

During the second semester each student is asked to go "beyond the textbook" and complete the term paper assignment which is detailed below

### Basic Perimeters of the Paper

- Your assignment will be a written paper (**5 to 8 pages** in length, typed, double-spaced, size 10-12 font, 1 inch margins)
- A minimum of **three different sources** (besides Internet sites or encyclopedias) must be utilized in writing the paper. These required sources may include periodical articles, secondary source books, primary sources, newspaper articles, or videos). In any case, be prepared to utilize the various college and university libraries in the area for your research. **You must provide "hard evidence" of your sources when you submit your paper.**
- Proper citation of sources is required throughout the paper (you are asked to use **parenthetical style citation** as opposed to footnotes or endnotes) and a **proper bibliography is also mandatory** (see handouts for guidance). Please remember that when you use direct quotations in your paper this is not the only time when you are required to use citation in order to avoid academic plagiarism.
- Your final paper will be **due approximately one week before the end of the 4th marking period**. However, there will be various intermediate steps (topic identification, preliminary bibliography, thesis statement, outlining, draft) and due dates throughout the process which lead up to the finished product.
- The topic you choose may be selected from any time in **American History**, not just from those periods covered during the 2nd semester. American History is boldface because it must be on a person or event from American History. For example, a paper on the Battle of Waterloo is not appropriate.
- The paper is worth 150 points total (50 points in preliminary work and 100 points for the final paper). From this you will receive an overall % grade (ex;  $120/150 = 80\%$ )
- This overall percentage grade will comprise 40% of your 4<sup>th</sup> marking period grade

### 4<sup>th</sup> MP grade example

90% on everything else x .6 = 54%  
80% on Term Paper x .4 = 32%

MP avg. = 86%

## American History 11 Term Paper Assignment (due late in the 4<sup>th</sup> MP)

There are a total of five packets that you will receive to help you complete the term paper

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**Packet #1:** Overall Instructions – ATTACHED TO THIS

- Basic Parameters of the Paper
- Premise of the Paper: Find Something New
- Description of the Six Steps to Complete the Paper

**Packet #2:** Cover Sheets and Instructions to Complete the Preliminary Steps

- Topic Identification Cover Sheet (Step 1)
- Preliminary (Working) Bibliography Cover Sheet (Step 2)
- Statement of Controlling Purpose (Thesis) Cover Sheet (Step 3)
- Instructions to Complete a Draft (Topic) Outline (Step 4)

**Packet #3:** Term Papers For Dummies: A Step by Step Procedure for Writing a Social Studies Research Paper (Accompanies Preliminary Steps 1 to 4)

**Packet #4:** Proper Citation Packet (will be used with step 5, completion of a full rough draft of your paper, and step 6, completion of your final paper) – You will receive this once step 4 is completed.

**Packet #5:** A Sample Paper to be used as a model for your final paper (will be used with step 5, completion of a full rough draft of your paper, and step 6, completion of your final paper) – You will receive this once step 4 is completed.

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ALL OF THE ABOVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT WILL BE  
AVAILABLE ONLINE AT

[www.jruppertatmcqaid.com](http://www.jruppertatmcqaid.com)

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### **Premise Of The Paper: Find Something New**

Our history textbook may be more than 1000 pages in length, but it cannot hope to cover all of American history. It is an edited text. Think of it as you would a family photo album. While giving key glimpses of your family's history, it inevitably is a partial story of your shared experiences. With your textbook, certain people and events have been included, and many more things have been left out. A simple comparison of 3 or 4 high school textbooks will bear this point out. In this paper you will be enriching your own understanding (and often my own) of American history by telling me about someone or something important which ideally, has been entirely left out of your textbook. Often local or state history topics are excellent choices. From a content perspective (50 points out of the total 100 points) please do the following within your final paper:

1. As we do throughout the course, **connect this person or event** with the rest of the American Story. Tell me what were the causes of / background to the event or what influences (historical forces or time setting) shaped the person (ex: Abraham Lincoln was born into a time where...) you have selected.
2. Utilizing your research, identify and describe the event, person, or part of history you have selected for your topic **in sufficient detail**. (body of the paper)
3. In completing point #2 above, present a convincing argument for why you believe your person / event is significant and deserves inclusion in the textbook, Pathways to the Present. Tell me **why you feel the person or event was not included in the text**. Was it because it or they just aren't well known? Or is there some bias against this type of person or event being included in history textbooks (you may want to consider the backgrounds of the authors)? Convince me!
4. Describe in as much detail as you can what were **some of the lasting historical effects** left by this person or event. In other words, how did your topic shape the subsequent course of American history? Engage in **"What If?" history** in your discussion. If you chose an event, could it have turned out differently? Speculate on how so and how this might have impacted later history vs. the actual outcome. If you chose a person, how might history have been different had this person not lived? Could this person have taken different actions at various points in his/her life which could have caused history to turn out differently? How so?

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The other 50 points which make up the grade for the Final Draft include consideration of:

- a) Proper documentation of sources and a properly completed bibliography
- b) Proper grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure
- c) Proper length and organization (use of paragraphs, transitions, etc.)
- d) Meets source requirements, title page, pagination, etc.

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### Specific Instructions for Completion of the Paper

You will be given a packet titled **“Term Papers for Dummies: A Step by Step Procedure for Writing a Social Studies Research Paper”**. From this packet, you will be clearly instructed on what needs to be done in order to complete the following:

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A) For 50 points total

Several preliminary assignments to writing / submitting the final paper which will be due throughout the 3rd and 4th marking periods (**specific due dates to follow**). These include submission of each of the following:

1. Term Paper Topic Identification (10 points)
2. Preparation of a Preliminary (Working) Bibliography (10 points)
3. Writing a Statement of Controlling Purpose for the paper (10 points)
4. Completion of a Draft (Topic) Outline of your paper with a fully written draft of your introduction and conclusion (10 points)
5. Completion of a Rough Draft of the entire research paper, complete with citation and a final bibliographic listing (10 points)

There are other steps mentioned in the TPD guide (such as preparation of bibliography cards, note cards, preliminary outlines, etc.) that you are encouraged, but not required to use in the preparation and completion of this research paper.

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B) For 100 points total

The Final Draft of the Term Paper

Note:

While the bibliography and the proper documentation / citation of sources throughout the paper are categories of assessment on the grading rubric for the final draft of the paper, any final paper which is submitted and contains no bibliography or citation of sources **will not receive a grade higher than 60% in any case.**