

I-Search Independent Research Projects

1. Paradoxes - Democracy or not democracy; that is the question.

Common notion not necessarily true in fact

Self-contradictory statement or observation

Woodrow Wilson said the United States must enter the Great War because "the world must be safe for democracy." Yet through the Espionage and Sedition acts, his government restricted rights guaranteed in the First Amendment.

Product

In a three-part, editorial essay explain your ideas on this paradox, using solid reasoning backed up by what really happened. Was Wilson right in doing this, or was he going against the values he said he believed in?

2. Attributes - Soldiers of yesterday and today

Inherent properties

Conventional symbols or identities

Ascribing qualities

Compare and contrast the qualities of a soldier during World War I and a soldier in today's military, not only physically but also psychologically.

Product

Create a hanging mobile that shows the different uniforms, equipment and living conditions of a soldier then and today. Also, include a written explanation of some of the psychological differences (e.g. family background, religious values, levels of patriotism).

3. Analogies - War and the American People

Situations of likeness

Similarities between things

Comparing one thing to another

Compare and contrast American public attitudes toward World War I, World War II, the Vietnam War and the Persian Gulf War.

Product

Prepare a photo essay that illustrates the public's attitudes for each war.

4. Discrepancies - The Lusitania: What if They Knew?

Gaps or limitations in knowledge Missing links in information What

is not known

At the time, the American people did not know that she was carrying arms and munitions from the United States to the British army when it was sunk by a German U-Boat, killing 128 Americans. Had the American people known this, do you think they would have supported U.S. entry into the war.

Product

First, in a fictional newspaper story for The New York Times, report what would have happened had the public found out about the weapons aboard the Lusitania. Then, write a Constitutional Amendment that would dictate what would have to happen in order for the United States to get involved in a war.

5. Provocative Questions - The "War to end all wars"?

Inquiry to bring forth meaning Incite

knowledge exploration Summons to

discovering new knowledge

World War I was supposed to be "the War to end all wars." But obviously, it hasn't fumed out that way. So the question we're forced to ask is, "Why?"

Product

In a museum exhibit, show how and why history has proven that "the War to end all wars" did not live up to expectations.

6. Examples of Change - From Bayonets to Smart Bombs

Demonstrate the dynamism of things.

Provide opportunities for making alterations, modifications, or substitutions.

The ways we fight wars has certainly changed since 1918, from a face-to-face, rifle-to-rifle stand-off to an antiseptic, technologically advanced and somewhat impersonal conflict. What are some of the reasons for this change, and maybe more importantly, what effect has it had on the way we view war?

Product

In a PBS documentary-like personal or video presentation, investigate and explain the reasons and effects of this important change that will affect all of our futures.

7. Examples of Habit - African Americans yesterday, today and tomorrow

Effects of habit-bound thinking

Building sensitivity against rigidity in ideas and well-learned ways

Read three articles and watch the films "Mississippi Burning" and "Glory." Then trace intolerance for African Americans from 1915 to today. Finally, examine your own attitudes about this minority group in our society.

Product

Write an Internet-editorial essay dated 2025 that examines the history of discrimination of African Americans from the early 1900s to that time and shows the prevailing level of acceptance to African Americans in that modern society. Also include your views of this progression.

8. Organized Random Search - "War! What is it good for? - Bruce Spingsteen

Use a familiar structure to go at random to build another structure. An

example from which new approaches occur at random.

Read Wilson's Fourteen Points and Franklin Roosevelt's Four Freedoms. Research anti-war protests during World War I, World War II, the Vietnam War, and the Persian Gulf War.

Product

Write your own formula for international conflict resolution that would eliminate future wars.

9. Skills of Research

Search for ways something has been done before (historical search).

Search for the current status of something (descriptive search).

Set up an experimental situation and search for what happens (experimental search).

Research the costs of fighting or funding wars by the United States from 1915 to the present.

Product

Prepare a graph (the type of your choice) to reflect your findings and explain some of the reasons for the results of your findings. Project what you think will happen to those costs in the next 25 years and explain the reasoning behind your projection in an oral presentation.

10. Tolerance for Ambiguity

Provide situations which puzzle, intrigue, or challenge thinking. Prose

open-ended situations which do not force closure.

Throughout the history of the planet, humans have gone to great lengths to find new and better ways to kill one another.

Product

In a one-person, one-act play, dramatize your response to the question, "Why?"

11. Intuitive Expression

Feel about things through all senses

Skill of expressing emotion

Be sensitive to inward hunches or nudges.

Choose an artist who created between 1914 and 1919 and research five of this artist's works.

Product

Create a song, poem or dance that you feel captures the essence of this artist's work.

12. Adjustment to Development Learn from

mistakes or failures. Develop from rather than

adjust to something. Develop many options or

possibilities.

What have we learned about the relationship between the signing of treaties and parties commitment to them since the Treaty of Versailles?

Product

Create a visual display that shows the results of treaties from the Treaty of Versailles through the Hanoi Dialogues to the modern day.

13. Study Creative People and Processes

Analyze traits of eminently creative people.

Study processes watch lead to problem solving, invention, incubation, and insight.

Review Gardener's seven intelligences. Choose seven people who were involved in t

War I experience and who personified the creative use of each of these intelligences.

Product

In a creative writing piece, see the world through their eyes. As if you were each one of them, write how you view the situation in the world and the United States at that time, from 1915-1919.

14. Evaluate Situation

Decide upon possibilities by their consequences and implications.

Certainly, it was very controversial whether the United States should have got involved in World War I. What do you think? Do you agree or disagree with the United States' involvement in the War.

Product:

Write and illustrate an original children's story reflecting your opinion and reasons on this topic.

15. Creative Reading Skill

Develop a mind-set for information that is read.

Learn the skill of generating ideas by reading.

Read Tim O'Brien's novel *The Things They Carried*, which deals with typical soldiers in the Vietnam War.

Product

Either in a written or performed two-person play, create a conversation between Western

Front's Paul Baumer and one of O'Brien's characters from his novel.

16. Creative Listening Skill

Learn the skill of generating ideas by listening.

Listen for information allowing one thing to lead another.

Choose 10 selections of music and 10 works of art from the World War I era and then present and connect the art with the music it best illustrates.

Product

Prepare a slide/overhead show with an audio tape.

17. Creative Writing Skill

Learn the skill of communicating ideas in writing.

Learn the skill of generating ideas through writing.

Research an issue that is an important part of the World War I era (e.g. treatment of women and/or African Americans, etc.).

Product

Write a letter to any world leader from that era that you think could do something about the problem, convincing them that they should.

18. Visualization Skill

Express ideas in visual forms

Illustrate thoughts and feelings

Describe experiences through illustrations

Visually dramatize your rage/compassion/indifference for the plight of victims of World War I.

Product

Create any visual (e.g. sculpture, puppet show, etc.) and a collection of at least five works of poetry (both your own and already published) to accompany the visual.

Critical Thinking Skills

[Academic] Analyzing Human Activities!

(ADA.)

(The 10 Foundational Activities of Humans)

1. Producing, Exchanging and Distributing (Economics)

Knowledge

Anticipatory Set: Watch the beginning of "The Great War" (REMC No. 79355) on how the United States increased its economic ties with the Allied Powers (after section 1 of chapter 10 in "The American Nation").

Tell how much more trade the United States was doing with Allied Powers in 1916 than in 1914 (e.g. in 1919 \$500 million in trade, which was 950 times the amount in 1914).

Comprehension

Explain what effect this increasing trade with the allied Powers had on the United States and its neutrality (e.g. the United States developed a stronger interest in who would win the war).