**Student:**

Elsie

**Topic:**

How can the mortality rate of Indigenous women with cervical cancer be reduced?

What is your name?

My name’s Elsie.

What was your research question?

I did ‘How can the mortality rate of Indigenous women with cervical cancer be reduced?’

How did you decide that would be your question?

Well I’ve always been really interested in Indigenous health and I wanted to pick something relevant to modern Australia.

How did you plan to answer your question?

I started off with the idea of doing maternal deaths in India. So I started with that, and I was just…couldn’t find any information on it, then I changed the topic to like volunteering in Asia, couldn’t find any information on it, and then I was, like, Indigenous health! Why not? Relevant to Australia, and I researched different things that really impact Indigenous people in Australia, so like lung cancer and cardiovascular disease but then I found out a fact that said Indigenous women are 5 times more likely to die from cervical cancer than non-Indigenous women in Australia specifically. And I just thought that can’t be true, first world country, such a big difference, so I researched further into it.

Where did your information mainly come from?

Well, I used a variety of resources like everything from you tube clips to media releases, journal articles, and relevant and reliable websites and stuff but the most useful information I found was from like the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. They had lots of new journals out at the time of my Research Project so it was really helpful. Yeah, the interviews provided me with heaps of first person information. Of course it’s really difficult because I did something to do with Indigenous women that…their women’s business is a really sensitive topic and it was a bit unethical for me to interview Indigenous women and Indigenous people so I had to go to other sources such as doctors, but they’re always really busy and, like, academics and stuff they don’t really have time to talk to you but, yeah, the interviews I did do were really useful, provided me with heaps of information.

How did you present your research outcome?

I did a report and in my report I detailed everything. So for my Research Project, personally, I created four focus questions and I researched into those four focus questions and then that was, like, they were each paragraph in my report, and you have to do something with your report, so to make it look like…’cause mine was like to do with a relevant topic I thought why not send it into the Australian Government. Didn’t get a reply but I still did it. There was a purpose to my report.

What challenges came up whilst undertaking the Research Project?

It was really, really difficult for me to get interviews. I emailed 58 people and a few different companies and stuff and I got 2 replies which I did over the internet, over email I interviewed them and I interviewed 1 doctor in person. I was very persistent, like, like I said, like, I emailed 58 people, they didn’t reply to my emails, I gave them a call. So you have to just be on top of it, you have to know when, like, to keep going until you get an answer and stuff.

What would you say to students about to start their Research Project?

If you’re not really interested in your topic you’re not going to have any motivation to do it, ‘cause it’s the longest project you’ll do in year 12 and if you don’t pick something you love, you’ll just, stop it, you’ll just be like, nup, ceebs. Pick a topic you love, stay organised, keep every note you make, every scribble, every checklist, keep it all, because it can all go in a folio to be marked, and just stay on top of it. Don’t lose track, keep a timetable of like, from week 1 to week 16, however long it goes for, and tick off every single thing.

How did your Research Project prepare you for what you are doing now?

Academically, it definitely did, like referencing is a huge thing at university and the Research Project really develops your referencing skills. As well as academic writing and reflection of, like, yourself and how you learn. It really helps you develop those sort of things but, in a different way it just helped me gain more understanding of indigenous culture. After my 5 year degree I really want to work in Indigenous communities and it just gave me a deeper understanding of how they work and their systems and stuff.