

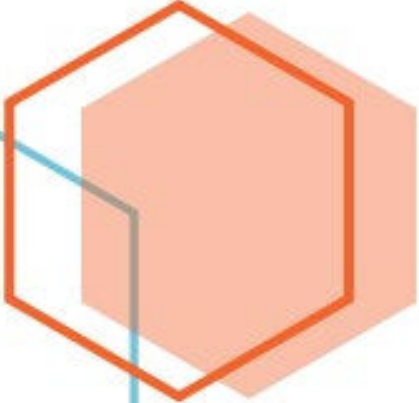


**Ambassador League**  
OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE. INTO YOUR COMMUNITY.

# Agent Packet

2024-2025

**SSI**  
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August 2024

Dear Agent-in-Training:

Congratulations on taking the first step on an exciting journey! Throughout the next year, you will complete a variety of assignments with the goal of placing you outside of your comfort zone and into your community.

An ambassador is to be a representative of their home nation. As Christians, we are called by God to be Ambassadors for Christ here on earth. This is a calling higher than any one assignment. Ambassador League is designed to equip you to be an ambassador in your community. This is a noble endeavor; I am excited to watch you grow and excel this year!

In this binder, you have the following: an Agent Packet (report information and assignment descriptions), the Verification Form Packet, the Grammar Guide, and an Assignment Planning Sheet. Please read these materials carefully; consider it your guidebook to Ambassador League.

To reach Agent status, you should endeavor to earn an average of 2 points per month. Those striving to achieve Special Agent status endeavor to earn an average of 3 points per month.

<u>Points Required for Agent Status</u>	<u>Points Required for Special Agent Status</u>
5 Points – Mission: Tactics	5 Points – Mission: Tactics
2 Points – Mission: Read	4 Points – Mission: Read
4 Points – Mission: Observe	4 Points – Mission: Observe
5 Points – Mission: Research	10 Points – Mission: Research
<u>9 Points – Mission: Take Action</u>	<u>14 Points – Mission: Take Action</u>
25 Points	37 Points

The tasks set before you are great; but, with perseverance and commitment, you can do it!

“No half-heartedness and no worldly fear must turn us aside from following the light unflinchingly.” - J.R.R. Tolkien

I am excited to see you take on the mission ahead.

For His glory,



Joseph Cecil  
SSI President & CEO

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# Report Information

## Where To Send Reports

Once you complete your report, email it to [amleague@ssionline.org](mailto:amleague@ssionline.org). Send your reports in an attached Word document or PDF. Do NOT send a link to Google Docs.

When you send your report, in the subject line, please include your name, the number of report you are submitting in that specific category, and the category of your assignment (Ex: Joe Smith 5<sup>th</sup> Interview Report). You do not need to turn reports based on the order they are given in the packet, but do make sure that the number given in the header reflects how many of that category you have turned in. For example, the first Book Report you turn in would read “1<sup>st</sup> Book Report”, even if it’s your 5<sup>th</sup> report total. If your number does not match our records of what you turned in (the header says it’s the 8<sup>th</sup> Take Action but we have only seen 6 come in), we will contact you to find out which report is missing.

To receive the point for an assignment that requires a verification report, you must submit your report AND a scan or photo of the SIGNED verification form to [amleague@ssionline.org](mailto:amleague@ssionline.org). More information (and the forms themselves) will be in the Verification Forms packet included in your Agent Folder. All Observe reports, Volunteer assignments, and the Promote LEAD report need a signed verification form included with the report to be accepted.

## Format

All Agents and Special Agents are required to use APA style in their reports. This is to provide a framework for you to exercise your creativity. It can be easy to look at a formal writing structure as a limitation. Instead, the structure should be seen as a canvas that allows you to narrow your focus and make a better result than if it were completely free styled. Additionally, most colleges and universities use APA format, so learning this style will provide you with a significant edge in the future.

Below, we have included an APA Style Guide that outlines our expectations for this format.

### APA Format: Basic Information

- All reports should be Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, and double-spaced.
- All paragraphs will be set in a basic block style being left justified, without indentations, and having one enter space between paragraphs.
- 1-inch margins (top, bottom, left, right).
  
- Page Numbers: At the top right corner of every page, you should include a page number. If you are using Microsoft Word, the easiest way to do this is to:
  - Double click at the top of any page
  - Go to the “Header & Footer” section
  - Click on the “Page Number” dropdown
  - Click on “Top of Page” and select the option that moves your page number farthest to the right

### APA Cover Page

This should be the very first thing someone sees when they open your report, and it should include five basic pieces of information in the following order:

- 1) Your report title and number of report submitted for the given category
- 2) Your name
- 3) The institution (Ambassador League)
- 4) The person accepting your report (The Ambassador League Coordinator)
- 5) Your submission date

Below is an example of the cover page header. The number given in the header reflects how many of that category you have turned in and not the total number of reports you have turned in. For example, the first Book Report you turn in would read “1<sup>st</sup> Book Report”, even if it’s your 5<sup>th</sup> report total.

Cover Page Example:

Page 1

**3<sup>rd</sup> Book Report: *The Case for Christ***

Joseph Cecil  
Ambassador League  
Grace Anne Rosbury  
January 4, 2025

# How to Write a Report

## Structure

Every report paper should have a distinct and specific focus that draws the reader's attention to something. What is the one thing a reader should remember after reading a paper? This is the paper's thesis. From a thesis should come sub-topics—ideas that branch off the thesis to provide a deeper look at the different aspects of the thesis. Most reports will have 2-4 sub-points. Each sub-point can be made into a paragraph. Throughout the paper, each paragraph should logically connect to the previous paragraph and lead to the following paragraph. Without the structure that a thesis statement provides and subsequent sub-points, papers come across as messy and confusing—a collection of ideas that don't take the reader anywhere and have limited relationship to each other.

## Research

The research phase is when you are gathering information before writing. This might be reading a book for a book report or reading Scripture for a Bible Research assignment. As you are researching, take notes and look for main points that could be your thesis. Keep in mind what sub-points could come off of potential theses. To avoid plagiarism, ensure that you know which ideas came from someone else so that they can be properly cited. All paraphrases and direct quotes used in any report must be cited (in-text and a works cited page).

## Outline

Before you start writing, make sure that you have a clear vision of what you want to say in your report in the form of a thesis and sub-points that all relate to your thesis.

*Introduction:* Your introduction should give a general overview of what the topic is and mention the sub-points you will focus on. Because it is the first thing readers see, there should be a hook that grabs readers and encourages them to keep reading. The last line of the introduction should be your thesis.

*Body:* Each paragraph in the body should focus on a thesis sub-point. Make sure to support any claims made. Think of a body paragraph like a sandwich. Each part (bread, veggies, meat) is necessary for a complete sandwich, and when a part is missing, it is no longer a sandwich. This structure is also needed for body paragraphs; we need to include each part for a complete paragraph.

Introductory Sentence (the top piece of bread): *what is the subtopic that you are focusing on in this paragraph?*

Context or Evidence (the veggies in the sandwich): *the outside quotes or paraphrases (with citations) that provide evidence that supports the main idea of the paragraph.*

Reasoning/Explanation (the meat (or the main part) of the sandwich): *the explanation of quotes and how they connect to the overall topic and individual argument.*

Conclusion Sentence (the bottom piece of bread): *wrap up the main ideas discussed in the paragraph.*

*Conclusion:* Not using a conclusion in your paper would be like ending a movie immediately after the final battle. Yes, you know who won, but you still want things to be wrapped up nicely. In the conclusion, restate the main sub-points covered throughout your paper and end by showing what the one most important point is that people should remember.

## Evaluation Guidelines

In addition to the individual assignment guidelines found later in this packet, here are the general evaluation guidelines for all reports. The path to becoming a good writer is not linear; instead, you are continually improving each time that you write. Headquarters may send a report back for edits; this is not a critique of you as a writer but to point to specific ways that you can improve your writing. Don't let perfection get in the way of your writing process. Even if you aren't perfectly happy with a report, send it in to get feedback from Headquarters. We are here to help guide you. If you are struggling with a report, reach out to Headquarters for some ideas.

- **Format and Length Requirements:**
  - Any assignment that does not meet minimum length or other requirements is not acceptable and will be returned to you for correction.
    - All Observe, Read, Research, and Interview Reports, the LEAD Experience Report, and the Promote LEAD report must be between 550 and 1100 words.
    - The Ambassador League Experience Report must be between 1100 and 2200 words.
    - Public Discourses must be at least 150 words long.
  - All reports must follow APA style (formatting and citations).
  - Reports that contain plagiarism (the copying of someone else's work or the incorrect acknowledgment of the source of idea (e.g. incorrect citations) will not be accepted.
  - All reports are due by August 23rd, 2025.
  
- **Writing Guidelines:**
  - Be straightforward. Language should be clear, concise, and uncomplicated. If an idea could be expressed in 20 words or 10 words, use 10.
  - Writing formally does not mean you need to sound like William Shakespeare. Instead, consider it more of a step up from a conversational tone. Here are a few tips to help:
    - Avoid contractions (don't, can't), acronyms (lol, atm), and slang words (cool, bet, etc.).
    - Avoid second- and first-person pronouns (I, you, me, we, etc.) except when writing about your own experience.
    - Reports are written from your perspective; avoid using "in my opinion" or "I think that"
  - Avoid meta commentary. In other words, don't write about the paper or about yourself writing the paper ("In this report I am going to show you..."). When you say "This report is going to explain..." or "I hope you enjoyed reading this report and understand now how...", you don't add to the report and instead distract from the points you are making.
  - Reports that contain more than ten grammatical errors will be sent back for edits. We highly recommend reading your report OUT LOUD before you send it in for submission. By slowing down and hearing what you have written, you will catch clunky or awkward phrasing, along with common spelling errors. See the Grammar Guide included in your Agent Folder for more information.

# Avoiding Plagiarism: Quoting and Paraphrasing Properly

## What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is any use of another person's work without properly referencing the work. This can be done by copying the author/creator's exact wording without using proper quotation marks or by taking the ideas presented by someone else and passing them off as your own. For instance, using a book by Francis Chan for inspiration on your Bible study and then referencing his unique analysis without crediting him as the originator of that idea would constitute plagiarism. Both forms of plagiarism, copying the author's exact words or copying ideas without proper recognition, are academically dishonest and are unacceptable for multiple reasons. First, it is disrespectful to God who commanded you not to steal. One's intellectual property is of equal value to one's physical property and is owed the same respect. Second, it is a failure to utilize the gifts that God has given you, and by not using those gifts to their full capacity, you are actively defeating the purpose of being in Ambassador League in the first place. Third, it is disrespectful to your advisor and a waste of time for you. In both high school and college, plagiarized papers are not graded, and repeated offenses can result in expulsion. Headquarters will not accept plagiarized reports, and any plagiarism will need to be rewritten.

## Quoting and Paraphrasing Well

To prevent plagiarism, we need to quote or paraphrase the author's work correctly. Outside sources can be referenced using direct quotes or paraphrases. Let's look at different ways we could use the following quote from Francis Chan: *"I think one of the most destructive practices of your generation is that you value your own thoughts way too much when God says, 'my thoughts aren't the same as yours.' And you want to look inside, and you want to tell everyone else what you've been thinking and what you've been feeling rather than opening up the word of God and saying, 'these truths are way beyond mine.'"*

**Direct Quotes:** For a direct quote, make sure to place a quotation mark on either end of the quote and copy the exact phrasing used by the author.

Example: *Francis Chan stated that "one of the most destructive practices of your generation is that you value your own thoughts way too much when God says, 'my thoughts aren't the same as your.' And you want to look inside, and you want to tell everyone else what you've been thinking and what you've been feeling rather than opening up the word of God and saying, 'these truths are way beyond mine.'"*

**Paraphrasing:** A paraphrase is not taking someone's ideas and rewording them as your own. To paraphrase an author's idea, you can summarize their original idea or condense their ideas to be more concise or understandable, and you must give the original author credit. Below, we take the original Francis Chan quote and paraphrase it in two different ways.

Incorrect Example: *I think a dangerous idea of my generation is to pay a lot more attention to what you think than you should when God says that his thoughts are different than yours...*

In this case, the exact same meaning of Chan's words is used, but he isn't given credit for his analysis. The writer of the paraphrase has contributed nothing new to the reader; rather than condensing, referencing, or expounding on Chan's thoughts, you're simply copying it with different words.

Correct Example: *Francis Chan asserted that we put far too much emphasis on what we think and believe instead of what God says.*

In that paraphrase, the paragraph of information is summarized, and the author (Chan) is recognized.

## Citing Your Works

In addition to quoting or paraphrasing the work correctly, we also have to make sure to give credit to the author through a citation. For APA Style, there are two types of citations that you must include in a paper whenever you quote or paraphrase: in-text and a works cited page.

### In-Text Citations

In-text citations are included in the body of the paper itself to give the reader a basic location of the work you are referencing. Follow your quote, reference, or paraphrase by adding a set of parentheses that include the citation between them.

**Books or Online Resources:** (Author LAST NAME, p. page or paragraph number)

*Example:* “To the cry of justice, the ears of a monarch should be open at every time, place, and circumstance” (Scott, p. 179).

**Bible:** (Book Chapter: Verse)

*Example:* “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

**Interview:** (Interviewee LAST NAME, Month and Year of Interview)

*Example:* “LEAD changed my life” (Smith, July 2024).

### Works Cited Page

The works cited page is a collection of every source consulted during the writing of the report. This includes the work mentioned in your in-text citations and works that influenced your thinking but that you may not have included via direct quotes or paraphrases in the report. It should be at the very end of your report and is not counted toward the final word count. Arrange your works cited page alphabetically by the author’s last name.

**Book:** Author Last Name, Author First Initial (Publication Date). *Name of Work*.

*Example:* Scott, W (1825). *The Talisman*.

**Website:** Author Last Name, Author First Initial (Publication Date). *Name of Work*. Retrieved From URL on Date When Resource Was Retrieved.

*Example:* Sproul, R.C, (2022). *Duty and Honor*. Retrieved from <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/duty-and-honor> on August 8, 2024.

**Interview:** Interviewee Last Name, Interviewee First Initial (Date of Interview).

*Example:* Smith, J (July 7, 2024).

**Bible:** Holy Bible, Translation Version (Version Publication Year).

*Example:* Holy Bible, ESV (2001).

For more information on citations and APA format, we recommend Purdue’s Online Writing Lab:

[www.owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/index.html](http://www.owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/index.html)

For help with creating a citation, you can use [www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/index.php](http://www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/index.php).

# Assignment: Tactics

## Objective

Focus on planning, executing, and following up the program in its totality.

## Requirements

Agents and Special Agents: Complete all 5 assignments.

### 1) Plagiarism Paragraph

*Objective:* Recognize the importance of what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

*Instructions:* Write a paragraph (minimum of five sentences) explaining what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Be sure to cover how to properly quote and paraphrase as well as how to cite a source in APA format. This shows Headquarters that you understand the importance of academic honesty and demonstrates your commitment to respecting yourself as an academic writer. This paragraph can be written and submitted at <https://ssionline.org/ambassador-league/resources/> before the program starts September 1st. **\*Note: You will not receive any points for reports submitted until your Plagiarism Paragraph has been submitted.**

### 2) Create an Action Plan

*Objective:* To lay out an actionable plan of attack for the year ahead by:

- a. Creating a rough timeline to complete assignments
- b. Identifying a support network (i.e. family, friends, and mentors)
- c. Outlining any major commitments (i.e. sports, theatre, vacation, school, etc.)

*Instructions:* Fill out the form on the website ([ssionline.org/ambassador-league/resources/](https://ssionline.org/ambassador-league/resources/)). The goal of the form is to set your personal goals and communicate to Headquarters what you are trying to achieve each month. In this plan, you need to ensure that you can complete at least five assignments by January 1st. If you do not have five points by January 1st, Headquarters will arrange a call with you to determine if you are able to complete the program. **\*Note: This assignment must be completed in September for you to continue the program.**

### 3) Check In Calls

- a. Boot Camp Calls

*Instructions:* There will be two “boot camp” calls will be in September. These calls to develop a clear understanding of the program and help formulate strategies for completing assignments, writing, etc. Attendance is not required on these calls, but it is highly encouraged that you attend. Dates for the calls will be sent individually.

- b. Monthly Check-in Calls

*Instructions:* There will be a total of ten check-in calls throughout the year (one per month from October-May). You must attend at least four calls throughout the year. Keep track of the calls that you attend on the Check-In Call form (found in the Verification Form Packet). In these meetings, we will discuss your goals that you want to accomplish before your next check-in and how you will accomplish them. When you have completed all four meetings, send a scan or photo of the form to Headquarters. No report is required. A schedule for October-May calls will be released once all Action Plan Forms are submitted. **\*Note: Attendance at the Boot Camp calls does NOT count toward your check in call log.**

**4) LEAD Experience Report**

*Objective:* To reflect on your LEAD experience (a common theme for many Ambassador League Agents) and how it impacted you.

**5) Final Project: Ambassador League Experience Report**

*Objective:* To reflect over the past year, cement the lessons you learned, and understand the importance of pushing yourself past your comfort zone.

**Writing an Experience Report**

Experience reports should focus on explaining what you did and how the experience impacted you. Here are some guiding questions for both reports.

**LEAD Experience Report**

- What were your expectations before, during and after the week?
- What did you learn at LEAD? Did anything surprise you as you went along?
- What did you do during the week?
- How did the week impact you?

**Ambassador League Experience Report**

- Summarize your time in Ambassador League. What were some of your favorite assignments?
- What were your expectations before, during and after the program?
- Would you recommend Ambassador League to other students and why?
- What is your greatest takeaway from the experience?
- What growth do you see in yourself? Were you surprised by anything that you learned about yourself during the experience?
- **\*Note that this report is double the normal length requirements (1100-word minimum, 2200-word maximum) and should be the last report that you submit.**

# Assignment: Read

## Objective

To extend beyond your sphere of relationships by learning from those who have come before you and to build a framework for understanding your world by reading different books and authors on a variety of topics. Then, you will write a report on each book you read, summarizing not only the main points but analyzing, digesting, and finding ways of applying the work in your own life.

## Writing a Book Report

Book reports should summarize the book, analyze the major principles, and give your opinion about whether it was a good book. While you read, remember that an author almost always has one or two central themes they write about. This is the material you should focus on rather than spending a little bit of time on each chapter. The point of reading any book isn't strictly to look at letters on a page. In every book the author is trying to communicate meaning and value to the ideas that they hold. Your task, then, is to take that communication of ideas and find out how the author's words can and should impact people. To help you do this, be proactive with your analysis and ask some key questions as you read.

- What was the main point the author was trying to make?
- Were there any concepts or ideas you didn't agree with? Why?
- Was the book worth reading and would you recommend it?
- How has the book made an impact on your life?
- What statement or quote in the book made an impact on you?

## Requirements

- Agents: Read one book from BOTH the Action and Apologetics categories and submit a report on each.
- Special Agents: Read one book from EACH of the four categories and submit a report on each.

### CATEGORY I: Action

*Just Do Something: A Liberating Approach to Finding God's Will* (Kevin DeYoung, 2014)

**OR**

*Do Hard Things* (Alex and Brett Harris, 2008)

### CATEGORY II: Apologetics

*Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions* (Greg Koukl, 2019)

**OR**

*The Case for Christ* (Lee Strobel, 1998)

### CATEGORY III: Faith Fundamentals

*The Story of Reality: How the World Began, How it Ends, and Everything in Between* (Greg Koukl, 2017)

**OR**

*Mere Christianity* (C.S. Lewis, 1942)

### CATEGORY IV: American History

*Defending the Declaration* (Gary Amos, 1989)

**OR**

*The Theme is Freedom: Religion, Politics, and the American tradition* (M. Stanton Evans, 1994)

\* **Note:** You may not submit more than one book report per category.

# Assignment: Biblical Research

## Objective

To apply the lens of Scripture to different areas of the world around you and to develop a Biblical way of thinking and approaching the world.

## Writing a Biblical Research Report

The primary goal of each report is to answer the question, “What does the Bible say about this topic?” In other words, if you only looked at Scripture, what conclusions would you come to? Ask yourself what the subject refers to and where the Bible speaks to that issue. Did Jesus speak on this? What about one of the Psalmists? Or Paul?

Before you begin writing or researching outside sources, go to Scripture first. You are allowed to use other sources (such as a thesaurus, Bible dictionary or commentary, outside articles, or a discussion with a pastor or Biblical scholar) to help you understand what you find but start developing an understanding of what the Bible says, not what other people say the Bible says. The Bible must be your primary source. Be careful to not use verses in isolation; make sure you read enough of the surrounding verses so that you can understand the context. Keep notes as you are researching. Ask yourself what the most important aspects of the topic are (these could become the report’s thesis or sub-points).

Your report should be about what the Bible says on a topic and not your opinion of what the Bible says. Make sure the claims you make are clearly taken from and supported by Scripture. Every claim you make needs to be supported; your readers need a reason to believe what you say that is more than your opinion. The support can be a verse reference or quote, but make sure you are giving any necessary explanations to show how the verse supports the claim. Ultimately, every claim you make should either be directly connected to a verse or should link to a previous point that has already been shown to be Scriptural. Again, you can use outside research, but your primary source and support should be Scripture.

While your report does need to be linked to Scripture, you should not need to ‘pad’ your report with long quotes to meet the length requirement. Instead of extensively quoting Scripture in your report, take long passages and summarize them or simply give the references. Only 20% of your report may be direct quotations. (Take the number of words being quoted and divide this by the total number of words in your report. That number should be .2 or smaller.) The rest should be your own words: analyze of what Scripture says or explain logical connections between points or a paraphrase of Scripture.

## Requirements:

- Agents: Write one report on each of the following five topics: Christian’s Responsibility to the Poor, Government as an Institution, Imago Dei (Made in God’s Image), Inspiration & Inerrancy of the Bible, and Self Control/Fruit of the Spirit.
- Special Agents: Write one report on each of the ten topics listed below. While it is not required that you do the five Agent reports first, it is encouraged as these reports were chosen to provide a framework for the other assignments you will complete in the program.

## Biblical Research Topics

- 1) **Imago Dei: *Made in God's Image***: What does it mean to be made in God's image, and why does this matter? What responsibility exists for us as Image bearers? What does this imply about the value of human life? How should this impact how we treat others and how we steward our own lives? What aspects of man are inherent to his nature?
- 2) **Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Bible**: Inspiration means divinely inspired by God. Inerrancy means perfect and without error. What does the Bible say about itself? How was it written? Does it claim to be without error? How do the Resurrection and/or fulfilment of prophecy play into these ideas? Are there proofs within the Bible?
- 3) **Self-Control/Fruit of the Spirit**: What does it mean to have self-control as defined by the Bible? What are the consequences for a lack of self-control? Why is there a need for character, integrity, honesty, and self-governance in our world? How does it relate to the rest of the Fruit of the Spirit?
- 4) **A Christian's Responsibility to the Poor**: What responsibilities does a Christian have to respond to the needs of the poor and underprivileged in our communities? What are the responsibilities of the church and of the government? Are there ways that these overlap or are they separate?
- 5) **Government as an Institution**: What is the role of the government as an institution in the world? What does God give the government authority over? What is the difference between the moral law and a government's legal structure? What, if any, rights are the government granted that the individual is not?
- 6) **Truth**: How does the Bible define truth? Is truth relative or absolute? What value is truth granted, or how important is truth to individuals or society? Are there methods by which we can determine truth from deceit?
- 7) **Justice and Mercy**: What is the definition of justice? What is the definition of mercy? Compare and contrast them. How does God exhibit each? Is one given more weight than the other? How are individuals and society supposed to demonstrate justice and mercy?
- 8) **Lordship of Christ**: What is Lordship? What does Christ say about His Lordship? What does the Old Testament say about His Lordship? What makes Christ a Lord? What is He Lord over? People? Nature? How do His deity and humanity factor into His Lordship? What should be our response to this?
- 9) **Gender and Sexuality**: What does the Bible say about it? Is its position consistent across the Old to the New Testament? How does gender and sexuality connect to Imago Dei or self-control?
- 10) **Sanctity of Marriage**: How does the Bible define and treat marriage? What are the purposes of marriage? Why is marriage considered sacred? What are the distinctions between marriage and other institutions/relationships?

Reminder: All Biblical Research reports should be based on what Scripture says concerning itself. It is not an external examination or research report what others have said about a given principle or topic in the Bible.

# Assignment: Observe

## Objective

To be aware of the world around you and develop an understanding of the different pieces that fit together to make your community.

## Observations

- 1) **Attend at least one Legislative Session AND one Committee meeting of the State House or Senate.** You may split this observation between two visits, but you should only submit one report. Be aware of when the legislature is in session. The last opportunity for you to observe this will typically be in June before the legislature goes into recess. You must attend in person. Reach out to Headquarters to let us know beforehand when you will be observing. We can help answer questions or arrange a capitol staffer (typically an alumnus) to meet with you and help show you around.
- 2) **Attend one session of a public judicial trial.** It can be any hearing held in a real courthouse with a real judge or official referee of the court. It could range from being a civil trial with a jury to a judge sentencing civil infractions. Because trials may be cancelled or rescheduled, we recommend going at a time when multiple trials are being held.
- 3) **Attend a local meeting of your school board, city council, or county commissioner.** Eligible meetings are any government meetings funded by taxpayers in which you can see how civil government is operating. The meeting should be discussing issues relevant to your community.
- 4) **Shadow A LOCAL LEADER for one day in a field of your interest.** Note the necessity that this be a LOCAL LEADER. “Local” means living and/or working within an hour of you. What he does should affect your community. “Leader” means having authority over or managing others in some way. This does not have to be a political leader but could be someone involved in business, media, education, factory work, or any other area that interests you. This person should be outside your relational sphere (meaning, you cannot interview a family member) but you may know the person; but, remember, a goal of Ambassador League is to get outside of your comfort zone. If you are interested in shadowing someone you already know, ask whether that person can recommend someone in the area who holds a similar position in that career.

## Requirements

- All Observe assignments must have a signed verification form submitted with the report to be accepted.
- Agents and Special Agents: Complete all four assignments.

*Writing guidelines for each type of observation are on the following page.*

### **Writing an Observe Report**

In each report, describe your experience and include your personal observations on each event and what you learned from it. The focus of the report should be on what you observed and learned, and not your opinion on what took place.

### **Legislative Session and Committee Meeting**

- Which legislative body did you observe (House or Senate)? What did you notice about the Representatives or Senators (how did they conduct themselves)? What was discussed during the session?
- What committee did you observe (Appropriations, etc.)? What issues or bills were discussed? Were there any other members of the public present? What did they speak on?

### **Judicial Trial**

- What type of trial did you observe? What happened during the trial? What did you notice about the role of justice in our society? What did you learn about our justice system?

### **Local Meeting**

- What type of meeting did you observe? How many people were present? What was discussed? What issues or affect will the decisions have on your local community? What did you learn about the importance of being engaged in your community?

### **Shadow a Local Leader**

- Make sure you define how the person is a leader. Who/what are they managing? What do they do on a daily basis? How does what they do affect your community?
- Describe your day with the person. What did they spend their time doing? What did you learn about their profession? After spending a day with the person, is their career something you are still interested in pursuing?

## Assignment: Take Action

There are four assignments in this category (Promote LEAD, Public Discourses, Interview Local Leaders, and Volunteering). See each assignment for specific requirements.

### 1) Promote LEAD

*Objective:* To step out of your comfort zone by giving a verbal presentation.

*Requirements:* Agents and Special Agents must complete one presentation and submit a report with the signed verification form.

*Instructions:* Promote LEAD for a minimum of ten minutes in your school, church, or at an organized event that has at least ten people present. If you are having trouble finding a group that large, call Headquarters and we will discuss your situation. Your presentation should include an explanation of what LEAD is and what the program means to you. We recommend distributing brochures (usually available in October) and/or showing a promotional video. Go to [ssionline.org/promotions/](http://ssionline.org/promotions/) to request brochures or to see what promotional videos we have.

After you give your presentation, submit a report about what you did, how you prepared, and what you learned through the experience. We encourage you to complete this assignment early so that those listening would have time to register by March 31st and receive the early registration discount.

### 2) Public Discourses

*Objective:* To engage with your community on different relevant topics and call them to take action.

*Requirements:* Agents: Complete at least three different discourse items.  
Special Agents: Complete five different discourse items.

*Instructions:* The goal of the public discourse is for you to engage your local community to take action about an issue that is affecting them in a place that they will see it. For example, you may write a letter your local newspaper about an upcoming election and the importance of voting. Or you may write to your local government body about a change that you believe needs to happen for the betterment of your community. The public forum can include article submissions, newsletter items, letters to the editor, submitting a testimony to a State House or Senate committee, a public presentation, etc.

Your submission must be at least 150 words for a written submission or at least five minutes for an oral presentation. What you submit should be what the forum would publish (you write the article; don't ask the newspaper to write an article about a topic you think is important).

**Before you send your piece or presentation to the public forum, you must have the forum approved by Headquarters ([ssionline.org/ambassador-league/resources](http://ssionline.org/ambassador-league/resources)).**

- a. Forum Guidelines:
  - i. Cannot be self-published (i.e. if you chose to make a social media post, it cannot be for your personal page)
  - ii. It must be linked to a reputable organization that is specifically geared to reaching members of your community (such as a local newspaper or newsletter or a public forum such as for a school board, city council, county commissioner, or Lion's club).

### 3) Interview Local Leaders

*Objective:* To meet influential people in your community, learn what leadership looks like in a variety of careers, and how different leaders think and practically lead others.

*Requirements:* Agents: Complete at least three interviews.

Special Agents: Complete five.

*Instructions:* Interview local leaders from different occupations. Note the necessity that this be a LOCAL LEADER. "Local" means living and/or working within an hour of you. What he does should affect your community. "Leader" means having authority over or managing others in some way. This does not have to be a political leader but could be someone involved in business, media, education, factory work, or any other area that interests you. This person should be outside your relational sphere (meaning, you cannot interview a family member) but you may know the person; but remember, a goal of Ambassador League is to get outside of your comfort zone. Look for leaders both in fields that you are interested in and in fields with which you are unfamiliar. If you are interested in interviewing someone you already know, ask whether that person can recommend someone in the area who holds a similar position in that career.

After your interview, write a report giving a brief biography of the person, how they are a leader in your local community, and what you learned from the interview. This should not be a transcript (word-for-word copy) of what was said during the interview, but rather a synthesis of who they are and what you learned. You are welcome to quote the person as long as you properly cite them.

Here are some questions you may want to ask in your interview:

- a. Explain your role within this organization.
- b. What training do you think is important to prepare for your position?
- c. What are the greatest rewards of your job?
- d. What are the biggest challenges?
- e. What is your favorite and least favorite part of your job?
- f. What role, if any, does your faith play in your profession?
- g. How do you engage with the local community in your job?
- h. How would you define a good leader?
- i. What are some qualities that a leader should have?
- j. What is the most important skill a young person should have when seeking a leadership role?

#### 4) Volunteer

*Objective:* To engage with your community and world in a way you have not before.

*Instructions:* Volunteer each for the different types of organizations described below (see Requirements for how many hours for Agents and Special Agents). If you already volunteer for a group that qualifies, look for a different group to volunteer for. The goal is to take you out of your current comfort zone and sphere of relationships.

For each type of volunteering, submit your report and your signed verification form. Your report should include an overview of the organization, why you chose to volunteer there, what you did, and what you learned from the experience (or how it impacted you). Make sure to mention the impact the group you chose has on society. If you split up your volunteering hours, do not send in your report or verification forms until you have completed all your required hours.

**Before you begin volunteering with any organization, you must submit an approval form to Headquarters** (found at [ssionline.org/ambassador-league/resources](http://ssionline.org/ambassador-league/resources)) to make sure the organization falls within the specific criteria. If you begin volunteering before the organization is approved, your hours may not be counted for the assignment.

##### a. Non-Profit Organizations

*Requirements:* Agents: Volunteer at least 10 total hours. Special Agents: Volunteer for at least 20 total hours. For both Agent and Special Agent, at least half of the hours must be with an organization primarily seeking to serve the community's underprivileged, poor, at risk, or otherwise challenged individuals.

*Instructions:* Volunteer for a local non-profit organization. At least half of your hours for a non-profit organization should be with an organization that seeks to serve people or to meet a need of some sort. Groups that could fit this category include Habitat for Humanity, the Salvation Army, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, a city rescue mission, a crisis pregnancy center, or a homeless shelter. You may NOT count volunteering for your own church (for example, handing out bulletins before service) or on a mission trip. However, if your church has a ministry for your local community (such as a basic need center) that organization would meet the criteria.

##### b. Public Policy Action Group OR Political Campaign

*Requirements:* Agents and Special Agents: Volunteer at least 10 total hours.

*Instructions:* **Public Policy Action Groups** are an issue-oriented institution organized around a certain social policy. Their core issues are based on supporting or affecting policies related to certain issues or affecting public opinion about those issues. They might achieve their goals by seeking to change a law or putting issues on the ballot for people to vote on, or by educating the public and calling them to action. What they do affects our society's laws. Examples of public policy action groups include Citizens for Traditional Values, Right to Life, Americans for Prosperity, Tea Party groups, the Sierra club, Pheasants Anonymous, the National Rifle Association, and Michigan Family Forum. **Political Campaigns** for a candidate seeking an elected office or a ballot proposal (issue voted on by the public). You may not count working at the polls for an election toward this assignment.