

Cults/Social In-Group Project

Objective: Using Google Slides, students will select, research and produce a slide presentation of a cult or social in-group of their choosing. The group can be well-known or obscure, contemporary or historical. All that matters is accuracy and adhering to the requirements below.

Note: This assignment is being treated as "extra credit," which means it can only help your grade whether you do it completely or partially. It is worth up to 75 bonus points.

Instructions - Required for this project are the following:

- 1) Written Essay - A prominent aspect of each presentation will be a written article about the individual leader of the group. This article will summarize the background of that individual, including what caused him/her to move in that direction, how he/she maintained control over the groups followers, and his/her gradual unraveling (because this always happens). In constructing the article, be sure to use the 5Ws and the H. At no more than 16-pt. font, this should cover at least 3-4 slides. Point. (worth 25 pts.)
- 2) Timeline - All presentations must include a timeline of at least 10 entry dates. It should pick up in the early stages of the group's existence and extend all the way to its demise (or its current manifestation). All important information that is chronological must be included. Each entry should be detailed and presented neatly. (worth 10 pts.)
- 3) Visual Details - There need to be no less than five illustrated examples of the group, including any symbols associated with it, pictures of the leader, scenes of the compound and/or group activities, etc. Visuals should be dispersed throughout the presentation (not bunched together on one slide). (worth 20 pts.)
- 4) Fact Sheet - The actual information gathered about the group will be presented in bullet format. Include at least 20 such bullet items, providing whatever details and highlights are essential to understanding this particular cult/social in-group. (worth 20 pts.)

FINAL NOTE: Cults follow a certain pattern of identification (religious in nature, leader has Christ complex, existence outside the group is muted, often suicidal or murderous). These would include such notorious cults as Heaven's Gate, People's Temple, and the Manson Family. There are a lot of social groups many believe to be cults, but do not actually fit the definition. Such examples include the KuKluxKlan, the Arian Brotherhood, the mafia (Mexican, Italian, Russian, etc.), street gangs, the Church of Scientology and other religious orders, and so forth. Doing your research on either is fine; just know the difference.