledge.	• How might your research benefit society or your discipline of study? • Why is your topic important to study?
Feasibility **Possibility of Research**	• Time, money, and resources can play a major part in determining the ability to complete your research. • You will have around two-three months to complete your actual research project (December – February).	• What will you need to complete your research? • How long will your research take? • Do you have access to the things you need for research? • What adults from the professional world can help with your research?

TASK 2: Annotated Bibliography - Due TBD, but anticipate first day of class after Labor Day weekend

Based on your work on Task 1, you will have identified two topics of interest. For Task 2, you will gather five (5) research articles related to EACH topic of interest. Do this for TWO topics of interest, (so 10 sources total…5 for each topic)

a. Two or three of these should be in the same discipline as the one you want to research (math, science, art, humanities, etc.)
b. All five should relate to your topic in some way. You should be able to use these articles to help inform your search and help you see a variety of perspectives on your topic/initial research question**.**
c. See the next page for a sample annotated bibliography and some guidelines. The first entry has a description of what you should cover, and the second entry is an actual example.
d. You will be submitting this to me by the due date, but please start NOW in determining an efficient way to save ALL files for AP Research in a place you can easily find them. This course has a portfolio requirement, so you want to be able to access all files easily and efficiently throughout the year.

One final note: Your topic of inquiry does not have to be super ambitious (i.e. curing cancer, solving world hunger, etc.) It can and should be something interesting to you that may include sports, robotics, film analysis, and phone apps to name a very few. There are endless possibilities.

Optional (Recommended): Consider an adult who is skilled in one of your potential topics. Think about who you could ask if they would be interested in supporting you during your research process. The College Board heavily encourages an expert adviser. Building a professional relationship with someone invested in your discipline will strengthen your academic paper. Start thinking about who that could be for you.

Example Annotated Bibliography (MLA Format)

First Name Last Name

Gurnard

AP Research

Day Month Year

Annotated Bibliography

Auster, Ellen. "Values, Authenticity, and Responsible Leadership." *Journal of Business Ethics,* vol. 1, no. 98, June 2011, pp. 15-23. *Academic Search Premier*, https://doi-org.libproxy.csun.edu/10.1007/s10551-011-1022-7.

Evaluative annotations include both a short description and your evaluation of the cited source. In your evaluation, critically assess the selected source for accuracy, relevance, and quality. Compare to other sources on the same topic that you have also cited to show similarities and differences. Explain why each source is useful for your research topic and how it relates to your topic. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the source. Identify the observations or conclusions of the author.

Holtschneider, Casey. "A Part of Something: The Importance of Transitional Living Programs within a Housing First Framework for Youth Experiencing Homelessness." *Children and Youth Services Review*, vol. 65, spring 2016, pp. 204–215. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2016.04.009.

The author of this article, Casey Holtschneider, Ph.D., LCSW Associate Professor of Social Work at Northeastern Illinois University, argues that in order to better serve the needs of homeless youths, research needs to be done on which types of services best meet their needs. In particular, she is interested in understanding the impact of transitional living programs (TLPs) on the lives of homeless young people. Holtschneider found that

TLPs were beneficial in many ways including: they provided a sense of family for those living in TLPS, helped them feel more understanding towards each other, and encouraged community and friendship building. I am interested in using this article because I am writing about the relationship between foster care and homelessness and I want to talk about ways to overcome the problem. This article provides strong support for TLPs as a strategy for helping move youths out of homelessness.

MLA Formatting Guidelines

- 1” margins
- Annotated Bibliography title is centered
- Citations are indented half an inch (.5”)
- Annotations are indented one inch (1”)
- Times New Roman font, 12 pt font size
- Double-spaced
- Organized alphabetically by author’s last name
- Start annotation on the next line after the end of the citation