

The PASSION PROJECT



A project driven by student
passions and interests

Designed for remote, home or on-line
learning environments

Welcome!

The Passion Project exists in many forms, but this specific version was born out of a desire to support teachers to use Project-Based Learning in the face of potential school closures due to the outbreak of COVID-19 (coronavirus). Home learning and online learning for most students is an unfamiliar concept. One viable option is to take traditional learning and transfer it to an online platform. Our fear is students who struggle to be engaged in a normal classroom might find even less motivation to engage in the same lessons in a home environment...

How do we empower students to take ownership of their learning from home?

The Passion Project offers an alternative to transferring a traditional classroom to an online platform. By putting passions at the center of learning, students can engage with the topics and information that is exciting to them. The things they are interested in. The Passion Project also takes students through a general Project-Based Learning process so they are engaging in important skills like time management, project planning, collaboration and self-reliance.

By prioritizing student choice, we can continue to engage students in important learning whether they are in the classroom, at home or in another environment.

There are many versions of the Passion Project that exist for teachers to use. This version has been developed by [Imagine If](#) with inspiration from the following educators:

- Evelyn McCulloch ([Park Maitland School](#), Director of Teaching and Learning)
- Kyle Wagner ([Transform Educational Consulting](#), Founder)

You are welcome to use, change and share this version of Passion Project so it fits your students and your needs.

In this collection you will find:

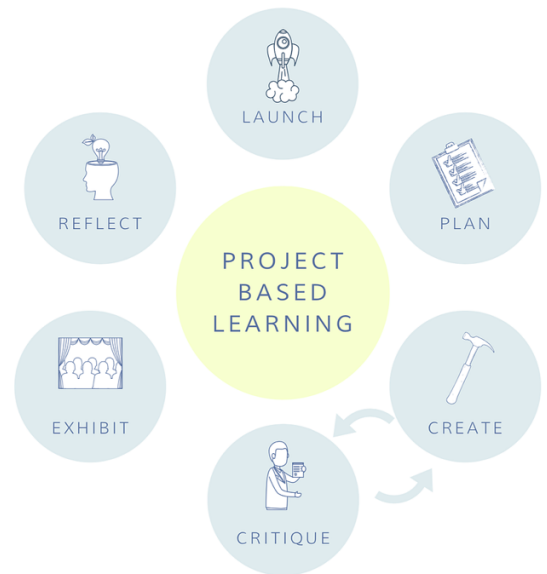
- Teacher Guide
- Student Toolbox
- Sample Parent Letter

If you have any questions, please reach out! Or visit www.imagineif.dk for more resources and ideas.

Together with passion, projects and purpose,
Loni Bergqvist
Founder, *Imagine If*

Passion Project Teacher Guide

This version of the Passion Project is yours to use, change and share. The Student Toolbox takes students through a general Project-Based Learning process of: Launch, Plan, Create, Critique, Exhibit and Reflect. Even if students are not familiar with this process or these terms, they can still do a Passion Project, as this process is naturally embedded in most learning experiences.



Some things to consider:

Time

The Student Toolbox walks students through the process of doing a Passion Project over four weeks, but this time can be shortened or lengthened without impacting the process or the project.

Parents

In the case of schools being closed, it is important to inform parents about what the Passion Project is and how they can support their child without taking over or doing it themselves 😊. We recommend sending home a Parent Letter that outlines the purpose of the Passion Project, the timeline/deadlines and some useful pieces of advice about how they can help. See "Sample Parent Letter" for some ideas.

Process

There are many processes that can be substituted in the Passion Project based on what students are already familiar with.

Increasing Academic Rigor

The goal of the passion project is to give students maximum choice and ownership over their learning, so be careful not to disrupt this by adding unnecessary academic requirements. Even if a topic doesn't seem that "academic" it doesn't mean students can't gain meaningful learning from working with it!

The rigor of the Passion Project can be increased by:

- Giving students a subject and having them choose a topic within it
- Having students align their topics/BIG Questions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Online Learning Platform

The Passion Project is ideal for remote/online learning because it is flexible, student-driven and owned by students. The use of an Online Learning Platform (Microsoft TEAMS, Google Classroom, Flipgrid, MeeBook, etc.) can facilitate student collaboration, teacher Check-In's and increase accountability to be sure all students are on track. If an Online Learning Platform is not an option to use with the Passion Project, Check-In's can still be done via phone, email or social media.

Critical Friends

This version of the Passion Project has students collaborating with a Critical Friend 2-3 times during the project. The Critical Friend is someone who can give/receive feedback on the project, and also support the student if they have challenges. Critical Friends should be paired before the project begins so their contact information can be exchanged.

Adapting For Younger Students

This version of the Passion Project is made for middle to high school students who can read, write and reasonably follow directions on their own. Adaptions can be made for younger students or students who do not fit these descriptions by offering a simplified version of each step. It is also possible to print the Student Toolbox so students can hand-write their work rather than documenting electronically. Instead of online research, students can check-out books relating to their topics or be provided with a list of websites or videos to help them in the research process. If the Passion Project is being done at home, family members can give feedback to the student in place of the teacher or Critical Friend. In the CRITIQUE phase, simply replace the word "teacher" with family member so the feedback can still be documented.

Launch Phase

It might be helpful to complete the Launch Phase as a class before any kind of remote or online learning takes place. Getting kids excited about the Passion Project is **key** for sustaining their interest over a longer period of time, especially if it is not possible for students to meet in person.

Teacher Check-In's

It is important that students have access to teacher support and feedback throughout this process, though how often and in what way this happens is flexible. It can range from a video call, online chat or phone call. It is also helpful to have a purpose for the Check-In so feedback and support is targeted and specific... avoiding the "unhelpful" experience for students. This can be a focus you have with all students or based on the needs of the individual.

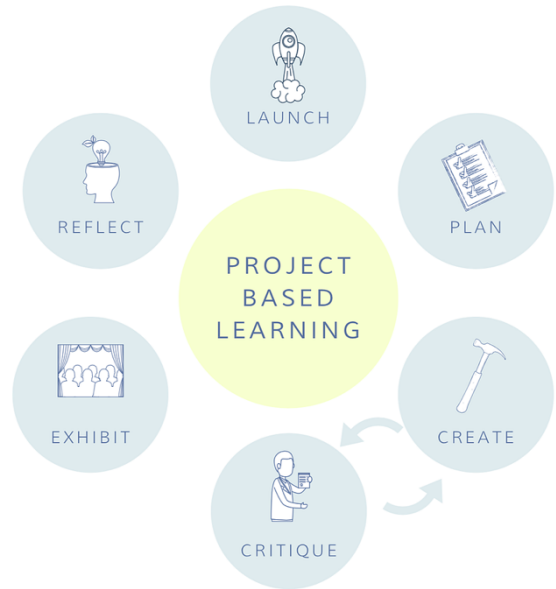
Passion Project Student Toolbox

Name _____

Project Overview

Welcome to Passion Project! In this project, you are going to explore something that you're interested in or curious about! You will have (number of weeks) to complete this project.

Throughout this process, you will plan your time, research, create a product, get feedback and present your final work to (audience) at the end. We will reflect together as a class about what you learned in this process when it is finished.



Calendar and Deadlines*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	List of possible topics and questions posted on (online learning platform) for feedback	Give feedback to classmates on their ideas Choose topic and question	Research and PLAN	Research and PLAN
Detailed plan for project posted on (online learning platform) for feedback from teacher	Check-In with your Critical Friend online about your project.	Individual Check-In's with teacher via (online learning platform)		Check-In with your Critical Friend online about your project.
	Post an update to the class on (online learning platform) about what you're working on (include pics!)			Check-In with your Critical Friend online about your project.
		Individual Check-In's with teacher via (online learning platform)	Prepare presentation for (audience)	Post Presentation Reflection Questions on (online learning platform)

*This is subject to change

If you need help:

If you find you're stuck or not knowing what to do, you can always get help!
Here are some places to try:

Your Critical Friend:

Name _____
Email _____
Phone _____

Your Teacher:

Name _____
Email _____
Phone _____

You can always ask your family members for help, too! Maybe they have some ideas that no one else has thought of.

Critical Updates

Before you start working each day, be sure you check the **(online learning platform)** for updates and helpful advice about your Passion Projects. There might be changes to the calendar that are important for you to consider.

At the end you will present:

- Complete Toolbox (this document)
- Product
- Any supporting products to help you describe your project (like drafts of your work)

Some helpful advice:

Trust yourself! YOU are directing your own learning in this project, which means you need to decide what to do and what is "good enough" for this work. You may get frustrated along the way, but that's also a part of learning. Learning is messy, sometimes unclear and hard! Follow your plan and reach out to your Critical Friend or Teacher if you feel really stuck. ☺

Ready? Set? GO!



Step 1: Brainstorm Ideas

What are things you're interested in? Passionate about? If you could spend a whole day doing something... what would it be? Make a list of 10 things you would like to consider as a topic for this project.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step 2: Brainstorm Questions

Choose a topic that you would like to use for this project and develop a BIG Question that will help you dig deeper. BIG Questions should be open and not have one specific answer. They can start with...

- What happens when...
- What if...
- How does...

Develop 5 BIG Questions that could be used to drive this project.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



Post these ideas and questions to the **(online learning platform)** by **(date)**.



My topic for this project is _____

My BIG Question for this project is:

Next, you need to plan how you will complete this project by doing some research and coming up with some more ideas!

Research

Find 5 sources online to read about that will give you some background information and ideas about how to answer your BIG Question. You can use more than 5, but at least 5 must be documented in your Toolbox.

Resource #1:

Type: (website, book, blog, ??) _____

URL:

Notes:

Resource #2:

Type: (website, book, blog, ??) _____

URL:

Notes:

Resource #3:

Type: (website, book, blog, ??) _____

URL:

Notes:

Resource #4:

Type: (website, book, blog, ??) _____

URL:

Notes:

Resource #5:

Type: (website, book, blog, ??) _____

URL:

Notes:

Product Ideas

A product could be anything that helps you dig deeper into your topic and BIG Question! Some ideas include: video, 3-D model, presentation, graphic novel, cookbook, essay, poem, documented experiment, song... the possibilities are endless! You should choose something that is realistic to get done in the time for this project, but also something that is really FUN and interesting for you to make!

Remember your audience is (insert audience here), so your product should also be fitting to the purpose of the project.

What products would you have fun making?

What products fit your audience?

I am going to make _____

What materials are needed to make your product? How will you get them?
Write down your ideas here:

What is going to be a successful product for you? How will you know if is "good enough"?

How many drafts do you plan to make of your product?

Time Planning

Using the project calendar, write in your own deadlines for your Passion Project based on the product you have chosen to make and the deadlines for the class.

You should include:

- What you plan to work on each day
- Deadlines for your drafts (depending on how many and how long you think it will take you to do)
- Final product deadline so you are prepared for presenting your work!

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		Individual Check-In's with teacher via (online learning platform)	Prepare presentation for (audience)	Post Presentation Reflection Questions on (online learning platform)



Post your planning section and calendar to (online learning platform) for feedback from your teacher by (date).



It's time to CREATE! Using your plan, start the process of making your product. You might want to consider sketching out some ideas and using the feedback from your teacher and Critical Friend.

Don't forget to document your process! Take photos along the way so you can reflect on the learning that's gone into creating your product.

You need to include at least 5 photos and descriptions showing the process!

Documentation is:

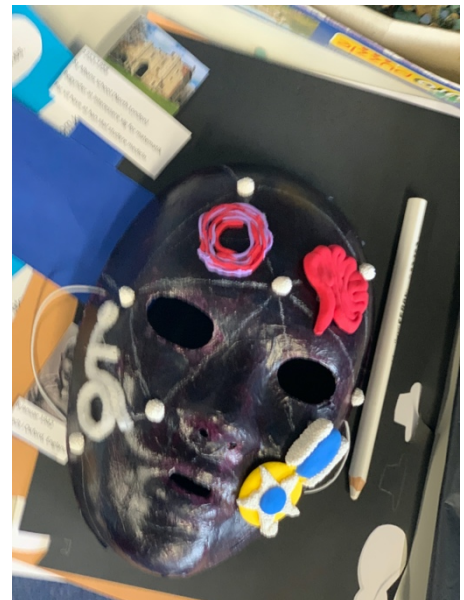
- Photo of your work
- Description of what's happening in the photo
- What you're learning
- What worked/didn't work

Example:

In this photo, I have painted the mask and added some of the elements that describe the person I choose to research.

I am learning how to place different elements onto the mask so it is easy to see and also balanced.

It wasn't easy to make the brain element, I struggled with using the clay and it took 3 days to dry.



Documentation:



You have several Teacher and Critical Friend Check-In's throughout this project. It is necessary to document these Check-In's in the toolbox so you can remember the feedback you're given and the feedback you gave!

Teacher Check-In #1

Date _____

Time _____

Feedback for me:

Teacher Check-In #2

Date _____

Time _____

Feedback for me:

Teacher Check-In #3

Date _____

Time _____

Feedback for me:

Critical Friend Check-In #1

Date _____

Time _____

Feedback for me:

Feedback for them:

Critical Friend Check-In #2

Date _____

Time _____

Feedback for me:

Feedback for them:

Additional Check-In's

Date _____

Time _____

Feedback for me:



How will you present your learning and products to **(audience)**? How will you present both products and process? What is important to share? What did you learn?

Your presentation should last between **(minutes)**.

Presentation Requirements:

- Complete Toolbox (this document)
- Your BIG Question (and the answer you have come up with)
- Product
- Any supporting products to help you describe your project (like drafts of your work)



To help you prepare for your presentation and your final class reflection on your Passion Project, answer the following questions:

1. What did you learn by working on this Passion Project?
2. What was exciting about doing your Passion Project? What did you like?
3. What was hard or frustrating about doing your Passion Project? What didn't you like?
4. If you could do your project over again, what would you do differently?

5. How well did you and your Critical Friend work together? What worked? What didn't work?

6. What advice do you have for someone doing a Passion Project for the first time?



Post your answers to **(online learning platform)** by **(date)**.

Congratulations! You have completed your Passion Project!

In addition to learning about your topic and trying to answer your BIG question, you have also worked with skills like: time planning, collaboration, giving feedback, taking feedback, self-directed learning, discipline and research! Hopefully you've also had FUN! We can't wait to see what you've worked on!

Passion Project Sample Parent Letter

Date

Dear Caretaker,

We will be embarking on a new challenge over the next **(insert number)** weeks of doing a Passion Project. Passion Projects follow a basic structured process but allow students to explore a topic they are passionate and interested in! Our hope is to empower students to take ownership of their learning by having this choice and also to develop in other real-world skills like time management, project planning, collaboration, giving and receiving feedback and self-reliance.

The basic calendar for our Passion Project is:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	List of possible topics and questions posted on (online learning platform) for feedback	Give feedback to classmates on their ideas Choose topic and question	Research and PLAN	Research and PLAN
Detailed plan for project posted on (online learning platform) for feedback from teacher	Check-In with your Critical Friend online about your project.	Individual Check-In's with teacher via (online learning platform)		Check-In with your Critical Friend online about your project.
	Post an update to the class on (online learning platform) about what you're working on (include pics!)			Check-In with your Critical Friend online about your project.
		Individual Check-In's with teacher via (online learning platform)	Prepare presentation for (audience)	Post Presentation Reflection Questions on (online learning platform)

Please note the deadlines and when students are expected to engage with our class for Check-In's or feedback.

There are several ways you can support your student to complete this project:

- Read through the Student Toolbox so you can understand the overview of the Passion Project
- Encourage your student to reach out to their Critical Friend or Teacher if they are frustrated or need help
- Provide some basic resources for product making (resources should not be extravagant or expensive!)
- Ask your student what they are working on and if they need any help
- Honor the topic and question they are choosing to explore... it may not seem “academic” or school related, but the process ensures a lot of learning is taking place!
- Give them feedback if you’re asked 😊
- Help them prepare their final presentation by listening and asking questions

Although it might be difficult, your role is **not** to do the project for your student. 😊 If you need help or support to facilitate, please just reach out.

We are very much looking forward to exploring your students’ passions and interests as they work on this Passion Project! If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Teacher
Phone xxx-000-xxxx
Email@teachingrocks.com