

# Sharing our Un-Beautiful Projects



## **The Six A's of Powerful Projects**

### **Academic Rigor**

**Projects address key learning standards identified by the school or district and helps students develop habits of mind and work associated with academic and professional disciplines.**

### **Authenticity**

**Projects use a real world context (e.g., community and workplace problems) and address issues that matter to the students.**

### **Applied Learning**

**Projects engage students in solving semi-structured problems calling for competencies expected in high-performance work organizations (e.g., teamwork, problem-solving, communication, etc.).**

### **Active Exploration**

**Projects extend beyond the classroom and connect to work internships, field-based investigations, and community explorations.**

### **Adult Connections**

**Projects connect students with adult mentors and coaches from the wider community.**

### **Assessment Practices**

**Projects involve students in regular exhibitions and assessments of their work in light of personal, school and real-world standards of performance.**



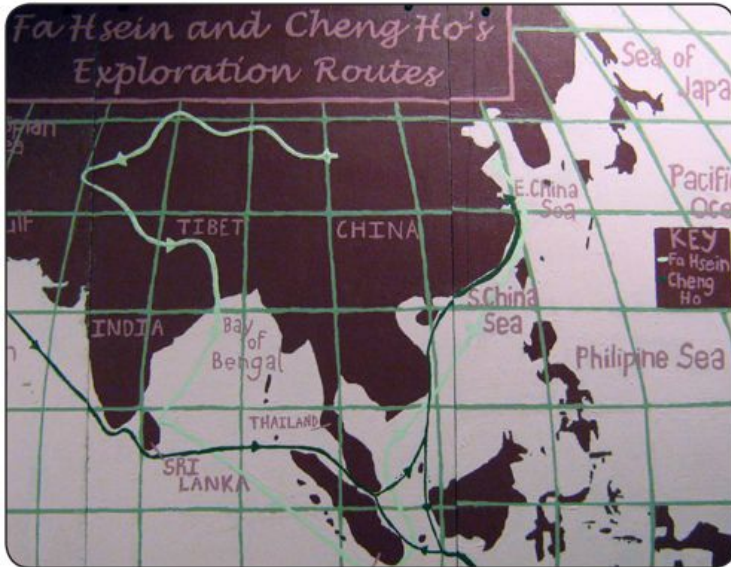
# Authenticity

## Projects:

**Use a real world context (e.g., community and workplace problems)**

**Emanate from a problem that has meaning to students**

**Result in a product or performance that has personal and/or social value**



# Applied Learning

## Projects:

**Engage students in solving semi-structured problems**

**Call for competencies expected in high-performance work organizations (e.g., teamwork, problem-solving, communication)**

**Require students to develop organizational and self-management skills**



Sangak{You}



# Active Exploration

**Projects:**

**Extend beyond the classroom**

**Connect to field-based investigations, community explorations, and work internships**

**Require real investigations using a variety of methods, media, and sources**



# Adult Connections

## Projects:

**Connect students with adult mentors and coaches from the wider community**

**Expose students to adults with relevant expertise**

**Engage adults in the design and assessment of student projects**

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# Assessment Practices

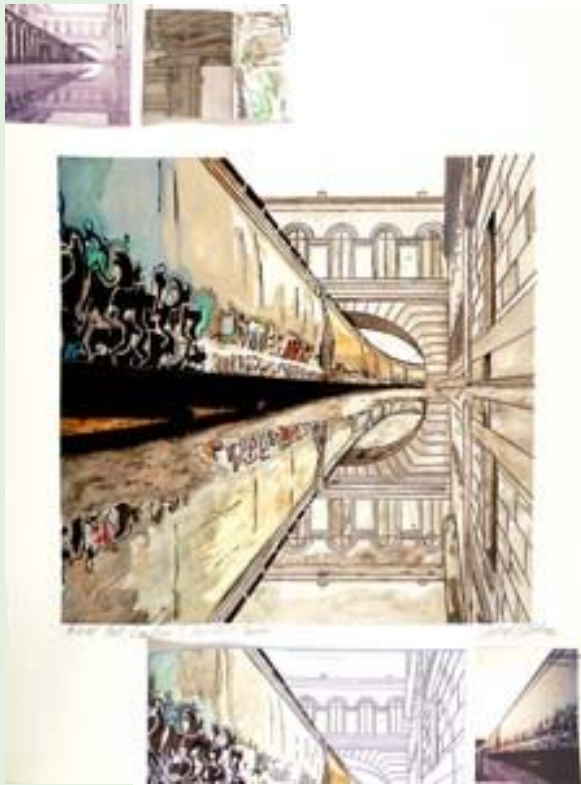
**Projects:**

**Provide milestones/checkpoints**

**Involve lots of reflection for students and teachers**

**Result in exhibitions and performances**

**Are grounded in personal, school and real-world standards of performance**



# Successful Projects

- **Are semi-structured and allow for student input (student choice)**
- **Follow a timeline with articulated milestones**
- **Require a tangible end product**
- **Articulate product expectations through professional examples (teachers make a prototype)**
- **Use critique and revision throughout the project**
- **Include presentation for a real audience**
- **Connect students with adult mentors and professionals**
- **Conceive of teachers as “coaches/facilitators” and students as “workers”**
- **Have grade level appropriate content**





# Goals:

- Encouraging risk
- Cultivating collegiality
- Improving our own work



# Instructions

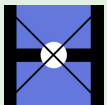
Write down one idea for a project that you would like to do with your class this year:

- **Product**
- **Topic**
- **Grade level**
- **Question you want answered**



# Norms

- Hard on the content, soft on the people
- Suspend judgment



# Example Guiding Questions

- What are some natural benchmarks for this project?
- How can I give students more choice/freedom?
- What would be some good management strategies for this project?
- What can I do to make my project more challenging?
- What can I do to make this project more authentic?
- Who is the audience? Who could benefit from this?
- How could I exhibit this?
- What could I do to make the products be more professional?
- What are some resources for this project?
- How can I make this project more “sticky”? Essential question suggestions?

