

Instructions for the Mississippi Writers Project of Starkville High School

Many twentieth century writers have roots in Mississippi. For this project, students will research one of these authors and the contributions the author has made to the literary world. The writer must have been born in Mississippi or have lived an important part of his/her life in Mississippi. The student will read one or more of the works by this author and write a review of that work or works. The student will also write a biography of the author using traditional resources as well as technological resources such as computers that access on-line library card catalogs, CD-roms, or the wide world web for searches on the internet. The student may also use videos. At the end of the biography the student will include a bibliography/works cited page of all related sources used by the student in his research on the author and his/her works. The students should attempt to directly contact the author if possible by mail, email, phone or fax. We will try to invite some of the writers to the class. An important part of the project will be to find as many as possible useful related web sites. All information will be placed on the project of Starkville High School on the Web called Mississippi Writers and Musicians where it will be available for other students and interested persons accessing the web site. The site can be viewed at <http://www.SHS.Starkville.K12.MS.US/mswm/MSWritersAndMusicians/>

Objectives

- To increase the students' awareness of their own literary and cultural heritage.
 - To improve the research and writing skills of the students
 - To involve students in research which makes use of computers, CD-Roms, the internet, on-line catalogs, and videos as well as traditional resources.
 - To encourage the reading of more books by students and others who may access the resulting web site.
 - To create a classroom environment in which technology supports the learning and teaching process.
-

The Finished Project Will Include

1. A **biography** of the author (with sources properly cited) and a photograph (photos must also give credit to source).
2. A **list of all the books written by the writer** or a list of the most important short stories or poems by the author
3. An **interview** which you conduct with the author by telephone, email, letter, or fax.
4. A **written book review of a novel or several short stories, essays, poems, or non-fiction by the author.**
5. A bibliography/**works cited** section listing all of the resources used by the student in the project.
6. A list of all useful **related web sites**/addresses for sites on the web which are related to the author or his works (Note: These addresses will be hyperlinked from our page to the actual web site). **Write a sentence or two explaining what can be found there.** The

best way to correctly **copy the address is to do a copy/paste when you use the link button in Composer.**

7. A **class presentation** which details the research done by the student on the author and novel or writing of choice

*Please note: The writers on the list may not be complete. If you know of another Mississippi author, please feel free to suggest that author, even if it is not an author you wish to use for your project. In addition, **if you discover the book for some reason offends you, you may choose another book, skip that section, or mention it in your review as offensive, unnecessary, or used for verisimilitude (whichever applies).**

Additional Instructions

All materials in final project must be typed and saved on a 3 1/2 floppy disk (in the **same file/folder**) which you will turn in with your project. You will also turn in **two hard copy versions** of your project (one to be placed in your writing portfolio and one to be graded and used for web project). If possible, type your paper using **Netscape Navigator** or **Netscape Communicator** since this program contains **Composer** (making it very easy for you to put your project into HTML and make it web-ready.) If your computer will not support this method, try to use Microsoft Word or Word Perfect. If you do not have any of these programs, save your project in TEXT as it will make it easier for us to turn the information into HTML for the web.

Follow This Order For Final Paper

SAVE the following in the **SAME** file. Follow setup used on web pages already up. Your class will go to the computer lab to learn how to set up your web page. It is not difficult.

1. **MAJOR WORKS** listing ALL the works by your writer
2. **BIOGRAPHY** of your author, using parenthetical notes when necessary. Use research paper (MLA) guidelines.
3. **INTERVIEW** with your author or someone who knew the author personally. See <http://www.SHS.Starkville.K12.MS.US/mswm/aboutus/wquestions.pdf> for ideas and suggestions on questions you might want to ask your author. Be sure to think of other questions that are appropriate for your author and his/her life and work. Also, remember to **thank the person** you interview for helping you with your project.
4. **ANALYSIS/CRITICAL REVIEW of one major work** by your author or several smaller works
5. **IMPORTANT RELATED WEB SITES** with sentence or two description of what is available on that sites. Remember to **click on all highlighted words for additional sites/information/addresses**. Instead of writing out the address, link your sentence to the web page using copy, then link, then paste in Netscape Composer.
6. **WORKS CITED/Bibliography** which follows MLA form and documents all sources used in paper, including any **photographs** you use.

***DO NOT USE OUR SHS WEB SITE AS A SOURCE. WE ALREADY HAVE THAT INFORMATION!!**

Suggestions For a Web Search

1. Do traditional research for your biography using **books, magazines, encyclopedias, newspapers**, etc. You can use this information to begin your search on the web as well. Your paper should have at least **three traditional sources**.
2. Try the netscape searches (google, Lycos, Infoseek, Go Search, LookSmart, HotBot, Excite, Magellan, Yahoo, Alta Vista, Web Crawler, etc. An excellent search is <http://www.google.com> Please realize that you may have to go through 100 entries to find what you really need.
3. From home you can also access the Magnolia database at <http://nt.library.msstate.edu/magnolia>

Other ideas:

- Begin by searching using the AUTHOR'S NAME OR WORK placing quotation marks around the words
 - Search for the home page of the author's HOMETOWN. They often include famous people who were born or lived in the town. You will find this info after doing some research.
 - Check the COLLEGE web site from which your author graduated
 - Check the TOWN WHERE HE/SHE NOW LIVES
 - Check the COLLEGE where he/she is teaching or has taught
 - Check the PRIZES OR AWARDS HOME PAGE that your author has won.
 - Check the **PUBLISHER'S WEB SITE**. . They often have web sites and even press kits with info on writer (if you ask).
 - Check amazon.com The site often has book reviews and list all books by the author, whether or not they are in print.
4. Use information you get in your interview to complete the biography!

Remember that ALL sources, including photographs, must be properly documented!

Other Things Due

1. **All your note cards and source cards**, whether you used them in the final paper or not-- but DO NOT TURN IN ANY BLANK NOTE CARDS. Keep them for next year!
2. **All your rough drafts** for your biography and your book analysis/review.
3. **Xerox copies of all your information** from traditional sources (books, newspaper articles, encyclopedias, etc.)
4. **Printouts of all web sites** used in paper as well as those included in related web sites section that are about your author or that refer to your author.

5. **DISK** on which you saved your project. Be sure **your name and your author's name is on a label** on the disk. Place disk in an envelope and tape it to the inside folder of your project.
 6. **Two hard copy printouts** of your project.
-

ORAL PRESENTATION

The day after your project is due, you will give an oral presentation to the class of your findings. This presentation will be a test grade. Practice what you are going to say. Find appropriate visual aids. Read an important passage from the book to show the author's style, characterization, plot, etc. Eye contact, voice, preparedness, choice of visuals, will be important for this grade as well as your research.