

## Research Culminating Project

All of the culminating projects require some type of research in order for students to learn about the various topics. Two research guides are included for grades K-3 and 4-8. Review these guides and teach students the steps they should go through to gather information.

In addition, “**What Do You Think?**” from Graffiti Wall is included here to help students put together surveys and collect additional data for research or science fair projects.

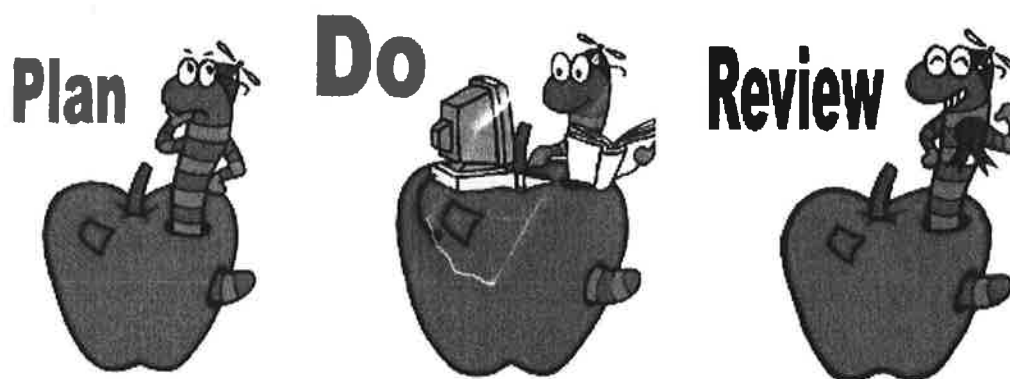
Students can present their information using PowerPoint, or they can do station presentations in the multi-purpose room for Family Night.

Turn Family Night into an **Earth Day Celebration**. Set up the multi-purpose room into a fair atmosphere with students hosting informational booths and demonstrations.

Finally, after students have completed their research, tie in some of the following fun projects from Lakeshore’s Write & Publish and Responding to Literature Activity Centers:

- Pop-Up Animal Riddle
- Fact Mobile
- Fact Book
- Story Box

## Super 3 Research Method for K – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Students



Before sending students off to do research, review the following items:

### 1. Plan

What am I supposed to do? (Be sure students are clear about the assignment)  
 What do I need to get the job done?  
 What do I want it to look like when I'm done?

### 2. Do

I must locate the things I will need (books, websites, materials etc.).  
 I need to ask questions, read, and take notes.  
 I need to use the information I find to create something.

- Have students submit a rough draft – give feedback
- Help students to edit and rewrite their papers/work

### 3. Review

Did I do what I was supposed to do?  
 Am I proud of what I've done?  
 Is there something else I should do before I say I am done?

## Super 3 Research Method for K – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Students



Before sending students off to do research, review the following items:

### 1. Plan

What am I supposed to do? (Be sure students are clear about the assignment)  
 What do I need to get the job done?  
 What do I want it to look like when I'm done?

### 2. Do

I must locate the things I will need (books, websites, materials etc.).  
 I need to ask questions, read, and take notes.  
 I need to use the information I find to create something.

- Have students submit a rough draft – give feedback
- Help students to edit and rewrite their papers/work

### 3. Review

Before students turn in their final product, go over the questions listed below. You can help students to self-evaluate by giving them the "I think I'm done! sheet."

Did I do what I was supposed to do?  
 Am I proud of what I've done?  
 Is there something else I should do before I say I am done?

I think I'm done!



1-4

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I researched \_\_\_\_\_.

---

Did I answer my question?

Did I do what I was supposed to do?

Do I feel good about what I created?

What do I like best?

What could I do better?

Should I do anything more before I say I am done?

If yes, then what?

## Research Process

**Staff : Please guide your students through this process. Help students to select a topic and make sure each knows what needs to be done for the end product.**

### **1. Task Definition – Identify and Develop Your Topic**

#### 1.1 Define the information problem

- Brainstorm, consider purpose and goal, use graphic organizers
- State your topic idea as a question

#### 1.2 Identify information needed

- Identify the main concepts or keywords in your question

### **2. Information Seeking Strategies**

#### 2.1 Determine all possible sources

- Use encyclopedias and dictionaries from print and online to get an overview of your topic

#### 2.2 Select the best sources

- Evaluate materials especially websites

### **3. Location and Access**

#### 3.1 Locate sources (intellectually and physically)

- Books and textbooks
- Journals, newspapers, and magazines articles
- Video and sound recordings

#### 3.2 Find information within sources

- Check bibliographies for additional useful resources

### **4. Use of Information**

#### 4.1 Engage (e.g., read, hear, view, touch)

#### 4.2 Extract relevant information

### **5. Synthesis**

#### 5.1 Organize from multiple sources

- Write what you have learned in your own words
- Write a first draft using information
- Edit and rewrite – see Editing Checklist
- Give credit for materials used - See "Citations" worksheet

#### 5.2 Present the information

- Publish works in a variety of ways, such as a paper, class book, bulletin board, letters to the editor, school newsletter, newspapers, brochures, flyers, booklets, or website.

### **6. Evaluation**

#### 6.1 Judge the product (effectiveness)

- Did you answer the question?

#### 6.2 Judge the process (efficiency)

- What did you learn about doing research that you can use in everyday life?



## EDITING CHECKLIST

- ☐ We read our paragraph to a friend to see where to STOP for
  - periods .
  - question marks ?
  - exclamation marks !
- ☐ We used capitals at the beginning of each sentence.
- ☐ We circled words that may be misspelled.
- ☐ We have an interesting beginning sentence.
- ☐ We tried to say things in different and surprising ways to keep the reader interested.
- ☐ We have evidence in our writing to show that we are thinking about our audience.
- ☐ We put the information in an order that makes sense.
- ☐ We ended the paragraph with a summary statement.

## Citations

Using the indicated item, fill in the blanks:

### Book

AUTHOR *if available* (last name, first and middle) \_\_\_\_\_ (period).

TITLE (*Italics*) \_\_\_\_\_ (period).

PLACE of publication \_\_\_\_\_ (colon):

PUBLISHER \_\_\_\_\_ (comma), YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ (period).

Medium of publication Print (period).

**Example: Eddy, Susan. *Cesar Chavez*. New York: Children's Press, 2003. Print.**

### Encyclopedia

AUTHOR *if available* (last name, first and middle) \_\_\_\_\_ (period).

TITLE OF ARTICLE ("quotation marks") \_\_\_\_\_ (period).

TITLE of encyclopedia (*italics*) \_\_\_\_\_ (period).

YEAR \_\_\_\_\_ followed by edition abbreviated to the letters: ed. (period).

Medium of publication Print (period).

**Example: Barnes, Isaac. "Washington, George." *The World Book Encyclopedia*. 2000 ed. Print.**

### Internet

AUTHOR *if available* (last name, first and middle) \_\_\_\_\_ (period).

TITLE OF ARTICLE ("quotation marks") \_\_\_\_\_ (period).

TITLE OF MAGAZINE (*italics*) \_\_\_\_\_ (no period)

DATE OF ARTICLE (Day Month (abbreviated + period.) Year) \_\_\_\_\_ (period).

Medium of publication Web (period).

DATE OF ACCESS (Day Month (abbreviated + period.) Year) \_\_\_\_\_ (no period).

Website Address (Only if requested, in <angle brackets>) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (period).

**Example: Walsh, Joan. "Clear the Field." *Teen Magazine* 9 Oct. 2002. Web. 27 July 2006.  
<<http://www.teenmagazine.com/news/feature/2002>>.**

## Citations

Whenever someone's words or ideas are used, credit must be given to the writer. To make it easy, we all use the same form to list our sources. This is called **Citations**.

- Arrange the items on your list by author in alphabetical order.
- If no author is given, start with the title.
- Abbreviate the names of all months except May, June, and July.
- Indent the second and following lines 5 spaces (or two fingers).

Use the information from page 1 to fill in this page. Be sure to use proper punctuation.

### Book

---



---



---

### Encyclopedia

---



---



---

### Internet

---



---



---



---



---



## Websites

We want to be sure to use websites which contain reliable information. Below is a list of websites which have been evaluated by teachers and librarians:

KidsClick! Web search for kids by librarians

<http://www.kidsclick.org/>

World Almanac for Kids

<http://www.worldalmanacforkids.com/>

Fact Monster: Online Almanac, Dictionary, Encyclopedia, and Homework Help

<http://www.factmonster.com/>

Brainpop and Brainpop Jr.

<https://www.brainpop.com/>

ALA: Great Websites for Kids

<http://gws.ala.org/>

National Geographic Kids

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/>

Internet Public Library-Kidspace

<http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/>

**Research Overview** (See "Research Process" in the binder for more details)

1. Select a general topic that interests you in some way – KWL Chart (see binder)
2. List key words to help you look up information about the topic – Brainstorm
3. Get an overview of the topic – look in an encyclopedia, dictionary, etc.
  - Using the general overview, begin to focus the topic.
  - An overview of the topic is important because it will help you to find words to help broaden or narrow your search.
4. Research your topic – look in books, magazines, online
5. Take notes - keep track of your sources so others can follow your trail
6. Write what you have learned in your own words
7. Edit and rewrite several times - you can do this or ask someone to help you
8. Complete your finished product

# What Do You Think?

What do you think, and what do others have to say?

## WHAT YOU NEED

- ✓ GraffitiWall space
- ✓ Markers

## Project possibilities!

**Time** 10 minutes or more for gathering responses  
15 minutes or more for presenting responses

**Independence Level** Medium/low

## WHAT YOU DO

**Take an interesting question, find out what everyone thinks, and share the information!**

1. Write a yes/no or multiple choice question on the Wall

Take a chart for students to mark their votes or opinions (see examples)

3. Set a time when all votes are due.

### Pollsters at Work

Have students poll teachers or parents on the question. Gather results and compare.

## PUNCHLINE

- Ask for a volunteer to present the results.
- What was the majority?
- Ask for explanations of different opinions.

### Looking for Questions?

Listen to what kids are talking about

Ask what's current in school

See what's in the news

Ask kids to come up with questions

Use court cases

## TAKE-OFFS

### Ratchet it down

- Ask simply worded Yes or No questions. Read the question aloud.
- Have children put X's under Yes or No.
- Count up answers as a group.

### Ratchet it up

- Ask popular issue, controversial questions.
- Expand surveying or polling beyond the group.
- Present findings in graphs or charts (see examples on page 60).
- Include percents, ratios, and fractions as relevant in reports.
- Have kids come up with questions.
- Use varied question and response formats (multiple choice, yes/no, true/false, check all that apply, ranking in order, scaling 1–10).
- Experiment with different methods for collecting and representing data (check boxes, marking a grid to create a bar graph, using pie charts or line graphs).
- Debate issues. Explore opportunities for debating teams.
- Use court cases and judgments. Explore opportunities for Mock Trial teams.

Question ideas?

Questions that worked?

## LINKS TO CONTENT

### Academic...

- Collect information and present it in an organized way
- Make, read, and use graphs, charts and diagrams

### ...and social

- Share thoughts and ideas
- Weigh information and form opinions
- Work in groups
- Expressing and listening to opinions

✓ ELA  
✓ Math/Science  
✓ Social Studies



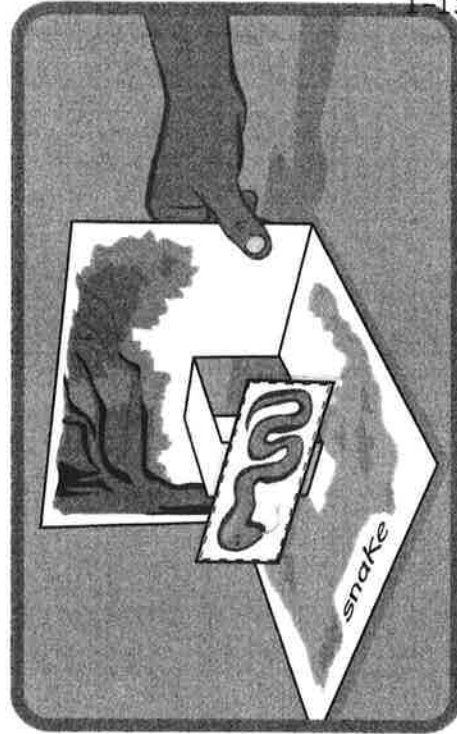
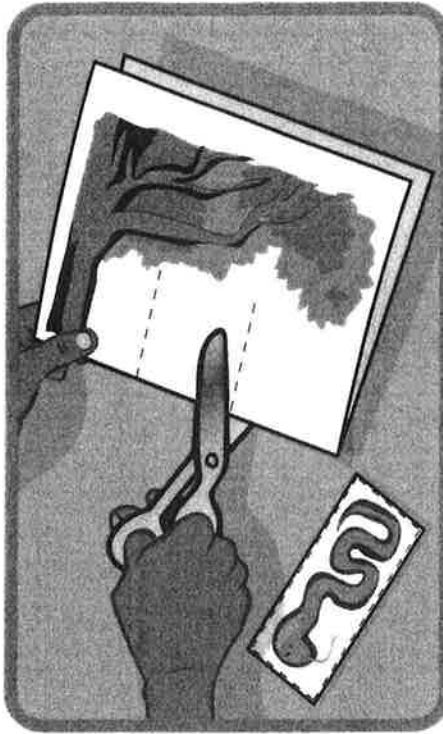
# Pop-Up Animal Riddle

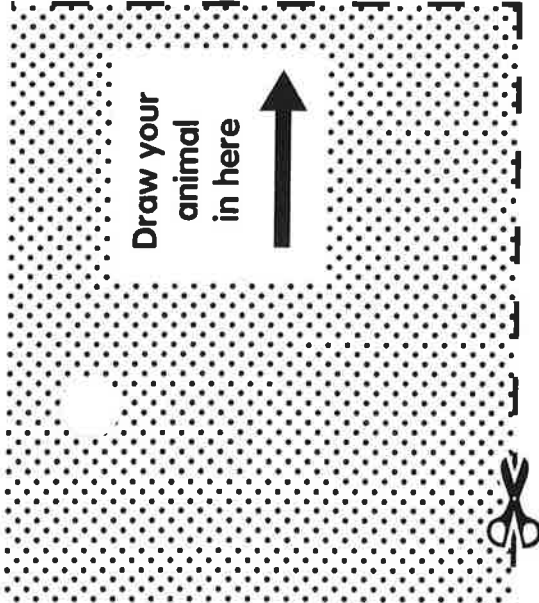
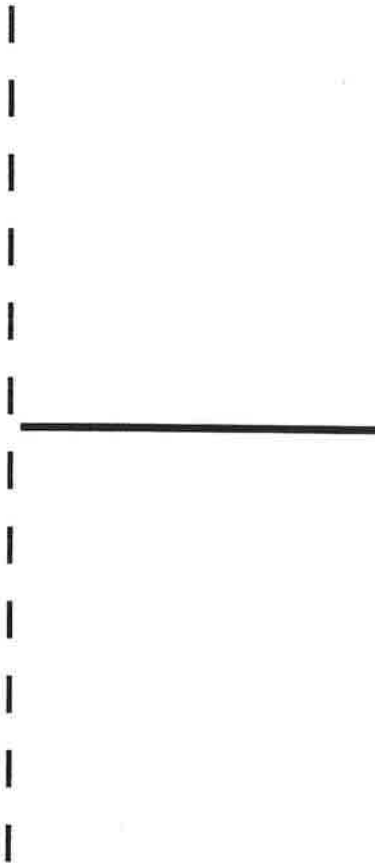
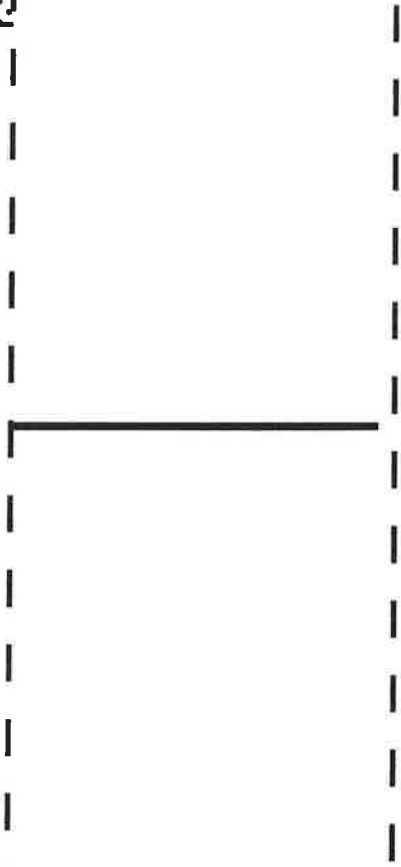
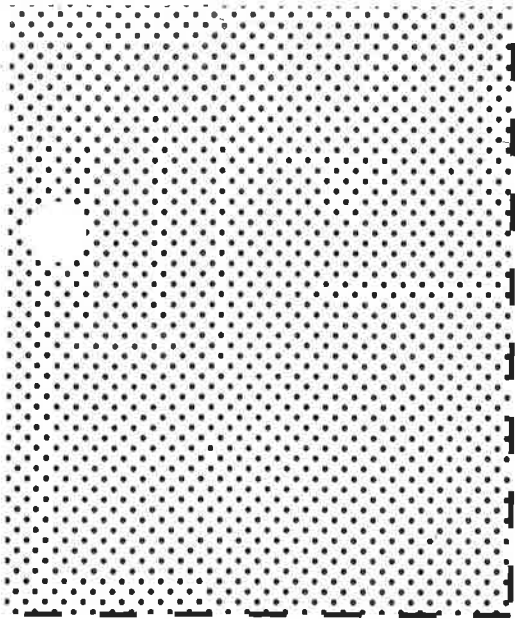
**1** Choose an animal to write a riddle about. Draw your animal in the box at the top of the page, and cut out the box along the dashed line.

**2** Fold the rest of the page along the solid line, with the solid line on the inside. On the outside front, write 3 clues to describe the animal and write your name.

**3** On the inside, draw where your animal lives, and write its name. Then, fold the page again, and cut along the dashed lines.

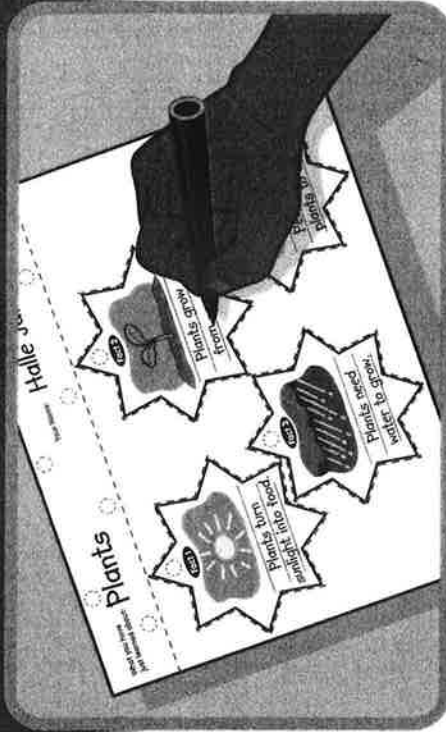
**4** Open the page and push the tab to the inside. Glue your animal to the tab.



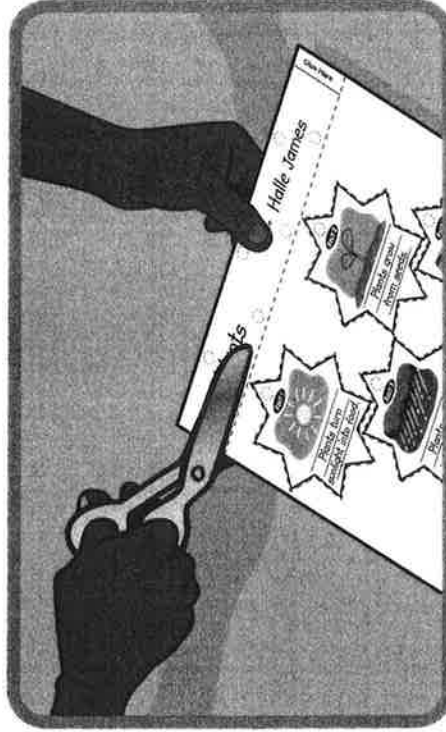


# Fact Mobile

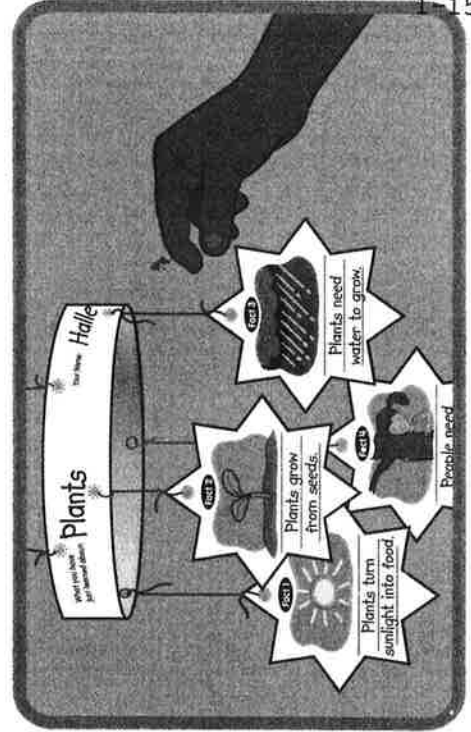
1 Think of 4 facts about something you have just learned at school. Draw pictures of the facts and write about them on the stars.



2 Cut the top strip along the dashed line. Then glue the strip into a circle.



3 Cut out the stars. Punch out all of the holes.



4 Tie the stars to the circle with a string. Now, tie strings to the top holes on the circle. Hang up your mobile!

Glue Here

1-16

Your Name:

What you've  
just learned about:

Fact 2

Fact 4

Fact 3

Fact 1



# FACT BOOK

1

Think of five facts from the book you read.

2

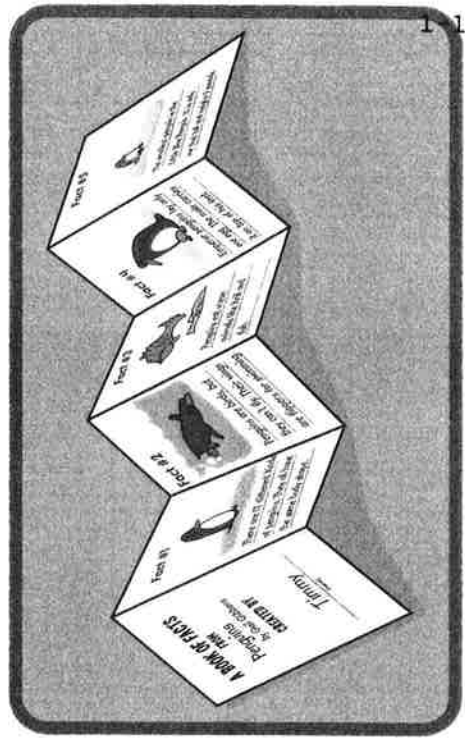
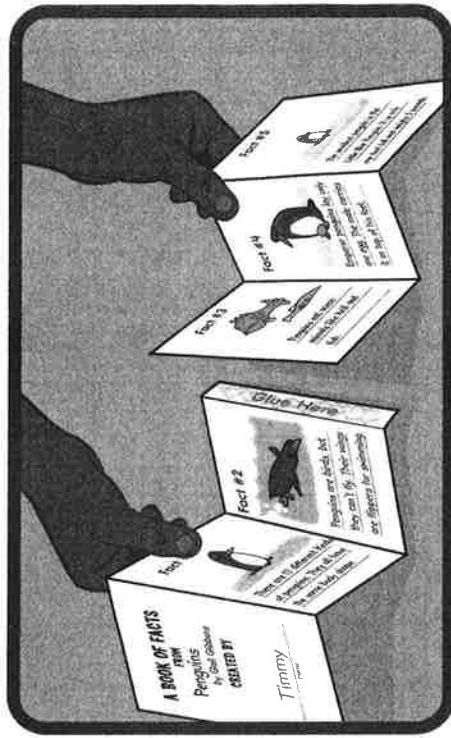
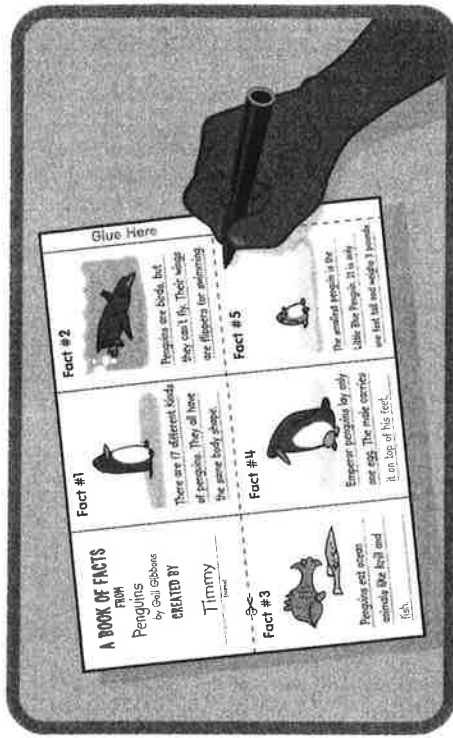
Write each one on a different section of the page. Draw pictures to illustrate the facts.

3

Cut along the dotted lines, then tape or glue the ends of the strips together.

4

Fold the pages accordion-style.



# A BOOK OF FACTS FROM

CREATED BY

(name)



Fact #3

---

---

---

Fact #1

---

---

---

Fact #4

---

---

---

Fact #2

---

---

---

Fact #5

---

---

Glue Here



# STORY BOX

1

Describe the main characters and the setting of the story you read in the appropriate squares.

2

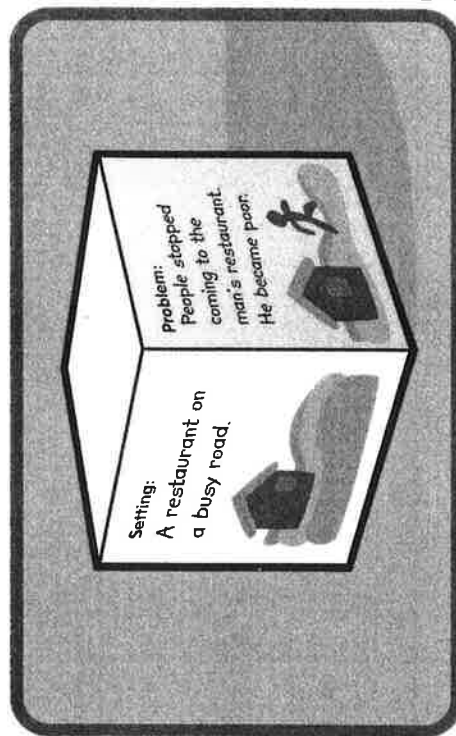
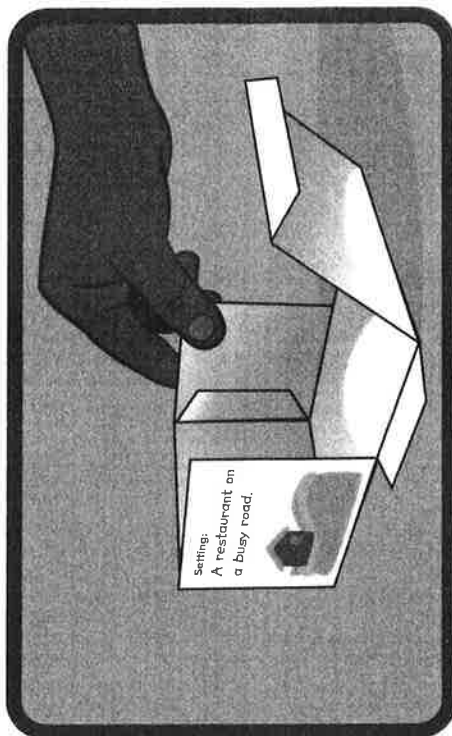
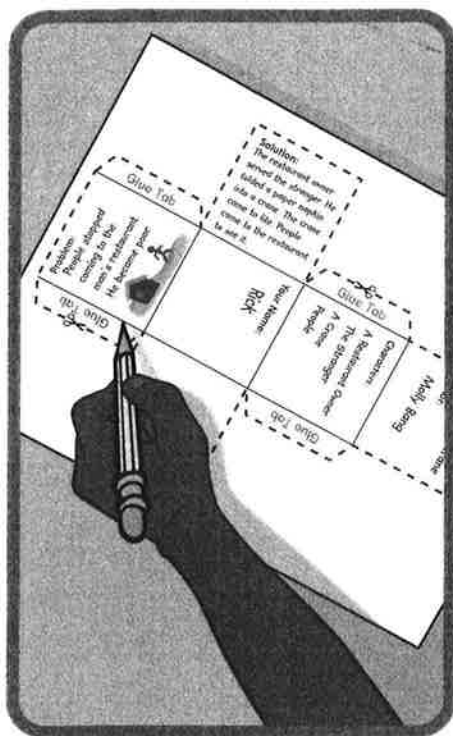
In two other squares, describe the problem of the story and the solution.

3

Cut out the shape along the dotted lines. Fold along the solid lines.

4

Glue the flaps to complete your box.



<b>Problem:</b>		<b>Glue Tab</b>	
<b>Setting:</b>		<b>Solution:</b>	
<b>Your Name:</b>		<b>Glue Tab</b>	
<b>Characters:</b>		<b>Glue Tab</b>	
<b>Author:</b>		<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Don't Glue Tab</b>			

# Service Learning Project Guide

**Service learning** is a teaching strategy that integrates service in the community after school activities. This helps students see communities as places of learning. Students learn beyond the classroom and grow through active participation in thoughtfully organized activities and experiences that:

Meet real community needs, including the needs of the school;

Develop academic, leadership and employment skills for students;

Foster the development of lifelong commitment to service for the community and the ability to work effectively as a team member

## What types of projects might a group consider?

Service learning projects can involve direct action, indirect action, or advocacy

**Direct Service:** students respond to a community need by interacting with and impacting the service recipient or site (for example, students prepare food for people in need)

**Indirect Service:** students build infrastructure or capacity to respond to the community need (for example, students pack food boxes at the local Food Bank)

**Research and Advocacy Service:** students find, gather and report on information to raise awareness of a problem and/or advocate for change in the condition underlying the community need (for example, students meet with elected officials to urge support for additional food subsidy for low-income families)

## What can your group do for a service learning project?

### K-3

- Mount an energy or water conservation campaign for your school/local neighborhood. Create posters and brochures to inform others.
- Construct health/hygiene packets for distribution to a shelter.
- Write letters to children in hospitals and seniors in homes.
- Initiate a penny drive for a cause.
- Plant trees and flowers for the school
- Collect and refurbish children's toys, school supplies, or food and donate to a shelter

### 4-8

- Restore a park.
- Install a garden in an "ugly" part of the school grounds.
- Use the Internet to research a social/environmental concern; create and distribute a flyer on the topic.
- Campaign for a cause; create and post related artwork around school/neighborhood/libraries.
- Create an educational pamphlet on environmental hazards around the home
- Donate recycling bins to your school or other organization
- Write letters of support of current environmental legislation
- Create a video advocating healthy ways to stop pollution

## The Five Stages of Service Learning

- Investigation
- Preparation and Planning
- Action
- Reflection
- Demonstration/Celebration

These **Five Stages of Service Learning** describe what students do to transform their ideas into action. Adults provide guidance, and ensure that students' skills and knowledge are developed during the process.

### Investigation

Young people identify community needs of interest and begin their research. During this process, often called "social analysis," they assess the needs by designing a survey, conducting interviews, using varied media including books and the Internet, and drawing from personal experience and observation. Students then document the extent and nature of the problem and establish a baseline for monitoring progress. Community partners are often identified. If a community partner provides the need, students still investigate to authenticate and document this need. A personal investigation is also of great value during which students interview each other to identify and consolidate each person's interests, skills, and talents. These are then referenced, employed, and developed while going through each of the sequential four stages of service-learning.

### Preparation and Planning

Young people, often working with community partners, outline varied ways they will meet the community need or contribute to improving the situation. Planning may include: developing a common vision for success, deciding what will occur and who will do each part of the work, creating a time line, listing materials and costs, and overseeing any logistics and approvals that must be obtained to move forward. Clarifying roles and responsibilities is key.

### Action

All participants implement their plans to meet the community need or contribute to the common good. The action most often looks like direct service, indirect service, advocacy, research, or a combination of these approaches to service.

### Reflection

At each stage, students consider how the experience, knowledge, and skills they are acquiring relate to their own lives and their community. Through varied activities they think about the needs, their actions, their impacts, what worked and did not work, and their contribution. This process includes both analytical and affective response. Final reflections may include measures or other ways to gauge results.

### Demonstration/Celebration

During demonstration, students provide evidence to others of their influence and accomplishments. They showcase what and how they have learned and their acquired skills and knowledge. In this context of demonstration, along with their partners, students may also plan and carry out a celebration of what they have gained and contributed including both the learning and the service.

**Know Your Community (Before)**

 Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date \_\_\_\_\_

You are going to explore your community and learn ways to deal with problems that exist there. Draw a picture of your community. What do you already know about the place where you live? What problems do you see? Take a class poll of answers.

Circle the word below that best describes each statement:

1. I know 

nothing  
 a little  
 a lot

 about my community and the people who live there.
2. I know 

nothing  
 a little  
 a lot

 about what my community was like in the past.
3. I know 

nothing  
 a little  
 a lot

 about the problems in my community.
4. I know 

nothing  
 a little  
 a lot

 about what causes community problems.
5. I know 

nothing  
 a little  
 a lot

 about how to make a plan to get things done.
6. I know 

nothing  
 a little  
 a lot

 about how to get help with community problems.
7. I am 

not  
 sort of  
 very

 proud of my community.
8. My community is 

not  
 sort of  
 very

 important to me.
9. Things that happen in my community have an effect on me. 

true  
 false
10. I believe I can make a difference in my community by working on community problems. 

true  
 false

# Picture the Problem

**Directions:**

1. Write what the problem is or draw a picture of the problem.
2. List the causes of the problem.
3. List the effects of the problem.

The Problem	
<b>Causes</b> What are some things that cause the problem? How did the problem begin? 1. _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ 3. _____ _____ 4. _____ _____	<b>Effects</b> How does the problem affect the school and community? How are people and the environment affected? 1. _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ 3. _____ _____ 4. _____ _____



This activity will expose students to the service learning idea process. Through learning about issues in their city, students will be able make a meaningful impact in their community.

## **WE –Act**

### **Materials:**

- 4 “Picture the Problem” handout . (One per group)
- “Why take local action” handout packet
- “Gift + Issue = CHANGE” worksheet (one per student)
- Computer or laptop (optional)
- Projector (optional)
- Internet Access to Youtube (optional)

Time: 1 hour (30 minutes if you do not have access to computers)      Grade 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>

### **Steps:**

- Divide students get into 4 groups.
- Read out loud the right side of “Why take local action” to the students.
- Each group will receive either: hunger, homelessness, environment or poverty handout and 1 “picture the problem” sheet.
- After reading the handout, groups will complete the “picture the problem” sheet.
- Groups will now share out what they learned to the whole group.

If you have access to a computer please complete the following.

- Watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fx88LEhNneM> (9 minutes and 30 seconds) showing how a 12 year old Craig Kielburger created an international human rights movement called Free the Children.
- Ask the students the following questions:
  - What problem did Craig address?
  - What are some of the causes of the problem?
- Show the following video of what Free the Children has become. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJ10sYhsCYY>
- Students will complete the Gift + Issue = CHANGE worksheet.
- Brainstorm with the group different ways to take action.

If you choose a service learning project please do the following lesson:

Raising awareness, taking action

## EXECUTIVE

# SUMMARY



Discover why it's important to take action on local issues



Find out how to identify local issues through a Community Mapping exercise



Explore a range of local issues: hunger, homelessness, the environment and poverty



Make a difference locally by taking on our top five action ideas or our ready-to-go campaigns



Access online educational resources for issuing and campaigns to help you prepare for your actions

Look for these icons throughout the We Act Kit and educational materials. The icons identify the most relevant core skills students will develop as they progress through the We Act program.



# WHY TAKE LOCAL ACTION?

*It's so easy to forget that, even within our own community, people struggle with many social issues on an ongoing basis. Hunger, poverty and homelessness are everyday realities for thousands of families across the United States. They affect big cities and small towns. They affect adults and children from all walks of life.*

*Understanding the challenges that face your own community is the first step toward making a difference. The actions you take can have a huge impact, both for you and the people you care about. Over the course of your local action you can:*



*If you're a teacher or group leader, local action often requires leading members of your campaign/policy group as they are immersed in real world experience and learning. So get ready to take on input like this too!*

# LOCAL ISSUE: HUNGER

*Hunger is a reality for more than 49 million people in America. Almost 16 million of them are children.*

*Although often seen as an issue facing developing communities, hunger is experienced by millions in one of the wealthiest nations in the world. In cities across America, families and individuals struggle to make ends meet, often having to choose between paying for housing and buying groceries. And having a job doesn't necessarily mean you can afford both.*

*Over the past decade, a hunger crisis has continued to grow across the United States. Feeding America provides food to 37 million Americans a year. That's a 46% increase in the amount of people accessing food banks since 2005. Compounded by the economic recession in 2008, hunger has become a national issue that affects every state.*

## FAST FACTS

- 3% of households served by Feeding America had to choose between paying for food and paying for necessities like rent or car.
- 18 million Americans are living in food insecurity below the poverty line.
- 5% of Americans have no access.

• OVER •  
**3 MILLION**  
CHILDREN  
**UNDER 5**  
THE AGE OF  
ARE HELPED BY  
FEEDING AMERICA



## WHY ARE FOOD BANKS NECESSARY?

People who are on the food banks often live on all welfare or on. Some people need support over long periods, but food banks can provide the assistance for a short period of time. Food banks may make the difference for a family trying to get by on their last few weeks of food. It can mean that a child doesn't go to school hungry. Ultimately food banks exist because of the ever-changing problem of poverty, loss of affordable housing and low employment.





## LOCAL ISSUE:

# HOMELESSNESS

*In January 2013, 610,042 people across the United States were homeless, and 67 percent were age 25 or older. But homelessness isn't just what we see on the street—it takes many forms and affects many different people.*

*There are three types of homelessness: chronic, when people are homeless for a long period of time; cyclical, when people move in and out of homelessness several times over a three-year period; and transitional, where people are homeless for a very short period of time. On a single night in January, nearly 18 percent of the homeless population were chronically homeless.*

*People find themselves homeless from any number of reasons. If they lose their job, their health deteriorates, they are fleeing domestic violence or are youth runaways, women and children in particular are often part of the "hidden homeless," people living in friends' homes and temporary accommodations.*

## FAST FACTS

- 13% of the chronically homeless population are families
- 46,924, or 80 percent of children and youth were homeless on one night in 2011
- 10% of homeless adults are employed

• IN 2013 •

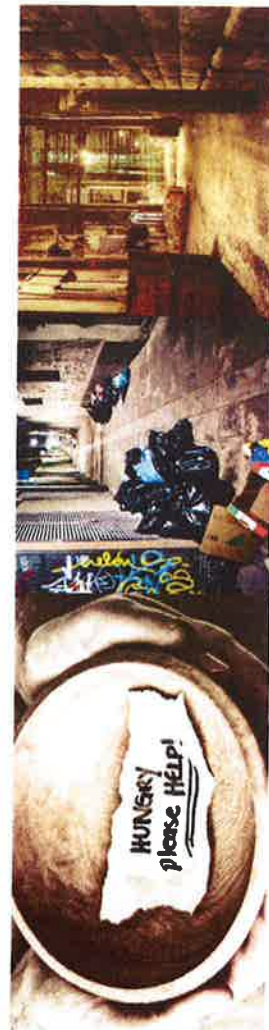
THERE WERE NEARLY

140,000

CHILDREN

— EXPERIENCING —

HOMELESSNESS



## RETHINKING SOLUTIONS TO HOMELESSNESS

As more housing providers begin turning to a "first look" model, they are also looking for ways to address the needs of the homeless population. Many are turning to the Housing First model, which gives someone facing stability first, and then provides education and training for their current challenges. Homeless families especially benefit, but all services can be significantly reduced. Overall, the method significantly reduces the difference with 85% of participants remaining successfully housed.





## LOCAL ISSUE:

# ENVIRONMENT

*We share this planet with an estimated 8.8 million species, but human practices pose a threat to their home and ours. Up to 8,800 species a year will go extinct, with pollution, overexploitation and habitat destruction largely to blame.*

*Today, whether it's chains that consume and discard waste, idling companies and individuals take little responsibility for their actions – big and small – that pollute the air, fill the oceans with garbage and destroy our forests.*

*Currently, we are using 50% more resources than nature can regenerate in a year. The average American residence uses over 100,000 gallons of water a year, and in 2011, 730,700,000 tons of municipal solid waste were discarded in landfills or through other disposal methods. Much of this waste could be reduced by recycling or simply by consuming less.*

## FAST FACTS

- Plastic requires 100 to 150 years to break down in a landfill.
- Recycling one ton of paper saves enough energy to heat an average 2,100 watt light bulb for four hours.
- Preventing one ton of paper waste saves between 17 and 20 cubic feet of space.

RECYCLING  **1 TON** OF PAPER

SAVES ENOUGH ENERGY TO HEAT AN

**AVERAGE HOME**  **FOR 6 MONTHS**



## GOING GREEN

Our everyday choices have a direct impact on the future of the planet. Whether we recycle, conserve water or eat more organic, every action has an impact on the environment. Even housewre doors can have a direct impact on the planet. Two key recycled products? Well, cardboard boxes and paper products. We're annual highway recyclers in order to get the best prices on this product and other. These are locally sourced, too, which means the local economy, producing recycled paper only requires 40% of the energy it takes to make paper from new wood pulp.





## LOCAL ISSUE:

# POVERTY

*Across the United States, nearly 47 million people live at or below the poverty line. Often, meeting basic needs is a struggle. Parents must decide whether to pay for groceries or electricity. Medical bills or housing. Diapers or medication. With every choice a family makes, there is a cost.*

*Many of these costs have long-term effects. When they can't afford health care, families are forced to live on high-cost, processed foods, which contribute to health issues. When someone in the family gets sick, the medical bills are often staggeringly high, particularly if they are one of the 48 million Americans without insurance coverage.*

*Compared to children whose parents have an income twice that of the poverty line, children who grow up in poverty during their early years complete fewer years of school, earn less than half as much money and are nearly three times as likely to have even health*

## FAST FACTS

- Nearly 12% of American families are living in poverty (about 49 million families).
- The median annual earnings of a woman working full time is \$14,100. That means 27% of the median annual earnings is a mere subsistence full time.
- Nearly 5% of the population is aided by a woman on temporary disability.

• NEARLY •  
**22%**  
% AMERICANS  
— AFFECTED BY —  
**POVERTY**  
ARE  
**CHILDREN**



## A DIFFERENT LIFE

There is no easy solution to ending poverty in America. Underlying causes such as lack of affordable housing, poor health care access, unemployment and low-paying jobs all need to be addressed. Organizations such as food banks help with everyday needs and provide a valuable safety net for individuals or families barely getting by in urban areas and rural communities. But it is not enough. Empowering families and individuals to lift themselves out of poverty requires tailored solutions by different institutions and efforts.





# TIME TO TAKE ACTION!



*You've learned more about the issues affecting your community and decided to make an impact—but how? We've prepared ready-to-go campaigns to help you get started, complete with fact sheets and online lesson plans, which you can find in the following pages. We've also put together our five favorite action ideas to help you brainstorm your own action.*



## FUN FAIR

Fun fairs are popular for organizations and participants alike. Your school, debate team, or lightly organized group can set up with different games and activities to raise money. Local businesses, a local school, or a local group can also help out the fair, accept for money to help with other needs, or even help with the fair itself.

## CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Don't forget to reach out to people in your community who are already making an impact on the issues you care about. Does your neighborhood have a food bank or recycling shelter? Invite a representative to come talk to your school about the impact your food drive will have. Does your school care about cleaning up a park or river? Ask a park ranger or environmental expert to speak to your group about wildlife preservation. This will help bring you closer to life for members of your WeAct group.

TEACHING ACTION



## VOLUNTEER DAY

Get in touch with a local charity that could use volunteers and have your team help out for a day. For example, local banks often need help sorting food and clothing donations. Soup kitchens need volunteers to prepare food. Reach out and see who could use in extra help!



## PANCAKE BREAKFAST

Coordinate volunteers to bring ingredients and non-perishable items to make breakfast. Try making pancakes, filling waffles, and accepting donations. And make sure that you are ready to explain the issue you are fundraising for so your hungry customers leave well informed and well fed!



## PARK OR CREEK CLEAN-UP

Set up a cleanup to get middle schoolers together to help clean up a park or creek. Bring gloves, bags, and recycling bins and have your students pick up trash in your school. For a challenge, have a "Most Valuable" contest for students who have picked up the most trash. Bring bags or gloves to help.



# Picture the Problem

## **Directions:**

1. Write what the problem is or draw a picture of the problem.
2. List the causes of the problem.
3. List the effects of the problem.

The Problem	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Causes</b></p> <p>What are some things that cause the problem? How did the problem begin?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. _____</li> <li>2. _____</li> <li>3. _____</li> <li>4. _____</li> </ol>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Effects</b></p> <p>How does the problem affect the school and community? How are people and the environment affected?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. _____</li> <li>2. _____</li> <li>3. _____</li> <li>4. _____</li> </ol>



## STUDENT WORKSHEET

**GIFT + ISSUE = CHANGE.**

*This equation is the cornerstone of the Me to We philosophy, and it has inspired thousands of young people to share their unique talents in the service of a better world. Discover your gifts and passion to make a better world with the following exercise:*

Finish this sentence: When I have spare time, I love to: \_\_\_\_\_

Write down as many of your gifts or talents as you can: \_\_\_\_\_

Write down the issues you care about: \_\_\_\_\_

Write down the actions you care about: \_\_\_\_\_

*Everyone has something unique to contribute to the world, even though we don't all have the confidence to admit it. Think about what you love to do, and how you can use your special gifts to create change. We've started the list with a few examples.*

<b>GIFT</b>	<b>SERVICE</b>
GOOD LISTENER	Join a peer-counseling group; be known as the one who is always there.
PHYSICAL STRENGTH	Shovel your elderly neighbor's driveway.
ARTISTIC SENSIBILITY	Design greeting cards to sell during the holidays as a fundraiser for a good cause.
WRITING	Start a school newspaper devoted to social issues.
SPEAKING	Run for student council and create positive change.
ATHLETIC ABILITY	Organize a sports tournament to raise awareness and funds for charity.
MUSICAL TALENTS	Set up a charity concert or open mic at school.

## ■ CONCLUDING LESSON:

## RAISING AWARENESS, TAKING ACTION



**Purpose:** Students will use the technology they know best to create an awareness-raising campaign to encourage action on the local issue of their choice.

**Instructional method(s):** Marketing ad campaign, memory recall, multi-media presentations

**Differentiated instruction:**

- The creation of a campaign may be done individually, in groups or as a class.

**Course connections:** Business Studies, English, Career Studies, Social Sciences and the Humanities, Interdisciplinary Studies

**Estimated time:** 75 minutes

**Steps:**

1. Ask students a few questions about ad campaigns and product promotions:
  - a. What ad campaigns are most memorable to you from the past or present?
  - b. What was the medium (e.g. radio, television, print, online, etc.)?
  - c. What made it memorable?
  - d. What was the main message of the ad?
  - e. Was it effective (i.e. did you buy the product, support the cause, etc.)?
  - f. How are ethical motivations used to engage consumers?
2. Tell students they will be creating their own campaign to raise awareness of their selected topic(s) and encourage action.
3. Using the students' knowledge of technology and social media, encourage them to develop a public service announcement that is tailored to employ multi-media resources, solicit an emotional response and encourage their peers to act.
4. Ask students to consider the following elements:
  - a. Cause (the selected topic)
  - b. Slogan (what is an effective pitch?)
  - c. Music (upbeat and fun, slow and moving, etc.)
  - d. Celebrity (think about the celebrity's reputation—are they a good match for the cause?)
  - e. Pictures (positive or negative images?)
  - f. Action Item (what are you asking people to do?)
  - g. Target Audience
5. Give students ten to fifteen minutes to think about the task and create an outline for their campaign. Review and approve the outlines before allowing students to move onto the next step.
6. Once students have approval, allow them to move their ideas into production. Give students thirty to forty minutes to develop their plans. Assign what is not completed for homework.
7. Have students share the campaign with the rest of the class or student body.



## Science Fair Culminating Activity

Your students will be learning about the scientific method, and a whole lot more. The science fair experience builds many important skills: self-discipline, time management, project management, and written, verbal and visual communication skills, to name a few. The importance of patience and precision comes into play nearly every step of the way.

Advance planning is key for all involved. Get a handle on the scope of the entire process right from the start. That way you'll be able to anticipate the workload and figure out how it will fit within the context of after school program schedule. Will you do individual projects or group projects?

The better prepared you are as a activity leader, the more time your students will have to tinker, investigate, measure, observe, make mistakes, try new things, and get the most out of the process.

### Sample Timeline for Science Fair Project

Activity	Time (Before the science fair)
Decide on topic and develop question or solution	6 weeks
Background research on topic	6 weeks
Determine materials and collect them	5 weeks
Set up project and begin to collect data	5-4 weeks (depending on project)
Gather project display supplies	3 weeks
Prepare project display	2 weeks
Prepare Oral presentation	1 week
Science Fair Day (Family Night)	0

Start by reading through the following documents:

See the guide on **"Types of Science Projects."** This guide provides a step by step process for completing a science fair project. If you would like to use technology, see the additional template for putting a PowerPoint Science Fair Presentation together.

In addition, there is a list of Environmental Science Fair Projects that tie into protecting the Earth.