

# STEP BY STEP: STARTING THE PIP PROCESS

## HSC Core: Personal Interest Project

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### Syllabus Content

Social and cultural research methods are to be applied through the process of completing the Personal Interest Project.

Students are to:

- develop a research proposal clearly outlining the topic, question or problem
- select appropriate concepts to ensure that the topic and the subsequent research relate to the Society and Culture course

### Rationale

The following resource aims to provide teachers with a brief outline of the practical steps of working with students in constructing their PIP research topic and research question/statement.

### Syllabus Outcomes

- H1 evaluates and effectively applies social and cultural concepts
- H4 assesses the interaction of personal experience and public knowledge in the development of social and cultural literacy
- H7 selects, organises, synthesises and analyses information from a variety of sources for usefulness, validity and bias
- H8 uses planning and review strategies to conduct ethical social and
- H10 communicates complex information, ideas and issues using appropriate written, oral and graphic forms



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Below is a brief outline of the steps that can be taken by teachers to guide their students through the beginning of the PIP research process.

### Steps:

1. Brainstorm with the class, 'What makes you angry?' (eg when snapchat goes down, people who walk slowly, when teachers do this..., racism, Donald Trump, etc, blah, blah).
2. With three different coloured markers, go through and identify whether these gripes fall into the micro, meso, or macro levels of society. For a more structured approach, divide the board into three sections, micro, meso, macro, and have students come up to the board and write an issue in each.
3. Either through further discussion, or in pairs, students select a handful of the examples on the board and spider map the S&C concepts and/or the syllabus dot-points from HSC topics around the examples. *You may have printed copies of the syllabus on the wall for students to refer to.*
4. Explicit teaching of how to write a multi-faceted question. Explicit teaching of HSC directive terms as a first port of call. e.g. Assess, discuss etc.
5. Model how you would use all of the above to develop a question.
6. Explain the premise of an initial hypothesis.
7. Model how to develop an initial hypothesis.
8. Have students select any of the original examples (and their corresponding spider map), a relevant HSC directive, and develop a question (stress that they don't have to use this question, but they must practise writing one).
9. Explain cross-cultural groups (each PIP needs a cross-cultural AND continuity and/or change element), e.g. comparing experience of men vs women, Australians vs Vietnamese, within the topic students have developed.
10. Confirm there's an avenue for continuity and change exploration (if you've developed a strong question, this should be obvious).
11. Read some Band 6 PIPs/ annotate one as a class to show students where this PIP is hitting all the requirements.  
  
*Note: extracts of Band 6 PIP's can be found in the Society and Culture Association's Members section. Many of these extracts have accompanying activities for later in the PIP process to explicitly teach and target the development of conceptual language, integration, analysis and synthesis.*
12. Have students go back to the drawing board with ideas (but now with a large arsenal of everyone else's ideas), pick 1–3 ideas for themselves.

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13. Complete preliminary secondary research into all ideas (ie go to State Library website, use JSTOR or Proquest, type in keywords from ideas and get some academic research already completed on area, flesh out idea – this will need to be explicitly taught -BUT, you should have done this in Prelim).
14. Write first draft of final question – stress to students that they MUST NOT get hung up on having a perfect question. This can be reworked, refined, right up until closer to the submission, and in fact, if research is done properly, research question will change at least once, and the hypothesis will/may be updated through process.
15. DO NOT SPEND MORE THAN ONE – TWO WEEKS OF LESSONS LETTING STUDENTS THINK UP THEIR TOPICS. THE SOONER YOU MAKE THEM PICK ONE, THE SOONER THEY WILL START DOING CONCRETE RESEARCH. The sooner they start doing that, the sooner they will realise they want to change their topic and that whole carry-on will hopefully be over inside of three weeks. If your students have completed their secondary research and aren't administering their first or second lot of primary research in the Christmas holidays of HSC year, it will make it difficult to deconstruct/analyse the data and write up their research results with regular reviews.  
*\*Note: The above steps and timeline has worked for my students and me as a SAC teacher. Please review and adjust to your own school context and the needs of your students.*
16. I strongly recommend dedicating about four weeks of straight PIP work in the first term of HSC, and then smaller chunks each following term until it's due. *Remember: The PIP is allocated 30% of HSC Course time according to the Syllabus.*