Pat Sample

Professor Sparks

English 2 – Sec. 11

16 April 2017 [updated for MLA 8th ed.]

Research Proposal: Is College Worth It?

My broad **topic** is the value of college, and the **focus** is whether my **audience**, primarily restless or disillusioned students at San Jose State, should consider other ways of getting prepared for a career and an autonomous adult life in general. My **forum** is the *Spartan Daily.* I am **refuting** an essay titled “Why College is a Waste of Time and Money,” by Porter Stansberry, who believes his two sons (and by extension all young people today) should skip college and just go straight into the working world.

Based on my preliminary research and my own experience with college—both as a student and after 25 years of teaching in college--I believe his view of what college is for shows the bias of an arrogant and narrow-minded person. I also believe he is unqualified to judge the full potential of that way of preparing young people for their future, particularly in Silicon Valley. I *do* agree with him on some points, though, such as the benefit of a “gap year” and/or a trial period investigating work in a particular field before a student commits to it.

My research questions include these:

* How many students at SJSU change their majors?
* What formal educational options for young people in the SF Bay Area exist besides college?
* How many young people are taking a “gap year” instead of starting college right after high school? How does it seem to work out for them?
* How do employers in the SF Bay Area feel about hiring students who took a gap year or worked for a while before starting (or before finishing) college?
* What do influential people in the world today think they gained from their own college education besides training in a particular career? (I’ll look for people in a variety of fields weighing in on this.)

[NOTE: the sources below have absolutely nothing to do with my topic, as they are from a real student sample that was designed for another kind of project altogether—a proposal to solve a particular problem. I am leaving them in because they show the proper format and each annotation has all 3 sections—summary, why it seems credible, and what the source will contribute to the student’s project. I just don’t have time to come up with 5 sources and annotate them while also doing my job as a teacher.]

Annotated Bibliography

Confessore, Nicholas. "How School Lunch Became the Latest Political Battleground." *New York Times.* New York Times. 12 Oct. 2014, *The Food Issue*: MM44. Print.

This article, originally published in the New York Times, discusses the starting point and motivation behind Michelle Obama's "Let's Move!" program as well as results from various schools using this program and the advantages/disadvantages of the program as a whole. It addresses and recognizes the nation-wide problems regarding poor nutrition, as well as obesity and other nutrition-related diseases. It concludes that while not all nutrition related problems with school lunches have been fixed, the various programs put in place to battle them are turning out to be more successful than planned, including Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move!” program, which is the main focus of this article.

This source seems to be credible since it was published in the *New York Times* by one of their own political correspondents, Nicholas Confessore.

This article provides me with the facts needed to back up the point I'll make about how government programs are actually working to fight obesity, specifically in schools and among children.

Dunaway, Ann. "National School Lunch Programs: An Interview with a Local Director of Nutrition." Interview with Cindy Culver. *Sweet Surprise*. Corn Refiner’s Association, 17 Oct. 2013. www. corn.org/new-study-fructose-and-added-sugars-should-not-be-singled-out-in-obesity/. Accessed 17 Mar. 2015.

This interview gives direct insight into the quality of public school lunches from the Director of Nutrition Services for Marietta City Schools. The interview discusses how public schools are actively improving the nutrition of the meals offered at their school and the challenges they face. Cindy Culver explains the challenges her school faced and the actions they took to overcome them. Culver also how the students reacted to the healthier options. It also shines light upon the endless list of beneficial things happening around the nation to improve school lunches. Culver gives her opinion on whether the various programs are actually working to help fight childhood obesity.

This source seems credible since the author is a registered dietician who has appeared as an expert nutritionist on both CNN and CBS. She also leads a company called Dunaway Dietetics and has over fourteen years of experience as a nutrition counselor. However, since it is posted on a site sponsored by the Corn Refiner’s Association, which would likely have a bias towards products such as High Fructose Corn Syrup, I have to keep that in mind, too.

I will use this interview to derive facts and ideas straight from someone who works in the public school system to support my thesis. Quotes from this interview will show the perspective of someone who works hands-on which school children and cafeteria food.

Madden, A. M., et al. "A Kitchen-Based Intervention to Improve Nutritional Intake from School Lunches in Children Aged 12-16 Years." *Journal of Human Nutrition and Dietetics* 26.3 (2013): 243-51. *Ebsco Host*. DOI: 10.1111/jhn.12037. Accessed 16 Mar. 2015.

This article examines an experiment in which school lunches were made more nutritious for children. The experiment involved making healthier options more readily accessible to kids and encouraging them to eat more nutritious foods. Some examples include replacing chips and crackers with fruits and vegetables. The article explains how the experiment actually helped to reduce the children’s fat intake and increase their energy output while getting them to eat more fruits and vegetables.

This source seems credible since it comes from a peer-reviewed journal and the experimenter and writer is an active member of the Department of Human and Environmental Sciences at the University of Hertfordshire.

I will use this source’s data to support my thesis that children will benefit from healthier meals at school and action should be taken to promote healthier eating among school-aged children in today’s society.

Schanzenbach, Diane Whitmore. "Do School Lunches Contribute to Childhood Obesity?." *Journal of Human Resources* 44.3 (2009): 684-709. *OmniFile Full Text Mega (H.W. Wilson)*. [www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/journals](http://www.wisc.edu/wisconsinpress/journals). Accessed 16 Mar. 2015.

This article discusses whether public school lunches cause or contribute to obesity in school-aged children. It showcases panel data and evaluates the nutritional values of reduced-price lunches for children. The article claims that low-income children whose parents must resort to reduced-price meals are more likely to become obese than wealthier children. It also stresses the importance of the current childhood obesity epidemic in America and worldwide.

This article seems to be credible since it was originally published in a peer-reviewed journal.

I will use this article’s data to support my point that improving school lunches may be able to reduce the severity of obesity in kids.

\*Sifferlin, Alexandra. "Why Some Schools Are Saying ‘No Thanks’ to the School-Lunch Program." *Time Magazine* 29 Aug. 2013: n. pag. *Time Healthland*. [www.healthland.time.com/2013/08/29/why-some-schools-are-saying-no-thanks-to-the-school-lunch-program/](http://www.healthland.time.com/2013/08/29/why-some-schools-are-saying-no-thanks-to-the-school-lunch-program/). Accessed 17 Mar. 2015.

This article discusses the opposing viewpoint of why some schools are refusing to participate in the National School Lunch Program. It stresses that the new, improved, and most importantly healthier school lunch programs may not be the best options for schools in terms of revenue. Many schools lost thousands of dollars by switching to a healthier meal plan, one reason a move to healthier foods may not be a good plan. The article also addresses the problems of food being wasted when kids reject more nutritional foods. The article does well in limiting its bias and showing both sides of the story, even though its main points are against switching to a healthier school lunch program.

This article appeared in *Time* magazine, a magazine whose editors and fact-checking staff can most likely be trusted.

I will use this article to present viewpoints and facts that oppose my own, which I will then contest.

[word count 1368 (but 91 of those are the NOTE. Aim for 1300 words)]