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Introductory Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As a senior at Carson High School, your son or daughter will be completing a Senior Project for his/her senior English class. This project provides a unique opportunity for each student to choose a topic of his/her personal interest and then make a presentation to a board of judges.

It is essential that students choose a topic that is truly something they are interested in, and your help in this area will be appreciated.

Generally, areas chosen for study fall into three categories: career exploration, personal development, and altruistic endeavors. Previous CHS students have studied such diverse areas as child development theories, ancient Egypt, computer security, science fiction writing, history of the Brewery Arts Center, forensics, cooking, diabetes, grant-writing, World War II, art therapy, bulimia, and dentistry. The students who have found areas they really care about are the ones who have gotten the most out of the process.

To pass the second semester of Senior English, students must complete all parts of this process. Help will be available for all students, and it is necessary that each student put forth his/her best effort. People other than your child's English teacher will also evaluate the portfolios and the presentations. Evaluators will, however, be trained and use scoring guides so that reasonable and fair standards will be applied to all portfolios and presentations.

You can assist in several important ways in this process. For some, it will be important that you monitor your son's or daughter's work so that you know how the work is progressing. We will also invite you to participate on the Senior Boards, those groups who listen to the student presentations at the completion of the project during the second semester.

We at Carson High School are excited about this project, and we will keep you informed as the process unfolds. We have included a handout that provides some specific information about the project and the timeline. Should you have any questions, please call your student's English teacher. We look forward to making the Senior Project journey with you.

Sincerely,

Senior Project Committee
Carson High School

Senior Project Timeline

The Senior Project provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have accumulated during their four years of high school and to apply these to an area of interest. The project must provide a learning stretch. A learning stretch is a task that requires you to acquire new knowledge, learn a new skill, or further develop knowledge or a skill you already possess.

The Senior Project has three main components: a student-directed project, a portfolio, and a presentation about the project. Each component is important to the overall success of the Senior Project, and each must be satisfactorily completed for a student to pass the senior English course.

Project proposals must be approved by the Senior Project Steering Committee, and no hours earned prior to that approval will count toward the hours (a minimum of ten) required by the project.

September

- ❖ Letter of Intent, approved by committee

October - November

- ❖ Proposal: hours can begin once proposal is submitted and approved

October through March – Project

- ❖ Work with mentor
- ❖ Complete project outside of class

March through April

- ❖ Create portfolio and present to boards

Project Overview

The Senior Project is a growth experience for you through which you will develop many useful life skills. The key to success is to pick a project that truly interests you. Projects tend to fall into one of three categories: occupational (career-related), altruistic (helping others), and personal development. However, a customized project may be out there for you – simply talk with your teacher to discover whether your idea will meet the project requirements listed below. For all projects, keep these in mind as you select your project and while you are working on it.

Learning Stretch

The purpose of your project is for you to apply the skills you have acquired in school in a new and unique way in an area of interest to you. It can be an opportunity to investigate an interesting subject you have never taken the time to study previously, or it can be a chance to explore much more in depth something already of interest to you. In your proposal, conversations with your teacher, and your portfolio, you will be required to demonstrate how your project reflects new learning and is not like something you have done before.

Time Requirement

Your project should take a minimum of ten (10) hours to complete. Refer to Senior Project scoring rubric for further details. None of the time spent on the letter of intent, proposal, portfolio, or other class assignments (including non-English classes) can be counted toward the ten hours. Valid hours are hours spent directly on the project only. Travel time does not count. You may begin to count hours as soon as your proposal has been approved by the Senior Project Steering Committee, but not before. Hours logged prior to acceptance of your proposal or in unapproved areas will be disallowed during the final assessment process and may negatively impact your grade. Also, please note ten hours is a minimum amount of time. It represents adequacy, not excellence, and this, too, will be reflected in your final grade. Ideally, you should work for more than ten hours. To be successful, therefore, you should pick something of real interest to you and manage your time efficiently over the months you are working on the project.

You will be required to provide documentation regarding the hours you spend on your project. Every time you work on your project, you need to write a journal entry detailing exactly what you did, how the time was spent, and reflection on what you learned. The time will also be summarized on a time verification log, which is to be signed by your mentor. Both of these documents will appear in your portfolio. The most effective way to do well on both of these is to write down this information immediately after you have spent the time working. If you put off writing your journal entries and making your time log until the end of the project, you may forget key information and details that would help your grade.

Evidence

In order to receive a grade, you will have to provide some form of proof as to what you have done for a project. Your project time logs are one important source of evidence, but they are not sufficient. The best projects provide a wide variety of evidence including products, brochures, photographs, videotapes, artifacts of the learning process, expense receipts, and more. Always keep your eye out for ways to show what you have learned and accomplished.

Not all Senior Projects, however, produce a product, but they must produce evidence. For example, students have organized fundraisers, taught classes, taken classes, and helped less fortunate people for their Senior Projects. None of these students had a product to show for their efforts; therefore, they had to develop alternate methods to provide evidence for what they had accomplished. The evidence they presented included videotapes of a performance, photographs, testimonials from participants, lessons, and demonstrations of a new skill.

Personal Development projects: Your project might involve creation of a product. For example, students have written books, produced films, created art, and built robots for the Senior Projects in previous years. Students have also learned to play the piano and how to rock climb; for learning projects such as these, it is necessary to collect photographs and video or audio recordings, and perhaps to demonstrate that learning by teaching others.

Career Exploration projects: If you job-shadow a professional for your project, you must also demonstrate your learning through creating a product of some sort. Some examples include creating a web page, a brochure, or a model. If it is an educational product, such as a “How to Care for your Contact Lenses” tips sheet, you must distribute copies of it to a population that can use the information. For example, after job-shadowing an architect, students have created blueprints or model houses, and after learning from a health professional, students have created tip sheets with an accompanying lesson plan that they used to teach a middle school class.

Altruistic projects: For these projects, it is necessary to show what actions you took and what was accomplished. For example, students have shared the promotional flyers, programs, and videotapes from fundraisers they held or photographs of the senior citizens they visited.

The possibilities for how you might provide evidence of your project are as myriad and varied as the projects themselves; however, you need to work closely with your teacher and mentor to settle upon an acceptable method. (Note: projects involving a performance of any type should include an evaluation form filled out by your audience.)

It is critical to your success that you continually keep in focus what you are going to accomplish and how you are going to prove it. Do not attempt to decide this for yourself! You do not want to reach the end of your project and hear that your evidence is inadequate. This step needs to be made in conjunction with your teacher so that any problems can be addressed before it is too late.

A note on duplicates: It is wise to have multiple copies of anything that is integral to your project. You take a big risk if a videotape, photograph, etc., is one-of-a-kind. Items such as these can easily become lost or damaged. Taking the time to make a duplicate copy could save you more time in the long run.

Advisor

At the beginning of the year, you will be assigned an advisor. This advisor will help guide you through the process of completing your senior project. You will meet with your advisor at the beginning of the year and multiple times as the year progresses. Your advisor will also be the chairperson of your panel for your presentation. Your advisor will have the following responsibilities:

- Evaluate your letter of intent
- Evaluate your proposal
- Contact your parents if you are failing to meet your senior project deadlines
- Contact your mentor and check the progress on your project
- Grade your final project
- Run your panel on the day of your speech

Additionally, your advisor is the person you can go to if you are having problems with your senior project or your mentor.

During your first meeting with your advisor, you will exchange contact information and set up future meetings.

Mentor

You are required to have a mentor for your Senior Project whom you contact at least one time per week during the time you work on your actual project. Record this contact in your Time Verification Log. A mentor is an adult, over the age of 21, with expertise in the area of your research and project. Your mentor cannot be related to you. (You may choose to have more than one mentor, in which case only one needs to be over 21. That mentor will be the one responsible for all signatures.) The purpose of the mentor is to provide you with guidance, encouragement, and direction for your project. They can provide you with counsel, resources, and advice, but they are not responsible for your work: you are. It is your responsibility to keep up contact with your mentor. Arranging a regular meeting time may make such recurring contact easier to maintain; contacts may also occur via telephone and e-mail. Your teacher will also rely upon the expertise of the mentor to verify the depth and quality of some of your work.

It is crucial to find a mentor with whom you are comfortable. Your mentor needs to be a person with whom you are able to work closely and someone who has real expertise in the area of your project. Finding a mentor, therefore, may take some time. Teachers who teach in the content area you are covering may be able to offer suggestions for mentors. You can use community resources, such as local business clubs and the Chamber of Commerce, to locate a person with the skills to assist you. You can also network with other students to find out how they found their mentors.

Mentor Information Handout

Note to student: Your teacher will likely give you this as a handout. This is for your reference.

Student Name _____

Teacher _____ **Room #** _____

Teacher phone _____

Teacher e-mail _____

Thank you so much for choosing to be a mentor for this Carson High School senior. By accepting this role, you will need to be willing to do a few things:

- You will need to be over the age of 21.
- You cannot be related to the student.
- You will need to verify your expertise in the area this student is studying.
- You will need to monitor the student's effort and be willing to complete the following documents as the project progresses.
 - Mentor Information Sheet (part of the proposal)
 - Mentor Contact Sheet
 - Mentor Evaluation Sheet
 - Time Log Verification form
- You will need to meet with the student a minimum of four times:
 - Once to sign off on the initial paperwork
 - Twice as the student works on the project to provide feedback
 - Once at the end to sign off on the final paperwork
- You will need to verify that the student completed the hours he/she claims to have done.
- You will need to verify that the student legitimately did the work him/herself.

We have included copies of all of the documents you will eventually need to complete in this packet. These forms are for your information only; the student will provide the documents to you at the appropriate times.

Senior Project – Getting Started

Before you begin any of the other elements of the project process, you must decide upon a project. All other elements are related to the project itself.

In terms of project activities, outcomes, and evidence, there are three approaches to the project:

Personal Development

Career Exploration

Altruistic

After you have chosen the type of project, you need to choose what form your project will take:

Physical Product

You create an original 3D animation.

You write five songs in a genre you have never studied before.

You build a telescope.

You shadow an orthopedic surgeon, then build a cast for a mannequin.

You shadow a nutritionist, then make a recipe book for kids at your local gymnastics club.

You shadow a luthier and build your own guitar.

You organize a talent show to raise money for epilepsy, creating fliers for advertising.

You learn how to bake a special sugar-free dessert, then sell samples at an event to raise awareness/ money for diabetes.

Performance

You write five songs using an instrument you are not too familiar with, and perform at a concert.

You learn how to paint your car and compete in a car show.

You learn how to belly dance and perform at a recital.

You learn about being a high school teacher by teaching a 10th grade social studies unit.

After spending time working in an attorney's office, you perform in a mock trial.

You do makeovers on three of your friends, including hair and makeup transformations.

You read to residents in a nursing home.

You perform in a charity event.

You sing an original song using a specific musical influence at a church fundraiser.

Specific Project Requirements

Some projects require some special considerations:

Athletic training: Make sure you have a clear learning stretch and that this has been articulated clearly in the letter of intent and the proposal. Evidence can be tricky for this subject, so be sure you work out ahead of time what you plan on using for evidence. If you're lifting weights, document before, during and after weight-lifting strength and include before and after pictures. Keep in mind that weightlifting you do during a CHS class does not count for hours on your project.

Fundraising: If you are raising funds for an organization, you may have all funds given directly to the charity of choice, or you may deposit it in account you establish through Student Finances ahead of time. Never have checks made out to you, and deposit all funds as quickly as possible. Keep track of all the money you spend and raise. You do not want someone claiming you have stolen money. Additionally, if you specify early on that you will be giving funds to one charity, that charity must be the recipient of your funds.

Career Explorations: Discuss with your mentor ahead of time what you will be doing. Simply shadowing someone is not enough of a learning stretch. Even in the medical field, students can be creative in finding ways to apply their knowledge.

Music: If you are learning a musical instrument, you must take lessons from a professional instructor. Think ahead of time about your evidence. Consider recording yourself a number of times throughout the process to show development of your skills. Keep sheet music and receipts from your lessons.

Autoshop, Autobody, and Welding: Remember that you cannot count hours that you spend working during shop class.

Cosmetics: Clarify with your teacher ahead of time that you have a learning stretch.

Performance: As evidence, use the Audience Verification Form.

Carson-Tahoe Hospital: If you wish to complete a career exploration at the hospital, you will need to contact the Carson High CTE department for placement.

Prohibited Projects: Projects we do not allow:

- Flying (though you can do ground school for your project)
- Sky diving (though you can do ground school for your project)
- Skateboarding, skiing or snowboarding videos

Project Brainstorming Page

The best projects are the ones in which the student has a great interest or desire. Do not think about how you will complete the project or who your mentor will be at this point. Just brainstorm possible areas in which you have a great interest. Be prepared to enter uncharted territory.

What are some things you've always wanted to know about or do?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

From those things, what could you make, build or create?

- 1.
- 2.

What careers have you always wanted to know about or experience?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What could you make, create, or do after an experience in a career area?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What charities or causes do you care about or would you like to learn more about? How could you do so?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Letter of Intent

Contents of this book:

- Scoring Rubric
- Explanation of paragraphs
- Sample letter

Checklist for student and parent:

- Are the required elements included in the letter?
- Have you proofread it carefully?
- Have you signed the letter?

Letter of Intent Grading Rubric

Name_____ Date_____ Period_____

Format:

12 point Times New Roman
Block format as in example

Paragraph 1:

Area of interest
Explanation of why interested
Explanation of previous knowledge or experience in the area

Paragraph 2:

Explanation of the **actual project**
Who/ what will be involved
What is the projected cost and time?
What resources will you need?

Paragraph 3:

Plagiarism, self-plagiarism and cheating must be explained
in your own words
Why must they be avoided?
What are the consequences if work is not original?

Mechanics:

Appropriate for class (varied sentence structure, use of correct punctuation,
obvious proofreading, professional quality)

Voice:

Elevated vocabulary, appropriate grammar, personal voice

Final Grade

Contents of Letter of Intent

This letter is part of your Senior Project Portfolio, so it must be typed using 12 pt. Times New Roman font and the format outlined on the previous page of this booklet. The bottom of your letter should include an Advisor Approval line. See sample on the next page.

- **Paragraph 1** This paragraph should tell your teacher the area of interest for your senior project. Explain why you are interested in this area and what you already know about this topic. If you have experience in this area, include that information so it is clear what knowledge base you are building on.
- **Paragraph 2** This paragraph will focus on your project. Explain what the details of the project are, who will be involved, what the potential cost might be, what time expenditure will be required, what possible resources you may use, and what the learning stretch is.
- **Paragraph 3** This important paragraph explains *in your own words* what plagiarism, self-plagiarism and cheating are, why you must avoid them, and what consequences you would expect should you plagiarize or cheat at any point in this project.

Sample Letter of Intent

December 1, 2001

Roberta Casey ← *your name and address*
100 Jones Street
Carson City, NV 89702

Advisor: (Name)
Teacher: (Name)
Carson High School
1111 North Saliman Road
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear (Advisor's Name): ← *your advisor's's name followed by a colon*

My senior project will be focused around art, an area that I am really interested in. For many years now, I have been interested in abstract art and abstract artists such as Pablo Picasso and Vincent van Gogh. I have little experience working with art, but I think that I have enough experience to do this project. When I was in fifth grade, I took an after-school art class, and since then, I have painted and drawn on my own. Also, I am involved in the Art Club here at school, and I expect that this assignment will help me to further develop my skills and interest.

For my Senior Project I will teach an art class for two hours after school every Friday for my project. During this time, I will create my own lesson plans and help students prepare and present an art gallery of their own work. Teachers and parents will be invited to view the students' work. There will be some costs associated with this project in terms of both time and of money. I know I will spend at least 25 hours working with the students, and there will be more time involved with preparing for the classes. Costs will depend on how much in terms of money and supplies I can get donated.

I definitely understand what plagiarism is and its consequences. Plagiarism is not only the act of copying others' work and claiming it as my own, but it is also an act that destroys the entire concept of hard work, pride, and individuality. To risk an F on this project and not graduate is not worth it. I want my students, now and in the future, to remember me because I was a good teacher who helped them learn to appreciate art and life, not because I was a liar and a thief.

Sincerely,
← *your signature*
Roberta Casey ← *your name*

Advisor Approval: _____ Date: _____

Senior Project Proposal

Contents of this book:

- Overview of the proposal
- Example of a cover page
- Example of blank form, page one
- Example of blank form, page two
- Example of blank form, page three

Checklist for student and parent:

- Do you have a cover page with your name and the other required elements?
- Do you have the Project Task Analysis form?
- Do you have the Project Cost and Mentor Information form?
- Do you have the Learning Stretch form?
- Have you proofread your work carefully?
- Has your mentor signed the Mentor Information form?
- Has your parent or guardian completed the Hold Harmless form.

Senior Project Proposal Information

After your letter of intent is approved, your next step will be to complete the Senior Project Proposal. Filling in this form will give you the opportunity to examine in more detail your plans for the project portion of your Senior Project. On this form, you will explain in detail the project you would like to undertake, the costs involved, the necessary steps entailed, and the project timeline.

Your proposal will have a cover sheet.

You will also be asked at this time to enlist the assistance of a mentor. This mentor will be an ally to help direct you to resources, figure out problems associated with your project, and assist you in whatever ways you two agree on. This person should have experience and information in the area you are studying. **In addition, the mentor may not be a member of your family.**

Breaking your project into definable steps will make the process much easier for you. Setting up a timeline will help you begin and assist you in continuing to make progress throughout the time allotted for the project. Figuring out how much this project is going to cost may keep you from running into problems later in the project. If you put some time and effort into planning at the beginning, you will find the process of completing your project much easier to handle.

The form for the Senior Project Proposal is included in this booklet, and you may use it as a worksheet. The actual form you will fill out to submit to your Senior English teacher may be downloaded from the Senior Project link on the Carson High School Web site: www.carsonhigh.com. Be careful to delete extra spaces so that the three pages keep the formats shown on the following pages with the page header at the top of the page.

The Senior Project Proposal consists of four pages of information, each of which must be completed:

- Project Task Analysis with Timeline
- Project Cost
- Obstacles and Learning Stretch with Signatures
- Mentor Information Form
- Hold Harmless Form

Senior Project Proposal: Snowboarding

By

John Smith

SAMPLE Proposal Cover Sheet

Carson High School
English IV, B6
Advisor: (Name)
Teacher: (Name)
September 26, 2015

Advisor Approval: _____ Date: _____

Page One: Task Analysis and Timeline (Typed)

1. Describe your project, including what you plan to do and what you plan to accomplish. Be as specific and concrete as you can be.

2. What will be your product or your hands-on learning?

3. Task Analysis: List all the steps you must take and the tasks you must complete to finish your project. Include the number of hours you think each step will take and the approximate date you plan to have that part of the process completed.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Hours Required</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
1) _____		
2) _____		
3) _____		
4) _____		
5) _____		
6) _____		
7) _____		
8) _____		
9) _____		

Total Projected Hours _____

Page Two: Project Cost (Typed)

List all materials and resources that you will need to complete this project, including the estimated cost for each item listed. You will be responsible for funding your project and will need to make sure that you are willing to spend the amount of money needed to complete your intended project.

Resource/Material	Cost

Total Projected Cost for Project _____

I understand that Carson High School will not fund my senior project and that I have freely chosen to undertake this project with its associated costs.

Signature

Date

Page Three: Obstacles and Learning Stretch (Typed)

List and discuss at least three difficulties you might encounter with this project. How do you plan to solve each of these problems?

Explain how this project is a learning stretch for you. Indicate *specifically what you expect to gain and how*.

Page Four: Mentor Information Form (Typed or Handwritten)

Senior's Name _____ Date _____

Mentor's Name _____ Home Phone _____

Cell Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Email _____

This form should be filled out by the Mentor:

What is your expertise in the area the student is studying?

How long have you known this student and in what capacity?

When you reviewed the proposal with the student, what advice did you give him/ her about the calendar plan?

What advice did you give him/ her about the cost analysis?

In what way would you change or modify the project OR what problems do you foresee the student might have?

Mentor Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____

Page Five: Hold Harmless (Handwritten)

SPECIAL PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY- SENIOR PROJECT

AGREEMENT REGARDING PARTICIPATION IN SENIOR PROJECT AND TO ASSUME RISK, TO RELEASE LIABILITY, AND TO HOLD HARMLESS

Activity: Carson High School Senior Project

Project Description: _____

Facility: _____

Date of Activity: _____, 201____

Transportation: Transportation to/from facility will be provided by Participant and/or his/her parent or guardian

Name of Participant: _____

Birth Date: _____

Address of Participant: _____

Phone Number of Participant: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Phone Number: _____

Allergies or Special Instructions: _____

► The undersigned consents to allow the Participant to engage in his/her Senior Project at the Facility, with transportation provided by Participant and/or his/her parent or guardian.

► The undersigned knows and understands that although completion of a Senior Project is required for High School graduation, the referenced Senior Project Activity at the Facility is **NOT** sponsored, conducted, or supervised by the Carson City School District, its trustees, administration, teachers, employees, contractors, agents, representatives, or volunteers (collectively, "CCSD"). No services, safety, security, supervision, custodial, janitorial, nutrition, marine, or medical services are offered or provided for the Activity at the Facility by CCSD. The employees of the Facility are **NOT** authorized agents or representatives of CCSD.

► The undersigned knows and understands that the undersigned is responsible for the safety, security, supervision, and care of the Participant in the Activity, and for all costs incurred in connection with such participation, including the cost of meals, medical care, safety and security, all without any compensation or reimbursement from CCSD or Facility.

► The undersigned represents that Participant is physically able to participate in the Activity at the Facility and that the undersigned has no knowledge of any mental, physical, or medical condition or impairment which would limit Participant's ability to engage in the Activity at the Facility.

► The undersigned agrees to protect, defend, indemnify, and hold harmless CCSD and Facility of, from, and against any and all claims, demands, damages, losses, liabilities, or injuries, whether to person or property or both, including death, which might occur or be suffered by Participant, the undersigned, or the heirs or next of kin of Participant, or any third party, as a result of Participant's involvement in the Activity at the Facility.

► The undersigned agrees to reimburse and make good any loss, damage, or costs, including attorneys' fees, that CCSD or Facility may incur or suffer to persons or property as a result of the Participant's conduct, which results, directly or indirectly, in damages allegedly caused by the Participant.

► The undersigned agrees to follow all behavioral expectations set by the Facility. The undersigned will represent himself or herself and Carson High School in a positive manner. The undersigned understands that if the rules of conduct are violated, the undersigned will be asked to leave the Facility. The undersigned also realizes that appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

► In case of accident, injury, illness, or other occurrence requiring parental permission, the Facility shall have and is hereby granted the authority to act for and on behalf of the Participant, if the undersigned cannot be reached.

► In executing this document, I/we certify that there are no promises or inducements which are not contained herein.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Print Parent/Guardian Name & Phone Date

Signature of Participant/Student

Print Participant/Student Name & Phone Date

The Project

Contents of this book:

- Project Scoring Rubric
- Overview of the Project Elements
- Audience Verification Form (if applicable)
- Time Verification Form
- Project Idea Flowchart
- Log Entry Examples
- Mentor Evaluation Form
- Project Self-Evaluation Form

Checklist for student and parent:

- Have you completed at least 10 hours (15 for an ‘A’)?
- Have you verified every hour with detailed log entries and the exact days with times?
- Have you supplied satisfactory evidence such as receipts, photographs, video, audience verification forms, or a product?
- Have you completed all of the necessary self-evaluation forms?
- Have you received the mentor evaluation forms with appropriate signatures?

Project Scoring Rubric

Points	Score Earned	4	3	2	1
Learning Stretch		Learned significant things about subject and/or self that will benefit student in the future.	Learned about subject and/or self in ways that will benefit student in the future.	Learned about subject and/or self in a way that might benefit student in the future.	Did not add to his/her knowledge or experience.
Difficulty of Project		Project was complex enough to require a great deal of time, effort, and resourcefulness on part of student.	The project required time and effort as well as resourcefulness on the student’s part.	The project required both time and effort.	The project did not require effort to complete.
Quality of Finished Project		The finished project showed attention to detail and exhibited pride and a willingness to make the finished project a success.	The finished project showed that the student spent time and effort to make the finished project successful.	The finished project showed that the student spent little time and little effort to make the finished project successful.	The finished project showed that the student spent no time and no effort to make the finished project successful.
Amount of Time		15 + Hours	13-14 Hours	11-12 Hours	10 Hours
Tangible Evidence of Project		The student provided a wide variety of evidence that clearly demonstrated what was accomplished.	The student provided evidence that demonstrated what was accomplished.	The student provided some evidence that showed what was accomplished.	The student did not have enough evidence to demonstrate completion of the project.
Extra Credit		Benefit to Others: Up to 2 Points The project will benefit others in a significant way by performing an important service.		Amount of Time: Up to 2 Points 25+ hours = 1 40+ hours = 2	
Total Points:		Student Name: _____			
Grade:		Student’s English Teacher: _____			
		Evaluator: _____			

20 – 100%	12 – 74%
19 – 96%	11 – 72%
18 – 92%	10 – 70%
17 – 88%	9 – 66%
16 – 85%	8 – 62%
15 – 82%	7 – 58%
14 – 78%	6 – 54%
13 – 76%	5 – 50%

Evidence

Part of the requirement of completing the senior project is to collect evidence that proves you have done the project. You will be graded on both amount and variety of evidence. It is important that you think ahead of time about what can be used as workable evidence. Below are some examples of the evidence collected by students.

Project: Making a trailer for a book written by a local author

- A DVD with the final product on it
- Another DVD with cut scenes
- The script
- An early version of the script with editing marks on it from the student and her mentor
- Pictures of her filming
- Pictures of the cast working on set
- The flyer calling for auditions
- An early draft of the auditions flyer

Project: Tutoring an elementary student in reading and writing

- Various student work assignments
- A letter from the students explaining what was done and thanking the senior tutor
- Visitor's passes from the elementary school where the tutoring took place
- Interview questions given to the student tutored to help assess effective engagement techniques
- Lists of spelling words given to students
- A pretest given to the tutored student
- Pictures of the senior with her student
- Receipts for materials purchased for a lesson the student taught

Project: Designing the make-up for the school musical *Cats*

- Photos of the make-up class she held for the cast
- Photos of the made-up faces
- A copy of the sketch template she used
- A copy of each of the designs used in the show
- Copies of designs that were rejected
- A sample mask they had planned on using but decided not to
- A note from the stage manager thanking her for her designs
- Notes from her ideas of what worked well and what didn't
- Copies of various flyers for *Cats*
- A copy of the program with her name highlighted as the make-up designer

Project: Career exploration of pediatric nursing

- Visitor name tags provided by the hospital
- Copies of the forms required by Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center for students working there for their senior projects

- A note from one of the nurses (not the mentor) saying the student was present on specific days
- Pictures of the student at the nurses' station with no patient names visible
- A picture of a patient's oxygen reading (the patient's identity is kept private)
- Some tubing from a patient's oxygen mask (with permission from the hospital)
- Copies of various forms the nurses use
- A note from a doctor stating that the student was there on a particular date

Your Turn

List five different items you could save as evidence of your work.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Audience Verification Form

This form is to be used when you have included some form of **presentation** as part of your senior project. For example, you must use this form if you are teaching a class about World War II or giving a speech to the Lion's Club. **Please feel free to adapt this form to meet the needs and format of your presentation.** These forms should be included in the evidence portion of your portfolio.

Presenter_____

Date of Presentation_____

Time of Presentation_____

Location_____

Teacher/Adult in charge (printed name) _____

Teacher/Adult in charge (signature) _____



Please rate the presentation on the basis of 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest.

1. The presenter was prepared and on time. _____

2. The presenter used good speech skills including: _____

Eye contact

Body language

Voice control

3. The presenter was knowledgeable about his/her subject. _____

4. The presenter was organized
in terms of an introduction, body, and conclusion. _____

5. The presenter demonstrated enthusiasm. _____

6. The presenter answered questions posed to him/her
after the presentation. _____

Senior Project Time Verification (Typed or Handwritten)

Keep track of your hours as you progress. This sheet is primarily for your mentor and does not count as your actual log. You should meet with your mentor weekly, but you are required to meet with your mentor at least twice before the project is over.

Date	Number of Hours	Mentor Contact	Description of Project Activity
Total Hours:			

As a mentor, I can reasonably assure the Senior Project Board that a minimum of ten hours has been spent by the student on the project.

Mentor's Signature

Narrative of Mentor Meetings Instructions

You are required to meet with your mentor a minimum of four times over the course of your project.

- The first time is when you introduce yourself, fill out the mentor information form, and discuss what you will be doing for your project.
- The second meeting should take place approximately one-third of the way through your project. During this meeting, you should update your mentor on the status of your project and ask for advice as you move towards completion. Make sure to complete the Narrative of Mentor Meeting form.
- The third meeting should take place two-thirds of the way through your project and, similar to the previous meeting, should include an update on the status of your project and advice on how to move forward. Make sure to complete the Narrative of Mentor Meeting form.
- The last meeting with your mentor should occur when you have completed your project and you are ready for your mentor to complete the mentor evaluation form and sign your Senior Project Time Verification Form.

Obviously, many students will meet with their mentors many more times than just these four. No matter how many times you meet with your mentor, however, you must twice complete a narrative of your mentor meeting. The following sheet should be brought with you during the two meetings – one approximately one third of the way through your project, the second about two-thirds with your project. As you meet with your mentor and discuss your project, you should write a narrative about what you discuss. At the end of the meeting with your mentor, you both sign where indicated.

Narrative of Mentor Meetings (Typed or Handwritten)

Meeting 1

Date: _____

What was accomplished during the meeting? _____

[illegible]

Student Signature _____

Mentor Signature

Meeting 2

Date: _____

What was accomplished during the meeting? _____

[illegible]

Student Signature

Mentor Signature

Detailed Log Entries (Typed)

Not only must you complete the time sheet for your project and write two narratives of meetings with your mentor, but you must also keep a written log of your work sessions. Whenever you do any work for your project, you must keep detailed notes of what you did; in addition, you should reflect upon what you learned. All questions should be answered in each log. Entries should be typed, as the log will be viewed by your committee. Remember, the time sheet is like a cover sheet for your logs and does not in any way count for your actual logs. Each entry should comment on an individual observation or reflection.

Date:

Time spent:

Tasks/learning: Give details on exactly what you did during this time frame. Specify any problems you encountered and how you solved them. Detail specifics tasks you completed.

Plan for next work session: Explain when you plan to work on your project again and what you plan to accomplish during that work session.

Example of an insufficient log:

February 10, 2004

1 hour

I worked on the jacket today. The sleeves were put in.

Example of a good log: (Note that this log is relatively short because the student only worked for one hour. A longer work session would require a longer log.)

Date: February 10, 2004

Start time: 10 a.m.

Stop time: 11 a.m.

Total time: 1 hour

Today I worked on the jacket. First, I sewed the two sleeve parts together for each sleeve. This straight seam was very easy to sew, and it went well.

I then had to get the sleeves set in, which was very difficult to do. I had trouble keeping the sleeve from puckering because of the easing, and I took out my seam twice. It seemed to me there was too much fabric to make it work, but my mentor finally helped me get the sleeves in without puckers. She showed me how to gather the fabric by pressing behind the presser foot. I was hoping to get more done in this hour, but I spent too much time struggling with the sleeve hole seam.

Tomorrow I hope to get a couple hours in. I am planning on sewing the lining so that when I work with my mentor next Saturday, she can help me sew the lining to the jacket.

More Sample Log Entries

April 4th

Start: 7:30

End: 9:30

Total time: 2 hours

For the first hour, I edited my shorter video. I added the titles needed with some colorful fonts and animations. I was a little crowded with all the people coming to me and begging constantly to watch the videos again and again, but it did make me proud and feel like I did a good job. The last hour I sat trying to get the DVD to burn so I can pass it off to the group in charge of the announcements. Problems did arise, and it made me want to tear my hair out.

First, I had to learn how to make the DVD by giving it a menu with a scene selection and everything. My mentor helped me get that added. Then I had to wait for it to actually burn onto the DVD. That took about ten minutes to wait for, which was nerve-wracking because I had to get this DVD to the announcement people when they record in a half hour. You never know how long it'll take for a video to burn. It all depended on how long it was, how many effects I had in it. The menu added is going to take some time; it just took a while.

When it was done, there were about twenty minutes left over before the announcements had to be run, and I decided to check on the DVD and make sure it burned correctly. Good thing it did! One of the markers that said where the first video ended and the next one began moved, and so I had half of the longer trailer at the beginning of the shorter one! I was furious. I had to then move the markers again and then burn a whole new DVD. Another time-consuming move, but it had to be done or it would not make sense at all. Luckily it finished burning just in time. It came out of the burner, went into my hands, and passed off into the hands of the one in charge of videos shown. I also wanted to show the shorter trailer today but when the video person looked at it, the heartbeats I added weren't playing. It was just dead silence. So instead, I had them play the longer trailer. Exciting and a little bit annoying that my plan didn't work out.

I may have to come in for another session to fix the heartbeats on the shorter video, but I have no idea how it will work.

.....
Date: August 12, 2008

Time: 1:15

Today I worked on the lesson plans for the class I will be teaching. My mentor suggested that I create a Power Point, but he said that before I do that, I should review the chapter on the causes of the Civil War in the text book before I make the Power Point. So I read through the chapter first. I was glad I did that because there were some important points I would have forgotten about, like including information on Lincoln's speeches.

After reviewing the chapter, I started working on the Power Point. I have made a lot of Power Points, so that isn't new to me. I did have a problem with trying to choose the slide backgrounds. My mentor said to have something simple, but I wanted something that related to the Civil War. I finally chose a gray background with black font.

I only got to make the first couple of slides. The first one is just a title slide. The other two I made are just review information. My mentor wants me to include one with key words on it, but I'm not sure what he means by that and need to ask him. When I was done, I printed my Power Point. It printed a slide on a page, the whole page! It used all the ink in my color cartridge. Next time I have to be more careful about printing. I want handouts, not actually single prints of the slides.

Mentor Evaluation Form (Typed or Handwritten)

Dear Mentor,

You have been chosen by this student to evaluate certain physical aspects of his or her Senior Project. It is necessary for the student to seek an evaluation because most of the physical part of the Senior Project is completed outside of class. Your observations are extremely important to this student's Senior Project teacher because your responses assist in the overall evaluation of this student's physical project. Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation.

1. Describe the project:

2. Based on the final project and this student's skill level, how many hours can you estimate that the student spent on this project?

3. What impressed you the most about this project?

4. What do you think could have been improved?

5. Where did you think that this student showed the most growth?

6. Discuss the student's professionalism.

Mentor's Printed Name

Phone Number

Mentor's Signature

Would you be interested in having your name added to a mentor database so that other students may contact you to be a mentor in the future? Yes No

Project Self-Evaluation (Typed)

1. Explain how this project is a learning stretch for you.
2. Discuss three problems that you encountered with your project. How did you solve these problems?
3. If you could redo your project, what would you do differently?
4. In at least fifty words, discuss the grade you should receive for your project. Describe what you did in order to ensure that your project was the best it could be. Include at least three specific examples or reasons to defend your position.

The Capstone Portfolio

Contents of this book:

- Portfolio Rubric
- Portfolio Table of Contents
- Senior Project Overview Form
- Thank you letter tips
- Sample thank you letters
- Sample letter to the judges

Checklist for students and parents:

- Have you included every element listed on the table of contents form?
- Do you have a table of contents?
- Do you have dividers or title pages for each section?
- Have you signed all of your letters?
- Do you have a cover sheet on the front of the binder?
- Have you included the teacher/ board assignment form handed out by your teacher?

Senior Project Portfolio Rubric

Student Name: _____

English Teacher: _____

Panel #: _____

Score	Professional Appearance	Demonstration of Learning Stretch	Quality of Responses	Individual Voice	Accuracy (Grammar/Spelling)
4	Outstanding in its professionalism	Evidence is related to learning, clearly labeled and exceptionally varied. Logs and reflections thoroughly explain learning.	Responses and letters show exceptional insight and sophistication.	Student as an individual is clearly evident.	Has few, if any mechanical mistakes.
3	Professional and pages are clean	Evidence is related to learning, labeled and varied. Logs and reflections explain learning.	Responses and letters show commendable insight and sophistication.	Student as an individual recognizable, but not clearly evident as 4.	Has some mechanical mistakes.
2	Predominantly Professional and pages are mostly clean	Evidence is occasionally related to learning, may be labeled, is somewhat varied. Logs and reflections occasionally allude to learning.	Responses and letters show occasional insight and sophistication.	Student as an individual is somewhat evident.	Has a noticeable number of mechanical mistakes.
1	Not Professional	Evidence is not related to learning, not labeled and not varied. Logs and reflections do not indicate learning.	Responses and letters are incomplete.	No sense of the student as an individual is evident.	Portfolio contains flaws in mechanics that may or may not interfere with meaning.

Features	4	3	2	1
Professional Appearance				
Demonstration of Learning Stretch				
Quality of Responses				
Individual Voice				
Accuracy (Grammar/Spelling)				

Comments	
<i>I like that you:</i>	<i>I would have liked you to:</i>

Senior Board Judge (*print name*)

Senior Board Judge (*signature*)

Date of Review

Portfolio

Your portfolio serves two purposes: first, it is the written presentation of the project that you completed your senior year; second, it is the capstone to your educational career in the Carson City School District. As you complete your portfolio, keep in mind that many different people will be viewing your portfolio. Your advisor will examine your portfolio as a means of grading your project. Community members will view it as an insight into your past, present, and future goals as well as a document showcasing your accomplishments not only with the senior project but with your time spent in the Carson City School District. Be aware of your audience. If your senior project deals in subject matter that may be offensive or upsetting, please make sure you include pages that clearly state what the audience is about to see. For example, if your senior project was a career exploration at a veterinary clinic and you observed or assisted in a surgery, your evidence may contain pictures that may be upsetting to an audience member. You would want to create a page before those pictures, clearly indicating the content of the following pictures.

When creating your portfolio, you have two distinct options.

Physical Portfolio

First, you may create a physical portfolio containing the required elements. If you choose to create a physical portfolio, you should follow the following guidelines. All documents in your portfolio should be neatly typed if at all possible. You may have some documents or some pieces of evidence that are handwritten: this is completely acceptable; however, make sure that they are presented professionally. Your portfolio must contain every element listed on the table of contents. If you are missing even one section, your portfolio will not be accepted for credit. Each section of the portfolio should be set off with a divider and a clear indication of what section your audience is about to view. The divider may contain either the name of the section or the number of the section. Many students choose to use page protectors because, as the name implies, they protect the pages, but also because they add a professional aspect to the portfolio. If you choose to use page protectors, you can put your pages front to back. When creating your portfolio, you may either produce a professional, unadorned portfolio, or, if you are so inclined, you may add stickers, pictures, graphics and other visual touches to create a more creative portfolio. If you are going for the creative look, make sure that creativity does not impede understanding.

Electronic Portfolio

Your other option is to create an electronic portfolio. Electronic portfolios contain all the information and documents found in a physical portfolio; however, as the name implies, all elements will be presented electronically through a webpage. To complete an electronic portfolio, you must be able to create a webpage that is accessible from Carson High School's library. The electronic portfolio should have an introductory page that contains tabs to each of the sections of the table of contents. Each of those pages should be clearly labeled as to what they contain and have a button to navigate back to the main page. All documents and evidence must be produced electronically or scanned in electronically. You also need to complete a one-page instruction sheet which helps your judges and advisor navigate to your webpage.

Capstone Portfolio Table of Contents

All contents must be clean copies and separated by dividers or title pages. You may substitute page numbers for sections.

Table of Contents

Letter of Introduction and Project Overview.....	Section 1
Letter of Intent and proposal.....	Section 2
Time Verification Form and Narrative of Mentor Meetings.....	Section 3
Senior Project Journal Entries.....	Section 4
Evidence of Project.....	Section 5
Mentor Evaluation and Project Self-Evaluation.....	Section 6
Thank You Letters.....	Section 7
Resume and Achievements.....	Section 8
Writing Samples with Introduction.....	Section 9
Personal Prospectus.....	Section 10

Letter of Introduction (Section 1) (Typed)

Purpose

With this letter, you are introducing yourself to your judges. Most judges will read this before you give your speech, so it is the perfect opportunity to get them excited to meet you. This is your opportunity to talk about yourself and let your personality shine.

What you should include

The content of your letter should include a short history of yourself and your career as a student in the Carson City School District. Who are you? What are some of your favorite memories? What were some obstacles that you had overcome? What teacher, coach, counselor, and/or administrator had a positive impact on your growth as a student or a human being? These are just a few of the questions you may wish to consider as you compose your letter of introduction. Remember, this letter will be read by community members before they meet you, and it is up to you what you wish to share about yourself and your life.

Format

Write your letter to the judges in block letter format. This is the same format you used in composing your Letter of Intent.

Senior Project Overview (Section 1) (Typed)

Name:

Project description:

How the project evolved:

Special things I would like the judges to consider:

Thank-You Letters (Section 7) (Typed or Handwritten)

Thank You: The two most important words! Score points with courteous, professional, or personal thank you letters. Thank you letters are a nice thought following any occasion. They can be used for the following purposes:

- Demonstrate/reiterate your interest in a project, product, or position.
- Thank someone for assistance or contribution.
- Make or reinforce a good impression.
- Promote opportunities for further collaboration.
- Form or strengthen positive business and personal relationships.
- Acknowledge receipt of a resume, invitation, report, or other important documents.

8 Thank You Letter Tips:

1. Write clearly and concisely; this is no time to be longwinded or flowery.
2. Be sincere – most people can sense when you are not being honest.
3. Stick to the point.
4. Write the thank you letter as soon as possible after the event (for a job interview, this should be within *24 hours* of the interview). However, do not thank the person beforehand (for example, “Thanking you in advance for your help in this matter”). To do so is presumptuous and suggests you are unwilling to write a follow-up letter.
5. Use quality paper. Handwrite personal letters, and use customized letterhead for business correspondence. E-mail may also be appropriate in less formal situations, especially if the addressee expresses a preference for it or if time constraints require it. (Not for the senior project, however!)
6. Proofread the letter before sending it: grammatical errors and typos are sloppy and unprofessional.
7. Be specific and include details from the event. Make your letter stand out (do not send a generic letter that could be to or from anyone).
8. Address your letter to a specific person, if possible, not just the company or organization in general.

Thank You Letter Statistics

- In a 2001 survey by the Emily Post Institute, 70 percent of the respondents said e-mailing thank-you notes was appropriate, especially to acknowledge a small gift or gesture.
- Even if they are seldom executed, thank you notes still are expected in other arenas. A survey in August 2005 by CareerBuilder.com found that:
 - Nearly 15 percent of hiring managers would reject a job candidate who neglected to send a thank you letter after the interview.
 - 32 percent said they would still consider the thankless prospect but that their opinion of him or her would diminish.
 - Nearly a quarter (23 percent) of managers prefer a handwritten thank you.
 - 21 percent seek a typed hard copy.
 - 19 percent want e-mailed appreciation letters followed up with a snail-mailed letter.

Sample Thank-You Letter

Date

John Doe
Address
Carson City, NV 89701

Mark Curtis
Creative Director
549 Court Street
Reno, NV 89505

Dear Mark Curtis:

I am writing to thank you for the time you took to help me with my senior project. Through my interview with you, I began to understand the difference between advertising and public relations, and I realized the competitiveness that comes with the territory of both these professions. Thanks to your interesting information and intriguing quotes I received an A on my research paper. The first part of my senior project was a success due to my meeting with you. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule; I really appreciated it.

Not only do I want to thank you for the information that you gave to me, but I also would like to thank you for everything you have done for the One Region Committee. I know that you have played an extremely important role in One Region's success. Please know that your efforts have not gone unnoticed; you have done a tremendous job, especially since it is all volunteer work. Since our last meeting, I too continue to be involved with the One Region Committee. Currently, I am working on organizing a meeting to discuss the One Region Summit, which is to be held on June 14, 2001, at Lake Tahoe. I am working hard and will conclude my project shortly. Thanks again for all your help.

Sincerely,

John Doe

Resume and Achievements (Section 8) (Typed)

Purpose

The purpose of this section of your portfolio is to showcase what you have achieved over the last twelve years of school.

What you should include

Resume: a resume is an official document that highlights the activities you have participated in and the awards you have been given. A resume normally includes work history, academic history, volunteer work, positions held within clubs or the community, personal achievements, and hobbies.

Achievements: in this section, you may also choose to include certificates, pictures or any artifacts that highlights some of your successes.

Format

Your resume may be in any format you choose as long as it looks professional. Microsoft Word has many templates you may wish to utilize. If you include certificates or other memorabilia, please remember to label them clearly so that your audience knows what they are viewing.

Writing Samples (Section 9) (Typed or handwritten)

You must include a typed introduction as to why you chose the sample(s).

Purpose

The purpose of the section of your portfolio is to showcase some of the writing you have completed.

What you should include

You must include at least one written sample that exemplifies your academic achievement in school. Do not just limit yourself to works that you composed in your English class. For example, you may have written an amazing research paper in your social studies class or you may have written a creative work in your theater class. While you may have more than one piece of writing included in the section, try to limit yourself to three pieces overall.

Format

Before each piece of writing, you should give a brief introduction of the purpose for the writing and why you chose to include it in this portfolio.

Personal Prospectus (Section 10) (Typed)

Purpose

A prospectus, by definition, is a plan for the future. The purpose of this final section of your portfolio is to give your audience an idea of what you have planned for your future.

What to include

This section should include a written account of where you see yourself in the future. You may wish to consider the following questions as you move through the writing process. Where do you see yourself after the summer? Where do you see yourself in five years, ten years, twenty years? Are you going to join the workforce? If so, where do you plan on working? Why do you want to engage in this type of work? Are you going to a trade school? If so, which trade have you decided to further your knowledge of? Are you going to college? If so, where are you going? What do you hope to study? To what use will you put your degree?

Format

The format for your prospectus is up to you. Refer to the Senior Project Website for examples.

Senior Boards

Contents of this book:

- Senior Boards Rubric
- Senior Boards speech preparation requirements
- Suggestions to deal with anxiety
- Speech content requirements
- Practice speech form
- Speech delivery information
- Speech language information
- Speech organization information
- Speech professional decorum information

Checklist for student and parent:

- Have you given at least one practice speech in front of your classmates?
- Have you timed the speech to be at least eight minutes?
- Have you completed a visual aid to take with you?
 - Have you thought carefully about all aspects of your delivery?

Senior Project Speech Evaluation

Student Name: _____

English Teacher: _____

Panel #: _____

Score	Content	Organization	Delivery	Language	Professional Decorum
4	Ideas/details were well chosen so the listener easily understood what the speaker did for the project.	Speech was well organized with an introduction, body and conclusion. In addition, transitions were smooth and enhanced presentation.	Speaker demonstrated command over volume, clarity, tempo, eye contact, posture, tone, pauses, pronunciation and inflection.	Speaker demonstrated control over grammar and vocabulary. Speaker used professional language and did not use slang.	<input type="checkbox"/> Appearance The speaker was dressed and groomed for the occasion.
3	There were enough ideas/details so the listener understood what the speaker did for the project.	Speech was organized with an introduction, body and conclusion. Transitions were sufficient and appropriate.	Speaker usually demonstrated command over volume, clarity, tempo, eye contact, posture, tone, pauses, pronunciation and inflection.	Speaker usually demonstrated control over grammar and vocabulary. Speaker used professional language and used very little, if any, slang.	<input type="checkbox"/> Attitude/ Group Rapport The speaker conveyed enthusiasm and a positive attitude throughout the presentation.
2	There were some ideas/details so the listener mostly understood what the speaker did for the project.	Speech was somewhat organized and the presenter may have used occasional transitions.	Speaker partially demonstrated command over volume, clarity, tempo, eye contact, posture, tone, pauses, pronunciation and inflection.	Speaker partially demonstrated control over grammar and vocabulary. Speaker occasionally used professional language and frequently used slang.	<input type="checkbox"/> Preparation The speaker was punctual and well prepared. <input type="checkbox"/> Visual Aid The speaker effectively used a visual aid to enhance the presentation.
1	Ideas/details were insufficient in that the project was not easily understood.	Speech was disorganized and difficult to follow.	Speaker demonstrated difficulty with volume, clarity, tempo, eye contact, posture, tone, pauses, pronunciation and inflection.	Speaker did not demonstrate control over grammar and vocabulary. Speaker's language was unprofessional.	

Features	4	3	2	1	
Content					Length of Speech _____
Organization					
Delivery					
Language					
Professional Decorum					
Comments					

Senior Board Judge (print name)

Senior Board Judge (signature)

Date

Senior Boards Speech Preparation – Overview

Basic Requirements:

- ◆ 8 to 12 minutes in length
- ◆ Covers basic project elements in detail and explores your educational past and future.
 - Your educational history and personal details
 - Project
 - Goals for the future
- ◆ Includes visual aid (posters, PowerPoint, video, equipment)

PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!

Practice is an essential element in preparing for the senior boards. Your teacher will probably require you to practice in class, but this is not enough. Below are some out-of-class practice suggestions that can help you prepare for the senior boards:

- ◆ Practice in front of a mirror so you can see what you look like.
- ◆ Tape your speech on a video camera and then watch the speech twice, one time without sound. This can help you pick up on some speech habits you may not be aware of.
- ◆ Practice with your friends.
- ◆ Practice with family – parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, and grandparents.
- ◆ Practice with and without note cards. Many people discover they feel more comfortable without the note cards.

Speech Content

What is content?

Content deals with what you say in your speech, not so much how you say it. A speech that has strong content gives details and support for what is being said.

What does content have to do with the senior boards speech?

In your senior project speech, be sure to give details on each of the following elements.

Yourself: Who are you? What is your history as a student in Carson City Schools?

Your topic: Tell us what you chose and why.

Your project: Tell us what you did for your project, why you did it, what the learning stretch was, what successes you had, what problems you encountered and how you conquered these challenges.

Your Future: Did the Sr. Project assist you in your possible future goals? What are your goals? Where do you see yourself in five, ten, or twenty years from now?

Why are details and support important?

Details and support are what make the speech interesting to listen to. They help differentiate your senior project from the 400 other projects at your school. Details and support also add proof for what you are saying, in this case that you actually completed the project.



Details and support are essential for an interesting and convincing speech. Try to add specifics over generalities. Instead of saying, *I like fast-paced movies*, say *I like martial arts movies such as Shanghai Noon or Double Impact*.

Example

Little detail: I chose cycling as my topic because I like it.

More detail: I chose bicycle racing as my project because I have always wanted to compete in cycling. I have been riding for enjoyment for three years now, but chose to challenge myself by competing in a local street race.

Practice



Look at your senior project evaluation form. Rate each of the following excerpts on the scale of 1-4 in content.

- I hate flying. It seems that more and more flights are delayed and luggage is lost. The FAA statistics show the problem is only getting increasingly worse in recent years. Last year, when I flew to Cincinnati to visit my grandmother for Christmas, they lost my luggage and I had to go to the family dinner with the jeans I wore on the plane.

- Flying is frustrating because there are delays and sometimes my luggage gets lost. Once, I couldn't get on a flight because it was overbooked, so I couldn't go to Vegas.

- Flying is frustrating. _____
- Flying these days seems more frustrating than ever. The FAA reports that in November of 1998, 83 percent of flights arrived on time, while in November of 2000 that number dropped to 78.1 percent. And what about those times when you reserve a seat, only to discover the airline has overbooked the flight? The FAA states that in the July-September period of 1999, 7,813 passengers were involuntarily denied access to a flight as a result of overbooking. This number increased to 13,736 for the same period in the year 2000.



YOUR TURN

Create a speech about your pet peeve. Be sure to provide justification (details and support) for why you are rightfully irritated.

Speech Organization

What is organization?

Organization deals with the order in which you provide your information and how easily your listener can follow your train of thought.

What does organization have to do with the senior boards speech?

When structuring your senior boards speech, be sure to have an **introduction**, **body** and **conclusion**.

Order your information in a manner that makes sense, and make sure your audience can follow your train of thought.

What are transitions?

Transitions are words or phrases that function as street signs for your audience. They let your audience know when you are changing thoughts, continuing a list, providing more detailed information or concluding. Transitions help with organization because the listener can follow your train of thought.

Transitions	
To begin with	Furthermore
Secondly	Moreover
Thirdly	Consequently
Also	As a result
Next	In conclusion
In addition	However

How do I start off my speech?

Start with an introduction. The purpose of an introduction is three-fold (but not necessarily in this order):

- Catch your listener's attention – There are many different types of attention-getters. You can list shocking facts, quote a famous person, tell an appropriate joke, tell a personal story, or suggest a hypothetical.
- Introduce your topic – Make sure at some point you present your topic.
- Prepare your listener for what is to come – Tell your audience the main points of your speech.
Example: There are three reasons why gum should be outlawed in the state of Nevada: it's sticky, gum chewers are irresponsible, and gum chewing is an annoying habit.

How do I end my speech?

Conclusions to speeches vary, but generally it is a good idea to refer to the attention-getter in your introduction and restate your main points. Be careful to not sound redundant; use different language in your conclusion than in your introduction.



Some people really find it helpful to outline main points of a speech first. This helps with organization. Once your outline is complete, think about the order of the ideas you will be presenting and whether this order makes logical sense.

Practice

1) Make a list of tasks required to successfully clean a car. Rearrange the tasks twice. First, organize the tasks chronologically (by time). Then, rearrange the tasks in order of importance. Which makes more sense? Why?

2) Write two different **introductions** for one of the following speech topics using a different attention getter for each introduction:

- My best summer vacation
- Why school should start later in the day
- Why Yucca Mountain should/should not be used as a landfill for radioactive material

YOUR TURN



Prepare a speech on one of the following topics. Be sure to focus on organization. Use transitions and have an introduction and conclusion.

- ◆ My biggest accomplishment
- ◆ The future of our generation
- ◆ Television – why it is/is not detrimental to society

Speech Delivery

What is delivery?

Delivery deals with how you present the information in your speech. It includes each of the following elements:

Volume – Can your audience hear you? Remember to talk to the person in the back of the room.

Clarity – Can your audience understand you? Are you speaking clearly and enunciating? If you are someone who slurs your words or mumbles, concentrate on speaking clearly.

Tempo and Pauses – Is there a natural rhythm to your speech? Pauses should seem natural and not be distracting. Don't speak too rapidly or too slowly.

Eye Contact – Do you make eye contact with the entire room? Don't forget about the audience members sitting to either side of you and in the back corners. Don't know how long to maintain eye contact? If you feel uncomfortable, they probably do too. Move on to the next audience member.

Posture – Do you appear confident? Slouching, while possibly just a bad habit, sends a message of insecurity. Be sure to stand up straight.

Tone – What emotions does your voice present? Anger? Boredom? Enthusiasm? You want to present a tone of interest in your topic. How can your audience care about what you're saying if you don't?

Pronunciation – Do you pronounce words according to standard English? If you're unsure, ask someone.

Inflection – Do you use vocal intonation to get your point across? Inflection deals with what words you choose to emphasize.

What does delivery have to do with the senior boards speech?

Although your audience is not looking for you to be the next Martin Luther King, Jr., they will expect that your delivery be professional. A well-written senior boards speech that is poorly delivered does not meet its goal: to inform its audience of your project.



Giving a speech? Throw out that gum! Gum chewing is not only distracting and unprofessional, but it also interferes with clarity and enunciation.

Something to Think About

Think about the role delivery plays in the act of a stand-up comedian.
Can two different people tell the same jokes differently and still be funny?

Practice



Eye contact – In a small group, give a brief speech about what you did last weekend. Make sure to make eye contact with *each* person for a few seconds.

Inflection – Read each sentence out loud, emphasizing the underlined word. How does the meaning change?

He gave the ring to her?

He gave the ring to her?

He gave the ring to her?

He gave the ring to her?



YOUR TURN

Create a persuasive speech. Your goal is to convince your audience to agree with your point of view. You can try to convince your audience that the driving age should be changed or that everyone should ski. Use delivery to help convince your audience.

Speech Language

What is meant by language?

Language deals with the words and phrases you choose to present an idea and how you put these together. Different situations call for different levels of formality. Informal situations, such as a dinner with friends, call for informal language. Formal situations, such as a job interview, call for more formal language. What is considered “proper English” should be used in the more formal settings.

What does language have to do with the senior boards speech?

Your audience is expecting professional language use, which means no profanity or slang. Additionally, your audience is looking for the language appropriate to your topic; this shows mastery in your topic area. For example, a student who has made pottery for their senior project will use words such as *the wheel*, *glaze* and *the kiln*.

How do I know when to use more formal language?

Language usage is largely intuitive, but everyone can benefit from thinking consciously about word choice. Below is an illustration of the formality continuum. Just as in writing, different situations call for more or less formality.

Casual situations with friends

Conversation with teachers

Senior Boards

Informal

Formal



Giving a formal speech or interviewing for a job? Remember to omit slang and profanity. Neither one belongs in a formal setting.

Practice

1). Reword the following phrase for the different scenarios:



That was a good movie.

- ◆ Telling your friends after the movie.
- ◆ Telling your grandparents over dinner.
- ◆ Telling your teacher before class.
- ◆ Telling your classmates in a speech assignment.

2) Place the following words where they belong on the formality continuum.

Informal

Formal

Outgoing
Gregarious
Chatty

Brutal
Arduous
Hard

Swine
Oinker
Pig



YOUR TURN

Prepare a speech for your class on someone who has influenced your life. Think consciously about your language choices. Aim for a more professional-sounding speech.

Speech – Professional Decorum

What is professional decorum?

Professional decorum deals with all the elements that do not fall into the previous four categories (content, organization, delivery and language). Decorum has to do with the way you present yourself.

What does decorum have to do with the senior boards speech?

Your audience is expecting a positive and professional attitude towards your project and towards your audience. They expect you to be polite and prepared. There are four areas they will be specifically addressing:

Appearance – Dress professionally. This means wear clean and neat clothing. Make sure you are clean and well groomed, too. Unsure of whether or not an outfit is professional? Ask your teacher.

Attitude and Group Rapport – Have a positive attitude about yourself, your project and your audience. Even if you don't like the senior project, do not whine. You want to invite the audience to share in your enthusiasm, not insult them or bore them. Be polite to everyone in the room, including your peers when they are presenting. Say *thank you* and *please*.

Preparation – Practice your speech, have visual aids ready, and be early.

Visual Aid – Present a visual aid that will aid you in your presentation. It should not distract from what you have to say. Visual aids can vary: Power Points, tools, handouts, or drawings are just some of the types of visual aids you can use. Be sure to include the visual aid as part of your speech and not just decoration behind you while you speak.

Something to Think About

Think about the role costuming plays in movies. Costume directors spend a great deal of energy dressing actors to suit their character. Consider the following characters and their attire. How does their clothing establish their role in the plot and their relationship with other characters?

A gangster	A “godfather”
A police officer	A serial killer
A rock star	A judge
A mother	A waitress



Prepare an informative speech on a topic that you know a great deal about. Use a visual aid. Dress professionally, as if you were giving your senior boards speech. Present professional decorum.

Conquering Public Speaking Anxiety

Nervous about your Senior Boards? It is said that most Americans are more afraid of public speaking than they are of death. Amazing, isn't it? If you're nervous about your senior boards, try the following techniques:

- ◆ Practice. It is the best method for overcoming anxiety. Even if you are still nervous when you walk into the room, at least you will be less likely to forget what you are talking about when you are well-practiced.
- ◆ Breathe. When we are nervous, we tend to take shallow breaths. Just before your speech, think about taking slow, deep breaths. This will help calm you.
- ◆ Remember that your audience is pulling for you. Everyone in the room wants you to succeed. Keeping this in mind often helps overcome public speaking anxiety.
- ◆ Keep in mind, too, that most people are afraid of public speaking. This levels the playing field and means that your audience is not quite as critical as you might think.
- ◆ Stay positive. Those who think negatively about themselves will be more nervous.
- ◆ Understand that anxiety can be a healthy response to an uncomfortable situation. Acknowledge that you're nervous and that it's okay.
- ◆ Set up a reward for yourself for completion of the senior boards. This gives you something positive to focus on. You could, for example, plan on taking yourself out to dinner as a celebration.
- ◆ Get some exercise. Burn off that anxiety in a good workout.
- ◆ Eat well and get sleep. You will feel more confident if you feel good physically.
- ◆ Talk to someone about your fears. Sometimes, just getting it off your chest can help.
- ◆ Don't overreact. The Senior Boards are not a life or death situation, even if you have convinced yourself that it is.
- ◆ Don't procrastinate. The last thing you need when you're nervous is the stress of last-minute pressure. Prepare now!