
















Tips from Experienced Project Citizen Teachers




When Choosing a Topic:

-  Allow students to pick the topic themselves.
-  Make sure you can find research on the topic.
-  Choose a topic that can bring results.
-  Review necessary vocabulary before beginning the portfolio process.
-  Call or e-mail the *Project Citizen* coordinator to make sure that the topic the students have selected is a public policy.


Working with the Students:

-  Do a skills inventory of your students before making group assignments.
-  Class should have the opportunity to bond before starting the Project.
-  Allow the students to voice their concerns and ask them how they would resolve problems/conflicts.
-  Start writing letters and contacting resources early as it takes awhile to get replies.
-  Be flexible with lesson plans, time, and kids.
-  Research, Research, Research – there is never too much research.
-  As much as the center stresses to be a facilitator, teachers need to take a little more active role in assisting the students. e.g. proofing work, making sure that all the boards have the required information, surveys, etc.
-  Be a cheerleader!







Parent Involvement:

-  Get parents involved whenever possible.
-  Communicate openly with parents.
-  Use parents as community resources.

Grades:

-  Grade can easily be applied to individual tasks, different stages of putting the portfolio together, a pre-class presentation prior to the competition, self-assessments and peer evaluations, etc.

Other Stuff:

-  Practice interviewing before students go out on the real thing.
-  Turn students' questions back to them and let them explore the answers.
-  Hold practice hearings (video, if you can and let students critique themselves).
-  Assign some of the research for homework to expedite the process.
-  Involve other teachers in the building to help with the project.
-  Duplicate the documentation portion of the portfolio so you have it when preparing for the hearing.