

21st Century Language Arts: Project-Based Lessons that....*Relate*

ISTE 2010

Denver, CO

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<http://www.ecboeworkshops.wikispaces.com>



Etowah County Board of Education
Director – Instructional Technology, Distance Learning, Advanced Placement

Jacksonville State University Writing Project
Co-Director and Teacher Consultant

<http://www.ecboe.org>
<http://www.twitter.com/ecboe>

Resources and Links

Wikis

- What are they?
http://www.teachertube.com/view_video.php?viewkey=cc65c3778e53776b416d
- Create one: <http://www.wikispaces.com> Click k-12 teacher.
- Visit Wikis: <http://hbhs88.wikispaces.com>
<http://ecboeworkshops.wikispaces.com>

Google Docs in Plain English:

http://www.teachertube.com/view_video.php?viewkey=77c5560d4cd9c3ffb6cd

Twitter (What are you doing?)

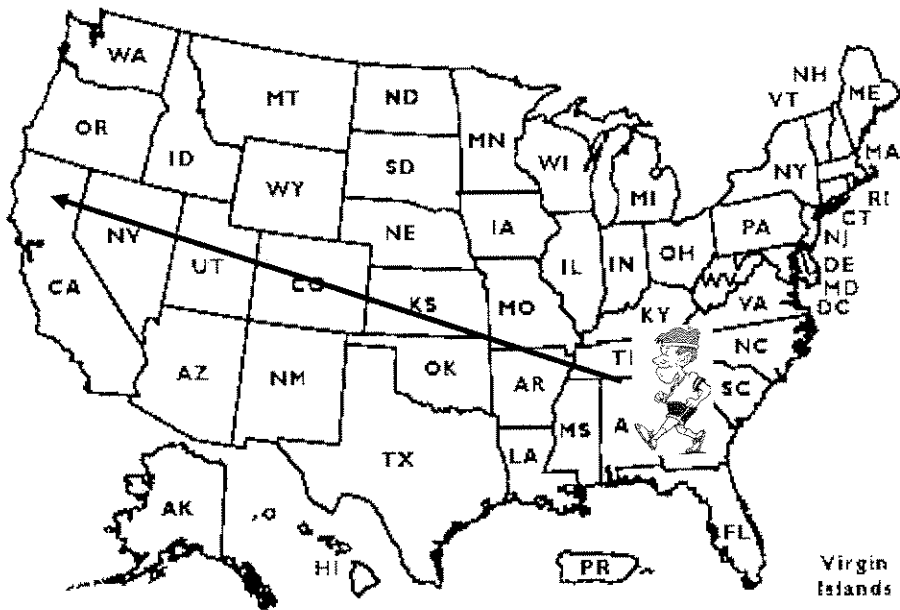
- What is it?
http://www.teachertube.com/view_video.php?viewkey=65c60642bc8f14432120
- Get connected: <http://twitter.com>

Poll Everywhere: <http://www.poll everywhere.com>

This presentation and workshop handouts are available online:

<http://www.ecboe.org> (Click Teachers' Corner / Language Arts / Writing) and
<http://ecboeworkshops.wikispaces.com/FETC-ACTE+Workshop>

I'm Walking Across America



Brief Description

“My Year Walking through America” is a project in which students use geography, personal finance, journaling, webquests, and wikis to create fictitious memoirs of their travels across America on foot, having only basic camping gear and \$750 in cash on hand. Students must research the anticipated path of their travels (states, tourist attractions, and history), as well as determine possible temporary sources of income. Students then write about their travels, means of income, and epiphanies they encountered along the way. This activity was inspired by Peter Jenkins’s autobiography, Walk Across America. All students publish their memoirs online on their school assigned blogs or Twitter.

I'M WALKING ACROSS AMERICA!

Project

Directions:

- On your map, plot your destination, beginning in Hokes Bluff on the map. You do NOT have to travel in a straight line, although your trip must end on the western or northeastern coast. You have **ONE YEAR** to complete this trip.
- On your paper, you must first introduce yourself and briefly explain what you expect to accomplish on this trip. Then, you must write a detailed description, telling why you are visiting each state. Discuss the attraction it has for you and what you plan to do there. Each state must be discussed in complete paragraphs. Use the Internet for research on each state. You might find some very unusual tourist attractions! ☺
<http://www.roadsideamerica.com/>
<http://www.etractions.com/>
- You have \$750 to spend. Explain how you will spend all the money. Include food, clothing, and any other expenses.
- As for holidays (Christmas, birthday, 4th of July, etc.), tell where you will be and how you will celebrate them.
- You must work for **SIX** weeks somewhere doing something. What will you do, and where will you stay? How much money will you make?
- Turn in your map, timeline, and narratives when finished. Your narratives must also be typed on your Think.com site.

"I started out searching for myself and my country and found both." - Peter Jenkins

A Hokes Bluff Middle School 8th grade class read the autobiography, *Walk Across America*, by Peter Jenkins. In this novel, Peter actually walked across the country in the early 70's in order to discover the "real" America. Disenchanted with American hypocrisy and materialism, he began his walk in Alfred, New York and made his way through the heartland. He left only with several hundred dollars, a well-equipped backpack, and his best friend – an Alaskan malamute named Cooper. He planned to earn money working odd jobs as needed, and he tried to camp out as much as possible.

His most anticipated destination was Alabama. Having witnessed much about the state in the media, Peter was eager to confront the "ignorance" of the southern population. George Wallace, the presiding governor at the time, was his main target. His stance on the South was irrevocably altered, however, when he actually reached Alabama and met many a farmer and southern belle. He wrote in this journal, "TAA," which stood for "Totally amazed by Alabama." He was overcome with the genteel nature and generosity of Alabamians. For instance, in Orville, a kind farmer named M.C. Jenkins offered his home for several days to Peter because, "if you sho' nuff aw a Jenkins, well, I won't let any kinfolk of mine sleep in that woods, no sa!" Peter stayed and milked cows, ate fine Southern cuisine, mended fences, and shoveled horse "ma-new-a." He later went to the capital and met the infamous George Wallace. Once again, he was proven wrong when he left Montgomery with an extreme fondness for the "guv-na" that most of the nation knew only for his harsh racial stands.

Before leaving Alabama, he worked in Mobile as a tree surgeon and while there, attended a Southern revival, which was led by a preacher named James Robison. It was then that he found what he had been missing his entire life – salvation and peace. His walk ends in Louisiana, where he lodged at a Christian seminary to write about his journey.

After reading this novel, the 8th grade class was inspired to emulate Peter's adventure. The project was this: Students had \$750 and one year to walk from Hokes Bluff to the western or northeastern shoreline. They were to find a job for at least six weeks and chronicle their trip in a journal. They were to explain the motivation for their destinations, as well as how they would spend their time and money. Students used Mapquest and Roadside America online for their research. Their journals were later published on each student's web page.

While completing this project, students learned so much about their country. The journal entries were riveting and emotional. It was, at times, easy to forget that they were fictional. Below are excerpts from some of the students.

Several weeks later, 8th graders met with their 2nd grade buddies (Mrs. Patti Shields and Mrs. Annette Morgan's class) to share information about their favorite states and attractions. They created limericks to teach fun facts. Maps were provided, and the older students pinpointed the path of their walks. After providing this information and pictures, the 2nd graders wrote descriptive essays with the help of their 8th grade buddies.

Name: _____

Timeline

January –

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

February – Valentine's Day

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

March –

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

April –

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

May –

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

June –

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

July – 4th of July

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

August –

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

September –

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

October – Halloween

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

November –

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

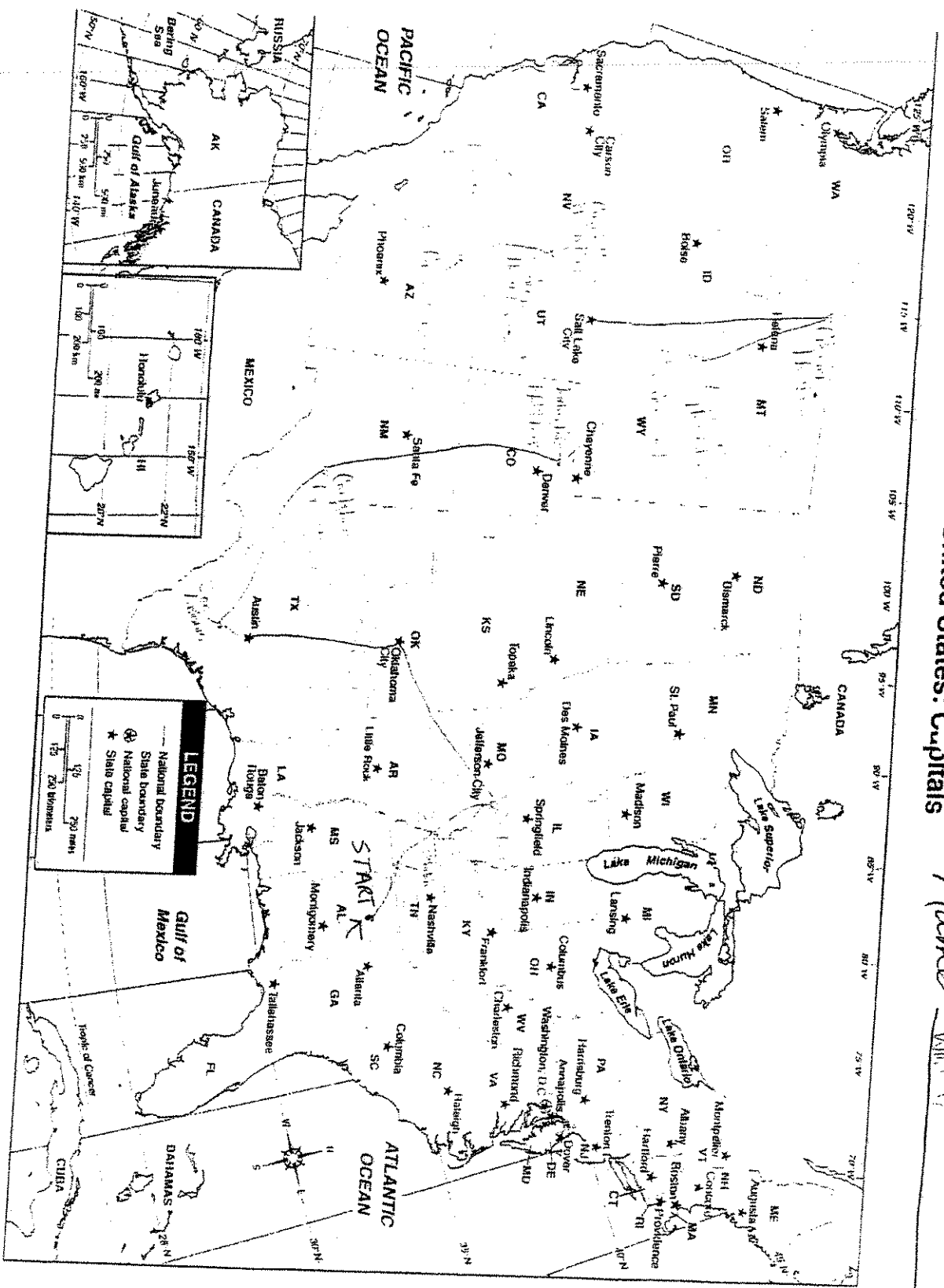
December – Christmas and New
Years

State(s):
Money Spent:
Attraction(s):
Notes:

6

United States: Capitals

Flame's Map 1



Excerpts from the Student's Blogs

From Heather W.:

Hey! My name is Heather and I am walking across America! We have recently been reading the book, "A Walk Across America", by Peter Jenkins, in my 8th grade Reading class. This wonderful book is about a man who is completely fed up with America and wants to do something about it. One day he decides that he and his dog, Cooper, will walk across America to better understand this country and the people in it. Throughout the book, he tells about the interesting people he meets along the way. My favorite is probably the black family that he stays with in Texana, North Carolina. My class decided that we would take our own journey and, just like Peter, Walk Across America! Please join me as I begin in Alabama on February 1, 2005 and end when I reach Washington in January, 2006. Hope you enjoy!

I will begin my journey on February 1, 2005, and end sometime in January 2006. I will be taking my golden retriever, Honey, along with me. Honey and I have trained for three months and we are more than ready! I have \$750 to spend and one year to complete my journey. I will start in my hometown of Hokes Bluff, AL. I plan to walk through the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Oregon, and finally, Washington!

April Entry:

We reached Texas on April 5. Honey and I spent the months of April and May in this southern state. Before our experience in Louisiana, neither Honey nor I had never been to a state park before. We enjoyed it so much that I decided to find another to visit in Texas. I was almost tired of searching for a park that would fit my budget, until I came across Big Bend National Park. It fit my budget perfectly and we had a blast. I only ended up spending \$100 during my first month in Texas. Even though I had not splurged or spent much money, I realized we weren't going to make it through an entire year with only \$750. I had to get a job! People and food are probably my two favorite things, so I thought a waitressing job would be perfect for me. I got a job at the Big Texan Steak Ranch. I worked here for 6 weeks and, including tips, made about \$1000 to spend on the rest of my journey. Honey and I were now ready to leave Texas.

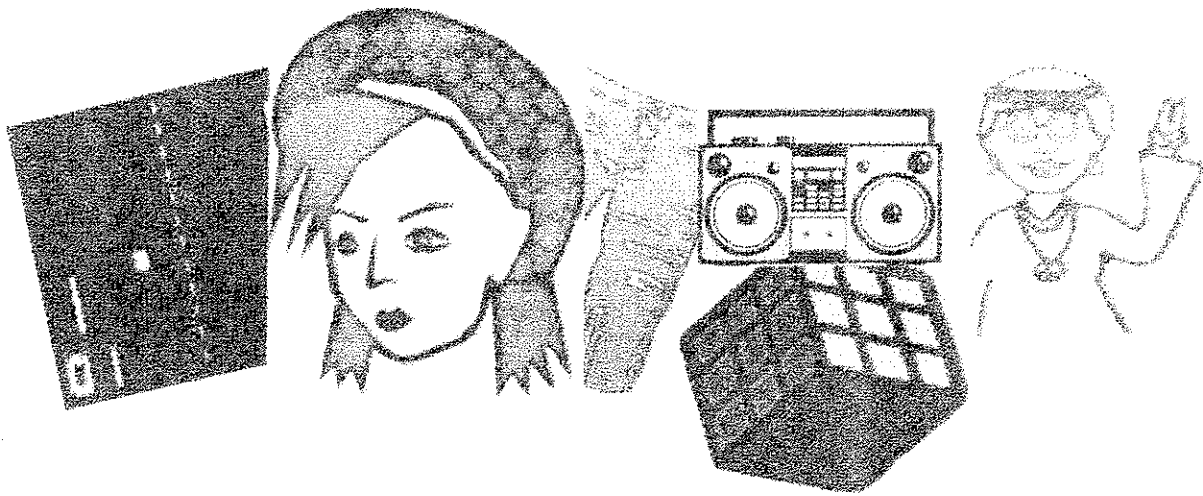
May Entry:

We left the big state of Texas on May 22, and began making our way toward New Mexico. I was very excited about this state. I was finally going to learn how to ski! Living in Alabama, I never experienced much snow growing up. However, I had always dreamed of learning how to ski. Now I was finally going to live out my dream!

June Entry:

We arrived at the Taos Ski Valley on June 3. When we first arrived, Honey immediately fell in love with the snow. Being only 3 years old, she had never seen snow before. It was wonderful watching her have so much fun in this winter wonderland, even though it was June. After Honey had her fun with the snow, it was time for me to meet my ski instructor. Her name was Alli, and she was about my age. The first thing she told me was that I would definitely need some ski equipment. I hadn't thought about this! I had only planned to spend \$25 in New Mexico. It wasn't in my budget. I thought my dream was lost when I told Alli that I wouldn't be able to pay for ski equipment. She told me not to worry. I could rent some equipment for only \$15. That included skis, a ski suit, goggles, shoes, a thick pair of socks, and three scarves. I was so relieved! I would still get to learn how to ski! I've always been a fast learner, and skiing was no different. I felt like I was made for the snow! This was one of the greatest experiences of my walk.

"Back in the Day" Research Project



Brief Description:

The "Back in the Day" project is a full-length MLA-style research paper where students focus on the year of their births (or other specified year). Researching national and international events, entertainment trends, and personal history are among the criteria for this project. Students conduct and publish the research through wikis, webquests, personal interviews, and formal MLA research writing. The project culminates in a "show and tell" activity in which students share a "piece" of that decade with the class through music, artifacts, clothing, or video. I designed this research project as a fun way to teach research writing to students in a format that cannot easily be "copied and pasted" from another source online.

Dear Parents,

Soon your child will begin working on a research paper about a very important person - You! Students will pick a parent (or guardian) and then research the year that parent graduated from high school in terms of news, music, and trends. They will also give a brief biography of the parent, his or her high school, and his or her birthplace. Fear not! We will get through this process together. Believe it or not, this is going to be an exciting and rewarding experience for your child. Hopefully, you will enjoy it too!

This "Back in the Day" research paper is a step-by-step process through which I will carefully guide your child. However, I would like for you to get involved and become an important part of this process. You can help by making sure your child is completing his or her research and by questioning and sharing the collected information at home. This research process to which your child will become committed will be useful throughout his or her life -far beyond the walls of my classroom.

Some of the materials that will be needed while completing the research process include the following:

Index cards (3 X 5)

Notecards (4 X 6)

Paper folder with brackets and pockets

Typewriter or word processor

Some initial guidelines are as follows:

Students must use at least 5 different sources: Encyclopedias and/or Books, News Sources, Teen Interviews (from that year), Family Interviews, Movies, and Internet Sites

Students must have at least 30 notecards.

The paper should follow this outline:

Introduction and Thesis

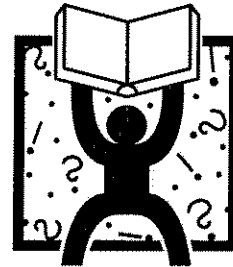
I. Parent Background

II. Current Events

III. Comparison and Contrast

Conclusion and Restated Thesis

The paper must be typed - at least 4 pages.



Your child will be given a research paper packet. He or she will only receive one, so please make sure that is accounted for at all times. If you have any questions concerning the steps and procedures involved in this research paper, consult the packet for answers.

As soon as we begin the paper, please check periodically with your child to see how he or she is doing. If I can be of assistance during this research project, please do not hesitate to call me at school or email me (mjshields@bellsouth.net). Thanks for your continued support and encouragement.

Parent's Signature

Respectfully,

Melissa Shields

/0

Name: _____

“Back in the Day” Research Project

I. Parent Background

- A. Parent Introduction (name, age, qualities, etc.)
- B. Parent’s High School
- C. City (Brief Description – Population, Interesting Facts, etc.)
- D. State (Brief Description – Population, State Symbols, Interesting Facts, etc.)

II. Current Events

- A. News
 1. National Events (Ones that happened on or near your birthday)
 2. International Events (Ones that happened on or near your birthday)
- B. Entertainment
 1. Movies
 - a. Oscar Winner (from that year)
 - b. Teen Favorite (from that year)
 2. Music
 - a. Number One Song (the name of the number one song during the week of your birth)
 - b. Popular Music (music trends, musicians, bands, and hit songs from that year)
- C. Trends
 1. Teen Appearance (clothing, name brands, hairstyles, etc.)
 2. Expressions
 3. Cars
- D. ????? Pick an area you would like to research - sports, weather, politics, television shows, etc.

III. Comparison and Contrast (Compare and contrast your parent’s graduation year with the current year. How have things remained the same? What’s different? Which is better, in your opinion?)

Your paper should follow the order of this outline. You may add details, but you may not omit any of the above information. All questions must be answered.

You must collect your information by means of at least five of the following resources: **Encyclopedias and/or Books, News Sources, Teen (from that year) Interviews, Family Interviews, Movies From that Period, and Internet Sites**

Check out these Sites! Mrs. Shields / 8th Grade English

Your bib cards should be copied exactly as provided here. You are encouraged to find other websites and reference materials to complete research. Use the references below to model any new bib cards.

90's Websites – News, Music, Trends, Etc.

Grosvenor, Charles R. Jr. "In the 90s." 2006. <http://www.inthe90s.com> (Today's Date).

"I Love the 90's" VH1. 2006. http://www.vh1.com/shows/dyn/i_love_the_90s/series.jhtml (Today's Date).

"The Noble Nineties." 2006. <http://library.thinkquest.org/J0111064/90home.htm> (Today's Date).

80's Websites – News, Music, Trends, Etc.

Grosvenor, Charles R. Jr. "In the 80s." 2006. <http://www.inthe80s.com> (Today's Date).

"i80's." 2005. <http://www.i80s.com> (Today's Date).

"The 80's Server." 2006. <http://www.80s.com> (Today's Date).

70's Website – News, Music, Trends, Etc.

Grosvenor, Charles R. Jr. "In the 70s." 2006. <http://www.inthe90s.com> (Today's Date).

Music Chart for Years/Months

"OzNet Music Chart." 2006. <http://www.onmc.iinet.net.au> (Today's Date).

You'll need to click on the pull down tab labeled "Australian, UK and US #1 Hit Singles Archive (1950-2006)" to find your song.

News Events

"Television News Archive." 2006. <http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu> (Today's Date).

You'll click on "Enter TV-News Search." Enter as "new user" and makeup name and password -- Use AR info sto you'll remember it. Once you are authorized, click on "Browse by Date," and then you'll find the newscasts from the exact day you need. It's really cool!

"NewsLibrary.com." 2006. <http://nl.newsbank.com> (Today's Date).

Click on "Search" tab, enter the year you need in the "from" box, and then you may narrow your search by clicking on "national" or "international."

Rap Song Research

Brief Description:

The third project is a class favorite – “Rap Song Research.” In groups, students create a research-based rap song about a historical event or figure. Students use Google-Docs or wikis to work on song as a group and ultimately perform their song to the class (or school, if preferred). Slideshow presentations must also accompany each performance. All work is cited in MLA format.

Rap Song Requirements
8th Grade Reading / Mrs. Shields

- 1) 16-20 lines
- 2) all must PERFORM song (one may run PP slideshow)
- 3) strong rhythm and/or pattern
- 4) research-based
- 5) typed copy turned in
- 6) use wiki or Google Doc to collaborate and create
- 7) PowerPoint to accompany performance
- 8) Group Collaboration (all must work)

Rap Songs
Mrs. Shields/8th English

1. Performance Your performance was hard to follow. Did you practice? 1 2	Pretty Good! Remember, all members must participate. 3 4	Great Performance! Very entertaining! 5 X 2 = _____
2. Rhythm Your song did not follow a strong rhythm or pattern. 1 2	Not Bad! Most of your song had an established rhythm. 3 4	Superb! Your song had a great beat. Very catchy tune! 5 X 6 = _____
3. Research Your song lacks research-based information. 1 2	Your song needs more research. Be DESCRIPTIVE. 3 4	Very informative. We learned a lot from your song. Good job! 5 X 4 = _____
4. Typed Copy Many lines have errors. Did you proofread? 1 2	Several errors. It's not ready for the anthology. 3 4	Looks great! Your final copy is attractive and error-free. 5 X 4 = _____
5. Group Effort Your group did not use research time effectively. You must ALL work together. 1 2	Use group time wisely. No talking to other groups. 3 4	Way to work together! I'm proud of your group! 5 X 4 = _____

Comments: _____ TOTAL = _____

CLEOPATRA

Cleopatra comin' at you from about 69 B.C.

Cleopatra was her name

Playin the flute was her game

The daughter of Ptolemy

A pharaoh known extensively

She had a lot goin' on for a teen

At only eighteen she became queen

She married her little brother

But soon she loved another

The man she met was king of Greece

He always wanted to keep peace

Caesar Agustus was his name

Ruling Greece was his game

Caesar thought Cleo was very keen

But all she wanted was to be queen

Mark Antony was a poet

And soon Cleopatra would know it

Their romance for each other grew stronger and stronger

Caesar was out of the picture and it lasted longer and longer

Mark Antony committed suicide

Because he heard Cleo had died

When Cleo found out that Mark was dead

She wouldn't eat any of the food she was fed

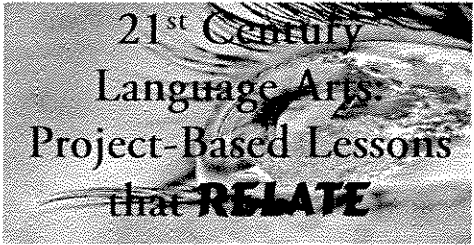
She found out the least painful way to die

She made an asp bite her, no time to even cry

And that's our story of Queen Cleopatra

Watch out for any asp it just might snatch ya

2nd Period / Group 1



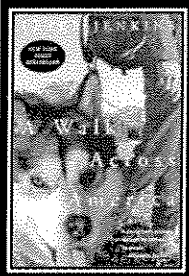
21st Century
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<http://www.ecboe.org>
<http://www.twitter.com/ecboe>

Walk Across America Project


- Webquests
- Google Earth
- Twitter
- Financial Planning
- Blogs / Online Memoirs



When I Become a Teacher.....

<http://homepage.mac.com/leslevu/iMovieTheate.html>

Walk Across America Project




Brief Description

"My Year Walking through America" is a project in which students use geography, personal finance, journaling, webquests, and wikis to create fictitious memoirs of their travels across America on foot, having only basic camping gear and \$750 in cash on hand.

- Students must research the anticipated path of their travels (states, tourist attractions, and history), as well as determine possible temporary sources of income.
- Students then write about their travels, means of income, and epiphanies they encountered along the way.
- This activity was inspired by Peter Jenkins's autobiography *Walk Across America*. All students publish their memoirs online on their school assigned blogs or Twitter.

Our Students Want to Learn...

- Technology
- With one another
- Online
- In their own time
- In their own place
- Doing things that matter



National Geographic
April 1977

Student Blog Excerpts

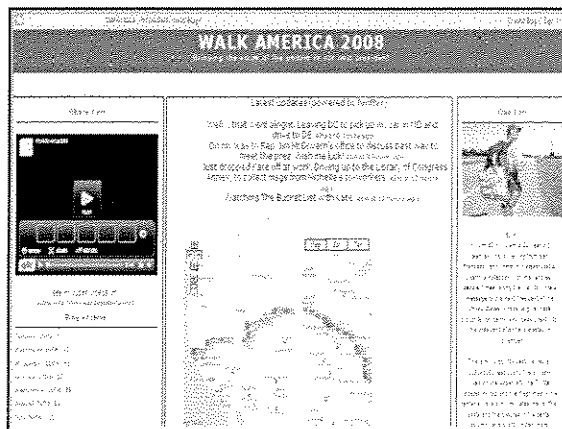
From Wade G.:



Hi, my name is Wade, and I am walking across America. I am setting out to see the sights of this wonderful country. I have camping supplies, \$750 in cash, and the unbridled spirit of exploration to get me through. I plan on walking from my home town of Hokes Bluff, Alabama to the coast of California in a year. We recently read a book called *A Walk Across America*. The book is about this guy who is fed up with people and the way they are. He's gotten to the point where he hates everything so he decides to walk across America with his dog Cooper and see what everything is all about. He's trying to find himself basically. Our teacher, Mrs. Shields, decided that we were going to walk across America too. She gave us a map so we could choose where we wanted to go and \$750 to start our journey with. Below are all the states I went to and what I found!

January Entry:

That month I had traveled through Texas and Oklahoma. Texas was so hot that Josie and I could hardly stand it. We went swimming in anything we could possibly get wet in. After Texas we went straight through Oklahoma and stopped in Oklahoma City to see a bombing memorial. The memorial sprawls across the real estate where the bombing took place. One particularly eerie sight is an array of chairs in a field, representing each victim, lit by a translucent cube below each seat. I camped there at night and it was so beautiful with all the lights everywhere.



Student Blog Excerpts

From Morgan G.:



In Reading class we are reading a book called "A Walk Across America." It's about a man named Peter Jenkins. He doesn't exactly like the direction his life is going, so he decides to give America one last chance. He and his dog train for a few weeks and then they take off on their journey through America. In class we are following in Peter's footsteps and going on our own journey across America. We have one year and \$750. We can't take anyone with us, so it's just us and great Mother Nature. HERE WE GO!!!!!!

For three months I prepared for this. The walk that hopefully would change my life. I packed all off the things that I needed. I had a huge bag on my back packed full, and a German Shepherd named Mary by my side. Early in the morning on February 7th, we took off... on our walk across America.

"Back in the Day" Research Project

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- Researching national and international events, entertainment trends, and personal history are among the criteria for this project.
- Students conduct and publish the research through wikis, webquests, personal interviews, and formal MLA research writing.
- The project culminates in a "show and tell" activity in which students share a "piece" of that decade with the class through music, artifacts, clothing, or video.
- I designed this research project as a fun way to teach research writing to students in a format that cannot easily be "copied and pasted" from another source online.

B.J. Hill

Walking Across America to Lend a Voice

English teacher, B.J. Hill, set out from San Francisco in March to walk across the United States. While doing so, he collected messages written to the next president, words written by the Americans he encountered during his journey.

On January 18, 2009, after 4,200 miles, seven pairs of shoes and enough messages to fill three books full, Hill capped his travels by arriving back in Boston, officially bringing his Walk Across America 2008 to a close.

Hill used the Internet to chronicle his trip, via both his *Walk America* blog and *Twitter*, but elected to keep the heart of his project — the people-to-president messages — in book form.

BJ's Blog: <http://walkamerica2008.blogspot.com/>



"Back in the Day" Research Project


- Wikis
- Webquests
- Interviews
- Classroom Text Messaging
- Guest Speakers
- MLA Research
- Ipods / MP3 Players
- "Show and Tell"



**The Totally Stellar, Tripenticular,
80's Research Paper**


“Help...I’ve fallen and can’t get up!” This is one of the famous 1980’s expressions. With such strange expressions, this decade must have been interesting. But what else was there to the 80’s? What happened during that time? Has anything changed since then?”

**RAP SONG
Requirements**



- 16-20 lines
- All must PERFORM song (one may run PP slideshow)
- Strong rhythm and/or pattern
- Research-based
- Typed copy turned in
- Use wiki or Google Doc to collaborate and create
- PowerPoint to accompany performance
- Group Collaboration (all must work)

**RAP SONG
Research**



Brief Description:

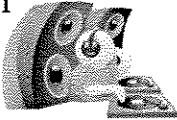
- In groups, students create a research-based rap song about a historical event or figure.
- Students use Google-Docs or wikis to work on song as a group and ultimately perform their song to the class (or school, if preferred).
- Slideshow presentations must also accompany each performance. All work is cited in MLA format.

Rap Song Excerpts

CLEOPATRA
 Cleopatra comin' at you from about 69 B.C.
 Cleopatra was her name
 Playin' the flute was her game
 The daughter of Ptolemy
 A pharaoh known extensively
 She had a lot goin' on for a teen
 At only eighteen she became queen
 She married her little brother
 But soon she loved another
 The man she met was king of Greece
 He always wanted to keep peace
 Caesar Agustus was his name
 Ruling Greece was his game
 Caesar thought Cleo was very keen
 But all she wanted was to be queen.....

*Written by the
Verb Vipers*

**RAP SONG
Research**



- Google Docs / Wikis
- PowerPoint Presentations
- Multi-Discipline Research
- Class/School Performances

Rap Song Excerpts

America, Sept. 11, 2001

“We live in the United States, a country that is free.
 Something happened in New York City, and it affected me.
 On the day of September 11 of the year 2001,
 Clouds of black smoke billowed from tower number one.
 At 8:50 on that morning, terror from the skies
 Would change the world forever by taking many lives.....

They killed about 6,000 people, and tons of them are missing.
 We have to stand up very tall and tell our enemy we're not sinking.
 Remember to keep praying for our country and do the best we can,
 For God is with our nation, and He will protect us until the end.”

Writing Rappers, 2001