

Your Essential Question

Research begins with an Essential Question. To determine your essential question for your Graduation Project, take a broad topic in which you have an interest and ask the following questions: **Why? How? Which? What if? Should?** You do not want to just “tell about” or “do a report” on your topic.

Listed below are examples of essential questions in different topic areas. Use this list as a springboard for determining your own topic of interest. These are some of the possibilities for graduation topics. This list should not be construed as all inclusive.

Fitness

Why should society support the fitness movement for economic benefit?

How has the fitness revolution changed the way we view the importance of exercise?

Which decade started the fitness movement and why?

What if fitness technology were eliminated—how would fitness, as we know it, be impacted?

Should fitness be promoted as a reward in the workplace?

Fashion Design

Why have some fashion trends flourished and others diminished?

How has fashion changed with the development of new technology?

Which historical era has most influenced fashion trends today?

What if design were taken out of fashion?

Should fashion play a part in one’s socioeconomic status?

Culinary Art

Why are foods important culturally?

How do culinary differences reflect cultural differences?

Which fast foods chains are doing the most or least to promote and support healthy eating and lifestyles?

What if one did not have refrigeration?

Should fast food chains be held as accountable for poor health as tobacco companies?

Politics

Why don’t all candidates have the same resources and access to the media?

How will the selection of the president now affect the Supreme Court and society 20 years from now?

Which president had the most positive impact on the U.S. economy?

What if we had a woman or other minority president?

Should Arnold Schwarzenegger be allowed to be president?

Global Warming

Why should the public care about global warming?

How do oil companies play a role in the public’s perception of global warming?

Which counties show the most production of CO₂?

What if Kyoto Protocol were ratified immediately?

Should the government play a role in informing the public about global warming?

U.S. Immigration

Why is immigration such a hot issue in the U.S.?

Why will immigration have an effect on the economy?

How should the U.S. (or any country) treat illegal immigrants?

How does illegal immigration affect the American economy?

Which policies for immigration work and are fair for everyone?

Which factors need to be considered before making a decision about illegal aliens?

What if all the illegal immigrants were deported in the next six months?

What if illegal parents have children in the U.S.?

Should immigrants who have been working in the U.S. be granted amnesty?

Should illegal aliens be forced to leave the U.S.?

Habitat for Humanity

Why is it beneficial for a community to support Habitat for Humanity?

How are Habitat for Humanity locations chosen?

Which areas of the country profit most from Habitat for Humanity?

What if Habitat for Humanity work is damaged?

Should Habitat for Humanity projects be funded by the public?

Video Games

Why are video games appealing?

How does online participation affect video game popularity?

Which video games have been linked to violent behavior and why?

What if video games were restricted, outlawed, or legally regulated?

Should video games be used as educational tools? (singing games, Dance Revolution, and Guitar Hero)

Religion – Hinduism

Why should Hindu values and morals be taught?

How should people interpret Hindu traditions?

Which god has been important to Hindu culture in America and why?

What if America were a predominately Hindu society?

Should Hinduism be a recognized religion by the U.S.?

Football

Why is football so popular in the U.S.?

How has the public broadcasting of football changed the game?

Which illegal substance has had the most negative effect on football and why?

What if professional football players went on strike?

Should there be a cap on the amount of money a professional football player makes?

Home Schooling

Why do parents choose to home school their children?

Why should home schooling be allowed?

How do home school students perform compared to students in public schools?

How does home schooling benefit students?

Which issues encourages people to choose home schooling over public schooling?

Which states have the most widespread use of home schooling and why?

What if more people chose home schooling over public schooling?

What if colleges denied entrance to home schooled students?

Should public schools change their policies in light of the rise in home schooling?

Should states have the right to deny parents the chance to home school their children?

Alternative Energy Sources

Why should alternative sources of energy be considered?

Why don't more companies take responsibility for implementing the use of alternative energy sources?

How would the government react to industry conflicts over alternative fuel use?

How can a process for implementing alternative fuel sources be developed in the U.S.?

Which types of alternative energy should be developed further?

Which long term environmental benefits would result from using alternative sources of energy?

Should the use of alternative energy sources be explored?

Should laws be enacted to mandate the use of alternative energy sources?

What if alternative sources of energy are not utilized?

What if it became more profitable to use alternative energy sources?

Housing and Flooding

Why did it take so long to get help with housing in New Orleans?

How could more lives have been saved when the levies broke in New Orleans?

Which type of housing should be built in flood areas?

Should housing be rebuilt in the areas of New Orleans where the levies broke?

What if insurance companies refuse to insure houses in flood zones?

Environment

Why do some people contend that global warming is a natural trend?

How can we combat current global warming trends?

Which current environmental concern will have the greatest impact for the future?

What if you had to reduce your current energy consumption by one-third?

Should there be global regulations on carbon emissions?

Sports

Why are sports important in high school?

Why do people love this sport?

How does one train for this sport?

How do we solve the problem of steroid use?

Which sport receives the most recognition and why?

Which basketball player overcame the greatest obstacles?

What if this sport no longer existed?

What if the Red Sox never sold Babe Ruth?

Should more people play this sport?

Should college football implement instant replay?

Music

Why do people love this type of music?

How is this type of music affected by the media?

Which genre of music seems to be the most popular among young people?

What if this type of music no longer existed?

Should more people support this type of music?

Divorce

Why is the divorce rate so high in the U.S.?

How can couples avoid divorce?

Which state has the most effective laws related to protect children during a divorce?

What if divorce were not allowed in America?

Should no-fault divorces be allowed?

Space Program

Why is the space program important?

How can the U.S. find life on other planets, if it exists?

Which space initiative would be the most beneficial to America in 20 years?

What if the U.S. puts more money into the space program?

Should the U.S. put more money into the space program?

Skin Cancer

Why aren't people more concerned about skin cancer?

How can skin cancer be prevented?

Which habits can I adopt to lessen my chances of getting cancer?

What if people ignore the warnings about the damaging affects of the sun?

Should the wearing of sunscreen be mandatory?

Dogs

Why do people select dogs as pets?

How should people select the best dog for their needs?

Which breeds of dogs make the best companions?

What if owners use dogs for the wrong reasons?

Should dog abusers be prosecuted?

Aviation

Why is it so difficult to become a commercial pilot?

How has aviation affected our lives?

Which inventions have affected the world of flight?

What if Wilber and Orville Wright had never lived?

Should there be more commercial supersonic flights?

Modeling

Why is modeling a difficult career?

How can models keep up with their popular image without sacrificing their health?

Which model has overcome the greatest obstacles?

What if models keep up with their popular image without sacrificing their health?

Should popular advertising use models that represent the major population?

Coaching

Why do coaches burn out?

How do different coaches react to diversity?

Which coach was the best in high school, college, or pro and why?

What if coaches were paid whether they won or lost?

Should coaches use religious statements during games?

Community Service

Why is it beneficial to an individual to do community service?

How is a community service organization formed?

Which community service best serves the community?

What if two community service groups combined their services?

Should a community service requirement be added to the high school curriculum?

Health and Nutrition

Why are children and teens becoming overweight at younger ages?

How can children and teens lose weight in a healthy manner?

Which diet plan or exercise program produces the best results?

What if certain unhealthy foods were illegal in the U.S.?

Should the federal government mandate nutrition requirements?

Cheerleading

Why is cheerleading considered a sport?

How can cheerleading be effective in improving school spirit?

Which association, N.C.A. or U.C.A., has the most effective safety rules to prevent injuries?

What if more boys joined the cheerleading squad?

Should cheerleaders be grounded and not allowed to perform stunts?

Record Production

Why does society accept material such as profanity in rap?

How do we, as a society, control what is being played on the radio?

Which group or person has done the most to change the music industry and the songs that are being produced?

What if the government censored today's music?

Should pop urban culture contain vulgar and obscene language?