

CREATING SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL PROJECTS

In this week's article, James Maddison, the head teacher of Hilltop Secondary School, gives us some useful tips on how to create a successful school project.

In my experience, the students that plan their projects carefully get the best results. It's a good idea to talk about the key stages of your project with the other people in your team. In my opinion, there are four key stages in a project:

A Deciding on the project

Imagine your teacher wants you to do a project on the UK. Clearly, your project can't provide information about every aspect of the UK. So, the first thing for your team to do is to choose which topic you want to focus on. Let's say that your team decides to focus on geography. You can then brainstorm ideas to help you decide which aspects of British geography you want to include, for example, the mountains and the rivers and the major towns and cities.

B Planning your project

It's important to plan your work on the project together. It's a good idea for each member of the team to have a different role. Perhaps the most creative person in your team can design the slides? You need to give each person a specific task and agree on a deadline for completing the research and producing the information (factfiles, maps, tables, graphs, video, etc.) for the presentation.

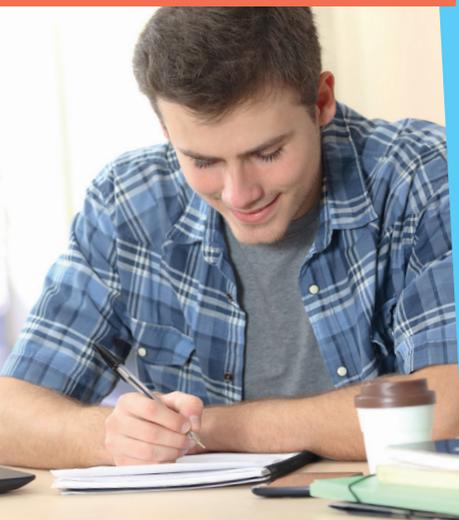
C Researching the information

You can talk together about the best ways of finding the information you need for your project. You can use the library and, of course, there's lots of information on the Internet. Perhaps the people in your team can suggest good websites to visit?

D Presenting the project

The final stage is to decide in detail what you want to include in the project and how to present this information to your class. Together, you can look at all the information from your research and choose the most important elements. It is a good idea to practise the presentation in your group before you present it to the class.

Working on a school project with your classmates teaches you a lot about teamwork. By following these suggestions you can create successful school projects and develop the teamworking skills everyone needs when they enter the world of work.



1 In pairs, discuss the questions.

- How often do you do projects at school? Which projects are you working on at the moment?
- Do you like working on a project on your own or with a team? Say why.

2 Read the article. Then in pairs say which stage A-D you find the most difficult. Say why.

3 Read the article again and complete the chart with words from the text.

A Deciding on the project

- Read the instructions.
- ¹ _____ the topic.
- ² _____ ideas.
- Agree the content of the project.

B Planning your project

- Decide each person's ³ _____ and tasks.
- Agree on a ⁴ _____.

C Researching the information

- Consult books and the ⁵ _____.

D Presenting the project

- Decide ⁶ _____ to present the information.
- ⁷ _____ your presentation before you present it to the class.

4 In pairs, read these sentences and decide which stage of a project (A-D) in Exercise 3 they belong to.

- 'OK, so Jack's job is to create the slides and Sarah's job is to find some good photos of British castles.'
- 'In this diagram you can see the organisation of the British parliament.'
- 'Yesterday I found a fantastic website that gives a lot of information about the history of cricket.'
- 'Space? Let's see, we could include the International Space Station or the Apollo missions to the Moon.'
- 'Do we agree that all the information needs to be ready by next Monday?'
- 'Why don't we make some posters and a map? We can put them on the walls of our classroom.'

5 What can go wrong when you work on a project in a team? What problems can you face? Discuss in pairs.

6  **3.6 Listen to Anna and David as they tell Chloe about a presentation they did at school. Then answer the questions.**

- What was the presentation about?
- How many people were in the team?
- Which team members did all the work?
- What was the problem with Ben?
- What was the problem with Abby?
- What problem did they have during the presentation?
- How did they solve the problem?

7  **3.6 Read the advice for working in a team on school projects. Did Anna and David follow all the advice? What about Abby? Listen again to check.**

LIFE SKILLS | How to work in a team on school projects

- Before you start, discuss the project with the other people in your team.
- Each team member has different skills, so give each person in the team a different role.
- Listen to other people's ideas and opinions.
- Use brainstorming to help you to choose the best ideas.
- Explain things to the other people in your team if they don't understand.

8 In groups of four, discuss your ideas for the project 'A brief guide to an English-speaking country'. Decide on a country, the topics and plan the work for your team. Use the tips from the list below.

- Choose one of these countries for your project:
Australia Canada New Zealand the USA
- Choose one of these topics:
culture films food geography sport
- Brainstorm ideas to decide which aspects of the topic you want to include.
- Agree what to include in the project.
- Agree each person's role.
- Agree a deadline for researching and preparing the information.

9 Do the task below.

LIFE SKILLS | Project

A brief guide to an English-speaking country:

- Prepare your part of the project – research the topic, use factfiles, tables, graphs, maps, etc.
- Create the final presentation with your team.
- Present your team's project to the class.
- Discuss with the class how well you worked as a team, describe any problems you had and say how you solved them.