

A Guide to Creating a Successful EE Proposal

Take out a blank sheet of paper. Turn the paper sideways. Create four columns. Write the names of four courses you've taken here at UAIS across the top and underline them (Physics, IB English, Drama). Below each jot down anything that comes to mind in response to the following prompts. Think through the prompts course by course. For each course, remember the lessons, issues, projects, discussions, and readings you experienced, and list the ones that:

intrigued you
made you think you could do this for a living
made you talk nonstop
morally outraged you
broke your heart
disturbed you
made you feel exceptionally smart
opened a whole new world to you
left you unsatisfied--there was so much more to discover
puzzled you--something just didn't make sense

Fill the paper. When you've exhausted your memory, start crossing off ideas that are outside the approved topics, less interesting, less promising, impractical, unoriginal, or redundant. Circle your favorites.

Take a separate sheet and make three columns. On the top, write down a favorite topic from three different subjects. In each column, do the following:

If necessary, take it down another level of specificity. For example, I might be starting with, "King Leopold's claim to the Congo." Then I might narrow it to "The most significant effect King Leopold II and General Sanford's campaign had on American trade with the Congo."

If your topic is a piece of literature you read as part of your IB Diploma program, you must shift your attention to either comparing/contrasting the work to another one that wasn't part of the curriculum, or to some other work by that author or in that genre.

Compose three urgent questions related to each topic. For example, now that I think about it, I really want to know, "What drove Sanford to betray King Leopold at the Anti-Slavery Conference?"

"By examining the early Belgian Congolese trade, what can we learn about contemporary American trade agreements with nations that institutionalize inhumanity against their citizens?"

In each column, consider the list of questions and then compose one unified research question that incorporates the topic. For example, "What are the most important principles underlying America's post-Emancipation Proclamation response to the Belgian Congolese publicity campaign?"

Now you have three promising EE topics in three different fields!