
Examples of Action-Based Projects

*These examples are provided to trigger ideas.
They can be simplified or made more complex for
different ages and skill levels.*

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Research Methods

Interview:

Opinion Polls
Factual Surveys
Expert Interviews
People-in-the-Street Interviews
Oral Histories
Firsthand Accounts
Casual Conversations

Documentation:

Original Records (birth cert., tax rolls)
Personal Accounts (letters, diaries, journals)
Pictorial Records (photos, maps)
Literature
Indexes
Newspapers/Magazines
Reference Books, Maps
Databases
Budgets/Spreadsheets
Case Studies
Electronic Media - Internet Search

Observation:

Controlled Experiments
*Field Observations (on-the-spot, behaviors
nature walks)*
*Works of Art (architecture, plays,
music, museums)*
Video, Films
Artifacts

Communication/Products

Written:

Proposals
Concept Papers
Reports of Information
Directions/Manuals
Scripts/Transcripts
Letters
Autobiographies/Bibliographies
Stories/Poetry
Scrapbooks
Books
Journals
Logs and Field Notes
News Articles
*Documents (grants, agreements, petitions,
legislation)*
Essays: Problems/Solution
Summaries
Advertisements
Musical Compositions
Recipe Books

Mathematical:

Mathematical Models
Computer Programs
Spreadsheets
Budgets
Charts & Graphs
Blueprints
Maps
Scale drawings/Models
Timelines
Simulations
Estimates
Fractals

Oral/Events:

Debates
Speeches
Storytelling
Poetry
Summaries
Conversations
Presentations: formal, casual

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IDEAS FOR THE TYPES OF RESEARCH METHODS AND PRODUCTS INCORPORATED IN ACTION-BASED PROJECTS

Communication/Products, Continued

Oral/Events, Continued:

Interviews
Meetings
Discussions
Eyewitness Reports
Workshops

Electronic:

Databases
Spreadsheets
Computer Programs
Computer Simulations
Multimedia
Computer Programs (hypercards, games, etc.)
Recordings (audio, visual)
Documentaries
Broadcasts
Interactive Television
Telephone Conversations
Computer Graphics
Digital Photographs
Telephone Hotline/Hotline
Public Service Announcement

Visual & Performing:

Charts (flowcharts, venn diagrams)
Maps
Timelines
Illustrations/Paintings
Blueprints
Commercials/Advertisements
Music
 Songs
 Instrumentals
 Recitals
 Conducting
Dance
Drama
 Skits
 Plays
 Roleplays
 Reader's Theater
 Oral Interpretation
Cartoons/Comic Books
Murals
Clothing/Fashion/Costumes/Makeup
Photographs/Slides

Visual & Performing, Continued:

Sculptures/
Mosaics/Ceramics
Weavings/Carvings
Storyboards
Simulations
Print Making
T-Shirt Designs
Business Cards

3-Dimensional:

Dioramas
Displays
Sculptures
Models
Inventions
Consumer Products (retail)
Structures (play equip., greenhouse, etc.)
Games

Events:

Press Conference
Breakfasts/Lunches/Dinners
Fund Raiser
Sponsorship
Pen-Pal
Adopt-a-Spot on Campus
Buddy System
Tutoring
School-Wide Contest
Service Project (clean up park, visit seniors, etc.)

Product Ideas for Project Work

Advertisement	Fairy tale	Photographs
Annotated bibliography	Family tree	Picture dictionary
Art Gallery	Filmstrip	Picture story for children
Batik	Glossary	Poem
Biography	Graph	Poster
Blueprint	Graphic design	Pottery
Board game	Greeting card	Puppet
Book cover	Guest speaker	Puppet show
Bulletin board	Haiku	Radio show
Card game	Illustrated story	Reader's Theater
Celebrity cards	Journal	Reference file
Ceramics	Labeled diagram	Relief map
Charcoal sketch	Large scale drawing	Rubbing
Chart	Lecture	Sand-casting
Choral reading	Letter	Science fiction story
Cinquain	Letter to the editor	Scrapbook
Coins	Lesson	Sculpture (soap, metal, clay, wire, junk, etc.)
Collage	Limerick	Short story
Collection with illustration	Line drawing	Silk screening
Collection with narrative	Magazine article	Skit
Comic strip	Map	Slide/tape presentation
Computer program	Map with legend	Small scale drawing
Crossword puzzle	Mobile	Song
Costume	Model	Songs (collection)
Dance	Monograph	Sonnet
Debate	Montage	Stencil
Detailed illustration	Movie	Stitchery
Diary	Mural	Survey
Diorama	Museum exhibit	Taped recording
Display	Musical composition	Terrarium
Drama (comedy, tragedy, melodrama, etc.)	News report	Textbook
Dramatic monologue	Newspaper article	Time line
Dramatic set design	Oil painting	Travelogue
Editorial	Oral report	TV documentary
Essay	Package for a product	TV newscast
Etching	Pamphlet	Video game
Experiment	Pantomime	Written report
Experiment log	Paper weight	
Fable	Pattern with instructions	
Fact file	Photo essay	

Project Example for Primary Students **“How can we help our family to be safer in our car?”**

GATHER DATA (FACTS, OPINIONS IDEAS)*:

- Brainstorm ideas: “What can we do to be safer in our car? (Seat belts; head rests; keeping arms inside window; keeping doors locked, etc.)
- Listen to and/or read children’s books on safety in automobiles
- Interview policeman (in class): ”Why are seat belts important...how should head rests be positioned....? etc.
- Observe without discussing with family: Who in our family always uses their seat belt — sometimes — never?

FORMULATE TENTATIVE PLAN AND GENERATE PRODUCTS:

- Pool ideas and develop action-plan (as an entire class) — how should we approach our family, what should we tell them, what posters and charts might we make?
- Dictate a class chart, “What we learned from reading, interviewing and our observation of who in our family uses seat belts.” — individuals copy chart or write something similar of their own
- Make a bar graph that shows how many children and adults in the families in our class do and do not use seat belts and follow other important safety behaviors
- Make posters to encourage safe behaviors — and (if appropriate) a checklist of things to point out to family
- Make matrix chart to keep track of target behaviors (who uses seat belts, who keeps arms inside windows, etc.)

REVISE PLAN AND TAKE PERSONAL ACTION:

- Practice in class what to say to family — how to read class chart (Perhaps bring back policeman to give feedback on what’s been planned)
- Present information and ideas to family — place posters in car
- Routinely chart target behaviors
- Periodically pool findings with class and create updated charts showing comparison of how different families are doing. (Could recheck target behaviors after 2 months.)

MEANWHILE, DOCUMENT PROCEDURE: Keep a record of activities in a log book (including charts as they are created) and use them to create a factual report of what was done. Possibilities include: sequential cartoons with captions (dictated or self-written); diorama with brief description (dictated or self-written); a book of “How You Can Help Your Family Be Safer in Your Car;” and so forth

EVALUATE ENTIRE ENTERPRISE AND DECIDE WHAT TO DO NEXT:

- Discuss how the project went — use simple rubric to evaluate products
- Could use products already created to teach other classes how to do a similar project or to kick off a school “car safety” project

Data gathering should include reading, observation and interview.

Project Ideas for Elementary Students

Provide a safe kid program for K-2 students
Teach others to care for our campus
Make healthy choices
Practice and teach conflict resolution
Teach others about personal hygiene (Keeping ourselves clean and healthy!)
Establish an “ADOPT-A-COMMUNITY” helper program
Run a “RECYCLE, REDUCE AND REUSE” campaign
Provide a gang awareness program
Teach about our impact on the environment
Teach our peers about careers in our society
Teach younger students about roles in the community
Help others make nutritional choices
Create a peer counseling plan at school
Plan an after school tutorial center (peer)
Create a readers club (to read, assist, etc.)
Create a peer assisted writing center
Run a more effective student government
Form an after school drug awareness club (student run)
Form a student centered school beautification program
Teach others how to take care of their bodies
Establish an after school fitness club
Teach family and peers about nutrition
Community food drive/outreach
Student created multi-cultural fair
Get others to conserve energy in our school
How can we help ourselves or others prepare for the future
Start and run a recycling program
What do you do with waste? Waste management project
Develop our own grade-level newspaper (current events in the school, community, world)
Hold an educational archeological dig (fossils, trash dig)
Students educate other students about endangered species and what can be done to prevent extinction
Create a program supplying support to students who have recently immigrated
Assess school lunches and take steps to make them more nutritious
Develop a school wide campaign to stress the importance of taking an active role in our government
Supply a forum for all students to learn about the importance of a college education and the opportunities available
Develop a peer mediation team to assist in peaceful resolutions of conflict between students

Project Example for Earth Science*

“How can we get our family to conserve water at home?”

GATHER DATA: (3 Types: Interview - Documentation - Observation)

- Interview Family: “How do you think we could save water?”
- Read and Analyze: water bills — compute last 3 months
- Observe: how family brushes teeth, rinses dishes, washes car
- Interview Water and Power: Common ways people waste water and what might be done about it.
- Phone for and analyze pamphlets on water conservation strategies
- Order water saving devices

GENERATE PRODUCTS:

- Pool ideas from others’ research
- Develop action-plan
- Prepare “sales pitch” for family, including background info and facts
- Make graphs and charts to show family: “Water usage observed in our home— compared with other homes.”
- Make checklist to gather commitment from family for who will do what (install/change behaviors)
- Make matrix chart to keep track of target behaviors

CARRY OUT PLAN AND ASSESS EFFECTIVENESS:

- Present information and ideas to family — plan for installation of devices and gain commitment for change of target behaviors
- Routinely chart target behaviors
- Periodically pool findings with class and create updated charts showing comparison of how different families are doing.
- After 2 months: recheck water bills

MEANWHILE: — Keep a record of activities in a log book and use them to create a factual report of what was done. Possibilities include:

- sequential cartoons with captions (hand- or computer-drawn and written)
- narrated video tape
- a pamphlet of “How You Can Help Your Family Save Water.”
- etc.

PRESENT WITHIN CLASS AND DECIDE WHAT TO DO NEXT:

Could use products already created -

- to teach other classes how to do a similar project
- to kick off a school water conservation project
- to interest the community in water conservation

*Related to “Big Ideas” from CLAS Science: E-4 - The earth’s resources are limited. The earth is a product of its history, so resources are unevenly distributed on the earth’s crust; E-5. - All life is dependent on the water cycle.

Examples of Action-Focused Questions and Major Activities

At the beginning of the project, students will need to be able to define an action-focused question, such as -

How can I improve my diet - or - prepare for my career goals?

How can we reduce the serving and clean up time in the cafeteria -or - make better use of the school parking lot?

How could we establish a successful business - or - create a useful invention?

How can we keep drugs off our campus - or - convince younger students to stay away away from drugs - or -stay out of gangs?

How can we get others to better prepare for a disaster at school - or - at home? Or, use their seat belts?

How can we reduce the waste generated on campus?

How can we ease transition for new comers to our school?

conduct opinion polls and factual surveys

interpret original records (birth certificates, tax rolls, etc.)

analyze themes/big ideas in readings

analyze budgets, spreadsheets

conduct controlled experiments

write directions, manuals

draft documents (proposals, agreements, petitions, etc.)

create musical compositions

create maps, scale drawings

engage in debates

make speeches, tell stories

conduct meetings and workshops

produce video tapes and broadcasts

act in skits, plays, audio-taped dramas

design clothing

create sculptures, dioramas

devise tools/inventions

Project Ideas Developed by Groups

Tracy, Michele & Lita:

Grades K-2

Question:

How can we keep our campus clean?

Audience:

Entire school population.

Product:

Posters promoting a clean campus and skit at a school assembly.

Action:

Presenting the posters and skit, and picking up trash.

Benchmark Topics:

Recycling

Plant life: Rainforest

Wildlife: endangered species

Ocean life

Conservation

Pollution/transportation

Past/present/future environmental action/issues

Shari, Tami, Julian & Christine

Grades: Primary

Question:

How can we reduce waste?

Product:

Assembly

Adopt a spot program

Letters

Posters

Classroom visits

Surveys

Recycling bins

Interviews

Recruit presenters

Audience:

Principals, teachers, students, superintendent and administration.

Todd, Rich, Jill, Brad, Jeanie, David and Jodi Grade: 5 - 8

Question:

How can we ease transition for new comers to our school?

Product:

Class/school bulletin board - jobs for students in community (i.e., baby-sitting,

car washing, etc.)

Coupon booklet - from community businesses

Business/local services directory

Audience:

Students/school/community

Action:

Buddy system - pair up student in same grade.

PTA - could plan orientation luncheon for parents and students; establish help line.

Chamber of Commerce - maps, coupon books.