Selwyn College –
Primary Research Project Competition

Information for Schools
Selwyn College is delighted to announce the pilot of a competition open to primary school pupils in Years 5 and 6. For the pilot, this competition will be open to pupils attending schools in East Berkshire (including Slough, Bracknell Forest, Windsor and Maidenhead).

Interested pupils will submit a research project on a topic of their choice which can be presented in a number of ways. The top 25 entrants will win a trip to the University of Cambridge for a day of fun activities and a chance to meet other pupils to share their work.

Background
Selwyn College is one of the 31 colleges which together form the University of Cambridge. As part of the University’s commitment to widening participation and fair access to higher education, Selwyn College employs a Schools Liaison Officer to build relationships with schools, facilitate visits and offer guidance and advice. This competition is organised and run by the Schools Liaison Officer in conjunction with the Admissions Tutors, in order to offer primary aged pupils a chance to engage with a university, raise aspirations and participate in hopefully a fun and engaging project.

Aims of the Competition:
- To promote research and independent study skills in pupils
- To support National Curriculum aims around reading and writing, subject exploration and research skills
- To provide an opportunity for primary aged pupils to learn and find out more about university

Expectations of the School
Schools and teaching staff will be expected to explain and publicise the competition to any pupils in Year 5 and 6 who this might be relevant to. Schools may wish to open it to a select group of pupils (e.g. pupils with high attainment or gifted & talented) or, equally, open it to the entire year group. For Year 6 pupils, this might serve as an ideal post-SATs project to keep pupils engaged throughout the summer term and aid in the transition to secondary school.

Teachers will NOT have to mark any projects – this will be done by staff at Selwyn College. However, we ask that where possible, teachers be available to support and guide pupils such as by providing resources (books, computer equipment), printing off webpages and proof-reading work.
Structure of the Project

Part 1 – (Optional) Visit to your school to introduce the competition

A representative from the University of Cambridge (usually the Schools Liaison Officer) is able to visit your school to introduce the project, introduce the idea of university and/or run a workshop exploring research ideas.

We are able to offer:

1. 30 min session – Introducing the project ONLY
OR
2. 60 min session – Interactive talk on what is university and introducing the project
OR
3. 120 min session - Talk and introduction as above, plus workshop exploring how to conduct research and planning a research project

For Sessions 1 and 2, schools will need to provide a room with a projector and computer/laptop to display a presentation. An assembly hall or classroom is suitable.

For Session 3, schools will need to provide a classroom with tables/desks for all participating pupils along with pencils/pens. Access to computers/laptops/tablets is helpful but not necessary.

It may be possible to run multiple sessions at a school on the same day (e.g. Session 3 for Year 5s followed by Session 2 for Year 6s).

Dates Available for Visits:

Tues 6th June – Fri 9th June
Mon 12th June – Thurs 15th June

If you are interested in booking one of these sessions, please fill in the online form:
http://tinyurl.com/SelwynPrimaryVisit

We ask that you specify a range of dates and times you are available for in order to make efficient use of our time in Berkshire. If there is availability, the relevant contact will be emailed directly to discuss details, timings and other considerations.

Please note this an optional part to the competition. Your school and its pupils can still enter even if a representative from Cambridge has not been to visit.
Part 2 – Competition

Pupils will be asked to submit their research projects to Selwyn College via post or email. Further information regarding the project and what it entails is included in the document ‘Information to Pupils’.

Please ensure all entrants include a cover sheet (attached) which must be signed by a member of staff at the school to certify this is a pupil’s original work and that the school is aware of who has entered.

We leave it up to schools to decide how much support you are willing to provide your pupils. Entrants will be asked to explain how much support is given them to for their project which will be taken into account when judging entries.

We would like to emphasise what we are looking for in these projects is well-researched writing with a clear structure and focus. The genre of writing should be nonfiction but may adopt the conventions of a number of appropriate types such as information texts, non-chronological reports or a balanced argument piece. All entries must be in the pupils’ own words and any plagiarism may lead to an entry being disqualified. Pupils do not need to include citations but may wish to including a reference list or in-text references (e.g. “An opinion article on The Guardian stated that…”) if appropriate.

All projects must include:
- A coversheet
- At least one A4 page of writing
- (optional) Any supporting materials

The deadline for entering the competition is Fri 30th June at 5pm. We advise that any postal entries are sent off by Mon 26th June in order to ensure the project arrives on time. Entries can be posted by the pupil directly or by the school (we ask that schools chip in for postage where appropriate to ensure that no pupil who wants to is unable to enter).
Part 3 – Feedback and Visit

All entries will receive personalised feedback on their project, highlighting the strengths and areas of development. Feedback will be collated from a number of sources including academic and non-academic staff at Selwyn College. They will also receive a Selwyn College postcard and a certificate to mark their achievement. These will be posted to the return address supplied after the competition deadline.

The top 25 entrants, as judged by staff at Selwyn College, will be invited to a visit to Selwyn College, Cambridge for the day, for themselves and one adult to accompany them (can be parent, guardian, family member, teacher or teaching staff – must be over 18). These entrants will be notified in July after the competition deadline and contacted directly to confirm their attendance; we would welcome assistance from schools in ensuring the winning entrants are contacted in good time.

The day will be entirely free and will include lunch. A coach will leave from a central point in Slough (to be confirmed) at 8am on Friday 14th July to take all invited to attend the day. The coach is expected to return to Slough around 7pm.

Some entrants will be asked to showcase their project during the day. This will involve setting up a table/stand with their project and answering questions from other pupils on the day. More guidance will be sent out to anyone this involves.

The day will consist of tours around the college and university campus, interactive talks and workshops on a range of topics and a showcase of research projects. It will serve as an excellent opportunity to find out more about university, what it is like to live there (including eating in our great hall!) and to visit a historic city.

If this visit is during your school’s term-time, we ask that schools grant an authorised absence for any pupils invited to the visit.