

Genius Hour Part I – Generating Ideas

Name: _____

For the next few Wednesdays, our class will be developing “Genius Hour” projects. **These projects will be due Monday, May 6.**

Genius Hour projects are student-developed, inquiry-based projects. Basically, the student creates a question based on a topic he or she is interested in. Then the student works to answer the question and develop a creative way to present his or her findings.

Every Wednesday will meet to discuss the progress on our projects and review expectations and guidelines for each step of the project.

Genius Hour projects are home-based projects – meaning that most of the work on the project needs to be done at home.

On May 6, students will bring their projects to school to display in the cafeteria as part of fifth grade’s “Genius Night”. Families are invited to come and see the work of our talented and creative students.

Think of a topic that interests you.

Before we get started on these projects, first find a topic that interests you. In the space below, brainstorm topics that you are interested in. Share your topics with a partner. Then circle the ONE topic that interests you the most:

Develop a question for your project to answer

Is there something about your topic that you would like to learn more about? Great! Your Genius Hour should be about that.

Write a question based on your topic that your Genius Hour project will try to answer. The question you choose is the heart of the project – so make it a good one!

Question Criteria: A good genius hour question...

- 1) Is based on a topic that your child is truly interested in and motivated to learn more about.
- 2) Requires in-depth observation, experimenting, and research to answer. **If a question can be answered within a minute by searching on Google, it's not a good question for a project.**
- 3) Is **possible** to answer using observation, experimenting, and research. Some questions really aren't possible to answer.
- 4) Does not involve dangerous activities or harms others.
- 5) Avoids "what if" questions.
- 6) Is presentable – you can present an answer.

Pro-Tip: A great genius hour question should start with HOW or WHY.

Examples:

These are **not** the only choices for your child, but are only examples to guide your child's choice:

Good Questions for a Project:	Not Good:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why should NASA choose Europa as the destination for their next space mission?• How does a 3-D printer work?• Why should we care about bees?• How does cotton go from a plant to pants?• How do animals communicate with people?• How do people make video games?• How did America win World War Two?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is Europa?• Can I 3-D print a Statue of Liberty?• What happens to bees kept in jars?• What happens if I mix diet coke and mentos?• What are the parts of a cotton plant?• What if the sun exploded?• Do plants need water?• How do you play Among Us?• What was D-Day?• Where do dogs go when they die?

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Brainstorm Questions:

Write possible questions for your project in the space below. Make sure to follow this checklist.

- ✓ Is it a question that you're interested in?
- ✓ Can it be answered by research, observation, and experiments that you can do?
- ✓ Is it safe?
- ✓ Can you work on it at home?
- ✓ Can you present your answer on a tri-fold poster or a stand-alone poster board? (you can add models)
- ✓ Can it be done by May 6?

Step Three: Finalize the Question with your Parents

After discussing the Genius Hour question with your parents, please write your final choice for the project question in the space below:

Fifth Grader Name: _____

Parent Approval Signature: _____

The question (not the project) is due by Wednesday, April 3.

All questions must be approved by Mr. Yates and a parent before a student can proceed.

RETURN THIS PAGE TO CLASS BY WEDNESDAY, April 3.