



August 28, 2015

Dear Parent,

As you know, Valley New School focuses on successful education through project-based learning. Students at VNS follow a prescribed process for completing their projects, which includes following a checklist, managing their time, and documenting all research, planning, and production. Understanding and utilizing these steps/tools allows students to achieve quality work and earn credits. **To learn how, all new students will begin the year by participating in an advisor-directed project class.**

For the next six weeks (August 28 – October 7), your child will spend about half of his/her daily work time (usually 10:00-11:30 a.m.) learning the project process as he/she completes a half-credit project. In addition to the 33 hours spent in class completing research, planning, and the written product, a formal paper, **your child will be required to spend a minimum of 17 hours outside class completing a non-written component** that complements the paper and further explores his/her chosen topic. Thus, your child will spend approximately 50 hours on this project. Successful completion of the course will earn .50 credit.

Students will be expected to meet the deadlines listed on the enclosed calendar/packet. **They will also be required to share their work with you periodically throughout the process**—another skill for them to learn now and practice in all future projects. Students will “graduate” from class and begin self-directed learning when they successfully earn .50 credit at their project assessment.

***We highly encourage you to attend your child’s assessment meeting!*** This is an incredible opportunity to see the project process come full-circle, watch your child take ownership of his/her learning, and celebrate the completion of the first VNS project! Assessment appointments will be scheduled October 8-15 between 1:00 and 2:30 p.m.

Please contact your child’s Advisor to schedule a mutually convenient time for your child’s assessment and ask any questions. **Thank you for supporting your child’s academic success at Valley New School.**

Sincerely,  
VNS Advisors

***DUE DAY 2 (Sept. 1): Please review this packet, note upcoming due dates, and sign below.***

I have read this project guide and understand the required tasks and deadlines.

**Parent signature** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Student name** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

			<b>Aug. 27</b> 12:30-1:00 <b>Receive Guidelines</b>	<b>28</b> Holmes <i>Day 1</i> 10:00-11:30 <b>Gather Sources</b>
<b>31 NO SCHOOL</b>	<b>Sept. 1</b> Holmes <i>Day 2</i> 1:30-2:15 <b>Signed Letter Due (&amp; APL Card App.)</b> <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>2</b> DeMay <i>Day 3</i> 1:00-2:15 <b>Source Due</b> <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>3</b> Plamann <i>Day 4</i> 1:00-2:15	<b>4</b> Luedtke <i>Day 5</i> 10:00-11:30 <b>25 Notecards Due</b>
<b>7 NO SCHOOL Labor Day</b>	<b>8</b> DeMay <i>Day 6</i> 1:00-2:15	<b>9</b> Holmes <i>Day 7</i> 1:00-2:15 <b>50 Notecards</b>	<b>10</b> <i>Day 8</i> 1:00-2:15 <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>11</b> <b>All-School Field Trip!</b>
<b>14</b> Holmes <i>Day 9</i> 1:00-2:30	<b>15</b> Plamann <i>Day 10</i> 1:00-2:30 <b>75 Notecards &amp; Works Cited Due</b> <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>16</b> DeMay <i>Day 11</i> 1:00-2:30	<b>17</b> Luedtke <i>Day 12</i> 1:00-2:30 <b>Outline of Essay &amp; Plan for Non-Written** Product Due</b> <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>18</b> Holmes <i>Day 13</i> 1:00-2:30 <b>MENTORS</b>
<b>21</b> Luedtke <i>Day 14</i> 1:00-2:30	<b>22</b> DeMay <i>Day 15</i> 1:00-2:30 <b>Rough Drafts of Essay &amp; Non-written Product** Due</b> <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>23</b> Holmes <i>Day 16</i> 1:00-2:30	<b>24</b> Plamann <i>Day 17</i> 1:00-2:30 <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>25</b> Holmes <i>Day 18</i> 1:00-2:30 <b>Revision of Essay</b>
<b>28</b> All <i>Day 19</i> 1:00-2:30 <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>29</b> <i>Day 20</i> <b>Due: Peer- &amp; Parent-reviewed Drafts &amp; Final Copy of Essay</b>	<b>30</b> <i>Day 21</i> <b>Non-written Product Due**;</b> <b>End-of-Project Analysis</b> <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>1</b> <i>Day 22</i> <b>All Project Components Due**</b> <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Pre-Assessment meetings</b>
<b>5</b> <b>Pre-Assessment meetings</b> <b>MENTORS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<p><b>GUIDED PROJECT ASSESSMENTS</b> <b>Student, 2 Advisors, Mentor, Parent(s)</b> <i>30-minute appointments scheduled daily between 12:30 and</i></p>				

## DAY 1: Gather Sources

1. Review Guided Project Calendar and deadlines.
2. Review your Project Proposal and Checklist; note your progress and what steps still need to be completed.
3. With your mentor review the open-ended questions that will guide your research. What are you trying to answer/discover/prove?
4. With your mentor's help, continue to gather credible resources that will help you answer your questions. Aim for *3 different types* of resources at minimum.

**\*\*Be sure to collect all necessary information (author, title, date, publisher, website URL, etc.) for every source you find!**

- Look up your subject on the **Appleton Public Library catalog** (see link on AASD homepage).
    - ❖ Create a list of available sources to look for at the library.
    - ❖ Note Dewey Decimal numbers of sources, so you can look in Adult, Reference, Video/DVD, and Children's sections for additional sources about your topic.
  - Learn how to locate sources in the **VNS library** and those of **other AASD schools**.
    - ❖ Create a list of available sources.
    - ❖ For those at VNS, find and check out.
    - ❖ For those at other schools, request via Inter-library Loan.
  - Gather **electronic sources**.
    - ❖ Print off a minimum of two articles from AASD Homepage links.
    - ❖ Print a minimum of one article from EBSCOhost.
    - ❖ Print a minimum of one Internet article. (HINT: Try Google Scholar!)
5. Document time and learning for today on the log sheets in your binder.
    - Hours
    - Task(s) accomplished
    - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.
  6. Homework—
    - Have the cover letter for this packet signed by a parent.
    - Bring money (in case you need to make copies of reference materials at APL).

## DAY 2: Gather More Sources

**1. Visit Appleton Public Library as a group.**

- Turn in application for library card if you do not already have one.
- Check out sources.
- Make copies of information found in the Reference section.

**2. With your mentor, contact a primary source.**

- List possible names and contact information:

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- Review scripts/guides in VNS binder.
- Schedule time/date to do an interview, take a tour, job shadow, etc.

**3. Write interview questions** (use additional paper if necessary). Use the research questions in your proposal as a starting point. Add/change/eliminate questions as you continue your research.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Review your research questions, noting which questions might not be answered in the sources you have already gathered. Gather additional sources as necessary.**

**5. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**

- Hours
- Task(s) accomplished
- Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

**DUE: LETTER SIGNED BY PARENT**  
*APL Card Application signed by parent (if applicable)*

## DAY 3: Notecards

1. **With your mentor's help, make a source card for each source you have.** Include ALL information needed for your Works Cited. Number each card. This will be the code for your notecards.

1
Plante, Michael. "Pablo Picasso." <i>The World</i>
<i>Book Encyclopedia</i> . 2003.

2. **Take notes from your sources on notecards.** Your notecards should:

- Contain ONE fact per card IN YOUR OWN WORDS. (The fact should be broad background information about your topic, answer one of your research questions, or help you prove a point.)
- Be source-coded: one number for each source.
- Contain the page number where you got the fact.
- **Remember:** notes should be just that! Abbreviate and paraphrase whenever possible. Save time and energy, allow for better processing of the information by your brain, and decrease the possibility of plagiarizing—avoid writing complete sentences!

1
(P. 448)
mainly painted—also
printmaking, sculpt., ceramics,
drawing, & theater scenery

1
(P. 448a) re: <i>Family of</i>
<i>Saltimbanques</i> : "The painting
displays almost no activity. The
characters hardly notice each other."

3. **Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**

- Hours
- Task(s) accomplished
- Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

**DUE: ALL SOURCES GATHERED**

## **DAY 4: Notecards**

### **1. Take notes from your sources on notecards.** Your notecards should:

- Contain ONE fact per card.
- Be source-coded: one number for each source.
- Contain the page number where you got the fact.

### **2. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**

- Hours
- Task(s) accomplished
- Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

## **DAY 5: Notecards**

### **1. Check your research.**

- Review your research questions. How many have answered? How many remain unanswered?
- Color-code your research questions, and color-code each notecard by question.
- Continue research. Focus on answering your research questions.

### **2. Take notes from your sources on notecards.** Your notecards should:

- Contain ONE fact per card.
- Be source-coded: one number for each source.
- Contain the page number where you got the fact.
- Be color-coded: one color for each question.

### **3. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**

- Hours
- Task(s) accomplished
- Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

**DUE: 25 NOTECARDS**

## DAY 6: Notecards

### 1. Check your research.

- Review your research questions. How many have answered? How many remain unanswered?
- Color-code each notecard by question.
- Continue research. Focus on answering your research questions.

### 2. Take notes from your sources on notecards. Your notecards should:

- Contain ONE fact per card.
- Be source-coded: one number for each source.
- Contain the page number where you got the fact.
- Be color-coded: one color for each question.

### 3. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.

- Hours
- Task(s) accomplished
- Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

## DAY 7: Notecards

### 1. Check your research.

- Review your research questions. How many have answered? How many remain unanswered?
- Color-code each notecard by question.
- Continue research. Focus on answering your research questions.

### 2. Take notes from your sources on notecards. Your notecards should:

- Contain ONE fact per card.
- Be source-coded: one number for each source.
- Contain the page number where you got the fact.
- Be color-coded: one color for each subtopic.

### 3. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.

- Hours
- Task(s) accomplished
- Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

**DUE: 50 NOTECARDS**

## **DAY 8: Notecards**

### **1. Check your research.**

- Review your research questions. How many have answered? How many remain unanswered?
- Color-code each notecard by question.
- Continue research. Focus on answering your research questions.

### **2. Take notes from your sources on notecards.** Your notecards should:

- Contain ONE fact per card.
- Be source-coded: one number for each source.
- Contain the page number where you got the fact.
- Be color-coded: one color for each subtopic.

### **3. Document time and learning for today in your Google log .**

- Hours
- Task(s) accomplished
- Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

## **DAY 9: Works Cited**

### **1. Learn/review how to write a Works Cited with mentors.**

### **2. Type the first draft of your Works Cited.**

- Refer to MLA Simplified (on AASD homepage or in your VNS binder) and/or MLA Handbook.
- Alphabetize all entries.
- Don't forget your primary resource/expert.

### **3. Self-edit the document; make changes.**

### **4. Have your mentor peer-edit; make changes.**

### **5. Have an advisor edit; make changes.**

### **6. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**

- Hours
- Task(s) accomplished
- Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

## **DAY 10: Notecards/Works Cited**

### **1. Complete a final review of your research.**

- How many of your research questions have been answered? How many remain unanswered?
- Check notecards for source number, page numbers, and color-coding by research question. Organize notecards into color groups.
- Continue research as necessary. Focus on answering your research questions.

### **2. Finish taking notes from your sources on notecards.** Your notecards should:

- Contain ONE fact per card.
- Be source-coded: one number for each source.
- Contain the page number where you got the fact.
- Be color-coded: one color for each subtopic.

### **3. Print final draft of Works Cited, and store in Finished Products section of project binder.**

### **4. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**

- Hours
- Task(s) accomplished
- Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

**DUE: *WORKS CITED***  
***75 NOTECARDS***

## **DAY 11: Planning**

- 1. With advisor, discuss product ideas.**
  - Written product will be 5-paragraph expository essay.
  - Choose non-written product; see Product Ideas list in your VNS binder: How will this type of product demonstrate/show/explain what you've learned?
- 2. With your mentor, write outline for 5-paragraph expository essay.**
  - Decide on a theme.
  - Write thesis statement.
  - Using your color-coded notecards, outline 3 body paragraphs.
- 3. With your mentor, create a plan for your non-written product.**
  - Include a sketch, storyboard, outline, etc.
  - Include a supply list.
  - Include detailed steps to complete product.
- 4. Complete Planning Meeting with your own Advisor during your weekly individual meeting (see Project Checklist).**
- 5. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**
  - Hours
  - Task(s) accomplished
  - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

## **DAY 12: Rough Draft**

- 1. Review parenthetical documentation with mentor-leaders.**
- 2. With mentor, write the rough draft of your first body paragraph (subtopic #1).**
  - Within one color-coded pile, organize notecards into a logical order.
  - Turn notes into sentences.
  - Add topic sentence, transitions, etc. to create a paragraph.
  - Write on EVERY OTHER line of your paper, or type double-spaced.
  - Include parenthetical documentation.
- 3. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**
  - Hours
  - Task(s) accomplished
  - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

***DUE: ESSAY OUTLINE & PLAN FOR NON-WRITTEN PRODUCT***

## **DAY 13: Rough Draft**

- 1. Write the rough draft of your second body paragraph (subtopic #2).**
  - Within one color-coded pile, organize notecards into a logical order.
  - Turn notes into sentences.
  - Add topic sentence, transitions, etc. to create a paragraph.
  - Write on EVERY OTHER line of your paper, or type double-spaced.
  - Include parenthetical documentation.
- 2. Begin first draft of non-written product.**
- 3. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**
  - Hours
  - Task(s) accomplished
  - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

## **DAY 14: Rough Draft**

- 1. Write the rough draft of your third body paragraph (subtopic #3).**
  - Within one color-coded pile, organize notecards into a logical order.
  - Turn notes into sentences.
  - Add topic sentence, transitions, etc. to create a paragraph.
  - Write on EVERY OTHER line of your paper, or type double-spaced.
  - Include parenthetical documentation.
- 2. Continue first draft of non-written product.**
- 3. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**
  - Hours
  - Task(s) accomplished
  - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

## **DAY 15: Rough Draft**

- 1. With your mentor's help, write the rough draft of your introduction & conclusion paragraphs.**
  - Consider your theme: what do you want your audience to think as they begin and end your essay?
  - Outline introduction and conclusion.
  - Write paragraphs on EVERY OTHER line of your paper, or type double-spaced.
  - Include parenthetical documentation, if necessary.
- 2. Finish draft of non-written product.**
- 3. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**
  - Hours
  - Task(s) accomplished
  - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

***DUE: ROUGH DRAFT OF PAPER***

***DUE: ROUGH DRAFT OF NON-WRITTEN PRODUCT***

## **DAY 16: Revision**

- 1. With mentor-leaders, discuss the purpose of and how to do quality Revision.**
- 2. Self-revise your essay for content and organization.**
  - Read it aloud!
  - Note passages that do not seem to have enough information, have too much/irrelevant information, or seem out of order.
  - Sign your name, and number as Draft #1.
  - Make changes.
- 3. BY CLASS ON DAY 18, schedule an appointment and meet with your Advisor to revise for content, organization, and fluency (Draft #2).**
- 4. Revise your non-written product.**
  - Further develop your idea.
  - Improve craftsmanship.
  - If necessary, reorganize.
- 5. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**
  - Hours
  - Task(s) accomplished
  - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

## **DAY 17: Revision**

- 1. With your mentor's help, continue to revise your essay for content and organization.**
  - Read it aloud!
  - Note passages that do not seem to have enough information, have too much/irrelevant information, or seem out of order.
  - Make sure your mentor signs his/her name, and note Draft #3 on the copy.
  - Make changes.
- 2. BY DAY 18, meet with your Advisor to revise for content, organization, and fluency.**
- 3. With your mentor's help, continue to revise your non-written product (see Day 16).**
- 4. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**
  - Hours
  - Task(s) accomplished
  - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

## DAY 18: Revision

1. **Finish revising your essay for content and organization.**
  - Read it aloud--again!
  - Note passages that do not seem to have enough information, have too much/irrelevant information, or seem out of order.
  - Make changes.
2. **Finish revision of non-written product (see Day 16).**
3. **Document time and learning for today in your Google log .**
  - Hours
  - Task(s) accomplished
  - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

**DUE: REVISION OF ESSAY**

**DUE: REVISION OF NON-WRITTEN PRODUCT**

## DAY 19: Editing

1. **Self-edit your essay for fluency, word choice, and conventions.**
  - Run Spell Check and Grammar Check.
  - Remove “I” and “you” by reconstructing sentences.
  - Check for varied sentence length (longest/shortest/average).
  - Check for good transitions from paragraph to paragraph and from sentence to sentence.
  - Write out contractions to make your writing more professional.
  - Replace overused, general, or “10-cent” words with specific, descriptive, “\$1.00” words. (HINT: Use a thesaurus!)
2. **Have your essay peer-reviewed by your mentor for fluency, word choice, and conventions.**
  - Ask a fellow new student to edit and note suggestions; make sure he/she signs and dates the paper.
  - Make changes.
  - Ask your Mentor to edit and note suggestions; make sure he/she signs and dates the paper (Draft #4).
  - Make changes.
  - Have your essay peer-edited by other students, but ONLY ONE student *at a time*. DO NOT give out multiple copies of the same draft! Always number your drafts!

3. **AT HOME, have a parent review your work.**
  - Make sure parent writes feedback on, signs, and dates the draft.
  - Number it, and make changes.
4. **Continue work on final draft of non-written product.**
  - Have a parent review your work; document feedback and the changes you made.
  - Have your mentor review your work; document feedback and the changes you made.
5. **Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**
  - Hours
  - Task(s) accomplished
  - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

## **DAY 20: Editing**

1. **Finish self-editing your essay.**
  - Run Spell Check and Grammar Check.
  - Remove “I” and “you” by reconstructing sentences.
  - Check for varied sentence length (longest/shortest/average).
  - Check for good transitions from paragraph to paragraph and from sentence to sentence.
  - Remove contractions to make your writing more professional.
  - Replace overused, general, or “10-cent” words with specific, descriptive, “\$1.00” words. (HINT: Use a thesaurus!)
2. **Have your essay peer-reviewed by a fellow new student for fluency, word choice, and conventions.**
  - Make sure he/she signs and dates the paper.
  - Make changes.
3. **Print final copy of essay.** Store in “Final Products” section of project binder.
4. **Finish non-written product.**
5. **Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**
  - b. Hours
  - c. Task(s) accomplished
  - d. Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

**DUE: PEER-REVIEWED DRAFT(S)**  
**PARENT-REVIEWED DRAFT**  
**FINAL COPY OF ESSAY**

## **DAY 21: Assessment Planning/End-of-Project Analysis**

- 1. With mentors, discuss how to successfully prepare for an assessment.**
- 2. Complete pre-writing for End-of-Project Analysis** (*see guide in VNS Binder*).
  - Make preliminary marks on rubric.
  - Read daily logs from the last 3 weeks.
  - Make notes on project strengths, weaknesses, things to focus on in future projects, etc.
- 3. Write End-of-Project Analysis.**
- 4. Schedule Pre-assessment Meeting with your Advisor.**
- 5. Schedule Assessment time on your project team's calendar.**
  - Invite your parents to your assessment!
- 6. Document time and learning for today in your Google log.**
  - Hours
  - Task(s) accomplished
  - Analysis of how you worked: successes, obstacles, ideas for tomorrow, etc.

**DUE: *NON-WRITTEN PRODUCT***

## **DAY 22: Assessment Planning Continued**

- 1. With your mentor's help, revise and edit your End-of-Project Analysis.**
- 2. Complete assessment planning** (*see Pre-assessment Phase on Project Checklist*).
- 3. With mentors, prepare to archive work.**
  - Discuss need to save work throughout school-year in order to complete PLP/Portfolio/Year-in-Review at the end of May.
  - Take digital photos of non-electronic work.
  - Organize all electronic files in one folder labeled with project title; save in Google Drive and one other place (e.g. H: and J: drives, flash drive, etc.).
  - Establish place for completed project binders/binder components (e.g. hanging file in filing cabinet).
- 4. Complete Pre-assessment Meeting with your Advisor & Mentor.**
- 5. Attend Assessment Meeting with your project team, mentor, and parent(s) at your scheduled appointment.**

**DUE: *ALL PROJECT COMPONENTS***