Personal Project Report-Writing Guidelines

Criterion A: Investigating

Introduction & Goal Statement
Start by stating your goal and providing a brief overview of the project. Remember that this is the first thing the moderator will read. They should have a general idea of (1) what you will explore, (2) how you will explore it and (3) how you intend to show what you’ve learned—your product or outcome. Keep this section somewhat brief, as you will go into greater detail later in your report.

Here are some guidelines for this section:
• Keep your overview to 200-400 words.
• Write it in future tense, as this is what you plan to do—“This project seeks to...” and “I will...”
• Discuss what you will explore.
• Discuss how you will explore it.
• Discuss how you intend to show what you’ve learned—your product.

Here are some sentence starters:
• “The goal of this project is to explore the question ‘____________.’ Specifically, I will ...”
• “This project seeks to understand how __________. Specifically, I will ...”

Things a goal might seek to do:
• Raise awareness
• Participate actively
• Research
• Inform
• Create/innovate
• Change behaviors
• Advocate

Sample statement:
“The topic for my personal project is currency design and the goal is to investigate and learn about the currency designs of different countries and how they reflect cultural values and reinforce national identities. I will explore this topic by researching currency designs from five different countries. I will then explore the historical and cultural connections informing each design and then draw some comparisons among them. I plan to present my findings in the form of an automated PowerPoint presentation that will be played on the television in the student lounge during lunch for one week.”
**Connections to Learning**

This part of the report provides the reader with more context for your project. This part should discuss the following four areas:

1. How the project connects to your personal interests and intellectual curiosity
2. How it connects to a global context
3. How it is connected to prior knowledge and how the project will challenge you to further develop your knowledge and skills
4. How the project will challenge you personally.

There is no specified length for this section. It should, however, be thorough and well-thought-out. You may consider addressing each of the points above in separate paragraphs using subheadings. Or you may consider combining some of the points and write 2-3 paragraphs. How many paragraphs you include and whether or not you use subheadings will be determined by how much you have to say. If you have 4-5 sentences for each point, you might consider using subheadings. Subheadings make it easier for the moderator to find required information in your report. It also makes writing the report a little easier. Here are some examples of headings:

- Possible Headings 1
  - Connection to Personal Interests & Intellectual Curiosity
  - Need Within the Community & Global Context
  - Connection to Prior Knowledge & Skills
  - Extending Knowledge and Skills

- Possible Headings 2
  - Personal Interests & Intellectual Curiosity
  - Community Need & Global Context
  - Connection & Building Prior Knowledge and Skills

---

**Connection to Personal Interest & Intellectual Curiosity**

Start a new paragraph for this section and consider using a subheading. Here you need to clearly connect your project to your personal interests and intellectual curiosity—that which inspires, motivates or moves you personally in some way. The length of this section varies from person to person. It should be at least 4-5 longer sentences. It may be useful to think about these areas when writing this part:

- **Social.** How does it relate to family, friends, school, society?
- **Intellectual.** How is it connected to your intellectual pursuits? Academic interests, personal interests, hobbies (things that make you think).
- **Emotional.** How do you feel about the topic/project? Be sure to use feeling words—enthusiastic, saddened, excited, deeply concerned, etc.
- **Spiritual.** Is your project connected to something larger and meaningful that you believe in?

**Sentence Starters:**

- “This project seeks to explore/discover (general statement).... I chose this project because...”
- “I first became interested in __________ when ________.”

**Connecting to a Global Context**

Start a new paragraph for this section and consider using a subheading. Here you need to explain how your project is connected to one of the Global Contexts. Your explanation should be well thought-out and specific. Some questions you may want to consider when thinking about this are:

- How will this project fulfill a need?
- What do I want to achieve through my personal project?
- What do I want others to understand
- What impact do I want my project to have?
- How does this specific Global Context
enrich and focus my project?

Here are the different Global Contexts. Consult the “Global Context” section of the Personal Project Guide for more details.

- Identities and relationships
- Orientation in space and time
- Personal and cultural expression
- Scientific and technical innovation
- Globalization and sustainability
- Fairness and development

Sentence starters:
- “This project connects to the ___________. I learned about this need through ______.”
- “It is connected to the __________ Global Context. I choose this context because…

Prior Subject-Specific Knowledge & Skills

It is recommended that you start a new paragraph for this section and consider using a subheading. In this subsection, you need to explain how this project builds on your prior knowledge and skills, including subject-specific knowledge if it is relevant. Consider these questions:

- What prior knowledge does the project build upon? What is this knowledge and how did you learn it? How will your project use this knowledge?
- Which specific prior skills does the project build upon? What are these skills and how did you learn them?
- Which subject area is your project connected to? What knowledge and which skills in this subject area does the project build upon? How will it build upon them?

Now explain how this project will challenge you to develop your existing knowledge and skills and possibly learn new ones. Consider these questions:

- What knowledge will you develop and acquire from completing this project?
- What skills will you develop and acquire from completing this project?
- In what ways, specifically, will this project challenge you in these areas?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESEARCH SKILLS</th>
<th>Challenge level</th>
<th>Possible demonstrations of ATL skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: Investigating</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>• Collect and record data/sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Access information to be informed and to inform others through the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Collect, record and verify data/sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Find information specific to and surrounding the project, using a variety of media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Process data and report results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Take effective notes during project development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>• Collect, record, verify and use a range of sources/data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify primary and secondary sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Compare, contrast and draw connections among resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Seek a range of perspectives from multiple and varied sources to inform the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Make connections between various sources of information, prior knowledge and subject-specific knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Construct a Works Cited according to MLA 8 guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Collect and analyze data to identify solutions and make informed decisions to further the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Create in-text citations and construct a Works Cited according to MLA 8 guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media (print, digital, traditional, social, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Use critical-thinking and literacy skills to analyze and interpret information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Understand the impact of media representations and modes of presentation when analyzing information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Demonstrate awareness of media interpretations of events and ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Understand and implement intellectual property rights</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This project builds on my prior learning in the Individuals and Societies course in grade 9. During this course we explored _____ and developed the skills in _____.

This project will develop my understanding of _____ by _____.

This project will develop my skills in _____ by _____.

This will be challenging for me because it will challenge my understanding of _____.

This will be challenging for me because it will challenge my ability to _____.

**Personal Challenge**
Here you must explain specifically how you think this project will challenge you personally throughout the entire process. You should start by identifying specific areas and then explain how each area will challenge you and why you consider this a personal challenge. Some questions you may want to consider as you write this part include:

- Which areas of the project will challenge you the most?
- Will the research challenge you? How? Why?
- Finding a solution to a particular aspect of the project? How? Why?
- Acquiring new knowledge? How? Why?
- Managing your time? How? Why?

**Evaluation of Preliminary Research**
This section of “Investigating” consists of a general discussion of your initial research—the research you conduct before you begin taking action. Before you write this section, however, you will need to complete a few steps.

*NOTE: It is highly likely that you will need to conduct more research as you take action. You should not discuss research you conduct during ‘Taking Action’ here. Instead, you will need to discuss it in the ‘Taking Action’ section. You must apply the steps below to any research you conduct during ‘Taking Action.’*

**Outline the research skills you had you started the project**
Be specific here and detail the skill set you had at the end of Grade 9. You might make specific reference to a class in which you developed research skills in the recent past. For example, you could reference an I&S research task from Grade 9 or maybe something you did in Visual Art or Design.

**Outline the research skills you had developed through the project**
What skills have you developed since the project work began? What difficulties have you encountered while researching? What successes? What new sources have you discovered and how did you find them?

*Note: You will come back and revise this part of the report before your final submission and it should include more detail about skills developed throughout the project.*
Identify a range of appropriate sources
In this part of the report, you should show that you have identified a range of appropriate sources as outlined in Criterion A. Your preliminary research should:

- Include at least five (5) different sources representing three (3) different formats (academic journal, blog, interview, handbook, text, etc.),
- Come from different places (not from the same book or website),
- Be relevant and reliable,
- Represent at least three different types of sources (interview, book, journal article, website, magazine article, video recording, audio recording)

NOTE: Wikipedia is a useful and convenient site that can be used to gain background knowledge but always use it as a stepping-off point. Look at the sources cited at the bottom of the page and use those to see where the Wikipedia editors got their information. Depending on your goal, be wary of blogs as well as it is difficult to verify the credentials of their authors.

Evaluate your preliminary research
a) Provide a summary of your research,
b) Explain how your research will help you achieve your goal,
c) Reference all of your sources in your discussion using MLA formatting for in-text citation,
d) Discuss the research skills you developed as you conducted your research.

Because you are limited in the amount of words you can use in your report, you cannot afford to go into too much detail here. Remember that your detailed evaluation of each source can be located in your appendix—either in your process journal extracts or an annotated bibliography. Be sure to tell the reader where the detailed evaluation is located in your report. You can tell them directly following the introductory statement— for example, “For a detailed evaluation of each of my sources, please see Appendix B: Annotated Bibliography.”

What can you include in the Appendices as evidence for Criterion A?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion strand</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Some example entries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defining goal (i)</td>
<td>What is to be achieved or accomplished</td>
<td>Brainstorms; versions of the goal with annotations or revisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior learning (ii)</td>
<td>School-based and independent personal learning that is relevant to the project and global context</td>
<td>Textbook excerpts; formula sheets; notes; summaries; documents from other projects; qualifications or certificates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research skills (iii)</td>
<td>Investigating, building background knowledge, gathering data</td>
<td>Search strategies; notes from reading; interview questions; annotated bibliography; data collection and analysis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>