Dear parents,

**Students will do a research paper for social studies class and the social studies fair project this year.** The students have a number of steps to complete at home. Parents are allowed to help with the projects. I have attempted to break the state guidelines into a timeline of manageable chunks. The big part of the project is the research paper and bibliography. If the research paper is done thoroughly, the rest of the project should flow smoothly. The students should have chosen a topic and narrowed down a research question. I included the website for state guidelines. The judges’ checklist will give you an idea of what they like to see. The page with the triboard format will show you where the most important features of the project are to be placed.

Parents will need to purchase what is needed for the project. The school can provide a triboard for students who are unable to buy it. Please let me know if you need the school to provide the triboard.

This website has photos of winning projects as well as the official social studies fair guide: <http://www.gcss.net/site/page/view/georgia-social-studies-fair>

Sincerely,

Jasper Middle School Social Studies Department

For any questions or concerns about the SS Fair, please contact Jacob Tatum.  
[JacobTatum@Pickenscountyschools.org](mailto:JacobTatum@Pickenscountyschools.org)  
(706) 253-1760 (ext. 301)

**Week of September 25- Topic due Oct. 6**

**I. CHOOSE A TOPIC**

1. ANTHROPOLOGY – People are survivors. I am a survivor.

2. ECONOMICS – People are consumers and producers. I am a consumer and producer.

3. GEOGRAPHY – People are earth dwellers. I am an earth dweller.

4. HISTORY – People are descendants. I am a descendant.

5. POLITICAL SCIENCE – People are citizens. I am a citizen.

6. SOCIOLOGY/SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY – People are members of groups. I am a member of many groups. – People are individuals. I am an individual.

[Ann Angell, Emory University]

**II. FORMULATE AN APPROPRIATE RESEARCH QUESTION.**

A. List questions that deal with your topic.

B. Ask each of these questions about your possible research questions:

1. Can you do original research on the topic? (preferable)

2. Is the topic relevant? Will the answer be of any benefit to you or your community? Ask “so what?” about the question.

3. Does the question use words that need to be defined?

4. Did you avoid questions with “yes” or “no” answers?

5. Do you already know the answer to the question? (avoid)

6. Are you biased or prejudiced about the topic?

7. Will you be able to draw some kind of conclusion to the question?

8. Can you find information in your community on the topic?

III. Keep in mind you will be citing your sources using the APA style bibliography. **If you have your sources available in class**, we will write the bibliography in class. You will need a date of retrieval for online sources. This is printed at the bottom of the pages that you print out.

IV. Start gathering any artifacts, maps, photos, charts, anything that will bring your project to life**. BE SURE TO MAKE A NOTE OF THE SOURCE** (where you found it)!

V. Think about this:

Is there a primary source (someone who has firsthand knowledge or an eyewitness) you could interview?

Primary sources and a videotape of the interview would be impressive because primary sources can be very hard to acquire. A primary source is NOT required, but it can be a good thing!

VI. Read over the judges’ checklist. Are you on track?

**Week of October 9- Devise a timeline-Start writing**

1. Start writing the report. I will be glad to look over your research paper for you.

2. Think about this: Do you want to make a powerpoint or prezi? You will need a laptop or ipad to sit in front of the triboard for viewing by the judges.

The school does not provide or loan any equipment. You may not use any commercially-produced media; you must create it yourself. Multimedia is NOT required, but it is impressive.

3. Read over the judges’ checklist. Are you on track?

**Week of October 16**

1. Continue the research paper. Check for a clear beginning, middle, and end.

Did you answer your research question completely? Check your grammar, punctuation, and spelling. **Your language or gifted teacher will be happy to proof it for you, but we will need to keep it two days. We will write on the paper**.

2. Decide on a color scheme. Buy the triboard—be sure to check the measurements to get the right-sized board.

3. Choose the most important photos, maps, charts, artifacts that you would like to include in the project. Any documents, such as vacation pamphlets, from a historic site are useful.

4. Read over the judges’ checklist. Are you on track?

**Week of October 30- start typing - completing research paper-Did you answer your question?**

Report and including title page and bibliography should be proofed and ready to type. Make sure it has been proofed before typing. **Do not put your name on the paper.**

It would be good idea to save your paper on Google Docs or Google drive so you can retrieve the document for revisions and editing. You might also want to save it to a flash drive.

**Week of November 15**

Complete the research paper and sketch of tri-board layout.

1. Is everything in the correct section of the triboard?

2. Is the triboard visually appealing? Not too many different colors or too crowded?

3. Is everything easy to see and read?

4. Can the judges look at your triboard and learn a lot about your topic in a few

minutes?

**Week of November 20**

1. Finalize your plan for the triboard and continue typing your research paper.

2. Make the labels for the triboard: Research Question, Methodology, Conclusion.

3. Try placing (**DO NOT GLUE DOWN YET.)** the labels, photos, etc. on the triboard

to see if everything fits correctly.

You may want to mat everything with construction paper, so it will pop on the display.

**Do not put your name on the triboard.**

REMEMBER! The research question goes in the middle at the top, the

methodology goes on the left at the top, and the conclusion goes on the right at the

top. Please refer to the planning sheet which is attached.

4. Have a very short label (title, date, source) for each photo, map, chart, etc. that will go on

the triboard.

Example: **Abraham Lincoln’s Inauguration March 4, 1861 All About Lincoln**

5. Type the methodology. This is a VERY short paragraph that tells how you did the project.

Keep it very short and very simple!

Example: I decided to find out more about the S.S. Maine. I researched books in the school

and public libraries and found information on several websites. I was able to find

a photo of the front page of a newspaper with major headline. My last tasks were

to create a timeline and a Prezi to help answer my research question.

**Week of December 4 – Final assembly- Put together trifold boards, go back over everything.**

**Week of December 11- Final projects due –final project completed for school judging**

**Setup will be December 12, Fair is December 13**

Bring everything: triboard, research paper and bibliography, multimedia presentations, and artifacts. The due date must be respected. Teachers must prepare for the school fair.

After the school fair, you will have a few weeks to change anything needed before the county fair in January, specific date to be announced later. In the past, the teachers have set up the projects, the judging takes place, and the students are available with projects on display at that week’s school board meeting in the evening. **Students and parents are not present to set up the projects. Students, parents, and teachers are not present while the judging is taking place.**

**If your child is participating in the fair, do you need the school to provide a triboard?**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_\_\_no**

**Child’s Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**