

Portfolio Projects

To the Student: Though you are not able to be in school at this time, there are many things that you can do to continue learning and growing. Portfolio Projects are independent projects that allow you to extend your learning outside of the classroom. They can span any subject area and can take a variety of forms. In developing your portfolio project you will have an opportunity to select a key area of interest, determine a perspective to express your interest, choose resources, design provocative, intriguing questions your project will answer, and make decisions regarding how to best present or format your information and conclusions. Additionally, you will have an opportunity to create your own grading rubric for your project.

Before you begin to work on your project, you will first need to map out the time you plan to dedicate to this project. You can use a weekly calendar or the boxed organization sheet we provided below. Think of the work week as a whole and fill in the days you plan to work, how many hours a day you will spend working and what makes sense sequentially to do each day so that you can complete this project in a timely fashion (5-8 days). Use the Portfolio Project Check List along the way to monitor your daily progress.

Once you organize and plan your time, you are ready to select your topic and area of interest. When selecting an area of interest, consider what you are currently studying in school. This project should be an extension of what you are studying in school, in addition to what you are interested in pursuing further. Though we have listed sample topics for projects, feel free to think of your own topics.

When you have selected your topic/area of interest, assume a perspective (point of view) for your project. You can select, but you are not limited to, a historical, scientific, literary, or artistic perspective. Assuming a perspective will allow you to develop your guiding question which will in turn “focus” your inquiry/research on your specific subject and area of interest.

Your guiding question should spark curiosity, probe for deeper meaning and set the stage for further questioning. Guiding questions focus your thinking and research. When developing your guiding questions, consider the following criteria:

- ✓ They all relate to the topic/area of interest you selected in some way.
- ✓ They are ideas you are genuinely curious about.
- ✓ They explore different perspectives related to your topic of interest.
- ✓ They may generate other follow up questions

The exciting thing about completing your own portfolio of projects is that you can create your own formats and choose topics beyond the examples we have provided. Choosing a format/medium for your project will best allow you to express your understanding, individuality and creativity. Projects can take the form of creative paper and pencil projects such as a play, a collection of poems, a song, an essay, or a research report, or they can be technology-based such as a PowerPoint, photo journal, interactive photography, compilations of your work on blogs, wikis, Flickr and Twitter, to name a few.

The format that you select along with your guiding questions will help determine the direction to follow while conducting your research. In gathering resources, there are multiple sources to access when collecting information, including news media, television, Internet, books, periodicals, the library, speaking to experts, museums, cultural organizations, poetry, art, music, and notes from class. Remember to keep track of all the resources you use for your research; you will need them to develop your bibliography. Good research and projects should cite multiple sources for the information you gather.

Now that you have a project in mind it is important to either design an original rubric or use a pre-existing one that aligns to your project. This will allow you and your audience to evaluate the quality of your work. Below are some websites that will help you design an original rubric. Should you decide to use a pre-existing rubric, be sure to cite your source.

Websites to help you design an original rubric:

- <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php?screen=NewRubric>
- http://myt4l.com/index.php?v=pl&page_ac=view&type=tools&tool=rubricmaker

The chart below is an example of how topics, perspective and guiding questions are related.

Topic	Perspective	Guiding Questions
Conflict	Historical	Is peace a realistic goal or a fantasy? Is our judicial system structured to resolve conflict in a fair and just way?
	Scientific	Is human progress driving us towards extinction? Is euthanasia murder?
	Literary	How does literature express conflict in society? How does current fiction reflect reality?
	Artistic	How have artists used art to express their personal beliefs in times of conflict? How does opera convey social conflict?
Heroes	Historical	In what ways do various cultures reward / recognize their heroes and sheroes? Do the attributes of a s/hero remain the same over time?
	Scientific	Are the scientists of modern medicine true heroes? When is the development of modern weapons considered a heroic act?
	Literary	In literature, why is Julius Caesar considered a heroic figure by some people and a villain by others? Can a heroic figure in literature also be seen as a villain?
	Artistic	How have artists portrayed heroes?
Hope	Historical	Why is the phrase, "Keep hope alive" important to the American people? What role does hope play in getting a society through tough times?
	Scientific	In what way does hope play a factor in healing?
	Literary	How have authors used narrative to send the message of hope?
	Artistic	How have songs, paintings or film inspired hope and moved people to action?
Identity	Historical	What has shaped an American identity?
	Scientific	Why should organisms resemble their parents? What role do your parents play in shaping your identity? Should we clone children?
	Literary	How do the personality traits of mythological gods mirror humans?
	Artistic	In what ways do we define ourselves within art work? How are societal values evidenced in works of art?

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Portfolio Project Checklist

Self-Regulating My Learning

- I developed a schedule and a timeline to organize my plan for completing this project.
- I review my accomplishments daily and make the appropriate revisions to my schedule.

Phase 1-Topic, Perspective, & Guiding Questions

- My choice of topic reflects my interests.
- I selected a topic related to something I am doing at school.
- I chose one of the following perspectives: Historical, Scientific, Literary or Artistic.
- I developed some questions that I will use to guide my search.

Phase 2-Format

- I considered resources/materials available to me in my selection of formats.
- I considered the following factors in selecting a format for my project: time allocation, cost, materials available and accessible resources.
- I researched and saw similar examples of the format I selected and can envision how my product will look.

Phase 3-Research

- I kept a list of all sources used, including websites, through the use of a bibliography.
- I selected an organizational format for note taking.
- I reviewed my notes and further narrowed the focus of my research to an area of interest.
- In reviewing my selected notes, it is clear what my angle is for my topic.

Phase 4-Rubric

- I considered whether there are any rubrics that I am familiar with that I can use to evaluate my project or decided to create my own rubric.
- I looked at the various sites available for rubric making and determined which one I want to use for developing my rubric.

Student Name: _____

Projected Start Date: _____

Projected End Date: _____

Week at a Glance Organizer

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Date:</u>	<u>Date:</u>	<u>Date:</u>	<u>Date:</u>
Work Hours:				
Material I will need:				
What I plan to do:				
What I accomplished:				