Pop Goes the Research: An Exploration into Pop Culture of the Past Ten Years!

**popular culture:** “cultural activities or commercial products reflecting, suited to, or aimed at the tastes of the general masses of people.” *Dictionary.com* 28 Mar. 2014.

For the next month, you will be delving into some item from pop culture of the last ten years. Think of some area of pop culture that young people know about but older people don't understand or have never heard of. We (old folks) know about iPhones and Facebook, so dig a little deeper. Your pop culture item could be a social media tool, a web comic, a band, a style of music, a word, an extreme sport, or something kids do in their spare time. Your topic can be obscure, but must be something that has been written about at least twice in current newspapers or magazines.

**The Research**
Keep track of all sources you use. For any source you consult, you need to make a Works Cited entry on NoodleTools so that notes you take are linked to that source.

You must use a minimum of seven sources, two of which must be periodical articles. Depending on the types of information you are looking for, your other sources might include Wikipedia, blogs, Twitter, websites, surveys, interviews, images, and other social media postings. Your sources might also include some so-called scholarly sources. You will learn how to cite all these sources in MLA style.

You must take notes on NoodleTools.

**The Paper**
You will write a traditional thesis-driven research paper on your pop culture item. Information covered should include the following:
- History of item
- Who knows about it?
- Why has it caught on?
- What does its popularity say about American life and culture?
- Will it last?

Can you see how any of the last three questions will lead to your thesis?

Paper must be at least three pages (not including Works Cited and Works Consulted pages). Paper must be no longer than five pages (not including Works Cited and Works Consulted pages).

**The Container of Explanation**
Explain your item to an old person via the container of your choice—a presentation, blog, video, skit, etc. Any sort of presentation has a five-minute time limit.

**Key Dates**
**Tuesday, April 1 and Wednesday, April 2**
Submit topic requests by 8 pm of your flex day via FirstClass to Mrs. Klein.
You must request three possible topics. For each topic, write two to three sentences that argue why you should receive one of your choices. Please vary your sentence structures and vocabulary. Please make sure each sentence flows logically from the previous one! Match your tone and style to your topic and audience (Mrs. Klein and Ms. Kochel). Remember that FirstClass has a Check Spelling option!!!!!
On your email, please put a space between each topic request. You do not need transitions between each request.

**Thursday, April 3**
Work in library
Introduction to periodicals.

**Friday, April 4**
Work in the library.
Key Dates continued

**Monday, April 7**
Work in the library.  Note card check!!!!

**Thursday, April 10**
Work in the library.

**Friday, April 11**
Work in the library.  Note card check!!!!

**Thursday, April 17**
Work in the library.  Note card check!!!!  Draft check.

**Monday, April 21**
Work in the library.  Note card check!!!!  Draft check.
Send me and Ms. Kochel your container plan via FirstClass.

**Thursday, April 24**
Work in the library.  Draft check.

**Monday, April 28**
Research paper due  Send to Mrs. Klein by 8 am via FirstClass.  Turn in hard copy of paper at the start of your English class on Monday, April 28.  If you are not in school on the April 28, you must still send your work by 8 am on April 28.

**May 5, May 8, or May 9**
Container and possible presentation due  Mrs. Klein will assign times after she knows what your container will be!

Remember: Communication is key!  Talk with Mrs. Klein and Ms. Kochel frequently.
Keep your eye on FirstClass and Canvas.  You will receive more information about this project as time goes on!!!!!!