

LEADER'S GUIDE

EXPERIENCE LEARNING

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT



CENTER FOR AFTERSCHOOL EDUCATION
FOUNDATIONS, INC.

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INDEPENDENT STUDY: WHY AND WHAT

CHAPTER 1



INTRODUCTION

At Benjamin Charter High School* in Philadelphia, Carlos and Lara are learning from life experience—and earning academic credit for it. Through an Independent Study option, they are using afterschool time to develop and implement an academic learning project that builds on their interests and experiences in the wider world. Carlos' project is expanding his knowledge of coaching strategies for a minor league soccer team. Lara is researching different areas of community service and creating a photo PowerPoint® project to demonstrate her findings. At Espinosa Charter High School*, Krystale is applying her experience of working in a pizza shop to learning more about running her own business one day. With the Independent Study Project, they are logging their time, reflecting on their learning, conducting research, and making a presentation, all documented and reviewed in an Independent Study Portfolio.

Young people entering college and today's workforce face challenges requiring skill sets that include, but go far beyond, standards-based academic preparation. Whether seen through the lens of 21st century skills, high school transitions, college readiness, or career and workforce development, young people must be able to think creatively, plan their time accurately, follow through, gather information, analyze, and present conclusions to varied audiences. They need to take responsibility for their learning, and become skilled in using a range of technology and media to communicate their knowledge and thinking. They need to lead, follow, work in teams, and work efficiently and effectively on their own.

As educators, we have the responsibility to teach and deepen these skills, equipping young people to succeed throughout high school, higher education, and into the global marketplace.

The Independent Study Project provides out-of-school staff, classroom teachers, and students with a structure to:

- Develop an applied learning project that builds on interests and activities students engage with outside the classroom, such as clubs, jobs, talents, community service, or special topics
- Capitalize on out-of-school time for expanded learning opportunities
- Enrich the learning through reflections and record-keeping
- Deepen knowledge through research
- Demonstrate learning
- Create a portfolio for documentation and assessment
- Earn Independent Study or senior project credit

No matter what the specific topic, overarching objectives for Independent Study include:

- Experiencing the excitement of learning more about an interest area
- Learning to learn, explore, and deepen knowledge in varied ways
- Becoming responsible for self-directed work
- Learning strategies for handling complex tasks
- Developing work and study skills of time management, tracking, and accountability
- Applying critical thinking to developing topics, assessing progress, and making revisions
- Applying critical thinking to rationales, explanations, and critique

* True events, but names have been changed for privacy.



GETTING STARTED WITH INDEPENDENT STUDY

Leading an exciting and effective Independent Study calls for preparation on three levels.

1. **You, the out-of-school staff,** need to be ready and prepared to actively engage with students as an Independent Study (IS) Coach. Help them find and follow their passion! Commit to supporting them as they learn to work on their own. Know that your support makes it work—or not. Students don't have a lot of opportunities to see themselves as inquiring, engaged, and successful learners. This is your chance to build those skills and show them that learning something they're interested in is fun!
2. **School administration and teachers** must be on-board and clear about the value of Independent Study. They are key to reinforcing the message that applied learning and independent work, when well-done, truly "counts." Before launching Independent Study with students, you must have explicit and written agreements with teachers about the type and amount of school credit students may earn, and the documentation and standards that will apply for awarding credit. Chapter 2—Laying the Groundwork with School—details this further.
3. **Students** need to see Independent Study as an exciting opportunity to prepare for college work, build skills, and earn credit by applying and expanding knowledge. Students tend to be a bit jaded about school. It's up to the out-of-school staff and classroom teachers to show Independent Study as a great out-of-school option that will help students advance.

The role of the out-of-school leader is to:

Interest, motivate, and engage students in Independent Study

Serve as a communication link with the classroom teacher as needed

Support students' work by:

1. Guiding them through the planning, so they create a solid work plan
2. Meeting weekly (or as arranged) to check in, trouble-shoot, review progress, revise if needed
3. Guiding them to more help or additional resources as needed. This may be:
 - Forming study groups with other students for peer support
 - Pairing students
 - Helping students connect with relevant teachers
 - Helping students locate outside resources for more information or support
 - Bringing in speakers
 - Asking teachers to make presentations or recommend resources



All staff leading and facilitating Independent Study should become familiar and comfortable with the parts and pieces.

1. Look through this **Leader's Guide**.
2. Read the **session plans and handouts** in Chapter 3—Guiding Independent Study with Students—for leading the process with students. You'll see that the detailed sessions provide a solid base for guiding students into and through Independent Study.
3. Review the documentation for students' **Portfolio of Work**—Chapter 4. Typically, this would include some or all of the following:
 - Independent Study Planner, showing initial brainstorming, thinking, and planning processes. This may be printed and handled as a full document, or as a series of handouts.
 - Independent Study Contract, showing students' commitment to a project, and their ability to clearly define the project, allocate time, specify tasks and activities, and understand requirements and accountability.
 - Time Log, showing actual hours spent, with sign-offs as appropriate, demonstrating effort, reliability, and consistency, as well as accountability.
 - Reflections showing development and extension of learning beyond the doing of the activity, as well as ability to think critically about progress and revisions, if needed.
 - Research component, with evidence of deepening the learning, and demonstrating ability to find reliable and relevant sources of information.
 - Mid-point Assessment documenting a review meeting, and showing student's self-assessment of progress, critical review with others of the project and the quality of work, and the ability to receive and use feedback.
 - Assessment Rubric showing application of judgment criteria to the student's work.
 - Other items selected by student to demonstrate learning or skills, or required by the school for the awarding of credit.
4. Lead sessions: **Opening Session through Session 5**.
5. After the sessions, work with students to complete the **Independent Study Contract**.
6. Meet with students weekly to review **time logs, research, and student reflection pieces**.
7. Meet for a **mid-point Portfolio review**
8. Schedule **presentation** times for students to demonstrate their learning for the program group, teachers, family, or others.
9. Maintain regular **communication** with teachers and others in the school.



LAYING THE GROUNDWORK WITH SCHOOL

CHAPTER 2



INTRODUCTION

Independent Study is a dynamic opportunity to engage young people in developing and applying 21st century, workforce, and college-readiness skills, including:

- Critical thinking
- Self-directed learning and responsibility
- Time management, productivity, and accountability
- Communication—including reading, writing, speaking, and listening

The core of Independent Study is active, structured learning from experience. Students may build upon work or projects they do outside of school, such as paid jobs, volunteer work, fulfilling family responsibilities, or clubs. Or they may choose to develop a project specifically for Independent Study, such as starting a film club, leading an environmental activity, or maintaining a blog on youth health issues.

From this core of experience, students identify a learning agenda, create an implementation plan, commit to a work contract, then carry it out. Reviews, check-in, reflections, study groups, and assessments develop the learning. Additional academic elements, such as a research component, may be incorporated.

Higher Level 21st Century Skills in Action (see page 8), details specific skills, and is used throughout the sessions to build students' vocabulary and understanding of these skills as recognized, important skills to develop.

To do Independent Study well, students and staff both must commit to the work, and to meeting the standards required for earning academic credit.

EARNING CREDIT

As in college, Independent Study is a way for students to earn credit for academic work and learning conducted outside the classroom. Different schools, however, have different ways of determining what is eligible for what types of credit.

Establish the meaning of 'credit,' and the standards and requirements for earning the credit, before launching Independent Study.



Before the program begins:

1. Secure buy-in from the school principal and teachers. Share the details of 21st century, college-readiness skills so teachers and leaders understand the value of this innovative opportunity for building skills and academic support.
2. Establish clear agreement on 'credit' among the principal, relevant teachers, and staff.
 - Is credit subject-based? If so, what will the teacher require?
 - Is credit equivalent to a certain number of points added to a grade? If so, how many points? What is required? Does it apply to a subject?
 - Is credit applied to electives?
 - Can Independent Study be used to fulfill service learning requirements? If so, what is required to make it apply?
3. Establish clear agreement among the principal, the teachers, and staff about the level of work that earns credit, the required elements, and the assessment.
 - Show teachers the elements of the Portfolio of Work, and discuss whether it aligns with the credit value.
 - Clarify and specify the number of Reflections to include, and/or how often they should be done.
 - Determine whether and what additional elements need to be included, such as a research or further writing component. For example, if subject-based credit will be awarded, should particular material be required? If credit is in English, should there be specified readings?
 - Show teachers the Assessment Rubric (template provided in Portfolio Documents). Discuss whether it provides acceptable criteria for assessing the work for the award of credit. If not, make additions or changes to align with school standards.
 - Discuss and establish whether the teacher or principal will conduct an additional assessment of the work, beyond that completed in the Independent Study project. If so, be clear about requirements.
4. Spell out the resources and supports available from teachers or the school, such as textbooks, consultations, reviews, computers, Internet access, or books. For example:
 - If students are required to do research, will they have access to the Internet? When?
 - If students are required to do particular readings, will the material be provided? When?
 - When will teachers be available for support, reviews or comments?
 - Will teachers attend presentations?
 - Will teachers review the Portfolio of Work?
 - How should communication be structured to ensure that students have the resources and support needed to be successful?



ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN COMMUNICATION

Independent Study is a coordinated partnership between school and afterschool that allows young people additional, expanded learning opportunities. Like all partnerships, this requires ongoing communication among those involved.

All parties must be clear about what each is bringing to the mix of supports for students' learning and development, and maintain open and ongoing communication.

- Establish points of contact for the project in the school and in afterschool.
- Determine the best way to communicate, whether on a schedule or as-needed basis.
- Concretize the understandings and commitments. Develop a contract (templates provided) among students, staff, and teachers, to demonstrate the adults' commitment to the student and to clarify expectations. The customizable contracts included in this Guide may serve as a basis for discussion; make changes as needed before printing and signing.

INDEPENDENT STUDY: HIGHER LEVEL 21ST CENTURY SKILLS IN ACTION

CRITICAL THINKING

1. Reason effectively. Use different kinds of thinking, drawing on different kinds of evidence. Find similarities, patterns, differences, compare, make observations, develop concepts, ideas, and conclusions.
2. Collect and consider range of views. Gather, listen to, evaluate, and integrate into analysis diverse points of view.
3. Question effectively. Develop and ask significant questions that clarify information, deepen understanding, and lead to greater knowledge or better solutions.
4. Analyze. Consider, test, weigh, and evaluate evidence and information, including facts, contexts, arguments, and opinions. Determine how pieces interact with and affect each other.
5. Reflect on experience. Draw on evidence from lived practice and experience to inform thinking, new learning, and processes.
6. Make reasoned judgments and decisions. Assess information, form opinions, draw conclusions, and make decisions.
7. Solve problems. Identify and recognize problems; apply reason and strategic thinking to address and solve problems.



INDEPENDENT STUDY: HIGHER LEVEL 21ST CENTURY SKILLS IN ACTION

INITIATIVE, SELF-DIRECTION, AND LEADERSHIP

1. Develop goals and outcomes. Set goals with short, medium, and long-term time frames, and identify criteria for success, targets, results, outcomes, and/or products associated with different time horizons.
2. Work independently. Define, prioritize, monitor progress, and complete tasks without direct oversight.
3. Manage time. Balance short, medium, and long term goals, analyze time requirements to reach results, and manage workload to reach maximum results efficiently.
4. Develop knowledge and skills through self-directed learning. Actively and independently expand and deepen learning and experience to gain greater knowledge and understanding, to master skills, and to advance personally and professionally.
5. Guide, lead, and inspire others. Identify and use strengths of others to accomplish shared goals, demonstrate by example the highest standards of work and achievement, and use interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence, inspire, and guide others to achieve outcomes.
6. Demonstrate accountability as a leader. Adhere to the highest ethical standards, use influence and power for the benefit of achieving the best possible results, and act responsibly in the interest of the larger community.

PRODUCTIVITY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND RESPONSIBILITY

1. Manage projects to achieve goals. Prioritize, manage time, and align efforts to achieve goals, whether single or multiple projects.
2. Fulfill responsibilities. Follow through with agreed-upon work and schedules, adhere to highest standards of ethics and professionalism, fulfill responsibilities to teams, and demonstrate reliability and punctuality.
3. Commit to achieving goals and results. Assume appropriate responsibility and accountability for reaching goals, outcomes, and results, whether individual and team projects.
4. Conduct oneself professionally. Work respectfully, positively, collaboratively, and cooperatively, and present oneself with the appropriate etiquette for the culture and situation.



INDEPENDENT STUDY: HIGHER LEVEL 21ST CENTURY SKILLS IN ACTION

1. Express thoughts and ideas clearly in diverse contexts. Use written, spoken, non-verbal, media, and technology-mediated methods appropriately, skillfully, and effectively in a variety of settings with diverse (including linguistically) populations.
2. Listen effectively. Listen carefully, respectfully, and analytically to understand information, viewpoints, values, emotions, and intentions.
3. Communicate purposefully. Understand the purpose of communication (to inform, instruct, motivate, inspire, persuade, etc.), and use appropriate content and methods.
4. Interact effectively. Know when it is appropriate and useful to listen and when to speak, monitor and assess processes and results of communication, and use technology-mediated interaction skillfully.
5. Work with diverse teams. Work productively and respectfully with people of different cultures, with different beliefs and viewpoints, and from different backgrounds.
6. Collaborate effectively. Assume shared responsibility for outcomes, listen and contribute respectfully and effectively, demonstrate flexibility and ability to compromise, and leverage different contributions to create, innovate, and lead to high quality results.



GUIDING INDEPENDENT STUDY WITH STUDENTS

SESSION PLANS

PLAN FOR ALL SESSIONS

- 30 – 40 minutes per session
- Review session plan ahead of time
- Prepare handouts
- Make notes afterward for follow up, to address next session, or to change for the next time



OPENING SESSION

INTRODUCTION

WHAT'S INDEPENDENT STUDY AND LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE?

TIME 30 minutes

OBJECTIVES

- Students understand the concept, expectations and opportunities of the Independent Study process.
- Students understand how Independent Study will be judged by using a Portfolio of Work that documents learning, instead of by a written test.
- Students become conscious of processes of taking responsibility for their own learning.
- Students learn the strategy of handling complex projects by chunking them up into smaller parts.

HANDOUTS

- What's Independent Study and Learning from Experience?
What's a Portfolio of Work?
- Contract

STEP BY STEP

1. OPENER

Ask: Has anyone worked on an Independent Study project for school? What?

Explain: Independent Study is common in college, but not as much in high school. It's a way to do work and learn on your own, in an area of your own choosing.

Ask: What does it mean to 'learn from experience'?
People sometimes say, 'life is the best teacher.'
Employers pay a great deal of attention to work experience. Why?
Discuss learning from experience.

Explain that students will have the opportunity to use their experience as a basis for learning. They'll take work or activities they do after school, or an interest they have, pick an Independent Study focus, develop a project, and document it.

Be clear about whether, and how, satisfactory completion of the project will earn academic credit for the student. Explain how much credit, and that you will discuss criteria for satisfactory work.



2. PROJECT OVERVIEW: THE BIG PICTURE AND WHERE STUDENTS ARE HEADED

Explain: To turn the topic or activity into an Independent Study project, students will develop an Independent Study project plan, agree on the scope of work and sign a contract, keep records, and actively think about what they're learning. There may also be a research component, or other elements. In the end, students will submit a Portfolio of Work that shows what they've done, and will make a presentation to the group.

Note that this is a complex project with several parts. At college, in life, and at work, managing schedules, responsibilities, work loads, and deliverables, is complex. Being able to do this well demands sets of skills. By doing Independent Study, students develop and apply these skills.

Explain: A good strategy for handling a complex project is to break it into chunks. You give each chunk the time and attention it needs, and go step by step. That's what we'll be doing with this project. Over four or five sessions, we'll do the planning that's needed for completing the Contract, and go through the pieces needed for completing the Independent Study project. We'll start with the big picture overview, then get into the implementation and groundwork.

Distribute the handout, What's Independent Study and Learning from Experience? Tell students to review the top part on Independent Study, and to discuss it in pairs for a few minutes.

Ask if there are any questions or comments about the overall idea of Independent Study.

3. ASSESSING INDEPENDENT STUDY

Ask: In school, how do you know if you've learned a subject? How do teachers know if students are learning?

Discuss what it means to 'demonstrate learning.'

Explain: Tests can show whether you've learned some things. But what kind of test is there for experience or projects? How do you know if someone has learned to ride a bike or drive a car? [Allow time for responses.]

Explain that with Independent Study, the 'test' is the doing—which you show with the record and logs of time—and also the demonstrations of what you learned—which you show with a Portfolio of Work and a presentation to the group.

This would be like logging the number of lessons and hours you spent learning to drive, keeping a journal on how you were doing after each driving lesson, and then showing a video to the group of you driving a car.

For course credit, you might add a research paper on driving in different countries, how in some cultures women aren't allowed to drive, and different rules of the road.

Tell students to review the section of the handout, "What's the Portfolio of Work?" Give them a few minutes to read it and discuss in pairs.



Ask and discuss: Do you think the higher level 21st century skills listed are important? When you think about college, work, or careers, which skills do you think are most important? Why?

How do you develop these skills? Do you develop them in school? In classes?

How would you show an employer or a college admissions office that you have any of these skills?

4. CHUNKING IT UP: NEXT STEPS

Explain: At the next session, you'll start brainstorming and planning for a project, using a Planner to help structure the thinking. You'll spend a couple of sessions on the planning, which then becomes the basis for filling out the Contract.

Distribute the Contract.

Explain: The Contract spells out the terms of agreement about what you'll do, how you'll document it, and what's expected for earning credit. This will be completed in a few weeks, based on the work you do over the next several sessions. The Contract then goes into the Portfolio of Work.

Ask if there are any questions.

Ask students to think about areas of interest, work, or afterschool activities for the next session.



WHAT'S INDEPENDENT STUDY & LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE?

Get credit for real life experience by turning your activities or work after school into an Independent Study project. You choose your activity, work, or project. To show the learning, you create a Portfolio of Work. Do it well, and earn Independent Study credit.

Independent study is common in college, but not in high school. Take advantage of this chance to build skills for success now—and for later!

- Gain valuable school credit
- Learn from doing, not just reading about it
- Build your resumé
- Have fun working with friends

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO? STEP BY STEP....

1. Identify afterschool activities that you learn from, such as a job, sports, clubs, child care, volunteering, or other. Or, think of issues or topics you're interested in, such as the environment, social justice, immigration, music, technology, sports, health, etc.
2. Spell out a learning agenda and develop a plan of action
3. Create and sign an Independent Study Contract that details what you'll do
4. Document what you do and the hours you spend
5. Meet with the Independent Study Coach or a peer study group once per week
6. Keep a Portfolio of Work with required documents
7. Submit the Portfolio for review for credit
8. Demonstrate and present your Independent Study learning



WHAT'S THE PORTFOLIO OF WORK?

The Portfolio is a compilation of documents and records that show what you've done, from the beginning planning stage, to the reviews, to the final presentation.

The Portfolio shows your ability in the **higher level 21st century skills** needed to succeed in college and to advance in careers. These include the ability to:

- Think creatively
- Develop a project, plan it, and follow-through independently
- Think critically about how the work is going, what you are getting out of it, and what may need to change
- Direct and lead your own learning, time, and effort
- Critically assess with others the quality of your work
- Take initiative
- Be accountable for deliverables
- Provide clear explanations, evidence, opinions, and rationales in writing and in presentations
- Use various means of communication effectively

WHAT'S IN THE PORTFOLIO OF WORK?

The contents of the Portfolio will be determined by the project, but would typically include some or all of the following, which will be agreed upon and noted in the Independent Study Contract.

- Independent Study Planner, showing initial brainstorming, thinking, and planning processes
- Independent Study Contract, showing commitment to the project, ability to clearly define the project, allocate time, specify tasks and activities, and understand requirements and accountability
- Time Logs, showing actual hours spent, with sign-offs as appropriate, demonstrating effort, reliability, and consistency, as well as accountability
- Reflections showing development and extension of learning beyond the doing of the activity, as well as ability to think critically about progress and revisions, if needed
- Research Component, with evidence of deepening the learning, and demonstrating ability to find reliable and relevant sources of information
- Mid-point Assessment documenting an meeting, and showing self-assessment of progress, critical review with others of the project and the quality of work, and the ability to receive and use feedback
- Assessment Rubric showing application of judgment criteria to the work
- Plan for the demonstration or presentation to the group
- Other items you select to demonstrate work, learning, or skills, or other items required by the school for awarding credit



INDEPENDENT STUDY CONTRACT

Name: _____

Date: _____

Homeroom (class designation or ID #): _____

1. INDEPENDENT STUDY WORK, ACTIVITY, OR PROJECT

Description _____

2. AMOUNT OF TIME

Total hours and schedule _____

3. LEARNING AGENDA

Objectives (knowledge, skills to gain) _____

Research question(s) _____

4. DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

INITIAL IDEAS FOR DEMONSTRATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS.

This should be revisited and can be changed at the mid point assessment



AGREEMENT

LEARNER

I agree to complete the above outlined work to the best of my ability.

I understand that to qualify for credit, the Portfolio of Work must contain (complete where applicable):

ITEM	TARGET DATE	COMPLETED
1. Planner (Handouts Step—)		
2. Time Log (specify frequency)		
3. Record of check-ins with dates and notes		
4. Mid-point Assessment plus reflection		
5. Reflections (specify number of frequency)		
6. Notes from study group		
7. Assessment		
8. Other Items		

INDEPENDENT STUDY COACH AGREES TO:

- ☐ Be available to discuss work/project/portfolio conditions, progress and problems
- ☐ Provide guidance for Portfolio pieces or other records
- ☐ Review experience and learning with learner on agreed schedule and as needed
- ☐ Attend the presentation
- ☐ Assess the quality of the work with the student
- ☐ Communicate with classroom teachers as needed
- ☐ Provide classroom teacher with recommendations for the award of credit

TEACHER AGREES TO:

- ☐ Establish clear requirements and standards for the award of credit
- ☐ Establish the amount of credit
- ☐ Provide supporting materials needed to complete requirements (e.g. texts, readings, computer access)
- ☐ Provide, as possible, feedback and support for student learning
- ☐ Maintain communication with Independent Study Coach

AGREED BY:

Learner

Date

Independent Study Coach

Date

Teacher

Principal

SESSION 1

INDEPENDENT STUDY PLANNER

STEP 1

BRAINSTORMING EXPERIENCE AND TOPIC

TIME 35 minutes

OBJECTIVES

- Students brainstorm and start to identify experience and/or topics as the basis for their Independent Study.
- Students understand steps and processes for systematically developing a project by using the Planner.
- Students build critical thinking skills, and practice explaining ideas and giving rationales.

PLANNER/HANDOUTS

- Complete Planner OR Handout, Independent Study Planner Step 1
- Thinking it Through: Experience and Topics

STEP BY STEP

1. OPENER

Ask if any students have jobs after school, or if they belong to any community organizations, do volunteer work, or take care of siblings.

Discuss what they do, and what they feel they learn from it.

2. PLANNING APPROACH

Explain: Over the next few sessions, you'll turn that experience into Independent Study by getting deliberate about what you're doing, how much time you're putting in, and what and how you're learning from the experience. To work it through, you'll use a Planner which guides through brainstorming, developing a topic, and detailing implementation.

Distribute the Planner. Give students a few minutes to look it over. (If you are using only handouts, distribute Handout Independent Study Planner Step 1.)



3. DEVELOPING TOPICS AND PROJECTS

Tell students: Look at the Planner. The first part asks what kinds of things you already do that you might like to build a project around. The second block gets you started thinking about interests and projects.

Distribute handout, Thinking it Through: Experience and Topics.

Explain: The handout gives two examples, one based on work or experience—in the example, it's taking care of younger children—and one based on digging into an interest area—in the example, it's the environment. Discuss the examples; ask which sounds more interesting, and why.

Ask: Are there areas you want to learn more about, like issues in the community, issues related to young people, college, or career explorations? Maybe you're interested in film, and would like to lead a film club. Or perhaps there are school or community issues you'd like to address, and you'd want to conduct surveys and create an action website.

Tell students: Take 5 minutes to make notes on the Planner with ideas for experience or work-based projects, and/or interest-based projects. Think about projects as learning experiences, and make notes of what you could or would like to learn. After a few minutes, you'll be discussing it with others, and explaining your thinking (that's one of the higher order skills).

4. DISCUSS AND EXPLAIN IDEAS

Ask students to compare notes with others. Give approximately five minutes for students to discuss with each other in pairs or threes.

Ask and discuss: Did anyone come up with experience or interest project ideas? What?

Ask students to explain their ideas and what they might learn.

Discuss: As students give their experience project ideas, ask for comments about what might be learned from the experience, and what other students might like to hear more about. This generates more ideas, and gives students practice thinking critically and explaining reasoning.

Note for students that this is what is meant by "critical thinking, using reasoning, and communicating and explaining thinking,"—all higher level 21st century skills. (Refer to Independent Study Higher Level 21st Century Skills)

5. COMPLETE NOTES FOR DEVELOPING IDEAS; ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO DISCUSS AND BRAINSTORM TOGETHER

6. CHUNKING IT UP: NEXT STEPS

Explain that at the next session, students will begin translating the idea into implementation steps—what to do and the amount of time. From there, they'll get more specific about the learning agenda.

Ask students to think more about their ideas, pick the one they like best, and how it can be fleshed out into a project.



INDEPENDENT STUDY PLANNER

STEP 1

What will you do for Independent Study? Use this worksheet to help generate ideas, pick a direction, and plan the work. Talk it through with other students and the Independent Study Coach.

Keep this worksheet as part of your Portfolio. It shows thinking and planning skills!

TYPE OR AREA OF EXPERIENCE AFTER SCHOOL

Are you involved with afterschool clubs or do you have a job? Do you have family or household responsibilities? Are there projects or volunteer opportunities you'd like to be involved with?

EXPERIENCE AREA	WHAT I COULD LEARN	WHAT I COULD DO (describe more specifically)
Work		
Family		
Clubs/Sports		
Community		
Other		



INTEREST AREA PROJECTS

Make afternoons more interesting by creating an Independent Study project. Lead a film club for other students, write a grant for program funding, or take leadership in making improvements in the school or community.

PROJECT OR TOPIC AREA	WHAT I COULD LEARN	WHAT I COULD DO (describe more specifically)
Film Club		
Grant writing		
Website development		
Environment		
Create a vegetable garden		
Write a guide for immigrant students and parents		
Other		



THINKING IT THROUGH

EXAMPLE 1: KID CARE

WORK OR ACTIVITY: I take care of my little brother and sister

HOW MUCH TIME: About 10 hours a week

WHAT COULD YOU LEARN?

- How to be a good sister or a good parent
- How children grow and what they need to grow up well
- Child development
- Nutrition and health

WHAT COULD YOU DO?

- Learn more about child development or child psychology
- See if I can tell what stages and behaviors my sister and brother show
- Give examples of what I should do as a good parent or good sister or brother to help them grow up well
- Find out what other people my age think good parenting, big-sistering or big-brothering is
- Prepare a position paper on, what young adults should learn and know about little kids and how to raise them
- Do a set of skits on little kid behavior and parent or sibling responses

EXAMPLE 2: ENVIRONMENT

INTEREST AREA TOPIC: Taking care of the environment

HOW MUCH TIME CAN YOU PUT IN?

About 10 hours per week

WHAT COULD YOU LEARN?

- How to clean up the environment
- Things to do in my neighborhood that would make a difference
- Why it's important to take care of the environment
- Which organizations or companies are committed to this cause
- What is already in place
- What materials are considered "green" or environmentally safe

WHAT COULD YOU DO?

- Learn more about causes of pollution
- Organize a group of my friends to clean up a park
- Make and distribute flyers about the importance of recycling
- Prepare a research paper that reflects my position on cleaning up the planet
- Give a PowerPoint® presentation of neighborhood areas showing environmental distress, and areas that are positive for the environment.



SESSION 2

INDEPENDENT STUDY PLANNER

STEP 2

AMOUNT OF TIME; CRITICAL THINKING

TIME 30 – 50 minutes (may split into two sessions)

OBJECTIVES

- Students learn how to document their project time
- Students build work and study skills by consciously planning time, then committing to processes for tracking time and monitoring progress
- Students understand expectations of weekly check-ins and reflections
- Students understand the process of reflection, learning, revision, and continued learning, and see the application of critical thinking skills

PLANNER/HANDOUTS

- Complete Planner OR Handout, Independent Study Planner Step 2
- Handout: Time Log
- Handout: Reflections
- Handout: Mid-point Assessment (optional)
- Handout: Higher Level 21st Century Skills in Action

STEP BY STEP

1. OPENER

Ask and explain: What do you think employers say are essential job skills? [Allow time for answers.]

Most employers will say: Showing up on time, coming to work every day, and putting in a full day's work. It's a person's work ethic; their commitment to doing the job and doing it well.

Explain: With Independent Study, students are responsible for planning and doing the work themselves, for showing that they are putting in the time needed, and that they're not wasting time. In workplace, college readiness, and 21st century skills language, it's called "Manage goals and time," including setting short, medium, and long term goals, and utilizing time and managing workload efficiently.



Explain and ask: Employers will also say, “critical thinking.” The phrase is used a lot in education. Critical thinking is really a set of skills that shows you can solve problems from small to large, think creatively, reason things out, gather and weigh information and evidence, hear and understand different opinions and points of view, and use different kinds of information and evidence to draw conclusions.

Ask: Do you have examples from your life or work where you applied critical thinking skills? It could be an example of figuring out how to handle a problem, or fixing something that wasn’t working. [Allow time for examples.]

Explain: With Independent Study, you actively draw on critical thinking. You’ll put time into thinking about how the project is going, what’s working and not, what you want to know more about, and whether changes should be made.

2. PLANNING TIME FOR THE WORK

Ask students to look back at the ideas they have for projects and activities, and what they might learn. (Step 1 of Planner).

Have students make notes on Planner Step 2: Amount of Time (Handout or in Planner), showing how much time they’ll be putting in, hours per week, and weeks per year.

Hand out the Time Log.

Explain: Students will use the Time Log to track their time. If they are using experience in a job or other afterschool activity off-site as the base for their project, they may be required to get signatures from supervisors to confirm the time logged.

3. PLANNING TIME FOR CRITICAL THINKING: REVIEWS, REFLECTIONS, STUDY GROUPS

Explain: Critical thinking about a project requires time and focus. There are several opportunities for this. [Note: The Independent Study project may require all or some of these; adjust the requirements and frequency to best fit the program and the students.]

- 1) Students meet weekly with their Independent Study Coach to review what is working, what isn’t, time planning, and to talk specifically about the learning. Students keep notes on the Time Log. The log with these notes becomes part of the Portfolio to show students put in the time and the thinking.
- 2) Students will meet mid-way through the project for a formal Mid-point Assessment with the IS Coach. [Note: you may provide this as a handout at this time.]
- 3) Students complete Weekly Reflection. (Distribute Reflection handout) Reflections are like keeping a journal, with notes about what students did, what they may be learning, what’s working, what’s not. Reflections are useful for guiding meetings with the IS Coach, and go into the Portfolio of Work. Looking back over Reflections, from the beginning of the project to the end, students should be able to see critical thinking, planning, and learning. They may also show skill-building in writing and time management.



Note: Depending on the program and requirements for credit, there may be different requirements for the number of reflections, how often they should be done, and any minimum standards for length or content. Be sure requirements are clear to students. You may use the Reflections handout, use journals, or other approaches.

- 4) Study groups of students working on similar projects, or with check-ins scheduled on the same days may form peer study groups. [Note whether this is an option for students, or a requirement.]

As a study group, students may:

- Review progress and issues with each other, keep notes, and put the notes in the Portfolio of Work
- Help each other with deadlines and requirements
- Brainstorm and share ideas
- Prepare as a group for a presentation of Independent Study work, findings, or learnings; brainstorm formats and approaches, discuss possibilities of videos, PowerPoint® presentations, games or game shows, workshops, or other ways to show and communicate what they got out of the project
- Give feedback to each other on written pieces as 'critical friends'
- Attend each others' presentations

TRIVIA DAY **EXAMPLE OF STUDY** **GROUP ACTIVITY**

Lead a game show Trivia Day as a final presentation, with questions based on what you're learning in Independent Study. For example: You're working at Pep Boys. What new info have you learned about auto mechanics or retail work? Turn the info into game show questions for your classmates. Questions can be structured like Trivial Pursuit, Jeopardy, or some other idea.

Come up with some great prizes for Trivia Day winners!

4. SKILLS REVIEW

Give students **5 to 10 minutes** to review the handouts and fill in the Planner or handout

Ask for a few volunteers to explain what they wrote, and why.

Ask if there are any questions, concerns, or ideas.

Distribute the handout, Higher Level 21st Century Skills in Action.

Tell students to look through the handout, and note that you'll be referring back to this handout several times.



Ask students to work in pairs or threes for about 10 minutes to read the first two sections, Critical Thinking and Initiative, Self-Direction, and Leadership. Ask them to check which skills are part of the Independent Study project.

Ask: Which did people check? Explain where you see that skill in practice.

Do you see these skills in other areas of your schoolwork, life, home, etc.?

Which two seem most important to you? Why?

5. CLOSING AND NEXT STEPS

Explain: Next session will get into the detail of the learning agenda—what you expect to learn. This is the time you'll be applying critical thinking, self-direction, and taking charge of your learning.

Ask for questions, comments, feedback.



INDEPENDENT STUDY PLANNER

**STEP
2**

AMOUNT OF TIME

TIME FOR PROJECT OR WORK

Schedule _____

Daily _____

Weekly _____

Number of weeks _____

TIME FOR CRITICAL THINKING

Check-ins

Schedule _____

Amount of time _____

Reflections

How often _____

Amount of time _____

Study group ☐ Yes ☐ No

Schedule _____

Amount of time _____



TIME LOG

Include dates of meetings with your Independent Study Coach, study groups, or other associated activities.

WEEKLY LOG	WEEK OF: _____
NOTES OR SIGN-OFFS	
MONDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
TUESDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
WEDNESDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
THURSDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
FRIDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
SATURDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
SUNDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____



REFLECTIONS

Date: _____

(May include notes or reflections from cohort meetings)

Take a few minutes to think about your experience. Write down some of your observations and thoughts. It might help to use one of these starters for your reflection.

THIS EXPERIENCE IS... _____

I AM INTERESTED IN... _____

I LEARN BEST WHEN... _____

THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF THIS FOR ME IS... _____



MID-POINT ASSESSMENT

**CONDUCTED BETWEEN STUDENT AND INDEPENDENT STUDY COACH
REVIEWED BY CONTENT AREA TEACHER, IF APPLICABLE**

Date: _____

- Review the Planner (or Planning handouts) and the Contract
- Discuss objectives, work plans, and where the student is with respect to fulfilling the terms and the learning agenda
- Discuss the unexpected learning that has taken place
- Discuss study groups or other supports
- Consider and discuss changes

TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT

1. Should you revise or add to your objectives? _____

2. Look at your plan for demonstrating learning. Does it still work? _____

3. Look at your timetable and Independent Study requirements. Are you on track? What else is needed?

4. What challenges are you finding? _____

5. What kind of help do you need to address the challenges? _____

INDEPENDENT STUDY COACH RECOMMENDATIONS _____

STUDENT REFLECTIONS, REQUESTS, OR RECOMMENDATIONS _____



HIGHER LEVEL 21ST CENTURY SKILLS IN ACTION

CRITICAL THINKING

1. Reason effectively. Use different kinds of thinking, drawing on different kinds of evidence. Find similarities, patterns, differences, compare, make observations, develop concepts, ideas, and conclusions.
2. Collect and consider range of views. Gather, listen to, evaluate, and integrate into analysis of diverse points of view.
3. Question effectively. Develop and ask significant questions that clarify information, deepen understanding, and lead to greater knowledge or better solutions.
4. Analyze. Consider, test, and weigh, and evaluate evidence and information, including facts, contexts, arguments, and opinions. Determine how pieces interact with and affect each other.
5. Reflect on experience. Draw on evidence from lived practice and experience to inform thinking, new learning, and processes.
6. Make reasoned judgments and decisions. Assess information, form opinions, draw conclusions, and make decisions.
7. Solve problems. Identify and recognize problems; apply reason and strategic thinking to address and solve problems.

INITIATIVE, SELF-DIRECTION, AND LEADERSHIP

1. Develop goals and outcomes. Set goals with short, medium, and long-term time frames, and identify criteria for success, targets, results, outcomes, and/or products associated with different time horizons.
2. Work independently. Define, prioritize, monitor progress, and complete tasks without direct oversight.
3. Manage time. Balance short, medium, and long term goals, analyze time requirements to reach results, and manage workload to reach maximum results efficiently.
4. Develop knowledge and skills through self-directed learning. Actively and independently expand and deepen learning and experience to gain greater knowledge and understanding, to master skills, and to advance personally and professionally.



5. Guide, lead, and inspire others. Identify and use strengths of others to accomplish shared goals, demonstrate by example the highest standards of work and achievement, and use interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence, inspire, and guide others to achieve outcomes.
6. Demonstrate accountability as a leader. Adhere to the highest ethical standards, use influence and power for the benefit of achieving the best possible results, and act responsibly in the interest of the larger community.

PRODUCTIVITY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND RESPONSIBILITY

1. Manage projects to achieve goals. Prioritize, manage time, and align efforts to achieve goals, whether single or multiple projects.
2. Fulfill responsibilities. Follow through with agreed-upon work and schedules, adhere to highest standards of ethics and professionalism, fulfill responsibilities to teams, and demonstrate reliability and punctuality.
3. Commit to achieving goals and results. Assume appropriate responsibility and accountability for reaching goals, outcomes, and results, whether individual and team projects.
4. Conduct oneself professionally. Work respectfully, positively, collaboratively, and cooperatively, and present oneself with the appropriate etiquette for the culture and situation.

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

1. Express thoughts and ideas clearly in diverse contexts. Use written, spoken, non-verbal, media, and technology-mediated methods appropriately, skillfully, and effectively in a variety of settings with diverse (including linguistically) populations.
2. Listen effectively. Listen carefully, respectfully, and analytically to understand information, viewpoints, values, emotions, and intentions.
3. Communicate purposefully. Understand the purpose of communication (to inform, instruct, motivate, inspire, persuade, etc.), and use appropriate content and methods.
4. Interact effectively. Know when it is appropriate and useful to listen and when to speak, monitor and assess processes and results of communication, and use technology-mediated interaction skillfully.
5. Work with diverse teams. Work productively and respectfully with people of different cultures, with different beliefs and viewpoints, and from different backgrounds.
6. Collaborate effectively. Assume shared responsibility for outcomes, listen and contribute respectfully and effectively, demonstrate flexibility and ability to compromise, and leverage different contributions to create, innovate, and lead to high quality results.



SESSION 3

INDEPENDENT STUDY PLANNER

STEP 3

LEARNING AGENDA

TIME 35 – 45 minutes

OBJECTIVES

- Students apply critical thinking to shape and direct their learning
- Students specify learning objectives for their Independent Study
- Students demonstrate ability to plan their learning by completing the Learning Agenda
- Students explore development of a research component (if required as a component of Independent Study work)

PLANNER/HANDOUTS

- Independent Study Higher Level Skills (from Session 2)
- Complete Planner OR Handout, Independent Study Planner Step 3
- Thinking It Through (from Session 1)

STEP BY STEP

1. OPENER

Ask and explain: Independent Study is about learning by doing, from a project, from work, from activities.

Ask: What's the difference between just doing something, and really learning from it? What does it take to 'learn' something? [Allow a few minutes for responses.]

Refer to the handout, Higher Level 21st Century Skills in Action (students may have this from prior session.) Under Critical Thinking, look at 5—Reflect on Experience. Being able to deliberately and consciously learn from experience is a skill.

Explain: Today's session is about setting your learning agenda, identifying specifically what the learning goals and objectives are. For example, you might have a job with the goal of making some money after school. But your learning goals might be developing workplace skills, learning money management, or learning about business management.



2. IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Tell students to look back at the notes they made on the work, project, or experience they'll use for Independent Study.

Distribute the handout, Independent Study Planner Step 3: Learning Agenda, or refer them to the Learning Agenda in the Planner. Refer them also to the examples on the handout, Thinking it Through, and to the handout Higher Level 21st Century Skills in Action.

Tell students to brainstorm and make notes on the Learning Agenda items 1 and 2, for about 10 minutes. Have students review each others' ideas in pairs or threes.

3. FINALIZING OBJECTIVES

Give students another 5 minutes or so to complete the Learning Agenda objectives.

Ask what students identified and wrote as objectives.

Discuss: Do these seem achievable based on the project and the time?

4. RESEARCH COMPONENT (OMIT IF NOT REQUIRED)

Ask students if they've done research. What? Where did the research question come from? How did they gather information?

Explain: Thinking about your Independent Study, what piece might you want to learn more about? What could you dig into further? Refer to Session 1, Thinking it Through. Under the section, What Could You Do, are several examples of research areas.

Explain any requirements provided by subject or class teachers who will be reviewing the research component.

Refer students to the Independent Study Planner section, Build in a Research Component. Allow students about 10 minutes to make notes.

Ask for examples of ideas; discuss.

Follow any other procedures required by subject or classroom teacher.



5. CLOSING AND NEXT STEPS

Refer students back to the handout, Higher Level 21st Century Skills in Action.

Ask students if their Learning Agenda addresses any of these. Which?

Explain that the next session is the last part of planning, and will address how students will demonstrate learning. The Portfolio provides a record and written evidence of what students did and learned. In addition, they will do a demonstration and presentation.

Explain that after the planning, they will complete the Contract, which will be quick, since all the work and thinking was done in the Planner.

Ask for questions, comments, thoughts.



INDEPENDENT STUDY PLANNER

LEARNING AGENDA

STEP
3

1. WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE?

2. SET YOUR LEARNING OBJECTIVES.

These can include building skills or gaining knowledge, such as

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Critical or analytical thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Global learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technology skills or knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> Presenting data |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Work habits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity | <input type="checkbox"/> College prep |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career prep | |

Objectives may start with:

Learn more about [topic] _____

Learn how to [skills] _____

Become better at [skills] _____

It should include *how*.

...by working at

...by working with

...by doing [activity] for [amount of time]

...by writing at least a paragraph each week



3. BUILD IN A RESEARCH COMPONENT

Independent Study may include a research component.

What do you want to learn more about?

What could be your research question? For example, if you have a job, your research questions might be: 'Who sets the minimum wage? Is it enough to live on?'

What kind of research do you like to do?

- ☐ Interviews and surveys, then analyzing and showing results
- ☐ Gathering information on the web, and writing a report with your analysis
- ☐ Reading books or articles on a topic
- ☐ Other ideas: _____

Finalize your research question, methods of research, time frame for work and due dates.



SESSION 4

INDEPENDENT STUDY PLANNER

STEP 4

DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

TIME 35 minutes

OBJECTIVES

- Students understand the concept of 'demonstrating learning' by developing a demonstration for their project
- Students identify communication and collaboration skills in practice
- Students practice initiative and self-direction in developing a demonstration plan

PLANNER/HANDOUTS

- Planner OR Handout, Independent Study Planner Step 4: Demonstration of Learning
- Higher Level 21st Century Skills (from Sessions 2)
- Handout, Assessment Rubric
- Handout: Mid-point Assessment

STEP BY STEP

1. OPENER

Explain: At the end of a course, you take a test to show what you learned. In Independent Study, you do two things: you submit the Portfolio with the records and the work along the way. And you do a presentation or demonstration for others.

Ask and discuss: When you say you learned something, how can you demonstrate that to someone else?



2. DEMONSTRATION IDEAS

Refer to the Independent Study Planner section, Demonstration of Learning, or distribute handout.

Give students a few minutes to look at the list of ideas for demonstrating learning.

Note that some ideas involve a product like a video, photo journal, or PowerPoint®. Others are a process, like organize an event, or maintain a blog.

Explain that at the end of the program, students will be asked to present to the group. They can present their product and explain what they learned to make it, or they can explain the process and what they learned (e.g., I kept a blog for three months and found that I couldn't get anyone to read it. So I tried different ways to get to people....)

Discuss ideas and possibilities related to the projects students have identified.

3. PLANNING FOR DEMONSTRATING LEARNING

Give students 10 to 15 minutes to work on the sections for final demonstration and presentation. Encourage them to work in pairs or threes to generate more ideas and test their ideas against others.

Ask what students came up with.

Discuss feasibility, and what supports or help are needed, if any. Review what type of support or resources will be available, and where they can get additional support.

Give students another few minutes to make changes, if needed, after the discussion.

4. ASSESSMENT AND CREDIT

Refer to the Independent Study Planner section, Putting It Together for Credit.

Explain: To be sure you earn credit for the work, you need to do the work well, and up to the standards required.

Explain: To check progress and quality along the way, students should:

- Stick to schedule for check-ins and reviews
- Meet with their study group, if they're in one
- Review the Assessment Rubric
- Keep their Portfolio of Work up-to-date and check for completeness



Distribute the Mid-point Assessment and the Assessment Rubric [Note: This should have been customized beforehand, if needed, to fit the specifics of the Independent Study program.]

Give students a few minutes to read the review outline and the Assessment Rubric.

Ask for questions. Discuss to be sure students understand how their work will be assessed.

5. CLOSING AND NEXT STEPS

Explain: Students can see that the demonstration and presentation addresses a number of higher level 21st century skills.

Refer to the handout, Higher Level 21st Century Skills in Action section Communication and Collaboration.

Ask and discuss skills: Do any of the demonstration or presentation ideas put these skills into practice? Which? What?

Explain that the last session will be completing the Contract, and then they'll be off on their own.



INDEPENDENT STUDY PLANNER

DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

**STEP
4**

1. DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

With Independent Study and learning from experience, you don't take a test—you show what you've learned.

The demonstration is not a list of activities, "I did this and then this and then this." It actually demonstrates or shows what you learned.

What best fits your work?

Check ones you might use.

- ☐ Make a video
- ☐ Write a special essay
- ☐ Create a skit
- ☐ Write a song and perform
- ☐ Build a sculpture
- ☐ Create a photo journal
- ☐ Write and draw a comic
- ☐ Organize an event
- ☐ Write a grant
- ☐ Create and administer a mini-quiz
- ☐ Build your own resume of experiences
- ☐ Hold a training orientation to pass along your skills
- ☐ Create some charts and graphs
- ☐ Make a speech
- ☐ Maintain a blog
- ☐ Create a website
- ☐ Other ideas:

DEMONSTRATIONS OF LEARNING

EXAMPLE

ACTIVITY: Child care

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1. UNDERSTAND PARENTING SKILLS**
Show by: Research, final demo skits
- 2. LEARN ABOUT CHILD DEVELOPMENT**
Show by: Research summary
- 3. BUILD TECHNICAL SKILLS**
Show by: Use internet for research, cite web sources
- 4. COMMUNICATION**
Show by: Final demo and presentation
- 5. CREATIVITY**
Show by: Create and produce funny skits for final demo

What will your demonstration be?

FEASIBILITY CHECK

Can you do this in the time available?

Do you need any help or support? What? Who?

Do you need to set deadlines along the way? What are they?

2. PRESENTATION

At the end of the program, you will be asked to present to the group. Your demonstration may actually be a presentation, such as a skit. If your demonstration is creation of a product, such as a video, PowerPoint®, photo journal, you can present that to the group and talk about what you learned. If your demonstration was doing something, or a process, like keeping a blog or organizing an event, you can explain how it went and what you learned. For example, "I kept a blog for three months and found that I couldn't get anyone to read it. So I tried different ways to get to people...."

How will you present or share your learning with others?

AUDIENCE WILL BE:

- Afterschool program
- An invited audience
- A combination
- An outside audience
- Other _____



3. PUTTING IT TOGETHER FOR CREDIT

CHECK-INS

- Check in with the Independent Study Coach and with peer study groups or others to see how you're doing along the way
- Check in with your peer study group, if you're part of one
- Stick to your scheduled reviews
- Schedule and stick with the mid-point assessment

HELP AND SUPPORT

Think about and use help and support available.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peer study group | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent Study Coach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Family members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employers | <input type="checkbox"/> Community leaders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

ASSESSMENTS AND REVIEWS

- Look at the Assessment Rubric to understand the judgment criteria
- Look at the Mid-point Assessment document ahead of time

PORTFOLIO DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Independent Study Planner
- ☐ Time Log
- ☐ Independent Study Contract
- ☐ Reviews
- ☐ Mid-point Assessment
- ☐ Assessment Rubric
- ☐ Reflections
- ☐ Research Component
- ☐ Other _____



MID-POINT ASSESSMENT

CONDUCTED BETWEEN STUDENT AND INDEPENDENT STUDY COACH
REVIEWED BY CONTENT AREA TEACHER, IF APPLICABLE

Date: _____

- Review the Planner (or Planning handouts) and the Contract
- Discuss objectives, work plans, and where the student is with respect to fulfilling the terms and the learning agenda
- Discuss the unexpected learning that has taken place
- Discuss study groups or other supports
- Consider and discuss changes

TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT

1. Should you revise or add to your objectives? _____

2. Look at your plan for demonstrating learning. Does it still work? _____

3. Look at your timetable and Independent Study requirements. Are you on track? What else is needed?

4. What challenges are you finding? _____

5. What kind of help do you need to address the challenges? _____

INDEPENDENT STUDY COACH RECOMMENDATIONS _____

STUDENT REFLECTIONS, REQUESTS, OR RECOMMENDATIONS _____



ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

CRITERIA	EXCELLENT=4	GOOD=3	FAIR=2	WEAK=1
RESEARCH COMPONENT	Comprehensive research connects with the project and research question. Length is appropriate for the topic. Sources are clearly cited. Document is neatly presented.	Research is good but could be more thorough. Most connections to the project and research question are clear. Sources are cited.	Unclear how research connects to the topic area or project. More research is needed. Less than 1–2 pages. Identification of sources should be clearer.	Incomplete research. No identification of sources.
Comments:				
REFLECTION PAPER	Reflection includes personal reflections that are descriptive, important, and insightful. Reviews both strengths and weaknesses Demonstrates critical thinking	Reflection includes 3 of the following: Personal reactions; clear description; evidence of insight. Reviews both strengths & weaknesses Demonstrates critical thinking	Reflection includes 2 of the following: Personal reactions; clear description; evidence of insight. Reviews both strengths & weaknesses Demonstrates critical thinking	No reflection submitted; superficial statement of actions without a reflective element. Reflection has superficial personal reactions, little description or shows limited insight.
Comments:				
PARTICIPATION IN STUDY GROUP	Played leadership role. Provided supportive feedback and accepted constructive criticism. Actively planned and participated in group activities.	Participated in group, sought and provided feedback to peers. Participated in group activities.	Was present, but did not seek or provide feedback. Did not participate in Cohort.	Did not participate in Cohort. Did not participate in study group.
Comments:				

CRITERIA	EXCELLENT=4	GOOD=3	FAIR=2	WEAK=1
DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING				
PRESENTATION (CONTENT)	Insightful, a "complete package", shows grasp of content, context, and implications.	Strong, coherent summary of content; some attention to broader content or meaning.	Understandable summary of content.	Scattered, incomplete and disorganized content.
PRESENTATION (ORAL PRESENTATION)	Presenter spoke clearly, made appropriate eye contact with audience and accurately answered questions.	Presenter spoke relatively clearly, made appropriate eye contact with audience and answered questions.	Presenter spoke relatively clearly most of the time, made eye contact with the audience and was able to answer some questions.	Presenter spoke unclearly, seldom made eye contact with audience and had difficulty answering questions.
PRESENTATION (VISUAL PRESENTATION)	Strong visual or other display of information. Main points appropriately emphasized by visual or other display.	Consideration given to ability of audience to see/hear presentation; Consistent use of graphics, sound, etc.	Inconsistent format or design detracts from content. Limited consideration given to ability of audience to see/hear presentation.	No use of supporting presentation materials. Haphazardly organized presentation support materials.
Comments:				
Learner Name: _____			Final Score: _____	



SESSION 5

INDEPENDENT STUDY PLANNER

STEP 5

CONTRACT

TIME 30 – 60 minutes

NOTE: Leader and/or staff should plan time here to review Contracts with students. Depending on the number of students involved, you may need to schedule additional time to finalize and sign Contracts.

OBJECTIVES

- Students commit to implementation plan
- Students develop a sense of responsibility and accountability by formalizing their plan and agreements through a contract
- Students practice communication, explanations, reasoning, and critical thinking by reviewing the Contract with the Independent Study Coach

PLANNER/HANDOUTS

- Independent Study Contract (from Session 1)

STEP BY STEP

1. OPENER

Explain: The Planner and the notes you've been working on were steps in thinking through an Independent Study project, what you'll do, and what you need to complete to make it a project and a job well done. The final step is to put it together in a contract or agreement showing what you'll do, and what the program staff, teachers, or others will do to support you.

Ask if people have questions, and if they feel ready to fill in the Contract.

Explain that they'll fill it in, then discuss it with the Independent Study Coach to finalize it.



2. COMPLETING THE CONTRACT

Distribute the Independent Study Contract.

Explain that the Contract sets out the terms of the project, and becomes a core piece of the Portfolio of Work. At review times, students and staff will be looking back at the Contract to see whether it is being fulfilled, and how well.

Allow students 15 to 20 minutes to complete the Contract.

3. REVIEW WITH INDEPENDENT STUDY COACH

Students may review their contracts with each other as the IS Coach circulates and meets with students individually. The IS Coach should set up additional meeting time with students as needed. Be clear about who should sign the Contract, and when.

4. CLOSING AND NEXT STEPS

Ask if students are clear about the next steps and their timelines.

Discuss and answer any questions.



PORTFOLIO DOCUMENTS

CHAPTER 4



WHAT'S INDEPENDENT STUDY & LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE?

Get credit for real life experience by turning your activities or work after school into an Independent Study project. You choose your activity, work, or project. To show the learning, you create a Portfolio of Work. Do it well, and earn Independent Study credit.

Independent study is common in college, but not in high school. Take advantage of this chance to build skills for success now—and for later!

- Gain valuable school credit
- Learn from doing, not just reading about it
- Build your resumé
- Have fun working with friends

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO? STEP BY STEP....

1. Identify afterschool activities that you learn from, such as a job, sports, clubs, child care, volunteering, or other. Or, think of issues or topics you're interested in, such as the environment, social justice, immigration, music, technology, sports, health, etc.
2. Spell out a learning agenda and develop a plan of action
3. Create and sign an Independent Study Contract that details what you'll do
4. Document what you do and the hours you spend
5. Meet with the Independent Study Coach or a peer study group once per week
6. Keep a Portfolio of Work with required documents
7. Submit the Portfolio for review for credit
8. Demonstrate and present your Independent Study learning



WHAT'S THE PORTFOLIO OF WORK?

The Portfolio is a compilation of documents and records that show what you've done, from the beginning planning stage, to the reviews, to the final presentation.

The Portfolio shows your ability in the **higher level 21st century skills** needed to succeed in college and to advance in careers. These include the ability to:

- Think creatively
- Develop a project, plan it, and follow-through independently
- Think critically about how the work is going, what you are getting out of it, and what may need to change
- Direct and lead your own learning, time, and effort
- Critically assess with others the quality of your work
- Take initiative
- Be accountable for deliverables
- Provide clear explanations, evidence, opinions, and rationales in writing and in presentations
- Use various means of communication effectively

WHAT'S IN THE PORTFOLIO OF WORK?

The contents of the Portfolio will be determined by the project, but would typically include some or all of the following, which will be agreed upon and noted in the Independent Study Contract.

- Independent Study Planner, showing initial brainstorming, thinking, and planning processes
- Independent Study Contract, showing commitment to the project, ability to clearly define the project, allocate time, specify tasks and activities, and understand requirements and accountability
- Time Logs, showing actual hours spent, with sign-offs as appropriate, demonstrating effort, reliability, and consistency, as well as accountability
- Reflections showing development and extension of learning beyond the doing of the activity, as well as ability to think critically about progress and revisions, if needed
- Research Component, with evidence of deepening the learning, and demonstrating ability to find reliable and relevant sources of information
- Mid-point Assessment documenting an assessment meeting, and showing self-assessment of progress, critical review with others of the project and the quality of work, and the ability to receive and use feedback
- Assessment Rubric showing application of judgment criteria to the work
- Plan for the demonstration or presentation to the group
- Other items you select to demonstrate work, learning, or skills, or other items required by the school for awarding credit



INDEPENDENT STUDY PLANNER

What will you do for Independent Study? Use this worksheet to help generate ideas, pick a direction, and plan the work. Talk it through with other students and the Independent Study Coach.

Keep this worksheet as part of your Portfolio. It shows thinking and planning skills!

TYPE OR AREA OF EXPERIENCE AFTER SCHOOL

Are you involved with afterschool clubs or do you have a job? Do you have family or household responsibilities? Are there projects or volunteer opportunities you'd like to be involved with?

EXPERIENCE AREA	WHAT I COULD LEARN	WHAT I COULD DO (describe more specifically)
Work		
Family		
Clubs/Sports		
Community		
Other		



INTEREST AREA PROJECTS

Make afternoons more interesting by creating an Independent Study project. Lead a film club for other students, write a grant for program funding, or take leadership in making improvements in the school or community.

PROJECT OR TOPIC AREA	WHAT I COULD LEARN	WHAT I COULD DO (describe more specifically)
Film Club		
Grant writing		
Website development		
Environment		
Create a vegetable garden		
Write a guide for immigrant students and parents		
Other		



AMOUNT OF TIME

TIME FOR PROJECT OR WORK

Schedule _____

Daily _____

Weekly _____

Number of weeks _____

TIME FOR CRITICAL THINKING

Check-ins

Schedule _____

Amount of time _____

Reflections

How often _____

Amount of time _____

Study group ☐ Yes ☐ No

Schedule _____

Amount of time _____



LEARNING AGENDA

1. WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE?

2. SET YOUR LEARNING OBJECTIVES.

These can include building skills or gaining knowledge, such as

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Critical or analytical thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership | <input type="checkbox"/> Global learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Technology skills or knowledge | <input type="checkbox"/> Presenting data |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Work habits |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creativity | <input type="checkbox"/> College prep |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career prep | |

Objectives may start with:

Learn more about [topic] _____

Learn how to [skills] _____

Become better at [skills] _____

It should include *how*.

...by working at

...by working with

...by doing [activity] for [amount of time]

...by writing at least a paragraph each week



3. BUILD IN A RESEARCH COMPONENT

Independent Study may include a research component.

What do you want to learn more about?

What could be your research question? For example, if you have a job, your research questions might be: 'Who sets the minimum wage? Is it enough to live on?'

What kind of research do you like to do?

- ☐ Interviews and surveys, then analyzing and showing results
- ☐ Gathering information on the web, and writing a report with your analysis
- ☐ Reading books or articles on a topic
- ☐ Other ideas: _____

Finalize your research question, methods of research, time frame for work and due dates.



DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

1. DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

With Independent Study and learning from experience, you don't take a test—you show what you've learned.

The demonstration is not a list of activities, "I did this and then this and then this." It actually demonstrates or shows what you learned.

What best fits your work?

Check ones you might use.

- ☐ Make a video
- ☐ Write a special essay
- ☐ Create a skit
- ☐ Write a song and perform
- ☐ Build a sculpture
- ☐ Create a photo journal
- ☐ Write and draw a comic
- ☐ Organize an event
- ☐ Write a grant
- ☐ Create and administer a mini-quiz
- ☐ Build your own resume of experiences
- ☐ Hold a training orientation to pass along your skills
- ☐ Create some charts and graphs
- ☐ Make a speech
- ☐ Maintain a blog
- ☐ Create a website
- ☐ Other ideas:

DEMONSTRATIONS OF LEARNING

EXAMPLE

ACTIVITY: Child care

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1. UNDERSTAND PARENTING SKILLS**
Show by: Research, final demo skits
- 2. LEARN ABOUT CHILD DEVELOPMENT**
Show by: Research summary
- 3. BUILD TECHNICAL SKILLS**
Show by: Use internet for research, cite web sources
- 4. COMMUNICATION**
Show by: Final demo and presentation
- 5. CREATIVITY**
Show by: Create and produce funny skits for final demo



What will your demonstration be?

FEASIBILITY CHECK

Can you do this in the time available?

Do you need any help or support? What? Who?

Do you need to set deadlines along the way? What are they?

2. PRESENTATION

At the end of the program, you will be asked to present to the group. Your demonstration may actually be a presentation, such as a skit. If your demonstration is creation of a product, such as a video, PowerPoint®, photo journal, you can present that to the group and talk about what you learned. If your demonstration was doing something, or a process, like keeping a blog or organizing an event, you can explain how it went and what you learned. For example, "I kept a blog for three months and found that I couldn't get anyone to read it. So I tried different ways to get to people...."

How will you present or share your learning with others?

AUDIENCE WILL BE:

- Afterschool program
- An invited audience
- A combination
- An outside audience
- Other _____



3. PUTTING IT TOGETHER FOR CREDIT

CHECK-INS

- Check in with the Independent Study Coach and with peer study groups or others to see how you're doing along the way
- Check in with your peer study group, if you're part of one
- Stick to your scheduled reviews
- Schedule and stick with the mid-point assessment

HELP AND SUPPORT

Think about and use help and support available.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Peer study group | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent Study Coach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> Family members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employers | <input type="checkbox"/> Community leaders |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

ASSESSMENTS AND REVIEWS

- Look at the Assessment Rubric to understand the judgment criteria
- Look at the Mid-point Assessment document ahead of time

PORTFOLIO DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Independent Study Planner
- ☐ Time Log
- ☐ Independent Study Contract
- ☐ Reviews
- ☐ Mid-point Assessment
- ☐ Assessment Rubric
- ☐ Reflections
- ☐ Research Component
- ☐ Other _____



THINKING IT THROUGH

EXAMPLE 1: KID CARE

WORK OR ACTIVITY: I take care of my little brother and sister

HOW MUCH TIME: About 10 hours a week

WHAT COULD YOU LEARN?

- How to be a good sister or a good parent
- How children grow and what they need to grow up well
- Child development
- Nutrition and health

WHAT COULD YOU DO?

- Learn more about child development or child psychology
- See if I can tell what stages and behaviors my sister and brother show
- Give examples of what I should do as a good parent or good sister or brother to help them grow up well
- Find out what other people my age think good parenting, big-sistering or big-brothering is
- Prepare a position paper on, what young adults should learn and know about little kids and how to raise them
- Do a set of skits on little kid behavior and parent or sibling responses

EXAMPLE 2: ENVIRONMENT

INTEREST AREA TOPIC: Taking care of the environment

HOW MUCH TIME CAN YOU PUT IN?

About 10 hours per week

WHAT COULD YOU LEARN?

- How to clean up the environment
- Things to do in my neighborhood that would make a difference
- Why it's important to take care of the environment
- Which organizations or companies are committed to this cause
- What is already in place
- What materials are considered "green" or environmentally safe

WHAT COULD YOU DO?

- Learn more about causes of pollution
- Organize a group of my friends to clean up a park
- Make and distribute flyers about the importance of recycling
- Prepare a research paper that reflects my position on cleaning up the planet
- Give a PowerPoint® presentation of neighborhood areas showing environmental distress, and areas that are positive for the environment.



INDEPENDENT STUDY CONTRACT

Name: _____

Date: _____

Homeroom (class designation or ID #): _____

1. INDEPENDENT STUDY WORK, ACTIVITY, OR PROJECT

Description _____

2. AMOUNT OF TIME

Total hours and schedule _____

3. LEARNING AGENDA

Objectives (knowledge, skills to gain) _____

Research question(s) _____

4. DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

INITIAL IDEAS FOR DEMONSTRATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

This should be revisited and can be changed at the mid-point assessment.



AGREEMENT LEARNER

I agree to complete the above outlined work to the best of my ability.

I understand that to qualify for credit, the Portfolio of Work must contain (complete where applicable):

ITEM	TARGET DATE	COMPLETED
1. Planner (Handouts Step—)		
2. Time Log (specify frequency)		
3. Record of check-ins with dates and notes		
4. Mid-point Assessment plus reflection		
5. Reflections (specify number or frequency)		
6. Notes from study group		
7. Assessment		
8. Other Items		

INDEPENDENT STUDY COACH AGREES TO:

- ☐ Be available to discuss work/project/portfolio conditions, progress and problems
- ☐ Provide guidance for portfolio pieces or other records
- ☐ Review experience and learning with learner on agreed schedule and as needed
- ☐ Attend the presentation
- ☐ Assess the quality of the work with the student
- ☐ Communicate with classroom teachers as needed
- ☐ Provide classroom teacher with recommendations for the award of credit

TEACHER AGREES TO:

- ☐ Establish clear requirements and standards for the award of credit
- ☐ Establish the amount of credit
- ☐ Provide supporting materials needed to complete requirements (e.g. texts, readings, computer access)
- ☐ Provide, as possible, feedback and support for student learning
- ☐ Maintain communication with Independent Study Coach

AGREED BY:

_____	_____	_____	_____
Learner	Date	Independent Study Coach	Date
_____	_____	_____	_____
Teacher		Principal	



TIME LOG

Include dates of meetings with your Independent Study Coach, study groups, or other associated activities.

WEEKLY LOG	WEEK OF: _____
NOTES OR SIGN-OFFS	
MONDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
TUESDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
WEDNESDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
THURSDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
FRIDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
SATURDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____
SUNDAY Activity: _____ Time Spent: _____	_____ _____ _____ _____



REFLECTIONS

Date: _____

(May include notes or reflections from cohort meetings)

Take a few minutes to think about your experience. Write down some of your observations and thoughts. It might help to use one of these starters for your reflection.

THIS EXPERIENCE IS... _____

I AM INTERESTED IN... _____

I LEARN BEST WHEN... _____

THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF THIS FOR ME IS... _____



HIGHER LEVEL 21ST CENTURY SKILLS IN ACTION

CRITICAL THINKING

1. Reason effectively. Use different kinds of thinking, drawing on different kinds of evidence. Find similarities, patterns, differences, compare, make observations, develop concepts, ideas, and conclusions.
2. Collect and consider range of views. Gather, listen to, evaluate, and integrate into analysis of diverse points of view.
3. Question effectively. Develop and ask significant questions that clarify information, deepen understanding, and lead to greater knowledge or better solutions.
4. Analyze. Consider, test, weigh, and evaluate evidence and information, including facts, contexts, arguments, and opinions. Determine how pieces interact with and affect each other.
5. Reflect on experience. Draw on evidence from lived practice and experience to inform thinking, new learning, and processes.
6. Make reasoned judgments and decisions. Assess information, form opinions, draw conclusions, and make decisions.
7. Solve problems. Identify and recognize problems; apply reason and strategic thinking to address and solve problems.

INITIATIVE, SELF-DIRECTION, AND LEADERSHIP

1. Develop goals and outcomes. Set goals with short, medium, and long-term time frames, and identify criteria for success, targets, results, outcomes, and/or products associated with different time horizons.
2. Work independently. Define, prioritize, monitor progress, and complete tasks without direct oversight.
3. Manage time. Balance short, medium, and long term goals, analyze time requirements to reach results, and manage workload to reach maximum results efficiently.
4. Develop knowledge and skills through self-directed learning. Actively and independently expand and deepen learning and experience to gain greater knowledge and understanding, to master skills, and to advance personally and professionally.



5. Guide, lead, and inspire others. Identify and use strengths of others to accomplish shared goals, demonstrate by example the highest standards of work and achievement, and use interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence, inspire, and guide others to achieve outcomes.
6. Demonstrate accountability as a leader. Adhere to the highest ethical standards, use influence and power for the benefit of achieving the best possible results, and act responsibly in the interest of the larger community.

PRODUCTIVITY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND RESPONSIBILITY

1. Manage projects to achieve goals. Prioritize, manage time, and align efforts to achieve goals, whether single or multiple projects.
2. Fulfill responsibilities. Follow through with agreed-upon work and schedules, adhere to highest standards of ethics and professionalism, fulfill responsibilities to teams, and demonstrate reliability and punctuality.
3. Commit to achieving goals and results. Assume appropriate responsibility and accountability for reaching goals, outcomes, and results, whether individual and team projects.
4. Conduct oneself professionally. Work respectfully, positively, collaboratively, and cooperatively, and present oneself with the appropriate etiquette for the culture and situation.

COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION

1. Express thoughts and ideas clearly in diverse contexts. Use written, spoken, non-verbal, media, and technology-mediated methods appropriately, skillfully, and effectively in a variety of settings with diverse (including linguistically) populations.
2. Listen effectively. Listen carefully, respectfully, and analytically to understand information, viewpoints, values, emotions, and intentions.
3. Communicate purposefully. Understand the purpose of communication (to inform, instruct, motivate, inspire, persuade, etc.), and use appropriate content and methods.
4. Interact effectively. Know when it is appropriate and useful to listen and when to speak, monitor and assess processes and results of communication, and use technology-mediated interaction skillfully.
5. Work with diverse teams. Work productively and respectfully with people of different cultures, with different beliefs and viewpoints, and from different backgrounds.
6. Collaborate effectively. Assume shared responsibility for outcomes, listen and contribute respectfully and effectively, demonstrate flexibility and ability to compromise, and leverage different contributions to create, innovate, and lead to high quality results.



MID-POINT ASSESSMENT

**CONDUCTED BETWEEN STUDENT AND INDEPENDENT STUDY COACH
REVIEWED BY CONTENT AREA TEACHER, IF APPLICABLE**

Date: _____

- Review the Planner (or Planning handouts) and the Contract
- Discuss objectives, work plans, and where the student is with respect to fulfilling the terms and the learning agenda
- Discuss the unexpected learning that has taken place
- Discuss study groups or other supports
- Consider and discuss changes

TO BE COMPLETED BY STUDENT

1. Should you revise or add to your objectives? _____

2. Look at your plan for demonstrating learning. Does it still work? _____

3. Look at your timetable and Independent Study requirements. Are you on track? What else is needed?

4. What challenges are you finding? _____

5. What kind of help do you need to address the challenges? _____

INDEPENDENT STUDY COACH RECOMMENDATIONS _____

STUDENT REFLECTIONS, REQUESTS, OR RECOMMENDATIONS _____



ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

CRITERIA	EXCELLENT=4	GOOD=3	FAIR=2	WEAK=1
RESEARCH COMPONENT	Comprehensive research connects with the project and research question. Length is appropriate for the topic. Sources are clearly cited. Document is neatly presented.	Research is good but could be more thorough. Most connections to the project and research question are clear. Sources are cited.	Unclear how research connects to the topic area or project. More research is needed. Less than 1–2 pages. Identification of sources should be clearer.	Incomplete research. No identification of sources.
Comments:				
REFLECTION PAPER	Reflection includes personal reflections that are descriptive, important, and insightful. Reviews both strengths and weaknesses Demonstrates critical thinking	Reflection includes 3 of the following: Personal reactions; clear description; evidence of insight. Reviews both strengths & weaknesses Demonstrates critical thinking	Reflection includes 2 of the following: Personal reactions; clear description; evidence of insight. Reviews both strengths & weaknesses Demonstrates critical thinking	No reflection submitted; superficial statement of actions without a reflective element. Reflection has superficial personal reactions, little description or shows limited insight.
Comments:				
PARTICIPATION IN STUDY GROUP	Played leadership role. Provided supportive feedback and accepted constructive criticism. Actively planned and participated in group activities.	Participated in group, sought and provided feedback to peers. Participated in group activities.	Was present, but did not seek or provide feedback. Did not participate in Cohort.	Did not participate in Cohort. Did not participate in study group.
Comments:				



CRITERIA	EXCELLENT=4	GOOD=3	FAIR=2	WEAK=1
DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING				
PRESENTATION (CONTENT)	Insightful, a "complete package", shows grasp of content, context, and implications.	Strong, coherent summary of content; some attention to broader content or meaning.	Understandable summary of content.	Scattered, incomplete and disorganized content.
PRESENTATION (ORAL PRESENTATION)	Presenter spoke clearly, made appropriate eye contact with audience and accurately answered questions.	Presenter spoke relatively clearly, made appropriate eye contact with audience and answered questions.	Presenter spoke relatively clearly most of the time, made eye contact with the audience and was able to answer some questions.	Presenter spoke unclearly, seldom made eye contact with audience and had difficulty answering questions.
PRESENTATION (VISUAL PRESENTATION)	Strong visual or other display of information. Main points appropriately emphasized by visual or other display.	Consideration given to ability of audience to see/hear presentation; Consistent use of graphics, sound, etc.	Inconsistent format or design detracts from content. Limited consideration given to ability of audience to see/hear presentation.	No use of supporting presentation materials. Haphazardly organized presentation support materials.
Comments:				
Learner Name: _____ Final Score: _____				



HAVE FUN WITH EXPERIENCE LEARNING

Please feel free to contact us

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