

**First Session.** In class. Before you can envision your own extended essay, you have to know what an extended essay is. The more you know, the more vividly you'll be able to imagine your future EE.

Your EE may be in any one of the following areas: Biology, Chemistry, English, French, History, Math, Music, Physics, Psychology, Spanish, Theater, and Visual Arts.

The links in this lesson will take you to exemplary extended essays in subjects open to you. Your first task in Lesson One is to scroll through the sample essays, read a few that grab your interest, and then answer the questions that follow. You might also want to:

- Read the Wikipedia entry on the [Extended Essay](#).
- Familiarize yourself with IBO's extended essay tips. [http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/International\\_Baccalaureate/Extended\\_Essay\\_Tips](http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/International_Baccalaureate/Extended_Essay_Tips)
- Read through the new [IBO Guidelines for the Extended Essay](#).
- Read through the Subject Area Guidelines for those subjects that interest you. (See Lesson 7)

**Ten-minute freewrite. There's no right and wrong. You're writing to explore your own personal relationship to this major IB assignment. Choose from among the following prompts.**

- In what ways does the Extended Essay resemble writing that you have already done?
- In what ways does the Extended Essay differ from writing that you have already done?
- In what ways will the Extended Essay most challenge you? What scares you?
- If writing this Extended Essay turned out to be your most rewarding academic experience so far, what would it involve? What would you need? On whom would you rely? What sorts of things would you do to prepare? How would it shape the kind of person and student you become?

**Second Session.** Now that you have a vivid conception of your ideal Extended Essay, your third task is to brainstorm some possible ideas.

Take out a blank sheet of paper and a writing utensil. Turn the paper sideways. Create three columns on each side. Write the names of six courses you've taken here at PHUHS 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.

**Your next task is to formulate promising topics in three different subject areas. 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!