Senior Project Topic Ideas

What makes a good topic?

Ask yourself these questions as you consider topics:
- Do I like this subject matter enough to work and research on it for almost a year?
- Is it based in a subject that teachers at WSA can provide me support?
- Is the topic so broad that I am overwhelmed with too much information?
- Is the topic so narrow that I can’t find very much information?
- Can I develop a strong thesis on this topic?
- Are there primary sources available on this topic?
- Is the topic appropriate for the high school & faculty audience?
- Can I imagine a physical representation of my research that I am excited to do about this topic?

What subject areas can my topic be based upon?
- History
- English Literature
- Science & Technology
- Politics
- Contemporary Culture
- Global communities or languages
- The arts

Sample topic ideas
Here are some ideas that might spark some of your own.

History
- Prohibition – compare/contrast the 18th amendment to the Constitution prohibiting the sale of alcohol to marijuana laws in present day
- Branch Rickey – the baseball team owner who recruited Jackie Robinson and integrated major league baseball
- Black Death – examining pandemics such as the plague and its impact on world history
- Charles Darwin’s work in the Galapagos Islands to develop his theory of evolution
- Leonardo Da Vinci
- 1972 Andes plane crash in which a Uruguayan rugby team survived 72 days in the mountains before they self-rescued by hiking out
- The Rise of Mao Zedong in China in 1934

English Literature
- Choose a favorite author to profile and discuss the author’s writings
- Examine trends in contemporary young adult fiction (the Twilight/Harry Potter effect)
- Compare contrast two authors
- Discuss a famous piece of literature and its impact post-publication
- Manga and the Graphic Novel

Science & Technology
• Examine a scientific question, develop a lab and write an analysis
• Discuss a world problem and propose potential solutions
• Examine the development of a specific piece of technology (for example, the internet) and its impact on culture
• Discuss a famous breakthrough in science (DNA mapping; development of penicillin, development of vaccinations, accepting that germs cause disease, combustible engines, the Industrial Age, energy, etc.)
• Environmental topics such as dam building, endangered species, global warming, carbon footprints, glacial melting, recycling, water shortage
• Stem cell research

Politics
• Choose a current or recent political leader and examine his or her work
• Examine a off-beat political topic such as education reform; homeland security; privacy laws
• Examine the political structure of another country different from yours: The Vatican, North Korea, Venezuela, Cuba
• Examine an historical political event: The Bay of Pigs, Tiananmen Square, The Olympic Boycott(s), a political assassination

Contemporary Culture
• Ultra-Athletes or Extreme Athletes
• Mt. Everest and the impact of contemporary climbers
• Eco-terrorism
• GMO’s
• Examine a modern influential artist, musician, fashion designer, actor, author

Global Communities or Languages
A more challenging topic would be to choose a subject based in a culture of the second language you are studying and write your paper in that language.

The Arts
• The British Invasion
• The Rise of Motown
• Elvis Presley
• Banksy
• Monet
• Rogers and Hammerstein
• Alvin Ailey
• Coco Chanel
• Vogue Magazine
• Smithsonian
• National Geographic