



Santa Clara High School

Junior Capstone Project

“Over the course of the year, in conjunction with reading and analyzing literature focused on the growth and development of the United States of America, students will interview at least 12 people from a predetermined sector of the community. Students will reflect on their research and gain a deeper understanding of the world around them. As part of their growth as Socially Responsible Saints, students will be required to explore the depth and diversity of the world around them and seek to understand the circumstances of others. This project will be guided by a central challenge to “define America” through the eyes of the student, and the community.”

“This project will ask students to reflect upon the beauty of their community, as well as the challenges the community faces. Students will explore how systemic injustices impact their community directly. Students will also be challenged to explore their own worldview and critique how that worldview has developed as well as how it influences their perception of society. Lastly, students will be expected to reflect on the connection between their Faith, and the image of American society that they describe.”

*The English Department Instructional Handbook
Santa Clara High School*

Task:

You, a talented scholar, will now seek to understand what America is. This project will be undertaken partially in class and partially on your own. In class, you will read and review numerous texts that have influenced or in part formed American thought, culture, and ideologies. These texts, like America herself, are complex and at times, contradictory. We will work in class to decode these texts together.

On your own, you will explore the perspectives of those around you in your community. To do this, you will interview 12 people; each from a different walk of American life. It is your choice who you interview and what questions you choose to ask.

Finally, you will unite your understanding of our in class texts, your own beliefs, and the perspectives of those in the community that you have gathered to synthesize an answer to the question: “What is America”

You will report your synthesis in an APA formatted paper, approximately 7 pages in length. Additionally, you will create a presentation which you will formally deliver to a panel of teachers and peers.

Purpose:**Each Capstone Project Supports the SAINT Integral Student Outcomes**

This assignment will help to grow your awareness of the world in which you live. The SAINT ISO focus for this assignment is “Socially Responsible”. By engaging with diverse ideas, worldviews, and people, we hope to empower you to become a more active participant in society. We hope that you embrace the mission of Catholics to enable all persons to share in the common good, the goods of the society in which they live.

Each Capstone Project Demands the Exercise of a Critical Academic Skill

In this project you will explore complex texts in their original form. You will be required to rigorously analyze them and explore the relationships between ideas and perspective presented in them. Then, you will integrate these ideas with your own and those you obtain through first-hand research to create a genuinely new piece of knowledge. This assignment requires extensive reading, analysis, formal writing, and public speaking.

Evaluation:

Your paper will be evaluated in two ways:

- 1.) Through use of the AP Language Synthesis Essay Rubric (AP Language) OR the Persuasive Essay rubric in the SCHS Writing Manual (English III/IIII)**
- 2.) A Content Rubric used by the panel receiving your presentation**

Panel Content Evaluation Rubric

| Content Area | Notes | Score (Go/Go w/Revisions/No-Go) |
|---|---------------------|--|
| | Content | |
| Proposes a unique definition of “America” | | |
| Uses three or more foundational American Documents | | |
| Discusses role of underrepresented voices in American society | | |
| Traces American Democracy to Philosophical Roots | | |
| Integrates notes from at least 6 interviews | | |
| Reflects on the connection between faith and social responsibility | | |
| Suggests a way to support the common good of the nation | | |
| | Presentation | |
| Visual aids are well designed, support presentation | | |
| Speaker uses appropriate pacing, tone, volume, and body language | | |
| Speaker addresses questions thoughtfully – demonstrates preparedness | | |

Evaluator: _____ **Date:** _____