



How to use...

Genius Hour

In your classroom

By Ask a Tech Teacher

How to use...

Genius Hour

In your classroom

By Ask a Tech Teacher

2014

Visit the companion website at <http://askatechteacher.com>© for more resources to teach K-12 technology

To receive free technology tips and websites, [click here](#)

ALL MATERIAL IN THIS EBOOK IS PROTECTED BY THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAWS OF THE USA.

No part of this work can be reproduced or used in any form or by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping, Web distribution or information storage and retrieval systems—without the prior written permission of the publisher

For permission to use material from this text or product, contact us by email at:

info@structuredlearning.net

structuredlearning.net

Printed in the United States of America by Structured Learning LLC

© 2008 Structured Learning LLC. All Rights Reserved

Genius Hour

Vocabulary	Problem Solving	Materials	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% • Benchmark • Collaboration • Extrinsic • Genius • Genius Hour • Globalization • Haiku Deck • Innovation • Inquiry • Intrinsic • Motivation • Passion • Pitch • Prezi • Temporal • Videographer • Voki 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I don't have a passion (You have interests...they lead to passion)</i> • <i>What are the best places to research online? (Start by asking a question, then use top resources with .org, .edu)</i> • <i>The teacher isn't around and I need help (ask for peer support)</i> • <i>I just want you to give me a handout (Sorry, we are learning through experience!)</i> • <i>Why are we doing this? (This is the type of learning you will do the rest of your life)</i> • <i>I can't find information on my passion (use search strategies, library, interviews, friends)</i> • <i>I can't finish in the time allotted (plan your work so you can)</i> 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backchannel device • Library, Media center, digital research device • Grit rubric • Six strategies to find your passion handout • Genius Hour expectations handout • Videos for motivation
<p>Time Required 300-400 minutes</p>	<p>NETS-S Standards 1a-b, 2a-b, d, 3a-d, 4a-b, 5a, 6b</p>		

Essential Question

What would I choose if I could learn anything?

Overview

Summary

Students take 20% of class time over a period of weeks to pursue a passion. They have benchmarks to achieve and checkpoints to provide and ways to measure evidence of success.

Big Idea

Students dig deeply into a topic that interests them, and create a product or presentation that displays their passion.

Teacher Prep

- Be prepared with an intro video to get students thinking about their passions (like Daniel Pink's [Science of Motivation](http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation.html) – http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation.html). See list at <http://geniushour.wikispaces.com/Student+Resources>.
- Find specific time to incorporate Genius Hour into your curriculum. For example, connect it with Common Core's focus on reading non-fiction texts and research/analysis activities. Students can spend time reading, taking notes, sharing, and then creating.
- Have helpful links on class internet start page for students who may be stuck.

- Use <http://geniushour.wikispaces.com/> site to gather resources for presentations and grading. Have these links ready for students and parents.
- If you want more depth in the education research behind Genius Hour and passion based learning, check out this article: <http://ajjuliani.com/the-research-behind-20-time/>
- This lesson plan can be done in the classroom or tech lab. Consider co-teaching.
- Something happen you weren't prepared for? No worries. Common Core is about critical thinking and problem solving. Show students how you fix the emergency without a meltdown and with a positive attitude.

Steps

Required skill level: basic understanding of internet research, presentation tools, and optional video recording devices.

Before beginning, put backchannel device onto Smartscreen ([Today's Meet](#), [Socrative](#), [Padlet](#), class Twitter account, GAFE form) to track student comments throughout class. Show students how to access it on their devices. As you teach, pay attention to student comments.

Genius Hour Project gives students 20% of in-class (and homework) time to pursue a topic that interests them. It is as loose or structured as you want. In this lesson, we make it fairly detailed. Feel free to adapt guidelines to your unique student group.

Genius Hour is flexible from a teacher standpoint. Depending on your schedule, have students work on projects multiple times, or just once, per week.

Tie into various classes—Math, Science, LA, or Social Studies. Consider co-teaching with these professionals with goals adapted to their needs. It is also a good fit for classes such as “Technology”, “Digital Media”, and that type.

Even if you're not grading based on rubric at end of Lesson, review guidelines as a method of explaining the intrinsic problem-solving and creative-thinking expected from this project.

Scaffold class time to specific benchmarks. Remind students of time constraints: Each benchmark uses only 20% of time (Benchmark 3 and 6—the two presentations—are not included in total). Students must budget labor, productivity, and time to fit temporal schedule:

- *Benchmark 1: Find your passion – 20% of one class*
- *Benchmark 2: Come up with a project – 20% of one class*
- *Benchmark 3: Project Pitch day to class –will likely take entire class*
- *Benchmark 4: Workday on Projects (video record your work) – 20% of ??? classes*
- *Benchmark 5: Share project with a peer. What is needed? – 20% of one class*
- *Benchmark 6: Class presentations—This will likely take entire class—or more*

Common Core

CCSS.Math.Practice.MP1,3,5,6

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1-3

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.1-9,10

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.2,4,6

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.W.7-8

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1-6

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.6.4,6

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.6 CCSS.ELA-

Literacy.RST.6-8.1,3,7-9

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7-10

- *Benchmark 7: Assessment, evidence of learning, summative—20% of one class*

____ Part of this project’s challenge is working within time constraints. Yes, it would be nice to have endless time to follow a dream, but that rarely happens in life or education. In fact, some colleges build that into their success matrix, throwing more material at the student than s/he can reasonably handle to see how they thrive with stress.

____ Share strategies to assist students in organizing work, thinking, and prioritizing research so they finish in allotted time.

____ *Figure 64* can be completed on Google Docs and shared with stakeholders:

Genius Hour Project

Figure 1

Action Steps	<u>How?</u>	<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Resources</u> 1. <i>Available</i> 2. <i>Needed</i>	<u>Barriers</u> 1. <i>What?</i> 2. <i>Overcome?</i>	<u>Communication Plan</u>
Step 1:					
Step 2:					
Step 3:					
Step 4:					
Step 5:					
Step 6:					
Step 7:					
Step 8:					
Step 9:					
Step 10:					
Step 11:					
Step 12:					

____ As students work, fill out table with evidence of progress and submit with final assessment.

____ Treat each child uniquely during this project. Their projects, necessary scaffolding, and expectations will vary. The Lesson goal is to get them excited about learning again. In that respect, the Genius Hour can be a transformative tool.

____ Focus on student growth and engagement instead of the final project.

____ Allow students to work in pairs, but only creating product. The rest is done individually.

____ You can even decide to “not grade” the final product, and instead focus on the learning path.

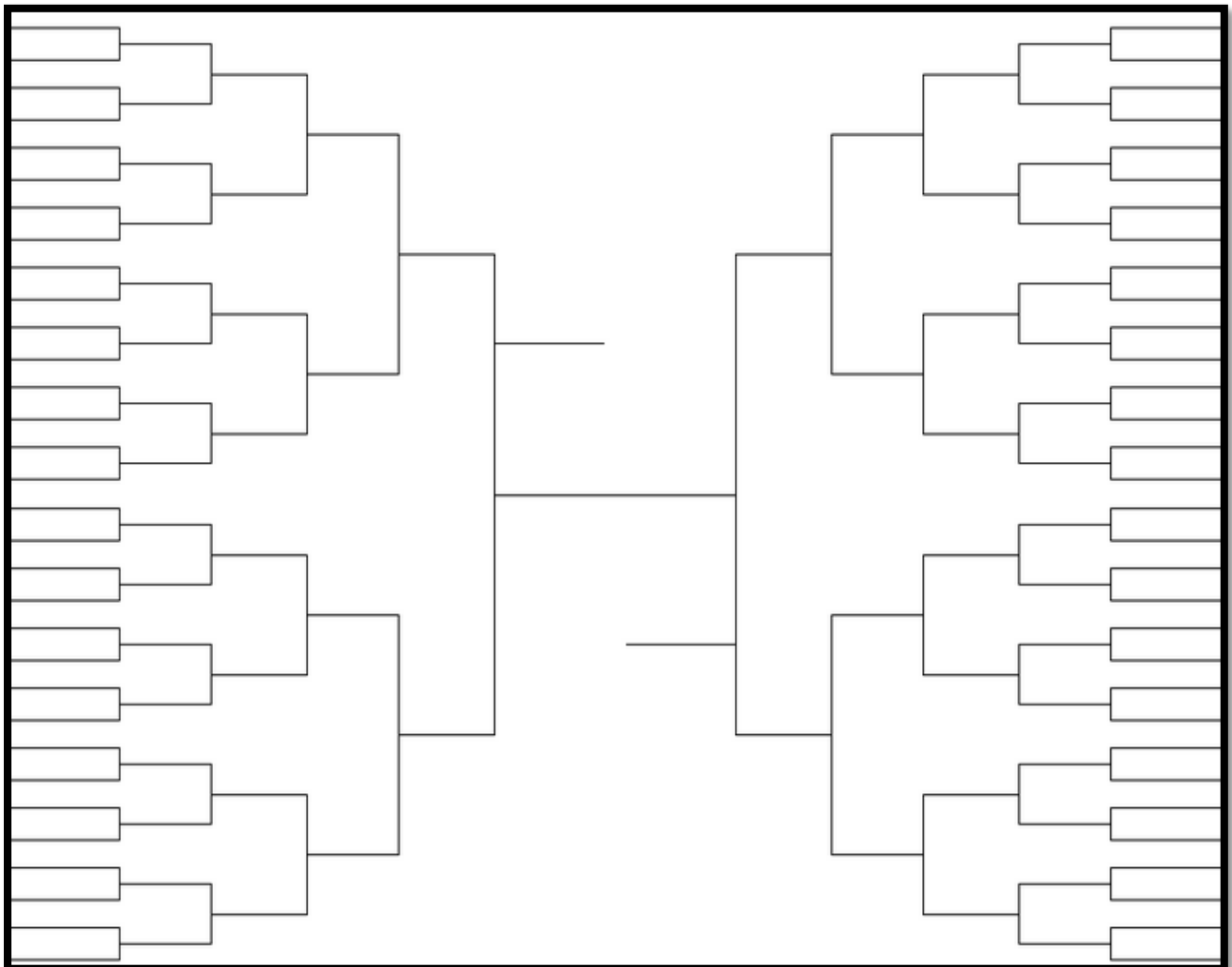
- _____ In general terms, discuss what motivates students—what would they learn if they could pick anything.
- _____ Done with class discussion? Now students complete the following steps—where relevant, in a collaborative writing tool (like Google Docs). We want to share from the beginning:

- **Step 1:** What are your interests? What topics, activities, skills would student like to learn more about.

If students have trouble finding passions 1) watch previous student projects at <http://theglobalgeniushourproject.wikispaces.com/> or 2) read “Six simple strategies to find their passion”: <http://ajjuliani.com/6-simple-strategies-to-help-find-your-passion/>.

As students work, list 64 interests they come up with on the bracket (*Figure 65*). Individually or with a partner, whittle it down to the one they will pursue during Genius Time (inset below used with permission of AJ Juliani’s “[6 Simple Strategies to Help Find Your Passion](#)”):

Figure 2



As student works, remember: The #1 topic will be something that fascinates student AND can be finished in 20% of class time for the balance of the grading period. Do the math with students—how many minutes/hours is 20% of ten hours? Or Fifteen hours (How many classes are in your grading cycle?)

- **Step 2:** Made a choice? Write a paragraph of at least five lines on why topic is important to learn and what informed student decision:

“I would like to learn how to create an app for the iPad because...”

“I would like to study World War II because...”

- **Step 3:** Student reviews what they already know about topic. Write another paragraph of at least five sentences to explain their background knowledge on topic.

“I have been studying programming in summer school and learned...”

“My Grandpa was in the Marines in WWII and told me...”

- **Step 4:** Read paragraphs from Steps 2 & 3 to a partner. Feel free to elaborate beyond what is written. Ask each other questions to help understand topic completely, then write about this conversation:

“My partner wants to enter a science competition. We discussed...”

Based on this discussion, create a list of five research questions to guide inquiry. Keep in mind time constraints; students have only 20% of class time to complete this work:

“Here are my five research questions:

1. *What are some successful apps*
- 2.

- **Step 5:** Each student prepares a quick presentation for Project Pitch Day where student ‘sells’ class on their passion and the importance of spending 20% of their time on topic. Student can use [Prezi](#), [HaikuDeck](#), [Yoki](#), or another tool to share thoughts on:

- *What I am doing and why*
- *What will make my project successful*

Genius Hour Steps:

1. *Consider your passion*
2. *Choose one*
3. *What do you already know?*
4. *Review with a partner*
5. *What will you research?*
6. *‘Sell’ class and teacher on choice*
7. *What are your sources?*
8. *Make a plan of action*
9. *How do you know it’ll work?*
10. *Research*
11. *Continual self-assessment*
12. *Evaluate with partner*
13. *Present to group*
14. *Share summative evidence of success*

While working: Complete
Genius Hour Table
Figure 64

- *How I plan to accomplish my goals*
- *How I plan to meet the time limitations*
- **Step 6:** With research questions established, develop a list of sources where student can find answers. List specific websites, books, magazines, people they know, etc.:

“Here’s where I can find answers:

1. *My partner has a friend whose Dad creates apps. Interview him.*
- 2.

- **Step 7:** Congratulations! Project is fleshed out! Now make a plan! First: What is most important to learn? Contact someone? Go to library? Internet research? List steps:

“Here are steps to complete my App:

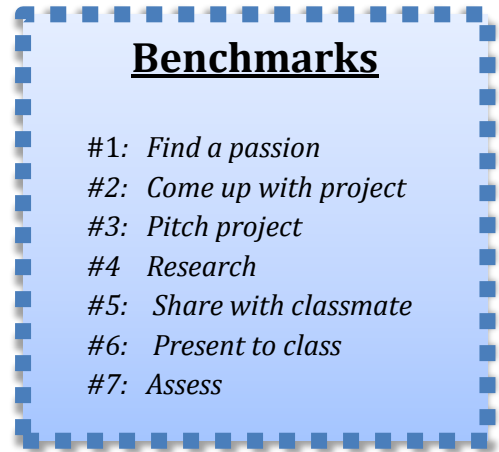
1. *Research...*
- 2.

While researching, remember (discuss these ideas if necessary):

- *Cite specific evidence to support analysis.*
- *Importance of visually representing information.*
- *Distinguish among facts, judgment based on research, and speculation.*
- *Compare and contrast information from experiments, simulations, video, or multimedia sources with that gained from reading a text.*
- *Read closely to determine what text says and make logical inferences from it; cite evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions.*
- *Summarize key details.*
- *Analyze how and why.*
- *Assess how point of view or purpose shapes content.*
- *Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media.*
- *Delineate and evaluate claims as well as relevance and sufficiency of evidence.*
- *Analyze how two or more texts address topic.*
- *Time is limited. Shape research to fit constraints.*

- **Step 8:** How will student know they’ve reached their goal? [John Hattie’s](#) education research shows self-assessment as the most powerful way to increase student understanding of a topic. This can be accomplished by (pick which apply to your group):

- *Reflections once a week and comments on classmates’ posts*
- *Tweets on class Twitter stream*



- *Class form on Google Apps that students complete weekly*
 - *Impromptu videocasts of student work, including screencasts. This can include student interview with each other—or your interview with students.*
 - *Video journal of progress updates, shared on YouTube (if you have school account), Google Apps, other*
 - *Another student-generated self-assessment method*
- **Step 9:** Collect relevant information from multiple print and digital sources by using preferred note-taking method—Google Docs, Evernote, OneNote, other (see Lesson on *Note-taking*). Be sure to assess credibility and accuracy of each source—see Lessons on *Digital Rights and Responsibilities* and *Internet Search*—while avoiding plagiarism by giving credit as needed. Integrate information into a bigger picture. Include (discuss these ideas if necessary):

- *arguments to support student claims.*
- *informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately.*
- *clear and coherent writing in which development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.*
- *evidence that student understands subject.*
- *evidence that supports analysis, reflection, and research.*

With some guidance and support from peers and adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others, demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of two pages in a single setting.

—Common Core

Additionally (discuss relevance of these points too if necessary):

- *Read closely to determine what text says and make logical inferences from it*
 - *Cite textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions.*
 - *Determine central ideas or themes and analyze key details and ideas.*
 - *Analyze how and why ideas develop and interact.*
- **Step 10:** When done researching, share project with a classmate 1) in person, 2) via Google Hangout. Do they understand? Do they feel the excitement? Share with teacher. Based on feedback, plan/revise/edit/rewrite. Add details or new approach if called for.
- **Step 11:** In a class presentation, share passion. Student has flexibility on approach they use (slideshow, Animoto, screencast, other), but whatever it is must communicate their excitement and show evidence of what they've learned. It shouldn't be same method used in pitch. Students will use academic and domain-specific vocabulary in their presentations, making sure that meaning is clarified by context and other clues.

Where necessary, student cites specific sources and provide evidence to support analysis.

- **Step 12:** Evaluate how student knows s/he achieved desired results? Use as Evidence:
 - *Completed Genius Hour Project table (Figure 64)*
 - *'Sales' Pitch to classmates*
 - *Progress reports via blogs, etc.*
 - *Final class presentation*
 - *Anecdotal observation of student work*

Assessment

1. *Pitch*
2. *Genius Hour table*
3. *Ongoing blog updates*
4. *Final presentation*
5. *Anecdotal observation*

- _____ Throughout class, check for understanding.
- _____ Remind students to transfer knowledge to class or home.
- _____ Expect students to solve problems independently. Problems at beginning of lesson are most common students face during lesson.
- _____ Expect students to make decisions that follow class rules.
- _____ Tuck chairs under desk, headphones over tower; leave station as it was.

Extension:

- *Join #geniushour community through Wikispace, Global Project Wikispace, or [Choose2Matter](http://choose2matter.org)—<http://choose2matter.org>— platform (created by Angela Maiers).*
- *Have students share project with other classrooms doing Genius Hour. Find them online with Twitter (use hashtag) or on Google+ (check out 20% time community).*
- *Invite parents to watch presentations. Or take best presentations to next school board meeting!*
- *As a class, create a page on [Global Genius Hour](https://theglobalgeniushourproject.wikispaces.com/) project and share with world (<https://theglobalgeniushourproject.wikispaces.com/>).*
- *Have students work towards creating a product at the end of the project, not just presenting on “what they learned”. An example would be instead of learning chords on a guitar, play a song you learned. The end goal should be something they produce.*
- *Have student create online assessments at beginning and end of project with Google Forms to gauge interest in subject.*
- *Have student create his/her own rubrics and forms for self-assessment.*
- *Assign a student to enter dates into class calendar for Genius Hour due date.*

More Information:

- *Joy Kirr’s Genius Hour resources: <http://www.livebinders.com/play/play/829279>*
- *[Cybraryman Genius Hour](http://cybraryman.com/geniushour.html)— <http://cybraryman.com/geniushour.html>*
- *[GeniusHour](http://geniushour.ca/) collaborative blog: <http://geniushour.ca/>*
- *See full list of assessment items at end of unit.*
- *Lesson questions? Go to [Ask a Tech Teacher](#).*

Lesson adapted from a class taught by [A.J. Juliani](#)

***This lesson from the 6th grade curriculum text (5th ed.)

Assessment

- ___ Did student use backchannel device when necessary?
- ___ Did students use domain-specific words during presentation? No umms, hand motions. Did they share knowledge in succinct, pithy sentences? Did s/he use multimedia devices when they helped convey information?
- ___ Did s/he reflect needs of audience, task, and purpose? Answer questions following agreed-upon rules for speaking?
- ___ Did student ask appropriate questions (when acting as audience)?
- ___ Was student engaged in the learning, making a best effort?
- ___ Was student able to respond to teacher suggestions positively?
- ___ Was student able to take/make helpful suggestions from/to peers?
- ___ Did student safely and effectively use the internet (where required)?
- ___ Did student successfully decode unknown words and phrases?
- ___ Did student submit 'new vocabulary' list to teacher?
- ___ Did student understand the juxtaposition of 'technology' and 'education'?
- ___ Did student use correct keyboarding skills while typing? Note-taking skills?
- ___ Did student plan, revise, edit rewrite?
- ___ Do students collect work to digital portfolio—wiki, digital locker, DropBox, via embeds or screen shots?
- ___ Did student transfer knowledge from other lessons?
- ___ Did student follow directions? Complete project?
- ___ Did student save/export to digital portfolio? Take screenshot if required? Reflect on project via blog or another method?
- ___ Did student understand that digital tool used was an alternative to paper-and-pencil used other times?
- ___ Was student engaged in learning, making a best effort?
- ___ Did student transfer learning to life?
- ___ Was student a risk-taker, curious about new technology?
- ___ Could student solve age-appropriate tech problems when needed?
- ___ While investigating, did student enjoy the experience?

Genius Hour Rubric

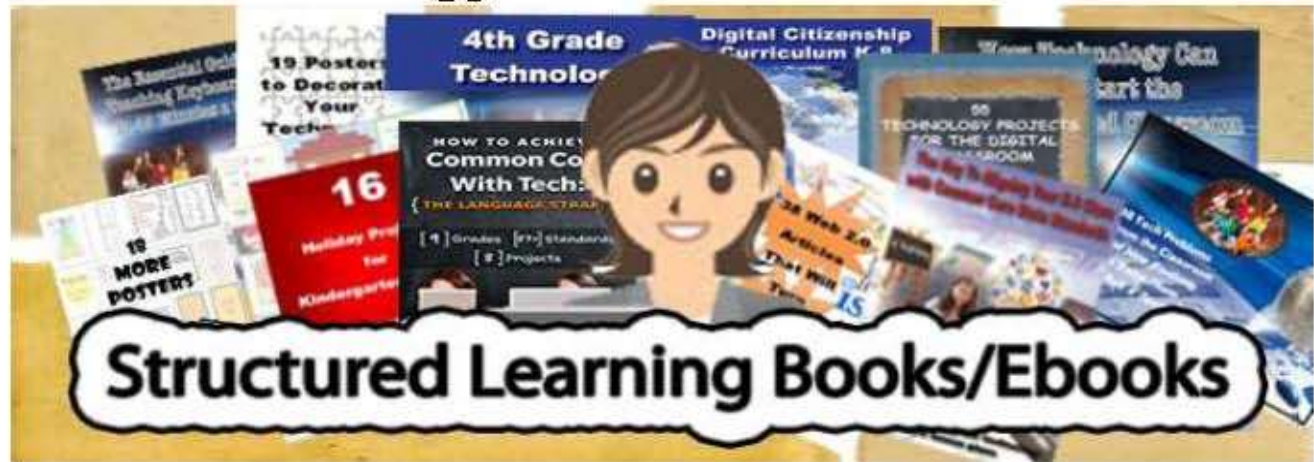
We started Genius Hour with the hopes of giving each of you the opportunity to explore your true passions in life. I hope your final presentations show an intrinsic motivation to better yourself and become a life-long learner.

	20	19-16	15-13	12-10	9-0
Creativity	<i>Demonstrates a high level of curiosity and offers a unique perspective on topic. Final product is distinct from other projects</i>	<i>Demonstrates a solid level of curiosity and offers a unique perspective on the topic. Final product is distinct from other projects.</i>	<i>Demonstrates some curiosity and offers a different perspective on topic. Final product is similar to other projects.</i>	<i>Demonstrates marginal curiosity and offers a similar perspective on topic. Final product is similar to other projects.</i>	
Organization	<i>Created a well-developed action plan, kept deadlines throughout process. Independently able to figure out what needed to be done and in what order.</i>	<i>Created a well-developed action plan, finished deadlines throughout process. Able to figure out what needed to be done and in what order with some help.</i>	<i>Created action plan and completed deadlines by presentation. Able to figure out what needed to be done and in what order with a lot of help.</i>	<i>Had help creating action plan and rushed to meet deadlines. Figured out what needed to be done and in what order with a lot of help.</i>	
Productivity	<i>Showed a very strong and efficient use of time and resources</i>	<i>Showed efficient use of time and resources</i>	<i>Not always prepared and wasted time.</i>	<i>Rarely prepared and consistently wasted time.</i>	
Grit/Hustle	<i>Demonstrated ability to overcome obstacles and distractions. Never let setbacks get in way of accomplishing goals.</i>	<i>Demonstrated ability to overcome most obstacles and distractions. Rarely let setbacks get in way of accomplishing goals.</i>	<i>Demonstrated ability to overcome some obstacles and distractions. Sometimes let setbacks get in way of accomplishing goals.</i>	<i>Had difficulty overcoming most obstacles and distractions. Allowed setbacks to get in way of accomplishing goals.</i>	
Presentation	<i>Showed strong passion and sense of purpose. Conveyed both successes and failures to entire class including what s/he learned.</i>	<i>Showed passion and sense of purpose. Conveyed both successes and failures to class.</i>	<i>Showed sense of purpose. Conveyed both successes and failure to class.</i>	<i>Purpose was unclear. Failed to convey successes and failure to class.</i>	

Other Singles from Structured Learning

- Bridge Building
- Debate
- Gamification
- Google Apps
- Khan Academy
- Service Learning
- Write an Ebook

SL Technology Books for Your Classroom



Which book	Price (print/digital/ Combo)	How Many
<i>K-8th Tech Textbook (each)</i>	<i>\$29.99-32.99/23.99-26.99/48.58-53.99+p&h</i>	
<i>K-6 Combo (all 7 textbooks)</i>	<i>\$190.74/\$153.84/\$344.57 + p&h</i>	
<i>K-8 Combo (all 7 textbooks)</i>	<i>\$246.52/\$200.62/\$447.14+ p&h</i>	
<i>35 More Projects for K-6</i>	<i>\$31.99/25.99/52.18 + p&h</i>	
<i>55 Tech Projects—Vol I,II, Combo</i>	<i>\$32.99 /\$59.98—digital only (free shipping)</i>	
<i>K-8 Keyboard Curriculum</i>	<i>\$29.95/25.95/50.91 + p&h</i>	
<i>K-8 Digital Citizenship Curriculum</i>	<i>\$29.95/25.99/50.98 + p&h</i>	
<i>Common Core—Math, Lang., Read</i>	<i>\$26.99 ea/72.87 for 3—digi only (free ship'g)</i>	
<i>K-5 Common Core Projects</i>	<i>\$29.95/23.99/48.55 + p&h</i>	
<i>16 Holiday Projects</i>	<i>\$14.99 (digital only) + p&h</i>	
<i>19 Posters for the Tech Lab</i>	<i>\$6.99 (digital only)</i>	
<i>18 More Posters for the Tech Lab</i>	<i>\$12.99 (digital only)</i>	
<i>98 Tech Tips From Classroom</i>	<i>\$9.99 (digital only) + p&h</i>	
<i>760+ Tech Ed Websites</i>	<i>\$14.99 (digital only) + p&h</i>	
<i>Tech Ed Scope and Sequences</i>	<i>\$14.99 (digital only) + p&h</i>	
<i>New Teacher Survival Kit (K-5)</i>	<i>\$338.21/\$287.85/\$567.08+ p&h</i>	
<i>New Teacher Survival Kit (K-6)</i>	<i>\$370.20/\$314.84/\$620.16 + p&h</i>	
<i>New Teacher Survival Kit (6-8)</i>	<i>\$280.83/\$261.83/\$415.74 + p&h</i>	
<i>Bundles of lesson plans</i>	<i>\$7.99 and up—digital only (free shipping)</i>	
<i>Mentoring (1 hr. at a time)</i>	<i>\$50/hr</i>	
<i>Year-long tech curriculum help</i>	<i>\$100 per year (online)</i>	
<i>Consulting/seminars/webinars</i>	<i>Call or email for prices</i>	
	Total	

Free sample? Visit Structured Learning LLC website

Fill out this form (prices subject to change)

Email Zeke.rowe@structuredlearning.net

Pay via Paypal, Credit Card, Amazon, TPT, pre-approved school district PO



Structured Learning
Premiere Provider of Technology Teaching Books to the
Education Community