I-Search Paper

This paper can be started before you complete the project as you will need some research to develop your product/performance.

However, the I-Search Paper also is a “reflective” document that asks you to think about what you learned from the experience as you look back and “reflect” on it. Make sure that you finish the paper after the Product/Performance is complete. The I-Search then becomes the story of your entire culminating project process.

Like traditional research papers, you must use proper citations, and for this you need to follow the MLA style; there are several cites listed below. There is also an MLA guide created for On Track that will change your life.

Be sure to cite sources, use quotation marks around anything you quote from another source, give credit for all ideas that are not your own, and include a correctly formatted Works Cited page. Unlike traditional research, you will actually use the word “I.”

Before you start you will complete:

My Topics - Possible I-Search Topics

This is an initial list of three topics that you are interested in and the reasons why you are interested. You will have the opportunity to scan and skim for more information on each topic.

My Questions – What I Already Know, and What I Want to Know

You will brainstorm to determine prior knowledge about a topic. You will list what you already knew about the topic, why you were interested in it, and what questions you began with. You will complete this worksheet for each of your three topics.

Some questions to guide your work in this section include the following:

- Why have I chosen this topic?
- What product will I create, and how does it relate to this research topic?
- What do I already know about this topic?
- What do I wonder about? What questions do I have? On what particular question do I want to focus?
- What do I want to “discover” in order to answer my major question?

Refer to “What Are Essential Questions?” and “Examples of Open-ended Questions” handouts to help develop an essential question for your topics. (You may very well be changing your EQ as you learn more about your topic while researching.)

My Scan and Skim – Research on my top three topics

You will complete a log of 16 searches for cites that give you information about your three topics. You will quickly read or Scan and Skim a source to decipher if a particular cite is a viable cite for you to use for your topic. Meaning, does it give you enough information and is it a reliable source to be able to write a paper based on what information it gives. This gives you the opportunity to explore if one of the topics that you chose, has