



**“A Perfect Alternative Research
Assignment: Making Learning
Applicable for Students’ Lives”**

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**Cavalier Conference on Writing and
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April 20, 2018



Session Outline

- Background & Needs-based
- Synopsis
- Process
- Traditional vs Alternative Research Assignment
- Assignment details with student feedback
- Recap

Background & Needs-based

- English Language Program; international exchange students study in the U.S. for 1 – 3 semesters; F1 visas
- Smaller class size (5 – 15 students)
- Students enroll in course as support English class; develop academic English skills
- Students need relative assignments
(Robertson, 2013)

Synopsis

- Learn from another educator's experience
- Gain and spark ideas on Alternative Research Papers
- Assignment considerations
- Is this a perfect alternative research paper assignment?

PROCESS

4. Teaching –
Teach and refine

3. Implementation – Applied
previous assignments

2. Creation/Design –
Assignment content

1. Brainstorming/Development
– Ask questions

START

Learner autonomy –
McCombs (2018),
Reeve & Jang, (2006)

Assignment Comparison

Traditional Research Paper

- Standard requirements
- Sections: Introduction, Background/Literature, Results, Argument/Discussion, Conclusion
- Publication/Written Viewpoint

(Alternative) Reflective-Interview Paper

- Different requirements
- Sections: Background, Introduction, Pre-learning, Post Reflective Learning, Conclusion, Application
- Combination of Oral/Interview Viewpoint + publication Viewpoint

Assignment, rubrics and other Specifics

- Part 1 of the assignment is to interview a professor or a professional. Next week, I would like you to contact someone of professional interest. Next Tuesday I will give you pointers or tips in how to appropriately conduct an interview. You will print out and take the rubric with you to the interview. The person you interview will assess your communication skills using the rubric.
- The purpose of the assignment is to experience what it is like to interview a professional or professor. I guarantee you will learn something from them! My question for you is what knowledge or information do you want to obtain from a well-respected, busy, working professional?

Assignment, rubrics and other Specifics

- Part 2. Interview-Reflective Learning Essay; 50 points
- For part two of this assignment, you will interview a professional of the same academic department or professional background of choice. After interviewing the professional, you will write a 5 - 7 page paper that includes the following sections of your paper: Introduction, Background, Pre-knowledge, Reflective learning, and Conclusion.

Student Feedback 1

- **TEVAL: Q. What activities or assignments were helpful in this course?**
- A. “Presentations, interview assignment, group activities were helpful.”
- “Only the writing assignments.”
- “Interview and Impromptu speech because I have never interviewed anyone before.”

Reflective Learning Feedback 2

- “I have not experienced such interview yet, so I am glad I have this new experience now, although at first, I was afraid of it. I managed to learn many new interesting things about one of my teachers.”
- “Finally, this is a wonderful opportunity and experience for me to chat with my professor, especially share our favorite design style. Professor _____ was excited to share his own view and taught me a lot of professional knowledge as well as his experience.”

Reflective Learning Feedback 2

- “Frankly, I am glad for the opportunity to make the interview with Dr. _____. Talking with the professor about the research and academic environment was beneficial experience for me.”
- “To be honest, I did not expect to learn something from my interview preparation. My attitude to business classes and textbooks is rather negative, but I said to myself to do something to get ready for the interview. But the more I was looking forward to getting the authentic experience firsthand from an actual businessman. And it worked perfectly.”



Recap

- Background & needs-based
- Personal experience and process
- Assignment comparison and details
- Student assignment compliments
- Perfect alternative research assignment?

References

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- Reeve, J., & Jang, H. (2006). What teachers say and do to support students' autonomy during a learning activity. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 98*(1), 209-218.
- Robertson, K. (2013) Motivating Students With Teaching Techniques that Establish Relevance, Promote Autonomy. *Faculty Focus*, October 21, 2013. Available online at <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-teaching-strategies/motivating-students-with-teaching-techniques-that-establish-relevance-promote-autonomy/>



Thank you for your time and attention!

- Any questions or comments?
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