

Valley New School
Project Guides

Project Binder Components

Interview Scripts

Site Visitation Form

Product Ideas

Writing an End-of-Project Analysis

Assessment Preparation Guide



Project Binder Components

The binder you bring to assessment for each project should contain all components of your project and be separated by tabs into the following sections. Each section should contain the items listed below, organized, and in the order as listed on this page. You must have your binder with tabs, along with those items marked with an asterisk () for your proposal meeting. A complete project binder at assessment will contain all of the following:*

Section 1: Proposal

- Project Checklist*
- Completed Project Proposal Guide signed by parents*
- Questions for Research/Outlines/Web*
- Performance Rubric, complete with communication and focus skills*
- Standards*
- Project time log,* with hours totaled
- Any other time management tools such as to-do lists, post it notes to yourself, etc.

Section 2: Research

- Articles/Websites, organized, documented, and highlighted and/or paraphrased on note-cards
- Fliers/brochures and/or permission slips from project field trips
- Documentation of all live sources: interviews, notes, logs/journals, emails/letters, and copy of thank you letters
- Organized notes, paraphrased in your own words
- Source list/source cards

Section 3: Planning

- Sketches, plans, stencils
- Outlines of written products and final analysis

Section 4: Drafts

- Written products, numbered and signed by the editors (at least one each from a peer, parent, advisor)
- Written work for displays
- End-of-Project Analysis
- Works Cited

Section 5: Final Products

- Written products
- Works Cited
- End-of-Project Analysis
- Copy of Annual Portfolio project slide

Interview Scripts

Script for Making a Phone Contact

- Hi, my name is _____. I am a student at Valley New School in Appleton, Wisconsin.
- I am seeking someone who can help me with questions I have about _____. (If you are transferred to another person, restate the above dialogue before proceeding.)
- Would it be possible to set up a (live interview, site visit, job shadow, long term internship) so that I can enhance the research for my _____ project?

or

- Could you (send me information, refer me to someone, contact me) so that I can enhance me research for my _____ project.
- When is a convenient time to _____? (Make arrangements, including when, where, who will make the next contact, and your contact information [school phone number: 993-7037].)
- Thank you for your time.

Script for Leaving a Phone Message

- Hi. my name is _____. I am a student at Valley New School in Appleton, Wisconsin.
- I am seeking someone who can help me with questions I have about _____.
- Could you please contact me through school at 993-7037?
- Thank you for your time.

Format for Sending an Email

Paragraph #1: Start with your intent (1–2 sentences)

- I am writing to request...

Paragraph #2: VNS explanation

- Valley New School is a project-based, student-driven charter school of the Appleton Area School District. Sixty-four students in grades 7–12 work in an individualized, interdisciplinary setting, designing and implementing independent research projects on topics of interest.

Paragraph #3: Specific needs/questions

- I am 15 hours into my preliminary research on the subject of _____. I am seeking information that will enhance my research. Specifically, I was wondering...

Paragraph #4: Close

- My project is due _____. Your response before _____ would be greatly appreciated.
- Also, could you refer me to anyone else who may be a useful source for my project?
- Thank you for your time.

Format for Sending a Business Letter in the Mail

See Write Source 2000, pages 241 - 250 for details. The body of the letter will be the same as the email format above.

Site Visitation Form

Name _____

Project _____

Date and Destination

Today's date _____ Date you will be offsite _____

Fieldwork destination _____

Departure time _____ Return time _____

Purpose/Goals

What will be accomplished? _____

Transportation/Supervision

How will you get there? _____

Mentor/Chaperone(s) _____

Approval

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor Signature _____ Date _____

Accomplishments

What was accomplished during today's session? _____

Productivity

Please rate the student's work habits (1-5)

___ Time on task ___ Cooperation ___ Accomplished goals ___ Conduct

Provide any comments on the back of this sheet. Thank you.

Approval

Mentor/Chaperone Signature _____ Date _____

(To be filled out by your mentor/chaperone)

Product Ideas

Don't settle for producing reports and display boards for every project! Get creative! Use the ideas below (that you brainstormed!) to help you design products that ooze with originality and really show what you know. Remember: any product can be modified to work with any topic.

- Design an advertisement
- Curate and hang an art exhibit
- Write a biography
- Create a batik
- Draw a blueprint
- Design a board game
- Make a book
- Create a card game
- Create ceramic pieces
- Do a charcoal drawing
- Create a detailed chart/diagram
- Perform a choral reading
- Write a cinquain
- Create a coin collection
- Make a collage
- Illustrate a book
- Write a letter to a politician
- Compile a short story collection
- Draw a series of comic strips
- Write a computer program
- Create a crossword puzzle book
- Design & sew a costume
- Choreograph a dance
- Schedule and do a debate
- Keep a journal/diary
- Build a diorama
- Set up a display
- Direct a play/musical
- Perform a monologue
- Design the sets for a play
- Write an editorial
- Create an elegy
- Write an essay
- Do an etching or print
- Do an experiment
- Write a fable/fairy tale
- Record a family tree
- Make a film/video
- Create a glossary/dictionary
- Create a graphic design
- Design a series of greeting cards
- Fund & invite a guest speaker
- Write a series of haikus
- Write a children's book
- Give a lecture
- Write a letter to the editor
- Design a teacher's lesson plan
- Write a series of limericks
- Create a scale drawing/model
- Write/submit a magazine article
- Draw a map with legend
- Create a mobile
- Do a movie montage
- Paint a mural
- Display a museum exhibit
- Compose a piece of music
- Broadcast the news
- Write a newspaper article
- Write a novella
- Create an oil/acrylic painting
- Design a product package
- Lay out a pamphlet
- Perform a pantomime
- Create a pattern w/ instructions
- Create a photo essay
- Take/develop photographs
- Make a poster
- Put on a puppet show
- Perform a radio show
- Do Readers' Theater
- Write a science fiction story
- Create a scrapbook
- Create a sculpture
- Do silk-screening
- Put on a skit
- Do a slide show
- Make a compilation CD
- Write a sonnet
- Do stitchery
- Survey & collect data
- Record a song/CD
- Construct a terrarium
- Build furniture
- Write a textbook/manual
- Create a timeline
- Design a travel itinerary
- Make a documentary
- Design a video game
- Create a watercolor painting
- Write a report
- Put on a fashion show
- Sew clothing
- Reupholster a chair
- Do colored pencil drawings
- Publish a magazine
- Start a hotline
- Start an organization
- Design a website
- Create/sell bumper stickers
- Build a _____
- Host a competition
- Do a demonstration
- Create jewelry
- Clean a park/river/etc.
- Take action on an issue
- Cook an international dinner
- Sew a flag
- Make wallpaper
- Learn a musical instrument
- Make candy
- Start a band
- Construct a toy or puzzle
- Write the history of _____
- Recite a speech
- Reenact an event/battle
- Make a uniform
- Do a comparative study
- Make your own tools
- Bake a pie/cake/etc.
- Write/test a recipe
- Put on a cooking show
- Run a contest
- Write a play
- Hold a sale
- Create a TV show
- Learn a language
- Create a comic book
- Write a guidebook
- Travel to _____
- Make a pizza from scratch
- Gather/make props for a play
- Raise money

- Put on a talent show
- Host a craft show
- Design a t-shirt
- Have a rummage sale
- Write a grant
- Build a computer
- Start a CD burning service

- Do computer art
- Be a tourist
- Build a house
- Write a book
- Host a pancake breakfast
- Learn a dance
- Document "a day in the life of _____"

- Write a review
- Do an interior design
- Create a mandala
- Design a logo
- Design a CD cover
- Write lyrics for music
- Make a music video
- Plant a garden

Add More Ideas Below:

Writing an End-of-Project Analysis

Probably the most important step in the project process, the End-of-Project Analysis demonstrates the highest level of thinking and provides your Project Team with a clear picture of what you have learned. A thoughtful, thorough analysis will help you earn the credit you deserve; a brief summary will only show the advisors that you had little interest in the project and did not care to think about your work. (See examples of good and bad Analyses on the next pages of your binder.)

Plan: Jot down your thoughts/ideas on a sheet of paper as you do the following:

- Read the daily logs you wrote during this project. Reflect on your process: successes, problems, time efficiency, level of thinking, etc.
- Consider your original goals and why you designed the project. Did you accomplish what you intended? Why or why not?
- Give yourself marks on the Rubric. Think carefully about how you rate your work in each area.

Write: Create the first draft of a narrative End-of-Project Analysis.

- Write the story of your project process from beginning to end. Do not just write the answers to a list of questions.
- Analyze the strengths and weaknesses at each step. Explain to your project team what and how you learned throughout the process.
- Remember, you are advocating for your learning! A detailed, well-planned End-of-Project Analysis will support the credit you have earned without ever saying, "This project is worth 1.0 credit because. . ."

Revise: Evaluate its content and structure. Make changes as necessary.

- Is it written in narrative form?
- Does it include analysis of each step in the project process?
- Is it candid and thoughtful?
- Have you practiced economy? There's no need to repeat yourself.

Edit: Evaluate its fluency, conventions, and word choice. Make changes as necessary.

- Have you removed "I" and "you"?
- Are there good transitions from one paragraph to the next? From one sentence to the next?
- Is your sentence length and word use varied?
- Is it free of grammatical and spelling errors? (HINT: Use Spell Check & Grammar Check!)

Present: Submit the final copy to your Project Team at Assessment.

- Typed, double-spaced, standard 12-point font looks most professional.

Assessment Preparation Guide

Part 1: The Process (10 minutes)

Express to the assessment team everything you did to complete the project. The process is the most important part of your project. How much depth you show about process will largely determine how much credit you earn!

- Use the checklist to include explanation of all parts of the process.
- Make sure to show everything in your binder/folder/that you brought with you.
- Show your time log to prove time spent.

Part 2: The Product (10 minutes)

Express to the assessment team everything you learned about your subject; prove you are an expert. The product(s) should show as much of what you learned as possible—it is proof of your learning.

- Plan and practice a presentation (like you would for an Event Night).
- Show your products and leave time for questions from assessment team.
- Utilize your subtopics to structure your presentation.

Part 3: Analysis (10 minutes)

Defend your position on the Performance Rubric by expressing what skills you have refined and/or improved throughout your project.

- Analyze your success for each section of the Performance Rubric in your End of Project Analysis. Decide where you want to circle on the Rubric and why.
- Advocate for yourself! Explain what you did well, and show improvement in weak areas.
- Prove yourself by showing specific examples of daily logs with strong daily analyses.

General Tips

- Total Time: About 30 minutes—Be efficient and prepared in your explanations.
- Be organized! Have all paperwork completely filled out (checklist, proposal, rubric). Bring everything with you to assessment, have a system (Binder, folders, paperclips...)
- Take Control! The more you lead the discussion, the more impressive the assessment.
- Use your Annual Portfolio Slide as the skeleton for your assessment—If your project slide is complete and of high quality, you can plan your entire assessment presentation with this slide as a guide. If you do your End of Project Analysis right, you could use that as the script for your assessment presentation.
- Don't leave anything out! "Show and tell" is how you will ultimately be recognized for your hard work with credit.