

**PROFESSIONAL LEARNING TEAM REPORT
2012-2013**

PLT Title

8th Grade Humanities Portfolio

Blurb for PLT Conference Brochure

The 8th grade Social Studies and English teams have been building off the foundation of the existing English portfolio to create a new collaborative humanities portfolio. This humanities portfolio will incorporate both Social Studies and English assessments by identifying requisite skills that are common among other eighth Social Studies/English teachers. These assessments were created not only to be aligned with new Common Core State Standards, but to also promote student learning toward those standards. The goal of this portfolio is to be able to measure and demonstrate student learning growth by the comparative analysis of student work throughout the year.

Contact Information (Write * next to facilitator's name.)

Name	School	Grade Level or Subject
Damian Gates*	Chenery	8 th Grade History
Suzanne Zmijewski	Chenery	8 th Grade History
Katie Metter	Chenery	8 th Grade History
Marlene Goncalves	Chenery	8 th Grade English
Jacquelyn Dupuis	Chenery	8 th Grade English
Maureen Lanoix	Chenery	8 th Grade English

PLT SMART Goal

To design and administer and evaluate two to four summative assessments to increase student achievement of the new Common Core State Standards. These will be added to the new 8th Grade Humanities Portfolio.

Key Actions

- 1. Design four summative assessments**
- 2. Administer assessments**
- 3. Collaborate with colleagues to assess student achievement**
- 4. Edit assignments based on student work**

These will be adapted to the 8th Grade Humanities Portfolio.

Findings

While the project is still in progress we have been able to ascertain some outcome information.

Results of this project (so far)

- We have seen an increased practice of various types of writing that is in line with the Common Core.
- As compared to History Day, students have been writing throughout the year which allows for deeper exploration of multiple topics in our curriculum.
- Having multiple projects allows for more opportunity to practice research skills throughout the year.
- We found standardizing the rubrics for social studies assignments to be very helpful. Students know what to expect for each assignment and teachers can more easily recognize student successes and where students need improvement.
- The self-assessment portion of each rubric allows students to begin to reflect upon their work and assess their progress. While we have been noticing some increased accuracy, we look forward to examining future year's data.
- We found a decrease in student stress as compared to history day since the work was spread over the course of the year as opposed to having to be completed in two months.

- More opportunities for differentiation since they are doing more research spread out over the year.
- We are able to provide better feedback because the projects are spread out throughout the course of the year.
- As compared to History Day, less money spent because there are no exhibits and there is no need for parents to contribute to the project.
- These projects more accurately tie in to support and reinforce the required curriculum.

Recommendations / Next Steps

When creating project, more thought needs to be given to how students will be presenting this project in their portfolios. For example, when students give presentations, a method needs to be created to determine how this presentation will translate this into something that can be incorporated into a portfolio.