

# *To Boldly Go...*

Or “How to encourage students to make the leap, even without splitting infinitives...”

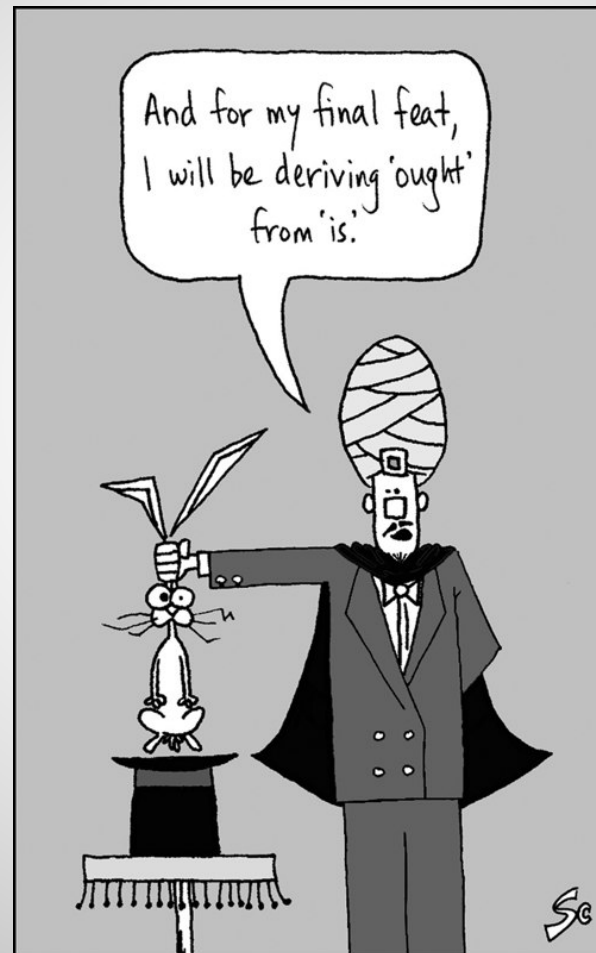
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Jackie Watson

[jwatson@westberks.org](mailto:jwatson@westberks.org)

# Magic?



# Being a Sixth Form Student means...



# Key issues

1. Research skills
2. Setting personal agenda
3. Handling extended work
4. Academic confidence

# Becoming independent researchers

- Research is very different to that expected when most teachers were undergraduates!



# What can we learn from Critical Thinking?

## Exploring credibility of sources

- plausibility of claims or evidence;
- corroboration;
- (in)consistency;
- bias or neutrality;
- expertise, experience or reputation;
- vested interest
- ability to see, including understanding of the relative reliability of primary sources compared to secondary sources

# Setting a personal agenda

- Work in class should be within the context of a student's wider ambition: using careers work to encourage aspiration and to motivate
- Reading lists and building a wider reading programme
- Using extended and/or individual work to support University applications

# Handling extended work

- Allowing choice appropriately – where possible student setting of research question
- Enabling effective planning
- Reviewing progress and discrimination between secondary material
- Handling the drafting process
- Encouraging student evaluation of work



### **1 1.3 What are the Learning Outcomes of the Extended Project Qualification?**

The learner will:

- identify, design, plan and complete an individual project, applying a range of organizational skills and strategies to meet agreed objectives
- obtain, critically select and use select information from a range of sources; analyse data, apply it relevantly and demonstrate understanding of any appropriate linkages, connections and complexities of the topic
- select and use a range of skills, including new technologies where appropriate, solve problems, take decisions critically, creatively and flexibly, to achieve planned outcomes
- evaluate outcomes both in relation to agreed objectives and own learning and performance. Select and use a range of communication skills and media to present evidenced outcomes and conclusions in appropriate format.

	Questioning	Planning	Identifying and Evaluating sources	Organizing Key information	Synthesizing	Reflecting, evaluating and reviewing	Communicating <i>Further planning, then creating, reporting &amp; evaluating</i>
Entry	I can think of a Factual question (What? When? Who? Where?) with the help of my teacher	My teacher gives me a step by step plan to follow	My teacher helps me to find sources and information that I can understand.	I can pick out and organize key points with help from my teacher.	I do not bring together information from more than one source.	My teacher tells me what I have missed and what needs to be done next.	I can tell key information to others.
1 Foundation	I can make up some of my own questions but need help with different types of questions.	I can think of a basic plan for my work, but I need help with step-by-step planning.	I can find some sources and information, but I need some help to find different types of source.	I can start to organize key points on my own, but I need some advice on how to improve my notes	I can pull together information from more than one source with some help, and am learning to draw conclusions	I can check for gaps in my information with some help.	I can report in some detail, combining information from more than one source.
2 Intermediate	I can choose my own research topic, identify what I already know, and devise some relevant questions about what you do not know	I can create my own research plan, know when I need my teacher's advice to review and change my plan, and work to a given deadline	I can find several sources on my own, check for fact, opinion, bias and validity, and focus and refine my search with a little help.	I can note relevant key information and can categorize and organize relevant information for later use with some help.	I can reorganize, compare, contrast and combine relevant information from several sources, and can draw and evidence basic conclusions.	I can check my research for gaps and identify where more research is necessary, and I am aware when to ask for help to develop ways of testing conclusions	I can report in a creative way, include organised information from a range of sources, and produce detailed, accurate, relevant and evidenced work.
3 Advanced	I can identify a problem or issue for investigation and formulate original relevant sub questions.	I can create my own research plan, and refine and review this plan throughout the research process without asking for help.	I can determine the validity, viewpoint and relevance of sources on my own, and can use a wide range of systems to help find information efficiently	I can make notes in different formats according to need, and organize information so that it is readily available to address a variety of relevant questions and issues.	I can use a wide variety of information in order to draw well-evidenced conclusions, and produce original, well-founded interpretations leading to knowledge, understanding, decisions/solutions	I can use and refine my original questions to evaluate and improve upon my research, and am able to test conclusions on my own.	I can report accurately, effectively and originally in a variety of persuasive, discursive and instructive formats.

# Gaining academic confidence

- Lesson planning to include more student leadership
- Student-chaired discussion
- Identified and official presentation of work
- Making it 'public' to make it valuable
- Encouraging proper student feedback to other students

# Working magic?

- Make expectations clearer by sharing with students what we see as academic independence
- Teach students *how* to plan and carry out extended work, and to conduct research
- Sustain reference to independence through the course – so it becomes a way of working and thinking about work
- Encourage student responsibility and provide a more public forum for individual exploration
- Allow risk...?

# What do universities want?



# Suggested Websites

- <http://whatshouldireadnext.com/>
- <http://politicsinspires.org/>
- <http://www.ted.com/>
- In Our Time (Radio 4) -  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qykl>
- Law In Action (Radio 4) -  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01c7pqs>
- Material World (Radio 4) -  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qyyb>
- <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/>