

CREATING QUESTIONS

Application 3: Creating Questions That Encourage Habits of Mind

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This group project, which is designed for my seventh grade Digital Media classroom, is also intended to be a collaborative project with the seventh grade Language Arts and Diversity classrooms. For the project, students will be creating posters for Black History Month that combine the subject of their book reports, their own image, and a quotation from the book that they read in their Language Arts classes.

For the first stage of the project, students will gather all of the raw materials that they need to complete the poster. First, each group will take a digital self-portrait in front of a green screen and import this photo into the computer. Second, each group will find a relevant background image for the post in a royalty-free image library (a list of available resources will be provided). Third, each group will find a suitable quotation from their chosen Black History Month book.

The students will then combine all of the raw materials using Adobe Photoshop and Microsoft PowerPoint, creating a poster that features their group in front of a relevant background with a quotation in an appropriate location. Once the poster is complete, the group will then have the opportunity to cross-reference their product with a rubric and example poster that contains all of the required elements and make any necessary changes before turning in their final product.

This project draws on students' past knowledge and experience in several ways. First, it requires students to remember how to use digital photography equipment and software. They must also recall how to search for images in an online database and remember specific operations in Photoshop and PowerPoint that allow them to complete the project effectively. Finally, students need to remember content from their Language

Arts and Diversity classrooms so they can find a relevant background image and a meaningful quotation.

This project also involves the use of several senses. To create an aesthetically appropriate poster, the students must have a keen visual sense and utilize spatial organization skills. Additionally, the students must use some specific kinesthetic skills to incorporate a digital camera for the self-portrait. Finally, the collaborative process involved in deciding which raw materials will be used will also require listening and discussion skills.

Moreover, this project requires students to check their work for accuracy during the final cross-referencing step. This step has been placed last to allow for maximum creativity and freedom. It also ensures that each group has used specific standards-based skills and objectives while creating this project.

Overall, I believe that this project is designed to elicit creativity and important habits of mind from students. As Costa asserts, “habits of mind make the most sense when they are integrated as a part of the entire working process of a classroom” (2000). In this project, the specific collaborative process requires several intelligences and learning styles, and the relevance to other school curricula helps students generalize the knowledge in an appropriate and relevant forum. Ultimately, the students' learning is enhanced by a flexible, thorough, and interesting project.

References:

Costa, A. and Kallick, B. (2000). *Activating and Engaging Habits of Mind*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.