

FIELD RESEARCH NOTEBOOK

The purpose of the Field Research Notebook is to document and reflect on observations, thoughts, direct dialogue and/or specific behaviors that students have observed. Creating a complete and accurate notebook will help immensely when writing the final paper. Students must spend a minimum of **40 hours/quarter** at their research sites. Half of a letter grade will be deducted for each hour of research that is missed (and not made up). Students who miss more than 8 hours of observations will not pass the course. Students will be required to complete **5 notebooks** (note exact date on course outline) based on approximately 8 hours (**minimum 4 hours; maximum 12 hours**) of observations for each notebook. Notebooks (hardcopy only) are due at the beginning of class on the days noted in the syllabus and will be out of 10 points (see Field Research Notebook grading sheet on page 3), accounting for 25% of the total course grade. If a notebook is turned in late, with no valid and verifiable excuse, one point will be deducted for each day that it is late, and if it is more than 7 days late it will be given a zero. Each notebook entry should include all of the following elements:

PART I: LOG

The first part of each entry must include a log of basic information. This includes the date(s), place, and time of observations (hours reported in notebook; cumulative hours of research to date).

Name: Jane Doe
Date(s): April 21st, 2006
Place: Torrey Pines Elementary School
Time: 12:00-4:00 (4 hours; 16 hours total)

Notebooks 2 & 3: List the specific key words/descriptors used to find literature in the area of research

Notebooks 4 & 5: State specific research hypothesis/research question

PART II: OVERALL PERSPECTIVE

- Provide a **detailed** description of the environment (sights, sounds, smells, etc.)
- Look at the key features of the site (e.g., how many people are there, what is the general mood of the group, etc).
- Note of any extraordinary events (e.g., holiday party, new participants, etc.).

PART III: SPECIFIC INTERACTIONS

- Record key features of the people being observed (number, age, gender, etc.)
- Where and when possible, record dialogues among participants or specific dialogues with the researcher.
- Describe, not interpret, how the people fit into the mood and situation of the site. For example, if a child is looking away from the puzzle, describe, “s/he is looking away from the puzzle” – do not write “s/he is not paying attention”.
- Initially, because students do not have a specific research question, this section may be rather lengthy, detailing a wide variety of behaviors. However by Week 4, once the research questions are solidified, this section will be focused on the specific behaviors under investigation.

PART IV: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

- Reflections encourage students to digest and draw connections between and what they have seen in their observations (Parts II and III), read in the literature, pondered in homework readings, and discussed in class.
- Early in the quarter, before students have narrowed their research focus, this section should contain possible research topics/questions as they become apparent, questions/issues to discuss with site mentors or in class (e.g. ethical issues, contradictory observations, difficulties with recording data, etc.).
- Once students have identified a specific research topic, this section should thoroughly discuss and analyze the data (consistencies and inconsistencies, both within and across notebooks) identifying specific trends/patterns, consider the implications of the results relative to previous literature, and explore limitations and future directions for the research.

GRADING:

Notebooks must be typed (12 pt font, 1 inch margins, 1.5 line spacing) and stapled in the top left corner. The student’s last name, first name, and the page number should be in the header in the top right corner of each page (e.g., Doe, Jane 3). Notebooks will be graded on completeness, thought put into personal reflections, and the recording of specific data (see notebook grading sheet on page 3).

HDP 191

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Student's Name _____

Notebook # _____ Score (10 points total) _____

LOG

.5 pt. Does the log include the date(s), place, and time (hours that day; cumulative hours to date) of observations?

OVERALL PERSPECTIVE

.5 pt. Is there adequate description of the general context of the observations?

.5 pt. Is there adequate description of the key features of the environment (e.g. relevant physical characteristics, important people/events)?

SPECIFIC INTERACTIONS

1 pt. Are the observed individuals/data sets described in sufficient detail?

1 pt. Is behavior/data described relatively objectively?

1 pt. Do observations appear to be conducted in a systematic fashion?

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

1 pt. Is there evidence of critical thinking about the observations/data?

1 pt. Do interpretations of observations/data reflect insight into underlying patterns or processes?

1 pt. Is there evidence of connections between the observations/data, the course material, and the literature, class discussions, etc.?

1 pt. Are observations/data interpreted in light of the topic and hypotheses?

FORMAT

.5 pt. Is the notebook typed and stapled? Is the formatting consistent with the requirements listed on the assignment sheet (e.g. sections in proper order, name and page numbers noted)?

SPELLING & GRAMMAR

.5 pt. Is the notebook largely free of spelling errors?

.5 pt. Is the notebook largely free of grammatical errors (e.g. fragments, run-ons)?