

Spanish and the Job of Your Dreams

Purpose

This project will help you discover your potential for success in the future as a bilingual candidate for the career of your choice. You may have thought about a potential career and hypothesized about how knowing Spanish will help you attain the job of your dreams. Now it is time to see if your hypothesis is correct.

Product

The project you are about to embark on is called an “I-Search” research project. It is a unique form of the traditional research paper, written in the first person (“I” form). Simply stated, it is a documentation of your search for information on your topic: “How Spanish will help me get the job of my dreams.”

Process

1. Complete the “I-Search Beginner’s Outline” provided below to guide your searching in the library and to help keep track of information found.
2. Prepare your actual I-Search paper, remembering the following guidelines:
 - Check at least five sources.
 - Document each source within the text using MLA format.
 - Describe what you found in each source including whether it was helpful or not.
 - Use your findings to draw a conclusion. If you were unable to find convincing arguments related to Spanish language knowledge and your career, you should formulate an alternative hypothesis; based upon your research, how do you **think** that knowing Spanish will be an asset in your future career choice?
 - Type and double-space your paper, using a 12 point font. This paper should be a minimum of three pages and a maximum of four pages.
 - Include a bibliography using MLA format.

Evaluation

Your I-Search project will be assessed according to the following criteria:

Task	Point Value
Paper exhibits thorough analysis with clear support of how proficiency in Spanish is an asset in your chosen career.	20
I-Search Beginner’s Outline is attached.	10
Five documented sources are included within the text of the paper and a bibliography is attached.	10
Attention is paid to overall neatness, mechanics, spelling and grammar.	10
Total points	50

I-Search projects are due on _____. Be prepared to submit your completed paper, this rubric and the I-Search Beginner’s Outline.

Name _____ Class _____

Good luck and happy I-searching!

I-Search Beginner's Outline

1. **Define your task.** What is the question that you are trying to answer?

What are three “sub-questions” that you can ask in order to lead you to answer the main question?

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. **Brainstorm** at least three sources where you can begin searching for the answers to the above questions.

- a.
- b.
- c.

3. List the five sources where you have **located** information to be used in your final I-search paper.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

4. What information will you be able to **use** in your paper to answer the main question?

5. How will you **organize** and **present** your information in the I-search paper?

6. **Reflect** on your findings. If you did not locate any information specifically helpful for answering your main question, state your re-formulated hypothesis here.

Erin Powers on Big6 ...

During the school year, 2001-2002, I had the opportunity to become acquainted with the Big6. Margaret Lincoln, our library media specialist at Lakeview High School in Battle Creek, Michigan had organized a workshop to provide Big6 training for 48 educators from local school districts in southwest lower Michigan. The workshop facilitator was Big6 cofounder Bob Berkowitz. Funding had been supplied by a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Teams of teachers and librarians participated in the initial training and then collaborated together to develop or modify an existing lesson so as to reinforce the Big6 approach. I am pleased to share with you a lesson that I revised with Margaret's help.

I teach Spanish. In an effort to support a school improvement goal tied to career education, I assign my students to write an I-search paper on how knowing Spanish will help them attain the job of their dreams. In the past, it was difficult for me to help students with the research portion of this assignment. Students became frustrated. I was often unable to direct them to appropriate sources of information. If a student was interested in becoming a teacher or entering a health profession, it was relatively easy. Such individuals inevitably come in contact with Spanish-speakers in our rapidly growing global community. I had more difficulty advising a student who wanted to enter a technical scientific field. I would suggest beginning a keyword search with such terms as "bilingual" and "Spanish" and "nuclear engineering" for example. When such a tactic was unsuccessful, I would encourage a student to look for demographic information about the city or state in which he might like to live. If Spanish could not be used directly in a job situation, perhaps it would be of use through everyday encounters in the community.

My exposure to the Big6 allowed me to re-work the I-Search assignment. Prior to going to the library with students, I gave them an "I-Search Beginner's Outline." Task definition (writing down a question to be answered) and brainstorming of sources would take place in the classroom. Once we arrived in the library, students would locate the information they needed. On their I-Search Beginner's Outline, they would write down the best sources to use and organize their information into a preliminary outline for writing their papers. Finally, they would reflect on their search process in order to determine if they had really been able to answer their initial question. If not, they would formulate a hypothesis about how knowing Spanish might help them in pursuing a chosen career.

Thanks to the use of the I-Search Beginner's Outline, our library research experience became an extraordinary success. Not only did students ask fewer questions on where and how to search for information on their own, but the students also needed less help in writing the final drafts of their papers. They knew exactly what my expectations were for the assignment and how to meet these expectations. By incorporating the Big6 into instruction, we give our students a head start in learning how to research and learning how to solve any problem that might arise in the course of their daily lives (whether it be buying a birthday present or giving an oral presentation). Our students will not only be successful in high school, but also in college and even in the "job of their dreams."