

“HOW TO CHANGE THE WORLD 101” (research paper prewriting)

IT’S YOUR WORLD—IF YOU DON’T LIKE IT....CHANGE IT!

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ISSUES: WHAT ARE THEY?

These are persistent questions which our world needs to address in order to create a better future for our children and grandchildren. They may be local, state-wide, national, or international in scope. The term *issue* suggests that people (often including experts) disagree about how to approach the dilemma.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT? WHAT CAN SOCIETY DO ABOUT IT?

You need to educate yourself about the issue in order to comprehend its complexity and form solid opinions. Then you can propose solutions which make sense and are feasible to implement.

HOW DO I FIGURE OUT WHAT TO INVESTIGATE?

You need to do lots of reading, talking, exploring, AND THINKING!! Then you will land on a question that will hold your interest for the next two months!

WARNING: Make sure you do not have a strong pre-existing bias so you can research this issue with an open mind and a strong sense of curiosity.

THINK ABOUT IT – THE WHOLE WORLD IS WATCHING!!!

There are too many potential topics to name. The following is a list of general categories that some students are intrigued by, but push yourself to look beyond the typical, and whatever you do, follow topics that *you* find interesting.

- Animal rights
- Hate crimes
- Future of women’s rights around the globe
- School safety
- International famine and hunger
- Protecting animals or the environment
- Obesity
- Racism in today’s society
- Energy sources of the future
- The future of public education in America
- Gay rights
- The spread of HIV and other pandemics
- Stopping the spread of terrorism
- Impact of technology
- Protecting our civil rights as Americans
- ????????

WHAT TO DO: your first research project assignment (15 points)

Complete **three** of the following and submit your work by Friday, November 17.

- 1) Skim the newspaper (either online or paper) for three days in a row and clip out at least FIVE articles on topics you might want to learn more about. Paste the articles on sheets and write a very short paragraph (3-5 sentences) for each article, explaining your interest.
- 2) Interview an adult you admire for at least 20 minutes and ask him or her for ideas about social issues s/he feels are urgent. Make a list of at least five, then write a brief (5 sentence) paragraph about the interview.
- 3) Go to a local bookstore and browse the non-fiction shelves for book titles that interest you. Find at **least three** and write them down with a brief description.
- 4) Visit your local library and ask a reference librarian to help you find books relating to contemporary social issues. Choose **three** that seem intriguing, then write a brief description of each (3-5 sentences).
- 5) Make a list of five extra-curricular activities or interests that are important to you. Brainstorm at least two questions per activity/interest that could come out of those endeavors.