

Project-Based Learning Proposal

PCEP Michigan Department of Education Models of Proficiency Grant

1. Unit/Course Title: *Book Trailers: Inspiring Others to Read*

2. Driving Question: Can students effectively promote reading among their peers through video technology?

3. Project Summary: In small collaborative groups, students will select a book for choice reading as a part of the 9th grade World Literature and Composition curriculum. Students will read, discuss, and write about the book together as a part of their ELA class activities. The students will also create a storyboard for a short video trailer to advertise their book to a wider student audience. The school librarian will provide instruction on how to use filming and editing technology. Completed trailers may be featured on the Student Television Station's regular morning announcements, as well on promotional monitors in the school libraries, or the district cable network.

4. Teaching Team:

Teacher Name	Course/Dept.	School
1. Mary McCarthy	Librarian	Salem HS
2. Cyndi Burnstein	World Literature/English	Salem HS

5. Duration: Students produced one book trailer during semester one and created a second video during semester two using the skills they learned semester one to create a video grammar lesson. For semester one, the books were read by the groups and creating the trailers from start to finish took approximately 3 weeks. For semester two, the grammar lessons were selected and studied by the groups and creating the video lessons from start to finish took approximately 3 weeks also.

Dates: Semester one project: January. Semester two project: May

6. Student Data:

Total number of participating students: Approximately 100 9th graders

Approximately 20 at-risk students participated, including special education, ELL, free and reduced lunch, and struggling learners.

Special Education Students: 10

7. Students with Special Needs

All groups submitted a trailer semester one, including all special education students. Every one of the ten students submitted a project and earned a passing grade. 60% earned A's or B+'s. Every one of the ten students also earned a passing grade for the semester in English. In each case, the movie trailer significantly raised the final semester grade.

8. Learning Goals and Strategies

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies include multiple modes of instructional content, multiple ways for students to express what they know, and multiple ways to engage students.

Content Standard

ELA 3.7: Recognize and use varied innovative techniques to construct text, convey meaning, and express feelings to influence an audience. Examples include: experimentation with time, order, stream of consciousness, and multiple viewpoints.

- Project Activity(s) to Specifically Address the Content Standard

Working as a group, students will decide how to represent their book to their target audience by creating a storyboard for their video trailer designed to maximize impact on audience motivation to read the particular book promoted.

- UDL Strategy(s)

Small group interaction, developing group and individual accountability rubrics

Content Standard

ELA 4.1: Demonstrate how language usage is related to successful communication in their different spoken, written, and visual communication contexts, such as job interviews, public speeches, debates, and advertising.

- Project Activity(s) to Specifically Address the Content Standard

Use of small camcorders, audio, copyright-free software music, transitions, moviemaker effects, script, production to produce effective book trailer ads and video grammar lessons.

- UDL Strategy(s)

Assignment of individual group members to roles based on interest or skill, such as: writer, director, camera operator, editor, sound/music, vocal talent, etc.

9. "Grabber" Activity to Generate Interest

Students were shown two movie trailers of favorite films by the English teacher and book trailers focused on young adult literature by the librarian. Students discussed what features of the trailers made them particularly effective

10. Formative Assessments and Tentative Timeline

Week 1:

- Students met in groups to clarify understanding of the text, identify questions about the book.
- Students were shown examples of movie and book trailers and discussed their effectiveness.
- The role each group member was determined under the direction of the classroom teacher.

Week 2:

- Storyboard was created by the group.
- Formal instruction on filming and editing was presented by the school librarian and tech assistant (independent study student).
- Filming is done at school or at another location
- Formal instruction on copyright issues
- Student research copyright free sounds and music

Week 3

- Editing of sound, music, creation of credits
- Trailers viewed by the class.

11. Summative Assessment/Culminating Product

Each student group completed a two-minute trailer advertising the book they read to a student audience. Classmates viewed the trailers and shared their reactions both positive and negative in guided discussion. The English teacher assessed the finished trailers, using Group Trailer Rubric on the following aspects: storyboard, visuals, sound, music, titles, and credits. Individual group members also wrote a self-evaluation, which was also assessed by the English teacher on the following aspects: individual contributions, credit given to other group members, evaluation of the finished product.

12. Outcomes Supported by Data

All 105 9th graders submitted a book trailer by the end of semester one. In a number of cases, successful completion of the book trailer project made the difference between a student passing or failing English for semester one.

13. Resources/UDL Supports Requested and Budget

Materials and estimated cost:

12 Nikon Coolpix S560 camera/ Sony Cybershot @ approximately \$175 each
 10 memory cards Nikon 4 GB SDHC Pro memory card/4 GB Sony Memory Stick Pro @ approximately \$15-30 each
 Specifics: 10.0 megapixel resolution, 4x optical zoom, 2.7" high resolution monitor, movie mode, editing software.

Two external hard drives for saving and storing videos at approx. \$100 each.

Training/Planning/Subs and estimated cost: None

Field Trip(s) and estimated cost: None

Total funding request: Approximately \$2,000

14. Should this proposal be selected for funding, we agree to participate in:

- **two one-hour planning sessions with the grant committee**
- **two meetings with the Hamtramck teachers to share our project experiences**
- **one one-hour session to share PBL unit/course with PCEP staff**
- **the completion of an end-of-project evaluation form (June 2010)**
- **posting of PBL unit/course on ePark**

Name	Signature	Date
Mary McCarthy		June 16, 2009
Cynthia Burnstein		June 16, 2009

15. What We Learned

We learned that teaching basic video skills to freshmen was much easier than expected; just a few well-crafted lessons on using the camcorders and using the editing software were necessary. We were concerned at first that the project requirements were too simple, but they turned out to be the right fit for freshman students. We were also very pleased with the quality of the conversations we had with the students about copyright issues; the integrity with which the students worked was extraordinary. (Since making their own videos, they have been quite critical of instances in which copyrighted material is used by others!) As teachers always do with such projects, we were reminded how creative our young students can be when given the opportunity. The students and teachers were very proud of the finished products and were pleased to showcase several of them at the MACUL conference in Grand Rapids earlier this year. Finally, far more ELA standards and benchmarks were met by this project than were listed on the original proposal. This is important news for teachers who are struggling to design ELA curriculum that meets all 91 each year, grades 9-12.

16. What Challenges We Faced

Group work is difficult for some students. There were situations in which one or more members of the group were not as responsible as others. In all cases, however, a solution acceptable to all was found. Having roles defined at the start was very helpful, as well as using a simple rubric. We also found that with 100 students, sharing camcorders required a large amount of flexibility and in some cases, the project took longer than the three weeks allotted due to students having to wait for camcorders. Ultimately, this was not a serious problem.