

Handout - Author Research Methods: Surveys, Interviews, Stunt Journalism

There are many ways to do research. Usually we research by reading what the experts say. However, in order to truly understand how things affect us and our community, it is important to really get personally involved in the research process. Throughout this unit, we are reading authors who did personal research: they immersed themselves in the research and personally got involved. Your author did find facts and statistics by reading articles and going to libraries and searching online, but they also designed and conducted their own personal research. What kind of personal research methods did your author use?

For each of the following research methods, determine if your author used that method. If they did, describe exactly what they did in the process.

Surveys: Surveys could be written surveys handed out in person, Internet-based surveys, or talking to people and asking them questions they can quickly answer. Surveys are used to get answers from many people and involve figuring out percentages and basic statistics for whole groups of people.

- Did your author conduct surveys?
- If so, how did they design them and get responses?

Personal Interviews: Personal Interviews are full conversations between two people. They can be done over the phone, through email or social media, or face-to-face. Personal interviews are done with only a few people, because the researcher is trying to understand a person's individual perspective and insight on a topic.

- Did your author conduct personal interviews?
- If so, how did they decide who to talk to?
- How did they conduct the interview?

Stunt Journalism: Stunt journalism involves the researcher completing some sort of personal "stunt" or personal experiment. In stunt journalism, the researcher wants to figure out how something affects them personally and what an experience is like. Often, stunt journalism involves changing a behavior or trying something new for a period of time.

- Did your author participate in stunt journalism?
- If so, what did your author do?
- How long did the stunt last?

Other Methods: Are there any other research methods that your author used that aren't listed here? If so, what did your author do?

12. Handout - Writing style: Author's Craft

An author's "craft" is the ways the author writes, or crafts, their story. It includes the techniques the author uses to explain their research as well as the storytelling elements they use to make their writing engaging. Please answer the following craft questions on your author and their writing.

1. How does the author record the data that they learn during their research?
2. How does the author discuss the research project that they did and present their findings?
3. In what point of view (POV) does the author write?
4. What is the tone (the author's attitude) of the writing?
5. How does the author describe their own participation in the research?
6. How does the author include information from the experts in the field?
7. Does the author include their own emotions in their writing?
8. What is the mood of the writing? (Does the author try to make you feel anything while you read? If so, what are the feelings the author wants you to feel? How can you tell?)
9. Who is the audience for your author's writing? How can you tell? How does the author appeal to this audience?
10. What is the purpose of your author's writing? Is there a universal truth that your author is uncovering?

13. Handout - Discussion Questions

Research Mentor Test Book Response

1. What book are you reading?
2. What page are you on?
3. What is your favorite quote from the book so far?
4. Explain the aspects of the author's craft that show up in this quote, and how they affect the text.
5. List 2 things that you have learned or that have surprised you so far.
 - a.
 - b.
6. What do you hope to find out by the end of the book?
7. What do you like about the book?
8. Is there anything you don't like about the book?

14. Handout - Citing sources: In-text Citations and References

1. How does the author cite any information in the text that they learned through research? Is there a consistent format they use? Describe it.
2. How does the author cite published books and articles that they read or consulted? Is there a format they use? Describe it.
3. How does the author cite personal interviews?
4. Is there a references or citations section of the book? If so, how is it organized? Where is it located?
5. How many references are included in your book?
6. What are the different types of sources your author used? Give one example from each type of source.