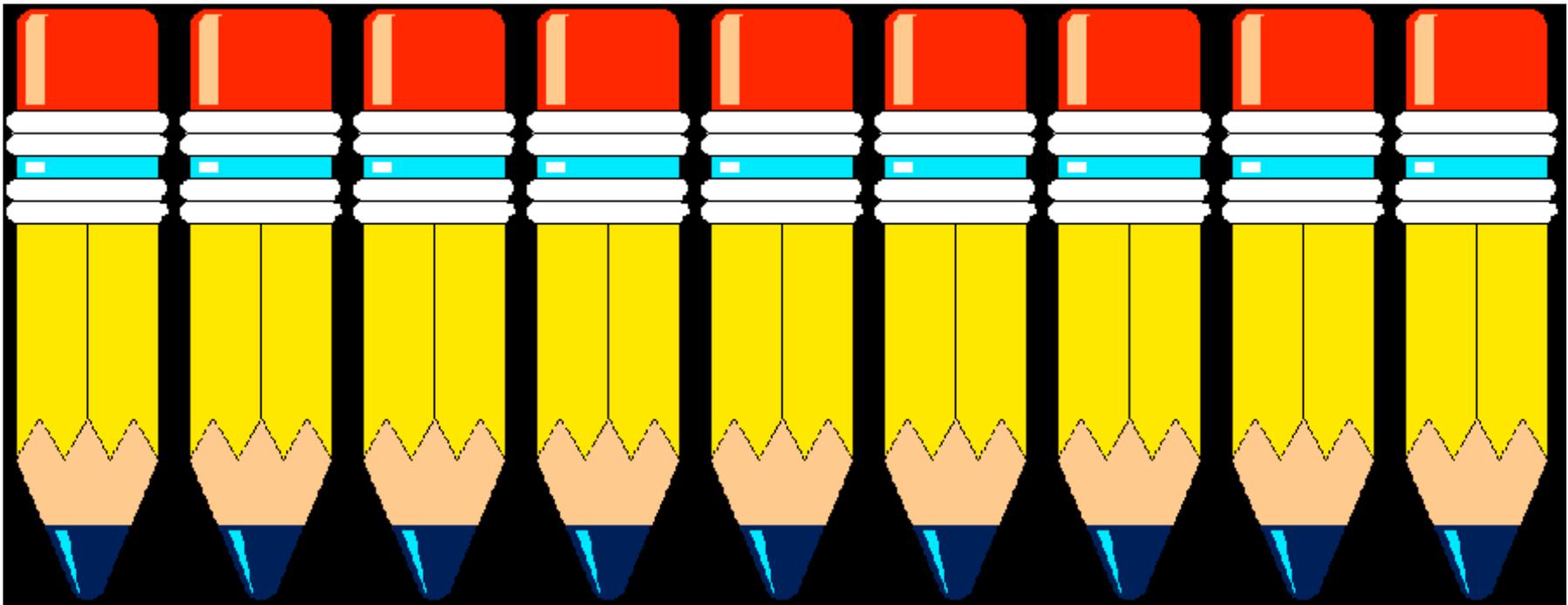


EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE

THE BIG FIFTH GRADE RESEARCH PROJECT



Prepared by Delise Sanders (delise.sanders@sumnerschools.org)

Explanation of Project

On the CD, there are pictures of my students presenting their research products to their families and the community. This was the culmination activity of 4 weeks of research. In fifth grade, students are not ready to tackle a project of this type without guidance and specific assignments. This project has proven to be very rewarding. Each year I have made alterations after making copious notes from the year before. This is truly a work in progress! I recently presented this project at the Tennessee Council for the Social Studies state conference, Tennessee Reading Association's state conference, the National Council for History Education annual conference, and have several presentations scheduled for this summer. For many years, I have been doing professional development presentations on integrating reading, writing and social studies.

Nancy Polette changed my teaching a few years ago. Since that time, I have read her books from cover to cover and found innovative ways to change the way my students respond to research projects. Using her methods and some of my own have become an integral parts in making research painless for students and parents. I had the great privilege of having dinner with her last fall and hearing her speak the next day. During that time, I was able to ask questions and confirm that I was on the right track in using these practices with my students. Although the templates, organizers, rubrics and calendar are my inventions, the inspiration for this project came from Nancy.

I want my students to be excited and actively engaged in any project we do in my fifth grade classroom. Since I teach all subjects, it is imperative that I integrate my curriculum. Building background for any project is vital to its success and student mastery. I use a variety of authentic children's literature for this. Students usually read a novel as a class or several in literature circles. For this project on people of the civil war, I read the classic novel, *Across Five Aprils* to the class over a period of three weeks. Its rich language brings a new dimension to the students' writing, and the Tennessee connections provide several avenues for class discussions. I also have copies of the other books I use in literature circles and daily use of picture books we read as a class. I don't mention the research project until the students have enough background to feel confident in their ability to do a project of this magnitude. Another key element that is vital to the success of this project is a calendar. The calendar helps students and parents to understand that they must have certain pieces of the project ready at certain times. This greatly diminishes procrastination.

Although I have done projects on immigrants and people of the Revolutionary War era, the Civil War project is the one I have chosen to outline. As we read and build background, I tell the students about the women spies, the leaders in government and military, those people like Clara Barton whose contributions eventually impacted both sides. Although I do edit my list of people each year, I spend a good bit of time looking over the amount of research available for the students to use. By the time I am ready to make assignments, many students have already expressed an interest in a person they would like to research. On the day I give out the packets of information, I leave plenty of time for discussions and questions.

We are indeed fortunate that we can visit the Nashville Public Library together. The staff has a

list of those we will be researching in advance and makes sure there are sources available for each student. Most intermediate students are not sophisticated enough to tackle the chore of locating information in a huge library. Field trips are always exciting for students. This excitement lends itself to well to motivating the students to the task at hand.

The first question for any writing project is “How much do we have to write?” By using the data retrieval chart, students are instructed to find this information before starting to write. Many times when a research assignment is given, students will just copy straight from a source---or worse---just cut and paste. This eliminates the copying—many thanks to Nancy Polette for writing *Research without Copying*. I used this book for inspiration in making my own templates.

From the data chart, students complete another template that organizes their information into a format easily made into paragraphs. The students then write a rough draft of their paper. We edit, and then type their final copy.

Before we start the project, I make the day we get our “research packets” (in bright red pocket folders) a day filled with reading from picture books about related people and subjects, refreshments, a visit from a former students who had done the project the year before, and a video of my former students on their big presentation night! This really created excitement and motivated the students to do their best!

Because of page limitations: copies of these pages are not in this notebook:

- Letter for the parents about the project
- Objectives (also on CD included with this information)
- Calendar with all due dates for each item in the packet
- Data retrieval Chart
- Outline Template for putting information in sentence form
- Bibliography form with examples of correct format for citing sources
- Instructions for creating a CD Cover listing 10 songs about the person (no music, just titles)
- Instructions for three sided display boards (students collect primary sources to place on boards)
- Instructions for two minute speech using first person.
- Instructions for finding and making a “period” costume for the night of their presentations
- Rubrics for research paper, oral presentation and display board

Just the Facts!

How to gather information

1. Get your parent's permission to do a search on your computer. The class will be going to the Nashville Public Library to start our research. The people there will help you find sources of information. We will also use our computer lab at school.
2. Save information you find to your flash drive or to a writable CD. At home, you can bookmark your sites or copy them to the same device.
3. Scan your information for the details that you will need. Print the information that you feel are reliable sources. Remember that we do not use Wikipedia!
4. Look at the data retrieval chart and make sure you look for the specific information needed for the chart.
5. Look at the documents you have printed. Look through the document for important details. You have three highlighters. You will use them to highlight details about your famous person.
 - Yellow – Early Life
 - Pink – Young Adulthood
 - Green – Adulthood
6. After you have located the facts, place them in the correct category on the data retrieval chart.

Primary Documents

Look at the list of primary documents. You will need at least five related to this person and his or her life for your display board. As you do your research, look for these also. Go to the Tennessee State Archives or the National Archives for pictures and documents.

- Look carefully at the clothing of this period. You will wear a “costume” of your creation for our big presentation night!
- Go to <http://FindAGrave.com> for pictures of tombstones or memorial sites.
- Go to the National Historical Parks and Sites for other pictures

Fifth Grade History Project

Madison Creek Elementary

When students get to middle school, they can compete in National History Day. So that students are prepared for this experience, this project takes elements from the National History Day competitions and puts them into on project. Each student is assigned a person from a specific historical era and does extensive research on this person's life.

We will "kick off" this project with a trip to the Nashville Public Library. The employees at the library will have sources of information for each student to use while we are there. If your child has a library card, books can be checked out if they are in the lending system. The Volunteer State Library is also available for public use.

All research is kept in a folder provided for each student. This folder should be in class everyday. The following information is provided for students and parents to use. Using a timeline will help students learn time management and responsibility. Since the project has several elements, they are listed below with the due date.

Project Assignment (person) _____

_____ Project page signed by parent.

_____ Data retrieval chart complete

_____ Data retrieval Chart

_____ Outline Template for putting information in sentence form

_____ Bibliography using correct format for citing sources

_____ Instructions for creating a CD cover listing 10 songs about the person (no music, just titles)

_____ Three sided display boards (students collect primary sources to place on boards)

_____ Two minute speech using first person.

_____ "Period" costume for the night of their presentations

(Place these items on a calendar for the students and parents to use.)

Biography Outline

(If you did not find all this information for your data retrieval chart, speak to the teacher.)

My essay will be written about _____

Paragraph 1 Introduction

Introductory Sentence (Use an interesting fact, quote or questions about this person.)

(Just write facts and details—you will use this information to form sentences when you write the essay.)

A. Full name of person: _____

B. Birth place and date: _____

C. Describe person's appearance and/or personality: _____

D. Explain the "stand" this person made in our nations' history: _____

Paragraph 2 Early Life to Adulthood

Early Life (Topic Sentence) _____

A. Childhood _____

B. Family _____

C. Education (as a young person, college???) _____

D. Influences (people, ideas, books, places) _____

Paragraph 3 Adult Life

A. Marriage _____

B. Children _____

C. Early Work _____

D. What problems or obstacles did he/she face? _____

E. What changes caused the problems? (population, environmental, economic, political, beliefs)

G. What did he/she do to overcome difficulties? _____

H. Achievements or Honors _____

Paragraph 4 Conclusion

A. Death (Include details) _____

B. Buried _____

C. How will this person be remembered? _____

D. How were these goals accomplished in his/her during lifetime? _____

Closing sentence: _____

Paragraph 5 (Personal Response)

Meeting _____ would have been an interesting experience

because _____

_____. If I could ask _____ a question,

I would ask _____.

This person's life has inspired me to

1. _____

2. _____

Examples of Sources

FOR AN INTERNET ADDRESS

Author Last Name, First Name "Title of the page information came from." Title of Website.
Date or year the website was last updated. Full URL Web Address. Date information was gathered.

Smith, Sarah "The Life of Harriet Tubman." Encyclopedia Britannica Online. 2003.
<http://www.encyclopediabritannica.com/tubman/harriet> 4 January, 2007

Journal Article

Mellers, B. A. (2000). Choice and relative consequences. *Psychology Bulletin* , xxxxx 126, 910-924.

Magazine Article

Kandel, E. R. & Squire, L. R. (2000, November 10). Breaking down scientific xxxxxx barriers to the study of the brain and mind. *Science* , 290, 1113-1112.

Book

Mitchell, T. (1987). *People in organizations: An introduction to organizational xxxxxx behavior* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

Encyclopedia Article

Bergmann, P. G. (1993). Relativity. In *The encyclopedia Britannica* (Vol. 26, xxxxxx pp. 501-508). Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica.

Newspaper Article

New drug appears to sharply cut the risk of death from heart failure. (1993, xxxxx July 15). *The Washington Post* , p. A12.

Design a CD Cover

You will need the following:

- Two 3 inch squares of paper
- A small picture of the person you researched
- An empty CD case (optional)

One square of the paper will be your cover. You will need a title and the picture of the person you researched. Try to make the title something that relates to the person. For example, if you were an all-star soccer player and you were making a CD about yourself, its title could be “The Kicker.”

Now, type up a list of song 10 titles that relate to the life of the person you researched. For example, a song about a soccer player could be “Using My Head.” You may use real song titles if they can be related to the life of this person.

Measure a 3” square around your titles. Cut them out, and place both squares in the CD case.

Social Studies Fair Display and Verbal Presentation

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	10	7.5	5	2.5	0
Complies with Rules	The display meets all the requirements of the Social Studies Fair Handouts.	The display meets all but one of the requirements of the Social Studies Fair Handouts.	The display meets all but two of the requirements of the Social Studies Fair Handouts..	The display meets all but three of the requirements of the Social Studies Fair Handouts.	The display meets all but four or more of the requirements of the Social Studies Fair Handouts.
Display Board	The display board is completely covered. The covering is: - completely opaque - neat with no wrinkles or damage - creative - relevant to the topic - attention-getting - colored - textured	The display board is completely covered. The covering lacks one of the following attributes: - completely opaque - neat with no wrinkles or damage - creative - relevant to the topic - attention-getting - colored - textured	The display board is completely covered. The covering lacks two of the following attributes: - completely opaque - neat with no wrinkles or damage - creative - relevant to the topic - attention-getting - colored - textured	The display board is completely covered. The covering lacks three of the following attributes: - completely opaque - neat with no wrinkles or damage - creative - relevant to the topic - attention-getting - colored - textured	Bare display board is showing.
Border	The entire display has a border with the following attributes: - student made - textured or 3D - visually appealing -	The entire display has a border lacking one of the following attributes: - student made - textured or 3D - visually	The entire display has a border lacking two of the following attributes: - student made - textured or 3D - visually	The entire display has a border lacking three of the following attributes: - student made - textured or 3D - visually	No border.

	attention-getting - unusual (not the standard bulletin-board border)	appealing - attention-getting - unusual (not the standard bulletin-board border)	appealing - attention-getting - unusual (not the standard bulletin-board border)	appealing - attention-getting - unusual (not the standard bulletin-board border)	
Attractiveness	The display is colorful yet tasteful.	The display is colorful, but the colors clash or not attractive.	The display is bland and dull.	The display is monochromatic.	The display is not present.
Neatness	The display is very neat. All elements are well proportioned and well placed on the display.	The display is neat. Most elements are well proportioned and well placed on the display.	The display is less than neat. Some elements are well placed on the display.	The display is less than neat. Few elements are well proportioned and well placed on the display.	The display is not neat. The elements are not well proportioned and poorly placed on the display.
Clarity	The message and meaning of the display is immediately apparent to the viewer and needs no explanation.	The message and meaning of the display is apparent to the viewer after brief consideration and needs little explanation.	The message and meaning of the display is not apparent to the viewer and needs explanation.	The message and meaning of the display is not apparent to the viewer even with explanation.	The display is not present.
Stays on topic	The display is so obviously relevant to the topic that no explanation is needed. The topic is interesting and relevant to the course.	The display is relevant to the topic that and little explanation is needed. The topic is relevant to the course.	The display is somewhat relevant to the topic that but some explanation is needed. The topic is relevant to the course.	The display is not very relevant to the topic that and much explanation is needed. The topic is not very relevant to the course.	The display is not relevant to the topic. The topic is not relevant to the course. Or: The display is not present.
Turned in on time	The display is completely assembled by the time the bell rings at the beginning of the	The display is completely assembled by the time the bell rings at the beginning of the	The display is completely assembled by the time the bell rings at the beginning of the	The display is completely assembled by the time the bell rings at the beginning of the	The display is not present on the date due. FIFTY MORE POINTS WILL BE

	class period. No repairs or adjustments are needed during class.	class period. A minor repair or adjustment is needed during class.	class period. More than one minor repair or adjustment is needed during class.	class period. More than two minor repairs or adjustments are needed during class or part of the display is not present or a major repair or assembly task is done during class.	SUBTRACTED FOR EACH SCHOOL DAY LATE.
--	--	--	--	---	---

Required Elements for Display Board

- Please use a standard three-sided display board. You may use any color. You may use a board that has a header.
- Use an attractive border. You may use a border that has a connection with the person that you researched.
- Type your essay neatly and place it on your display board.
- Use 5-8 primary sources directly related to you research.
- In addition to your primary sources, use pictures of artifacts related to your research.
- Be prepared to talk about your board, but don't stand and read from your board during your oral presentation.

Plan your board using the space below.

--	--	--