

# **MORENO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL INDEPENDENT RESEARCH**

Course Title: Independent Research Course Number: 0896

Department: To be determined by the focus of the research ADS Number: 0896

Prerequisites: Student must be a junior or senior in good standing at MVHS

Length of Course: One semester Credit/PRI Area: .5 credit Grade Level(s): 11-12

*Important Notes:* Students interested in enrolling in Independent Research must have the written approval of the sponsoring teacher.

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Independent Research is an exciting option offered to allow a student to design his/her own learning plan, creating an option for credit which is not limited to the curriculum. Independent Study requires initiative, motivation, and organization. The Independent Study contract is negotiated between a member of the MVHS teaching staff and a MVHS student who has completed at least one year at MVHS or is an upper level student. The student, together with the supervising teacher, will design the proposed course of study. The student is responsible for keeping a log of his/her learning activities and sharing his/her progress on a regularly scheduled basis with the sponsoring teacher. During scheduled meetings with his/her supervisor, the student is to go over his/her log of activities and explain this chronicle. It should detail the work in progress, including dates, times, description of work accomplished, questions, problems, etc. The Independent Research student is responsible for asking for help when needed, not necessarily waiting for the scheduled appointment. Independent Research is offered to provide students flexibility to meet individual student needs, interests, and styles of learning.

## **SYLLABUS (Topics studied are determined by the student and sponsoring teacher.)**

### 1. Basic Skills:

Reads, writes, performs arithmetic and mathematical operations, listens and speaks

- A. Reading--locates, understands, and interprets written information in prose and in documents such as manuals, graphs, and schedules
- B. Writing--communicates thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing; and creates documents such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flow charts
- C. Arithmetic/Mathematics--performs basic computations and approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques
- D. Listening--receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues
- E. Speaking--organizes ideas and communicates orally

### 2. Thinking Skills:

Thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, visualizes, knows how to learn, and reasons

- A. Creative Thinking--generates new ideas
- B. Decision Making--specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, and evaluates and chooses best alternative
- C. Problem Solving--recognizes problems and devises and implements plan of action
- D. Seeing Things in the Mind's Eye--organizes, and processes symbols, pictures, graphs, objects, and other information
- E. Knowing How to Learn--uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills
- F. Reasoning--discovers a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or objects and applies it when solving a problem

### 3. Information

Acquires and uses information

- A. Acquires and Evaluates Information
- B. Organizes and Maintains Information
- C. Interprets and Communicates Information
- D. Uses Computers to Process Information

### **STRATEGIES**

Interviews, field trips, Response journal/learning log, summary, lab experiments, I-search, work sheets, student produced artifact (e.g. drawing, poem, chart, video), Field notes, reflection journal, self-assessment survey, simulation, modeling

### **ASSESSMENTS**

- **Forced Choice Items** – multiple choice tests, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, matching.
- **Essay Questions**
- **Performance Tasks** – (e.g. Lab report, speech, model, portfolio)
- **Socratic Seminar Rubric** – The framework of the rubric is listed below:
  1. **ACADEMIC SKILLS** – Textual understanding; speaking; listening; knowing how to learn; critical thinking
  2. **SOCIAL SKILLS** – Teamwork; Sensitivity/Good manners
  3. **PERSONAL SKILLS** – Honesty and integrity; Willingness to accept criticism; Responsibility and initiative
- **Teacher Observation** – Group participation and skill development
- **Student Self-Assessment** – Students reflect on what they learned, strengths and weaknesses, and goal setting

### **SUGGESTED TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS** (To be determined by the student and sponsoring teacher)

Textbooks; Videos, workbooks, articles, Internet, Field Trips, on-line courses, SOSNet courses, correspondence courses, or others subject to MVHS Governing Council approval

### **SUGGESTED TITLES/AUTHORS WEB SITES** (To be determined by the student and sponsoring teacher)

**STRAND I: READING AND LISTENING FOR COMPREHENSION****CONTENT STANDARD: STUDENTS WILL APPLY STRATEGIES AND SKILLS TO COMPREHEND INFORMATION THAT IS READ, HEARD, AND VIEWED.**

A. BENCHMARK: Listen to, read, react to, and analyze information

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
10-12	1. Express reflections and reactions to print and non-print texts as well as to personal experience by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• composing and presenting reflective texts that give an audience an understanding of complex thoughts and feelings, a sense of significance, and a sense of encouragement to reflect on own ideas</li> <li>• responding to texts make connections, reflecting on cultural and historical perspectives, examining own response, and recognizing features of the author's</li> <li>• use of language and how the writer relates to the subject so that the audience will empathize</li> </ul> 2. Analyze and critique texts from various perspectives and approaches by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• developing critiques based on establishing and applying clear, credible criteria for evaluation</li> <li>• substantiating assessments with reasons and evidence</li> </ul>	1. An art student doing an independent project may look at the art of a particular artist, and then read critics written about these same pieces of art. The student may produce a piece of art using the same style and techniques as the artist studied, then write a critic on their own piece using the elements from the critics they have studied.  2. A music student doing an independent project on hip-hop may listen to a foundation level hip-hop piece of music. The student would then read critics that presented both positive and negative elements of hip-hop. The student would then write a rebuttal to the critics both agreeing and disagreeing with the critics while using proof from the music chosen.

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B. BENCHMARK: Synthesize and evaluate information to solve problems across the curriculum

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
10-12	1. Identify and defend research questions and topics that will be important in the future. 2. Use a variety of resources to gather information to critically analyze texts to gain meaning, develop thematic connections, and synthesize ideas. 3. Demonstrate increasing sophistication in the selection and use of resources to define issues and use argument effectively.	3. A student doing an independent project comparing World War II to the present war in Iraq, would <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Create a list of questions that would need to be answered to fully understand the similarities and differences in the two wars; such as: causes, technology, strategy, who is involved, ending, effects on USA and on the nations involved.</li> </ul>

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
		<p>B. Gather information using internet, textbooks, other specific books and primary sources.</p> <p>C. Whatever the method of presentation (illustrated paper, timeline, Power point presentation, etc.), the student should address a recommendation to the President of the USA concerning war in the future based on the comparison completed in the research.</p>

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C. BENCHMARK: Demonstrate critical thinking skills to evaluate information and solve problems

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
10-12	<p>1. Research, define, and present issues of public concern by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• using a variety of resources such as media centers, on-line resources, interviews, and personal reflection</li> <li>• specifying the nature of an issue, including claims made and the reasoning that supports those claims</li> <li>• organizing and delivering a presentation that specifies reasons for the claim and makes a clear stance on the issue.</li> </ul> <p>2. Identify and analyze the philosophical assumptions and basic beliefs underlying an author's work.</p> <p>3. Analyze the effects on a text of the attitudes and values of a period in which the text was written.</p>	<p>1. A biology student project on water pollution in Moreno Valley</p> <p>A. Use the scientific process to: define a problem/theory</p> <p>B. Use resources including: writings; experimentation on the waters in the Moreno Valley; interview at least two government agencies involved with water concerns and one non-government agency with water concerns; and one local politician.</p> <p>C. Deliver a presentation (verbally or in paper form) of a scientific conclusion showing understanding of all the issues involve.</p> <p>2 and 3. A student independent project for Spanish might include:</p> <p>A. To read <i>Don Quixote</i> in Spanish</p> <p>B. To analyze the basic beliefs and philosophy expressed in the book.</p> <p>C. To research the history of the time the book was written to include: political and philosophy of the time, social classes of the time, and religion of the time.</p> <p>D. To present their analysis and findings with a conclusion evaluating the book's relevance to the present day.</p>

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D. BENCHMARK: Apply knowledge of reading process to evaluate print, non-print, and technology-based information

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
10-12	<p>1. Read a wide variety of informational and literary texts and selections to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand and express reflections and reactions to print and non-print text, as well as, personal experience</li> <li>• inform an audience</li> <li>• develop an argument to support an issue or position</li> <li>• conduct research and make in-depth analyses of information</li> <li>• synthesize ideas and generate new understanding to increase a knowledge base</li> </ul> <p>2. Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of different cultural perspectives through selected literary works.</p> <p>3. Analyze recurring themes and patterns in literary selections and oral traditions of other cultures.</p> <p>4. Identify and select appropriate text for a specific task using an array of advanced technologies (e.g., web resources, interactive media, software, email, networks).</p>	<p>1. A student's independent project in political science may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Selection of one right written in the Bill of Rights.</li> <li>B. To complete all of the following tasks in a discovery of the complexity of the issue:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interview people who may be involved in that right.</li> <li>2. Using internet sources and blogs: find statistics on how the right is being used presently in the USA; identify pro/con sides to the right; use two editorials and identify the bias in each article, and analyze several political cartoons for bias.</li> <li>3. Through a presentation form an opinion on the right and what restrictions should be placed on this right based on the research done.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>2. A student's independent project in World Literature may be to study the French Revolution through literary works of the period. The student would then read books such as <i>Les Miserables</i>, <i>Red and Black</i>, etc analyzing them for the political and social themes of each social class involved. The student could then present the social and political issues in a series of dioramas, pictures, or scenarios.</p> <p>3. A student's independent project in any literature class may be to compare how women are written about by several different societies. The comparison could also include different eras of time. They may compare things like women slaves in China, Japan, Africa, Amerindians, USA pre-Civil War.</p> <p>4. In a computer class independent project, a student may want to do a project that involves selling a product. The student would study the characteristics of newspaper, television, product, internet ads. The student would then create a newspaper ad using Photoshop; created a label using Photoshop, create a pop-up ad, created a webpage to sell the product that included interactive sections, create a TV ad, create and create a radio ad.</p>

**STRAND II: WRITING AND SPEAKING FOR EXPRESSION**  
**CONTENT STANDARD 2: STUDENTS WILL COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY THROUGH SPEAKING AND WRITING.**

A. BENCHMARK: Communicate information in a coherent and persuasive manner using verbal and non-verbal language

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
10-12	1. Develop oral formal presentations using clear enunciation, gestures, tone, vocabulary, and organization appropriate for a particular audience. 2. Make explicit use of various techniques for effective presentations (e.g., voice, inflection, tempo, gestures). 3. Organize and deliver an argument so that an intended audience will respond by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• wording the claim clearly</li> <li>• specifying convincing reasons to support the claim</li> <li>• adopting a stance and appropriate tone toward the issue</li> </ul> 4. Design and apply criteria for evaluating oral presentations and arguments before delivering them.	1 and 2. A student interested in becoming an elementary teacher, would create an independent project to work with an elementary teacher and develop a lesson to teach for art, music, social studies, reading, etc.  2 and 3. A drama student's independent project could be to write and present to an audience a character dilemma (this could include other students). The dilemma would be scripted and acted out to the audience. The student would then present to the audience, through scripted acting two possible endings/solutions. The student would solicit the audience to determine which ending/solution would be better.  4. An independent project for a debate student would be to design a rubric for judging a debate on a particular controversial issue such as abortion. The student would study several different types of rubrics and research behind writing rubrics. The student would then write a rubric and use the rubric to judge an actual debate.

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B. BENCHMARK: Apply grammatical and language conventions to communicate.

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
10-12	1. Demonstrate the ability to comprehensively, coherently, and concisely expound upon ideas.	1. A math independent project may take the theory of gravity. The student's ultimate goal would be to present and to demonstrate to a class of freshmen what the theory entails, variations on the theory, and current research being done on the theory. The student would do this through presenting a paper to the students. After the freshmen had read the paper, they should ask the student questions. The student should be able to answer clearly and knowledgably all questions ask by the students.

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C. BENCHMARK: Demonstrate competence in the skills and strategies of the writing process to inform and persuade

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
10-12	1. Use and apply grammatical, metaphorical, or rhetorical devices to inform and persuade others. 2. Use the elements of satire in persuasive writing. 3. Analyze own work for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• consistency of facts, ideas, tone, voice</li> <li>• development of argument or plot</li> <li>• clarity and conciseness</li> </ul>	1, 2, and 3. A literature independent project might be to read Voltaire's <i>Candide</i> and then write a present day <i>Candide</i> using several of the techniques used by Voltaire.

**STRAND I: HISTORY****CONTENT STANDARD 1: STUDENTS ARE ABLE TO IDENTIFY IMPORTANT PEOPLE AND EVENTS IN ORDER TO ANALYZE SIGNIFICANT PATTERNS, RELATIONSHIPS, THEMES, IDEAS, BELIEFS, AND TURNING POINTS IN NEW MEXICO, UNITED STATES, AND WORLD HISTORY IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND THE COMPLEXITY OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE.**

BENCHMARK: Use critical thinking skills to understand and communicate perspectives of individuals, groups, and societies from multiple contexts.

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
10-12	1. Understand how to use the skills of historical analysis to apply to current social, political, geographic, and economic issues. 2. Apply chronological and spatial thinking to understand the importance of events. 3. Describe primary and secondary sources and their uses in research. 4. Explain how to use a variety of historical research methods and documents to interpret and understand social issues (e.g., the friction among societies, the diffusion of ideas). 5. Distinguish 'facts' from authors' opinions and evaluate an author's implicit and explicit philosophical assumptions, beliefs, or biases about the subject. 6. Interpret events and issues based upon the historical, economic, political, social, and geographic context of the participants. 7. Analyze the evolution of particular historical and contemporary perspectives. 8. Explain how to use technological tools to research data, verify facts and information, and communicate findings.	1-8. An independent project may be to study immigration in the USA from 1900 to the present. The student would be expected to research using primary and secondary sources found in books and on internet. Student's would need to find primary sources from different ethnic groups and compare and contrast their experiences while distinguishing fact from emotional statements, and exploring bias in the writings. Students should then apply the past US immigration to the immigration problems of the present day comparing similarities and differences while looking for possible solutions. The student would present their findings through a power point presentation that must include music, pictures, and show different views on the same issue.