

## **Pittsburgh- Let's Read, Write and Explore**

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### **Overview**

The curriculum unit I have chosen to write, Pittsburgh- Let's Read, Write and Explore, is designed for students at the middle school level. Although the unit could be used at any grade level, my specific target audience is sixth grade Communications students. The main goal of this unit is to discover more about the city of Pittsburgh while meeting the communication standards of the Pittsburgh Public Schools. In order to meet the main objective, my unit will be divided into three different, interconnected areas of study.

The first area of study will be a brief look at the state of Pennsylvania. This is really an optional choice for teachers depending upon the students you teach and the time frame you have to work with.

The next area of study will be an exploration of the history of Pittsburgh. The idea here is to give students an overview of the city they live in as we continue to narrow the focus of the curriculum unit.

The third and final area of study revolves around the exploration of specific landmarks and people associated with Pittsburgh. Here, students really have the opportunity to discover some of the truly amazing people and places that have made Pittsburgh such a fine city.

Each of the three areas of study will require students to read, write, and explore as they discover the rich heritage of their city. It is not necessary to include each of these areas if a teacher chooses to use this unit. The idea is to

pick and choose which areas best suit your specific educational needs and objectives.

## **Rationale**

Pennsylvania was founded in 1682 by William Penn as a refuge for the Society of Friends, or Quakers, and other religious minority groups. The colony was named for William Penn's father, Admiral William Penn, and literally means "Penn's woods." Pennsylvania became a state in 1787 and eventually came to be known as the Keystone State because of its location in the middle of the original thirteen states. Another commonly used term for Pennsylvania is the Quaker State.

With an area of 46,058 square miles, Pennsylvania ranks 33<sup>rd</sup> in size compared to the other states. Its boundaries include New Jersey and New York to the east, West Virginia and Ohio to the west, New York and Lake Erie to the north, and Delaware, Maryland, and West Virginia to the south. One of Pennsylvania's most striking characteristics is the great diversity of its landforms. Within the borders of this relatively small state can be found seven distinct geographical regions including coastal plain, piedmont, mountains, plateaus, and lowlands. The state contains a number of rivers, streams, lakes, and ponds, and approximately 60 percent of its area is covered by trees. The climate of Pennsylvania is classified as humid continental, with four distinct seasons and abundant rainfall.

Pennsylvania's abundant natural resources have historically provided for a variety of economic activities. Since colonial times, Pennsylvanians have engaged in farming, mining, logging, trade and manufacturing. During the nineteenth century, the state became known as a major producer of oil, coal, iron, steel, and glass. Today, about 31 percent of Pennsylvanians work in the service sector while another 22 percent are employed in the wholesale and retail trade industries. About 15 percent work in manufacturing with the rest of the population employed by government, finance, construction, utilities, transportation, and farming.

In the 1990 census, Pennsylvania ranked fifth in the United States with a population of 11,881,643 residents. It is the eighth most densely populated state and features a very diverse population. Most of Pennsylvania's original colonists came from England, Germany, France, Scotland, and Ireland. With the rise of manufacturing in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, many immigrants came to the state from Great Britain and Europe. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Pennsylvania's population swelled from an influx of African-Americans from the South. Today, its population is 88.5 percent white, 9.2 percent African-American, 2 percent Hispanic, 1.2 percent Asian, and the remainder from Native Americans and other minority groups. As of 1990, 69 percent of Pennsylvanians lived in metropolitan

areas. The largest of these areas is Philadelphia, which is located in the southeastern part of the state and contains a population of 1,585,577. The state capital is in Harrisburg, with a population of 52,376.

Pittsburgh (population 369,577) is the second largest city in Pennsylvania. It is located in the southwestern part of the state where the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers converge to form the Ohio River. Originally populated by members of the Shawnee and Delaware tribes, Pittsburgh's strategic location made it an ideal military settlement for both the English and the French. After the fall of the French Fort Duquesne in 1758, the site was permanently established as a British settlement and named after English Prime Minister William Pitt the Elder. In 1764, John Campbell laid out the area as a town and, in 1816, Pittsburgh became incorporated as a city. Because of the prominent role that Pittsburgh played in our nation's early history, the city and its neighboring counties contain many places of historic significance, such as Fort Pitt and Fort Necessity.

Pittsburgh's location eventually proved to be commercially, as well as militarily strategic. In the early 1800s, the city became established as a major center for travel by river, canal, railroad, and other forms of transportation. The first steamboat to travel the Mississippi River was built in Pittsburgh and by the middle of the century, the Pennsylvania Mainline Canal and Pennsylvania Railroad had reached the city. Nearby, the National Pike was built in neighboring Washington and Fayette counties. Pittsburgh's prominence as a transportation center eventually earned it the nickname of "Gateway to the West." When high quality bituminous coal was discovered nearby, Pittsburgh's importance as an industrial center began to grow as well. In addition to mining and exporting this valuable natural resource to other American cities, Pittsburgh used its coal to fuel its growing glass, iron, steel and textile industries. With the advent of the Civil War in 1861, Pittsburgh became a major supplier of ordnance to the Union army. Later, Pittsburgh's industries would respond to our nation's needs as we fought World Wars I and II.

Unfortunately, Pittsburgh's success as an industrial and transportation behemoth did not come without a price. Labor unrest rocked the city several times during the later half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as steelworkers fought for better pay and work conditions. Their efforts were stymied by industrialists, such as Andrew Carnegie and Henry Clay Frick, who defeated the workers by employing hundreds of Pinkerton detectives and by calling up the Pennsylvania State Militia. Furthermore, the growth of industry in Pittsburgh created terrible pollution of the city's air and water. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the air was so smoky, that streetlights needed to be turned on during the day. Pittsburgh's troubles were exacerbated in 1936, when a devastating flood destroyed much of the city and caused millions of dollars in damage. In addition, poor public services and

deteriorating housing resulted in wretched living conditions for many Pittsburghers.

In 1945, a coalition of local business and political leaders launched the Pittsburgh Renaissance. This partnership of private funding and public authority led to remarkable improvements as air pollution and flooding were brought under control, the city's transportation system was revitalized, and the downtown district was renewed and rebuilt. A second renaissance began in 1976, under the leadership of Mayor Richard Caliguiri. This initiative continued many of the improvements that had been started during the first renaissance. It also fostered the creation of service jobs and helped the city rebound from a severe downturn in the domestic steel industry.

Because of its long and colorful history, Pittsburgh is home to a number of fascinating people and places. A number of historical sites, some dating from the 1700s, can be visited without leaving the city limits. For example, Fort Pitt is located in Point State Park while the mansion of Henry Clay Frick can be found in the city's east end. The downtown area also features a number of notable and unique buildings from Pittsburgh's two renaissances. Gateway Center and the USX Tower would be examples of these. Remnants of the city's industrial past can be seen in neighboring communities along the Monongahela and Ohio Rivers, while the Oakland area contains several colleges, major universities, parks, and museums. Located on the city's north side, the Andy Warhol museum is the only facility of its kind in the United States that is dedicated to the work of a single artist. In this case, the artist is one of Pittsburgh's most notable celebrities. Other sites of historical interest include the home of engineer George Ferris, the inventor of the Ferris Wheel, at 204 Arch St and the home of musician Billy Eckstine at 5913 Bryant Avenue.

The rationale behind the development of this unit is two-fold. First, this unit will enable me, as a teacher, to have students meet many of the requirements needed for completion of their standards based portfolios. This unit will also meet many of the Communication Standards used in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. Developing this unit will also help both the students and me gain new insight and knowledge into Pittsburgh and how its exploration can be used to better appreciate our city and its rich heritage.

The seminar that I participated in, which led to the development of this curriculum unit, was entitled Pittsburgh Parks and Landmarks. The focus of the seminar was the exploration of Pittsburgh parks and landmarks from a variety of perspectives. These included, but were not limited to, history, geology, ecology, culture, politics, and sociology. Personally, I have never taken a course about Pittsburgh, which is one reason I chose this particular topic.

Although I consider myself to be a lifelong Pittsburgher, the truth is, I grew up on the fringes of the city, in the suburbs. My earliest recollections of the city have nothing to do with visiting its beautiful parks or admiring historic landmarks. As a young child, what I remember most vividly is shopping. Yes, every summer as the new school year approached, my mother would pile my older sister, younger brother, and myself onto a Port Authority Transportation (PAT) bus, and we would make our yearly pilgrimage to the city. It was new school clothes shopping day. How I enjoyed the feeling of traveling on what seemed like such a huge vehicle as we lumbered down the Parkway West. And I am still to this day as awestruck as I was as a child every time I burst through the Fort Pitt Tunnels and see that magnificent view of the Point and downtown Pittsburgh. As a youngster, however, I had only the excitement of new school clothes bought at Horne's Department Store, lunch in the Jenkins Arcade, and a trip to G. C. Murphy's for a toy, on my mind. And sadly, for many, many years, that's what I knew about Pittsburgh. As I grew older, my experiences grew more numerous but were not as rich as they could have or should have been. That is one of the main reasons I feel this curriculum unit is important. It will provide me with a way to learn more about the city of Pittsburgh. I see this unit as a teaching tool for my students and myself. I can use this unit to expand my students' knowledge and understanding of the city of Pittsburgh, while at the same time broadening my own spectrum of knowledge and helping me to become a better-rounded teacher.

The second idea behind my rationale for developing this curriculum unit deals more directly with the students I teach. In my sixth grade Communications (English Language Arts) curriculum, the scope and sequence requires the use of the Elements of Literature textbook. This book is divided into eight separate collections. These collections revolve around a specific theme with accompanying stories. The idea behind my curriculum unit is to develop my own collection. This collection will have Pittsburgh as its theme.

Another curriculum requirement revolves around the students' Standards Based Portfolios. The three elements include a reading section, a writing section, and a speaking, listening, and viewing section. Students are required to complete different elements in each of these sections. A report of information, response to literature, autobiographical incident, and a persuasive piece are a few of the required elements. Students are also required to read twenty-five books by at least four different authors and in at least four different genres. I think that this curriculum unit would enable my students to meet many of these requirements. By developing this curriculum unit, students will acquire new information, insights, and hopefully begin developing a new appreciation for Pittsburgh while never straying far from the scope and sequence of the mandated curriculum. This unit will be fun, entertaining, and educational for everyone.

## Objectives

As I mentioned earlier, students in the Pittsburgh Public School District are required to develop and maintain a Standards Based Portfolio. As students move through the different phases of this curriculum unit, they will be meeting many of the writing requirements. This unit will also enable students to fulfill the speaking, listening, and viewing requirements of their portfolio. In order to meet the requirements and standards set forth by the district, children are given rubrics that enable them to understand, and therefore, meet the expected criteria for a given piece of work. Within the framework of this unit, students will meet and hopefully exceed the expected criteria for each piece of work. My objectives for students as they progress through the unit will be:

1. The student will do independent research using the computer.
2. The student will do independent research using the library.
3. The student will discuss facts about Pennsylvania.
4. The student will read a story about Pennsylvania.
5. The student will present facts about their state to classmates.
6. The student will read a book about Pittsburgh.
7. The student will discuss Pittsburgh and compose a list of famous people and places.
8. The student will write a narrative based on an experience in the city of Pittsburgh.
9. The student will write a biography of a famous Pittsburgher.
10. The student will orally present a biography to an audience.
11. The student will view tapes dealing with famous Pittsburgh landmarks.
12. The student will write an informational piece on a landmark.
13. The student will orally present an informational piece to an audience.
14. The student will complete a peer evaluation of a speech.

15. The student will write a journal of reflections based on the unit.

16. The student will visit selected Pittsburgh landmarks.

### **Strategies**

Throughout the development of this unit, I will employ a number of strategies in order to meet the objectives I outlined and to assist students in reaching the standards.

In order to enable students to successfully complete the curriculum unit, it will be necessary to familiarize them with their state and city. This will be done in several different phases in order to keep their interest high and establish an adequate background for the unit.

As I mentioned in the overview, I see the entire curriculum unit as divided into three different, yet interconnected areas of study. The first strategy I would use to give the students a better understanding of the curriculum unit would be to introduce them to the first area of study: an overview of their state, Pennsylvania. Giving students an overview of Pennsylvania could be achieved in several different ways such as teacher led discussions that introduce some of the key landmarks and contributors to the state's history. The hope at this point of the unit, is that beginning with a broad look at the state will make the process somewhat familiar and therefore easier for students to deal with when the focus begins to narrow later in the curriculum's development. Also students will certainly bring Pittsburgh into the discussion during our exploration of the state. Once students develop some background knowledge about their state we can move to the next area of study.

The next strategy I would employ in order to help students meet the objectives outlined in my unit is the introduction of a second area of study. This area focuses on an exploration of the history of Pittsburgh. The rationale at this point is to begin to narrow the focus of the curriculum unit while still giving the students a glimpse of the rich history of their city. Again, teacher input would be used to generate specific time periods for student research. A timeline would be developed by the students to highlight major and memorable events throughout the city's history. Student presentations of the timeline would complete this phase of the curriculum unit.

The final step in the process of developing my unit is to introduce the third area of study to my students. This phase involves the exploration of specific landmarks and famous people associated with the city of Pittsburgh. In order to

successfully complete this objective, several strategies would be used at this point in the unit.

An initial strategy to guide students during this final phase of the curriculum unit would be to have them generate a list of landmarks. Obviously this would not be possible without the use of research and teacher assistance. The next step might be to narrow the list of landmarks to those in Pittsburgh or perhaps Allegheny County. Of course this choice is entirely up to the teacher. Students would then research a given landmark and share their information with their fellow students.

This phase of the curriculum unit also calls for students to generate a list of famous Pittsburghers. At this point in the unit, the task may not be so daunting. Students have already researched the history of Pittsburgh where they surely came across numerous men and women that contributed greatly to the city's success. This information along with teacher assistance would certainly allow for a full list of names. After student-based research, students would share their information with fellow classmates.

The final strategy used in this curriculum unit would be a student reflection. During this reflection, the students might discuss the different areas of study examined throughout the unit and their reaction to each.

As students work through the objectives outlined in this unit, they will be meeting the district standards outlined by the Pittsburgh Board of Education (these can be found at the end of the curriculum unit in the appendix).

### **Classroom Activities**

What follows is a detailed description of the activities I intend to use in order to bring this unit to fruition.

#### **Activity 1- Introduction**

Before beginning this or any other unit, it is important to check students' prior knowledge. Since this unit is actually divided into three areas of study, I would begin by introducing students to a broad overview of the areas. In order to accomplish this goal, I would display several items to the students and direct them to find something they all have in common. For example, a small replica of the Liberty Bell, a Hershey's Kiss, and a picture of the city of Pittsburgh might be three good choices. Through discussion, students would hopefully conclude that the common thread was places and/or landmarks in Pennsylvania.

From here, I would outline the three areas of study the unit will cover in more detail. I would explain that the activities that follow would touch upon each of these three areas of study in much greater detail. It is important to note that teachers using this unit will have the opportunity to pick and choose activities based on their own particular needs.

#### Activity 2- Book read/ Discussion

This activity would begin with the teacher reading the book K is for Keystone by Kristen Kane. This book is a simple alphabetical accounting of some of the places and faces that make Pennsylvania unique. After reading this book to the students, a teacher-led discussion of Pennsylvania people and places would occur. The hope here is to have the students engaged in meaningful dialogue about their state while kicking off the curriculum unit.

#### Activity 3- Narrative

From the discussion of familiar people and places in Pennsylvania, I would have students generate a list. From this list, students would choose a place or person to write about. The topic would be somewhere the students had visited in Pennsylvania. Since writing a narrative is one of the portfolio requirements, this would be a fun way for students to fulfill the narrative portion of the portfolio. After students write their narrative about a place they had visited in Pennsylvania, they would share their narratives with each other.

#### Activity 4- Book Read

As a way to compliment the previous activity, I would next introduce the book Pennsylvania Curiosities by Clark De Leon. The book divides the state into five regions; northwest, north central, northeast, southwest, and southeast. Basically, the book describes curious or intriguing people, places, or stories that took place in one of these regions of Pennsylvania. After introducing students to the book by reading one or two of the stories, I would have students choose a story they found curious or funny. This activity could be used in two different ways. If the teacher just wanted students to get a better feel for the state, students could choose a story from any of the five regions. If the teacher wanted to narrow the focus in order to move toward the eventual introduction of Pittsburgh, he/she could limit student choice to the southwestern region of Pennsylvania. Personally, I would limit the student's choice to southwestern Pennsylvania in order to begin to narrow the focus of my unit. Either way, the student would choose a funny anecdote or story and present it to their fellow classmates.

#### Activity 5- Oral Presentation

After students research their Pennsylvania “curiosity” they will orally present the information to the class. The hope here is that students will again get an opportunity to be exposed to more information about their home state. Along with the chance to gain more knowledge students will also have the opportunity to speak in front of their classmates. Since students at this age are often uncomfortable speaking in front of their peers, giving this short presentation is a good way to ease students into oral speaking. Later in the unit students will be required to give a more in depth presentation.

#### Activity 6- Pennsylvania fact list

As a culminating activity to the first area of study in this curriculum unit, students would develop a Pennsylvania fact list. This would be a comprehensive list of interesting facts, people, and places that students had discovered over the course of the previous activities. This list would be posted in the room for students to enjoy.

#### Activity 7- Introduction of Pittsburgh

After students have been introduced to the state of Pennsylvania, the focus of the curriculum unit begins to narrow with the introduction of the city of Pittsburgh. In order to keep the students interest level high, this introduction would be accomplished using the book Days of Sweet Remembrance by J. Bruce Baumann. This is a picture book of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania. Showing pictures, which include such popular sites as Sandcastle and the “Point”, should spark the students’ memories of other famous Pittsburgh landmarks and places they have had an opportunity to visit. This lively discussion would be a great way to begin this portion of the curriculum unit.

#### Activity 8- Novel reading

At this point in the curriculum unit, I would introduce the novel Singing the City by Laurie Graham. This book is a captivating look at the city of Pittsburgh, which includes its past, present, and future. Much of the story is told through the eyes of Pittsburghers. The novel would be read throughout the course of the unit and discussed periodically. A journal of reflections would be kept so that students could share their thoughts and ideas with each other. Since reading twenty-five books is a portfolio requirement, students would be reading this book for two important reasons. First, students would be gaining insight into the city of Pittsburgh through the eyes of Pittsburghers. Secondly, students would be fulfilling yet another of their portfolio requirements.

### Activity 9- Autobiographical Incident

Now that students have engaged in some preliminary discussion of famous Pittsburgh landmarks and have begun reading a book about Pittsburgh, the students are now ready to complete a list of places they've visited in the city. This would be a student-generated list based on previous discussions. From this list, students would choose a place they had visited and write a narrative based on their experience. Students would be writing an autobiographical incident, which is a true story, based on an incident that occurred in their life. Once again, students are required to supply an autobiographical incident as one of their writing entries in the student portfolio. What better way to fulfill this requirement and have students share their Pittsburgh experience than to write an autobiographical incident.

### Activity 10- Oral reading

After students complete their autobiographical incident about the Pittsburgh place they've visited, they will share their writing with fellow classmates. This exchange will give students the opportunity to share their own story while at the same time learning about their fellow classmate's experiences.

### Activity 11- Research

Activities seven through ten might be considered preliminary work as the unit moves to more specific research on the city of Pittsburgh itself. The idea at this point is to have the students begin to research the actual history of the city. One good resource to use at this juncture is the book Pittsburgh- The Story of an American City by Stefan Lorant. I would have the students use the school library, Internet, and even first person accounts in order to get necessary information about the city of Pittsburgh.

### Activity 12- Timeline

At this point in the unit, I would divide the students up into groups. The students would develop a timeline showing the history of the city of Pittsburgh. Personally, I would divide the students into eight groups. Group one would compose a list of important dates and events from 1700 to 1750. Group two would list events from 1750-1800. The division of groups would continue in these increments until the 1900's. Because better records of events were kept after the 1900's, I would divide the time period between 1900 to the present between the last four groups. After students complete their group work, they would come together and create one continuous timeline.

### Activity 13- Timeline Presentation

At this point in the unit, students will present the timeline of the history of the city of Pittsburgh. Each group would pick one speaker from their group to present their particular portion of the timeline. The idea at this particular point in the unit is to have students be able to see the highlights of the city's history. The timeline would be prominently displayed in the classroom until the completion of the entire curriculum unit.

### Activity 14- Research of Famous Pittsburghers

The activities from this point to the end of the curriculum unit make up the third phase of the unit. At this point, the curriculum unit narrows even further. Students will begin a research paper of a famous person associated with the city of Pittsburgh. Over the course of the unit to this point, students should be able to compose a fairly thorough list of famous Pittsburghers. Below is a list of names that students might have on a list:

H. J. Heinz	David Leo
Lawrence	
Richard King Mellon	Thomas
Murphy	
Stephen Foster	Errol Garner
Andy Warhol	Andrew
Carnegie	
Sophie Masloff	Philip
Pearlstein	
George Westinghouse	Rachel Carson
Nellie Bly	Willa Cather
August Wilson	Henry Clay
Frick	
Perry Como	Bobby Vinton
Robert Fulton	Jonas Salk
Dan Marino	Joe Montana

This is just a short list and certainly students can choose one of these names or research a person of their own choice.

Using various book sources, the Internet, and the library, students would begin taking notes and composing a bibliography in order to write their report.

### Activity 15- Presentation

At this point in the unit, students have had time to learn a great deal about their state, their city, and now a famous person associated with the city. Each student will now have the opportunity to share what he or she has learned with his or her classmates. Because student's portfolios require them to complete a speaking component, this particular phase of the unit lends itself to that particular piece of the portfolio. The student would not just get up and read about the person they researched, instead they would "become" that person. The speech would be delivered in the first person. Students would be required to dress up as their particular person and deliver their speech as that person. This is a great way for students to learn about their fellow students' famous Pittsburgher while at the same time fulfilling the speech requirement required by the standards based portfolio.

### Activity 16- Landmark Research

As we move into the final phase of the curriculum unit, students will begin to be introduced to Pittsburgh Landmarks. At this point, the teacher again can make a few choices. One option is to have the students choose from the numerous landmarks throughout the state. Another choice is to limit the choice of landmarks. For the purposes of this unit, I will limit the choice of landmarks to those in Allegheny County. Below is a list of landmarks students might choose:

Allegheny Arsenal	Allegheny Observatory
Carnegie Library	Avery College
Bethel A.M.E. Church	Bethel Presbyterian
Church	
Billy Eckstine home: 5913 Bryant Ave.	
Bost Building	
Bouquet Camp	Bower Hill
Braddock's Crossing	Braddock's Defeat
Braddock's Field	Carnegie Hero Fund
Commission	
Charles Martin Hall	Daisy E. Lampkin
David L. Lawrence	Davis Island Lock and
Dam	
Dravo Corporation Shipyard	Duquesne Steel Works
U.S. Steel	Duquesne University
Elizabeth	George Ferris home: 204
Arch St	
First Aluminum Observatory Dome	First Mining of Pittsburgh
Coal	

Students could choose from this list or pick a landmark of their own.

Students would choose one of the Pittsburgh Landmarks and research it. Students would then write a summary of their landmark for presentation.

#### Activity 17- Presentation of Landmarks

After students have completed their research and written a summary of their landmark, they will present the information to their classmates. After the presentations are complete, I would have the students vote on the top five landmarks they would like to visit. This would be done in the hopes that as a culminating activity to the unit, we would visit several landmarks.

#### Activity 18- Visiting Landmarks

As a way to begin closure of the curriculum unit, I would have students visit several of the landmarks they had researched. I believe this would really help students to see several of the places they had researched and shared with their fellow students. The choice of landmarks would ideally be left to the students, so they would feel ownership of the unit.

#### Activity 19- Journal Writing/Reflections

In order to complete the curriculum unit I would have students write about their thoughts and reflections regarding the entire curriculum unit. Students would be given the opportunity to discuss their favorite parts of the unit, things they were not particularly fond of, and ways to improve the unit in the future. The students would be given the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings with classmates in an open journal reading time. By giving the students a chance to share their likes and dislikes, I will be able to gain important insight into ways to adjust the unit for future use. Hopefully at the end of this curriculum unit, all of the students will have become more knowledgeable about their home state and the city of Pittsburgh.

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*This is a picture book highlighting many of Pittsburgh's beautiful sights.*

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*This book shows pictures of the city and marks famous events.*

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*This book highlights things found in Pittsburgh.*

## Student Bibliography

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*This book is an earlier version of the previous book.*

## Content Standards for the Pittsburgh Public Schools Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening

1. All students use effective research and information management skills, including locating primary and secondary sources of information with traditional and emerging library technologies.
2. All students read and use a variety of methods to make sense of various kinds of complex texts.
3. All students respond orally and in writing to information and ideas gained by reading narrative and informational texts and use the information and ideas to make decisions and solve problems.
4. All students write for a variety of purposes, including to narrate, inform, and persuade, in all subject areas.
5. All students analyze and make critical judgments about all forms of communication, separating fact from opinion, recognizing propaganda, stereotypes and statements of bias, recognizing inconsistencies and judging the validity of evidence.
6. All students exchange information orally, including understanding and giving spoken instructions, asking questions appropriately, and promoting effective group communication.
7. All students listen to and understand complex oral messages and identify their purpose, structure and use.
8. All students compose and make oral presentations for each academic area of study that are designed to persuade, inform or describe.
9. All students converse, at a minimum level of “Intermediate Low”, as defined in the oral proficiency guidelines developed by the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages, in at least one language other than English, including the native language if other than English, under Sec. 5.215© (relating to languages).
10. All students communicate appropriately in business, work and other applied situations.

## **Report of Information** **Assignment Sheet**

Your job is to write a report about the person of your choice. Please read the information below very carefully in order to complete the assignment. Any questions? See me immediately.

You will write a biographical report.

Your report will be on a famous person associated with Pittsburgh. The report is due \_\_\_\_\_.

The final report will contain at least 5 typed paragraphs double-spaced.

Your final report will have a separate typed "Works Cited" page, which will contain at least 2 references as a bibliography in MLA style. Not all of the sources can be from the Internet.

Your report will contain an illustration page. This can be a print out picture or your own illustration of your famous individual. You may also choose to illustrate a scene from this person's life or some of this person's work.

Your report will be graded using a rubric, which you will receive.

Follow this outline when setting up your paper:

1st Paragraph- Introduction to your famous person. Who is this person?

2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph- Tell about this person's childhood and early life.

3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph- Tell about this person's mid and later life and if this person is still alive. Tell what the person is doing now.

4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph- Tell about and list some of this person's greatest achievements.

5<sup>th</sup> Paragraph- Finally, tell why you chose this person and why you admire him/her.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Choose your person.
2. Find references- write bibliography cards.
3. Take notes and complete an outline.
4. Write out a rough draft of your report.
5. Have a peer edit your report.
6. Have teacher review your report.
7. Make additions and corrections.
8. Type final report.
9. Add bibliography.
10. Add illustration page.
11. Prepare your speech.
12. Turn in your final report.
13. Present your speech to the class.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Communications- Grade 6

### Autobiographical Incident Assignment Sheet

Directions: Your job is to write a story about an incident that happened in your life. In order to narrow the assignment just a little you need to write about an incident that occurred at a Pittsburgh location. Perhaps you were at the Carnegie Science center or a city park. Remember that an incident is just one event or moment not your life story. Please refer back to the Writer's Notebook entries in your journal to get ideas. The web and timeline you worked on in class should also help you when choosing a topic.

Your Autobiographical Incident should include the following:

- An opening that grabs your reader's attention
- Examples of dialogue used correctly and effectively
- Sensory details to make the reader feel like they "are there"
- Correct use of conventions
- Tell your readers what you learned or how you felt at the end of the narrative

Remember to use the rubric and refer to the entry slip in order to write the best piece possible.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Communications- Grade 6

Speech  
Assignment Sheet

Directions: Your job is to prepare a speech to accompany the research you've completed on your famous person associated with Pittsburgh. You will orally present the information to your classmates. Remember that you are to "become" the famous person of your choice. That means you will dress like your character and take on their persona. You may want to include this assignment in your portfolio. Please refer to the attached rubric and entry slip as you work through the process. Listed below are some guidelines you need to follow when completing the assignment.

- You must include note cards, an outline or planning notes.
- You will complete a self-evaluation of your speech.
- A teacher and peer evaluation will also be included.

Please see me immediately if you have questions.

Good luck and have fun!