

Restoring pride to the “House”.

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Westinghouse High School*

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Overview

If a person were to visit Westinghouse High School, which is located in one of ten neighborhoods within Pittsburgh’s 9th district, more noticed as the Homewood community of Pittsburgh, that person would notice that the school sits in an almost desolated area on a street that is over-run with vacant lots, crack houses and active forms of despair. Without the presence of the school, the area looks as though hope has given up on itself. There is a Mom and Pop store a block and a half north of the school that provides the only means of legal commerce within four blocks. There is an elementary/middle school about three blocks east of Westinghouse and it serves as a feeder into the high school. Since the elementary/middle school is situated in a more family friendly atmosphere, though within the same neighborhood, it does not appear to be as foreboding. The younger students know however that it is very possible that they will have to walk the same streets to get to the High School which is affectionately known as the “House”.

After getting past the security and metal detectors, one could easily believe that the “House” is an institution of greater learning. The hallways and stair cases are immaculately clean and the lighting is inviting. Many of the rooms have been updated with state of the art computer labs and equipment that is not found in many high schools. There is a recently renovated gym, swimming pool, weight room and library that add to the aesthetics of the four-story addition to support the music program. The Pittsburgh Public School District settled on 4 million dollars to complete the project despite the fact that the district was financially strapped during the time of the construction.¹ The facility can house much more than the 300-400 students that sporadically attend. Alumni, former faculty, staff and administrators have an unabashed nostalgia associated with Westinghouse High School. On the first floor hallway, right outside the school office is one of the most impressive sites of the building. It is what is known as the Westinghouse Wall of Fame.²

The Wall of Fame is a living and growing testimony of the achievements and accomplishments of the assorted Westinghouse alumni who have gone beyond the

parameters of Homewood to take their place in history. Many have gone to achieve national and international recognition. Individuals such as World famous model Naomi Sims and Jazz creator Billy Strayhorn were Westinghouse grads. While others, including the likes of noted educator/administrator, Dr. Helen Faison, and trailblazer in the field of local real estate, Mr. Robert Lavelle opted to stay in Pittsburgh to make their mark in history within their respected fields of endeavor. Despite the similar demographic upbringings that most Westinghouse students live through, these individuals along with many others stand out. Ms. Valeria Williams, one of the organizers and creators of the Wall of Fame points out, "I thought if the kids knew that these people on the wall lived in the same community, in the same houses that they do, it could make a difference."³

Another amazing documentary that was produced exclusively about Westinghouse High School was aired on the acclaimed Black Horizons news program. Pittsburgh's historic PBS station WQED (channel 13), first aired "The HOUSE" in 2004.⁴ Chris Moore was the host and produced this segment, which showcased the internal pride of some of the distinguished alumni who through their interviews and testimonies told the world exactly how things used to be. Incidentally, when this production was being produced, the school was in the throws of transition. The administrator that was the school leader was close to retirement along with other faculty and staff. The interviews from the students that were enrolled during that broadcast were from a mixed bag. Many attempted to maintain the school pride because they were riding the waves of the alumni that were present. Sad to say that during this documentary, Westinghouse was lagging in PSSA test scores, attendance was spotty and the school pride was struggling.

It should be noted that practically every high school in America has distinguished alum and in that aspect, Westinghouse is no different. What is special about Westinghouse however is the ongoing celebration of pride that has lasted for over 50 years and that the alumni themselves have taken the initiative to recognize the accomplishments of their peers. It is in this effort that they pay homage to each other and actively seek additions to the monument. What drives this activity is the undying pride that they have for their alma mater.

It is a special pride that is passed down that provides the motivation for the next generation to excel in all high schools throughout this country. One of the major setbacks to Westinghouse however is that its history of having the esteemed pride seems to be staggering lately and it is hard for many alum to swallow this fact. Some of the causes that have plagued Westinghouse High School follow.

For the past several years the Pittsburgh Westinghouse High School has been struggling. It has been struggling in the major areas that are most important in maintaining a successful urban high school. According to the Pittsburgh Public School's district website, the PSSA test scores have been consistently low, the drop out rate has been high, graduation rates have been poor, attendance is sporadic and the enrollment hovers at 350 students.⁵ The overall morale of the school has been dismal and the school has even lost its prestige in the realm of athletic competition. With the exception of girls basketball, (2007-2008 city league champions), there has been nothing much to celebrate because the

once fearsome football team has won less than five games in the last 3 years. This was unheard of even ten years ago.

While the same or similar phenomenon has been occurring in other high schools throughout our country, there has been no focused attempt to restore the pride that has been lost. The primary focus of this curriculum is to reconnect students with the history that Westinghouse High School has from its inception and to use this pride as momentum to close the education gap, raise tests scores, and leave a legacy of success for younger students to follow. In addition, this model will serve as a blueprint that provides students with the vehicle of creating, restoring and preserving the rich oral history that the school has. The secondary purpose of this curriculum is to serve as a model for other high schools to use if they are encountering the same or similar dilemma.

The concepts and practice will be adaptable to any school and should not be considered as a “be all to end all” solution to low achievement. This curriculum must accompany a staff and administration that is willing to take the risk and support the students as they research the school history in an attempt to regain the pride that is lost.

Rationale

The situation at Westinghouse High School and schools like it is not unique. Despite everything that appears negative there is still a considerable collection of individuals that are deeply concerned about the schools’ future and those people continue to display resilient efforts to attend school and give it their best. They are persistent and committed to some belief that their perseverance will eventually pay off. What might benefit and support their endeavor is for them to look at the achievements of past graduates and attempt to make a connection with their remedies for success. If they are able to build this bridge, they may raise their own level of self esteem and change the trajectory of their course. The purpose of this curriculum is to re-engage the pride machine that fueled success in this school. While this is the intention of this unit, it is important to get a brief background of how and why Westinghouse is currently the way it is.

As of April of 2008, there are 8 high schools in the Pittsburgh Public School System. Westinghouse High School is positioned as the eastern most high school of the area and its students have traditionally come from the eastern region, in fact the neighborhood that acts as the primary feeder is Homewood. Since Westinghouse has been one of the most failing high schools in the district, many of its students have opted to go to other district high schools. One in particular is Taylor Allderdice.⁶ With over 1400 students, Taylor Allderdice High School, which is located at the tail end of the commercially active Squirrel Hill community, has been the recipient of many high school students that permanently reside in Homewood. Allderdice has been the school of choice because some believe it to have better education, more extra-curricular activities, more security, and a more eclectic student population. Allderdice has graduated more students and has performed better in the subjects of Math and Reading in the most recent PSSA tests. During the 2006/2007 school year, Allderdice students scored dramatically higher than

the district's average.⁷ These are some of the reasons why the district allowed students from failing schools the option to attend Allderdice.

In contrast, Westinghouse High School is located towards the end of N. Murtland Avenue. Many of the lots on that block are vacant and many of the houses that still exist are abandoned or run-down. At any given day at any given moment one can see open air drug deals and prostitution activity within 200 yards of the front door of the school. There is one mom and pop store a block and a half north of the school which serves as the only legal commerce on the street. The rear side of Westinghouse high school faces a hillside that leads to the busy Washington Blvd. The rest of the area surrounding Westinghouse is desolate.

When compared to other high schools in the Pittsburgh Public School District, the demographic area of Westinghouse is quite unique. Other high schools of the district are either in residential areas that support a wide range of commerce, areas that have no building or structure unrelated to the school district within 50 yards, or areas that are protected and isolated by the geography that is relative to the area. Nowhere else in the district is crime activity as chronic and close in proximity as what it is at Westinghouse. Three years ago, the school received local and state news coverage and political recognition when a student was shot within steps from the side entrance before the first morning bell sounded.⁸ On the morning after the shooting, the mayor and news stations did a neighborhood walk-through to evaluate what the students and residents see everyday. Many promises were made to beef up police visibility, and the demolition of the vacant buildings that serve as crack houses. After the election and media airplay, the area is back to business as usual and nothing has changed.

On a side note there have been some reasons to be proud. Most recently, several former Westinghouse students have made the news. The girls' basketball team won the city championship for the second year in a row.⁹ As a result, one of the star players was the recipient of a full scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh. In addition, several girls have earned their state license to becoming certified in the field of hair care and cosmetology. In contrast however, their achievements run tough competition to the too many recently former students that have made local news for shootings, robbery and murder. Ironically, these students have a pride of their own even when they represent a growing population of students who idolize and celebrate crime and notoriety.

As unfortunate as it may seem, it is very important to recognize all of these scenarios because they set the stage for the current academic situation of the school. Again, it's not that Westinghouse is unique in its situation because there are other schools in this district that are in disrepair. As mentioned before, the neighborhoods surrounding other schools in this district support the success or failure of those institutions. The Homewood neighborhood supports a devastating atmosphere in which the attitude in the school and much of the area indicates that pride is lost.

If a historian or anthropologist were to study the area, and many have, they would notice that much of these most drastic changes have occurred within the last 15 years. Not that

the physical make-up of Homewood and the area surrounding Westinghouse has changed much. More significantly, the changes are associated with attitude. The current attitude is one that is more fearful, more desperate, and more pessimistic. There is also an attitude that suggests that since those involved in the immediate situation are slow to accept positive change then negativity might as well be embraced. One can get an idea of the bittersweet residential feelings in the chronicled documented series “My Homewood” published in the on-line version of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

Before the early 70’s, the school’s community of Homewood excelled in commerce, employment, home ownership, and faith based organizations. Though Homewood would not be considered a hub-bub of wealthy activity as some other Pittsburgh communities, it was able to hold its’ own in regards to a community that was striving and not gasping to survive. As did many African American communities throughout the country, Homewood made a dramatic change directly after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King in 1968. Even after this national tragedy occurred, Homewood was reluctant to give up hope on itself.

Within the last 17 years Homewood had the opportunity of regaining some of its economic progress. If the plan would have come to full fruition, the positive impact would have been resonated throughout the community and felt in the schools. Regional and International franchises such as Kentucky Fried Chicken, Dairy Queen, Rite Aid and The Athletes Foot stores opened business right on the main drag of Homewood Avenue. All of these stores were within the same block. Not only did this business’s attempt to revive commerce but also they provided jobs to many high school students and families that needed the work. Within 7 years, three of these business’s failed the litmus test and only the Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise remains.

Two years ago development began for a Family Dollar Store which stood within a stone’s throw of the Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise but the plans were aborted due to theft and vandalism before the completion of the construction. Family Dollar stores continue to flourish in other deprived parts of this city but never had a chance in Homewood. The building remains vacant hoping for a buyer.¹⁰ Months ago a teen was gunned down in the drive through of the Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant.¹¹

During the same period of this redevelopment, one of Pittsburgh’s most colorful and celebrated summer festivals arose and fell in the streets of Homewood. Pittsburgh’s HARAMBEE festival, which blocked the major arteries of Homewood, gained national recognition in its creative spirit and purpose. It was a gathering of sorts for all Pittsburghers but particularly African Americans to celebrate their own heritage and gather together to praise its’ culture.¹² Regretfully, none of these businesses or festivals could survive because of the major factor that spoiled all hopes of pride in the school and community. Homewood and Westinghouse High School are still recovering from the devastating effects of gang violence and the insurgence of crack cocaine. The abandonment of the HARAMBEE festival indicated that some of the citizens of the Homewood community had -turned on themselves.

Again, Homewood is not unique in its problem with gang and drug activity. Yet Homewood is unique in that though it has at least five different major roadways to accessibility, it is still geographically located on an island like setting with few means to sustain itself economically and occupationally. One of the only institutions that has been consistent in its' existence is Westinghouse High School.

Since the late 1950's Homewood and Westinghouse High School are predominately made up of African American people. Early school yearbooks show this change over the years progressed from 1959 and it is interesting that since then, the population of both the neighborhood and school has critically declined. The school population floats between 300-400 and some of the students are not residents of Homewood. Though complete advancements have been made in the building' structure, design and function, there have been considerable changes in attitude. There may be fewer people but the lack of pride has increased.

Westinghouse's veteran teachers with more than 25 years readily speak about the changes. When asked if they thought there was a difference in the schools' pride that was rampant and present 10-20 years ago, there was a unanimous reply of "definitely". When asked what the reasons were for these changes, they immediately pointed to the increase of the before mentioned activities that are brought in from the streets. They also mentioned that the change in the school administration had a lot to do with the change in traditions that supported the pride.¹³

In these interviews, alumni and veteran teachers remarked that such customary activities as "Ribbon Day" and the location and mystery as described in the notorious "Room" which is the title of Homewood historian's John Brewer novel about said place, have been abolished.¹⁴ The progressive, and revered "Glorious Rebirth Performing Troupe", which is a triumphant singing force formed and trained by the elegant Birdie Nichols is basically unknown to the students presently attending Westinghouse High School. The Troupe which was born and raised at Westinghouse still exists but consists of Westinghouse Alumni that still carry the banner. If no mention or recognition of these activities ever occurs, they might never be regained.

Those pride generating traditions that are not always talked about or hardly documented but have legendary status no longer exist to support the subculture. Instead, the current student population has not been able to replace the emotional drive that once gave the alumni so much momentum. Furthermore, the high teacher and faculty turnover has not been able to sustain or continue the customs that made the school unique and the few activities that remain simply represent a shadow of what once was commonplace. In this the internal fabric of the pride has been torn. During conversations with students regarding the changes that Westinghouse and the Homewood community have sustained during the last 5 years, students look in disbelief and wonderment as if the changes never occurred or at least they are somewhat oblivious to what is going on. Jamaican borne leader, Marcus Garvey, once said that "A people without a knowledge of their past

history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.” This unit will hopefully attempt to utilize the same internal forces that alumni used to propel themselves to greatness as a positive mending agent.

Objectives

The objective of this unit is to introduce Pittsburgh Westinghouse High School students to the esteemed history of the school, the namesake, the accomplished alumni, and the neighborhood. It is hoped that the conception and usage of this unit might be able to create new possibilities by using some of the best resources that are readily available but currently not being employed to its full potential. Westinghouse High School can be used as the test market for other schools to follow in its attempt to widen the vision of students who have experience narrow possibilities. This unit could be a component of the district’s 9th GRADE NATION: Be the Change curriculum that is required learning in the districts civics program. Through this unit students will be required to use traditional and electronic research methods to collect, research, organize and communicate the history of Westinghouse High School. The end product of the student research will be an on-going archive of oral and written history that will be restored, updated and passed through all generations. This unit can easily be used in its whole or in parts.

It is hoped that with the accomplishment of these objectives, students will become proud of their school for positive reasons and strive to become an achiever and eventually one that becomes a life long role model for the students that will come behind them. It is also hoped that the new found pride will support student attendance, the raising of standardized tests scores, reverse the drop out trend, and promote a culture that cares about the school and neighborhood. In order for this unit to be successful, administrators, faculty, staff, parents and alumni must become stakeholders in the investment of the academic process. This execution of this unit can not be considered the answer to the complex situation that is at hand. It is also hoped that this exercise can serve as a model for other schools to emulate.

Strategies

It was once stated, “To know a man, observe how he wins his object, rather than how he loses it; for when we fail our pride supports us; when we succeed, it betrays us.”

Charles Caleb Colton (1780 - 1832)

Teach school and neighborhood history to 9th graders to regenerate school pride. As mentioned before, the pride that Westinghouse High School once shared has either been muffled or put aside. Even more prevalent is the fact that the more positive pride that accompanies achievement has been displaced with an attitude that allows failure to be acceptable or even encouraged. Achievement in all areas must be encouraged and the upside down beliefs that academic achievement is an attempt to be “white” must be turned around. Outside of this school, it is believed that if a person is proud of their

heritage then they will do all they can do to protect the outcome of their future by investing in their present. It is hoped that the strategies in this curriculum will instill or reinvigorate pride in the students of the school. This curriculum is designed to be used the first four weeks of school.

Connect with the namesake. Make the school namesake part of the 9th Grade Nation.

There is a lot of local history that many students don't know anything about. Many students are totally unaware that the city of Pittsburgh is broken into nine separate districts that consist of communities and neighborhoods. Many students don't realize that these districts and their respected representatives play a vital role in shaping what happens in the Pittsburgh Public School System.

Part of the institution of 9th Grade Nation: Be the Change curriculum is an effort to shift the momentum by giving incoming 9th graders education about their city and those individuals that influence it by teaching 9th graders about Pittsburgh and Pittsburghers who have had on the world's culture and economy. A good place for students to begin their research is their high school.

To accompany the curriculum of the 9th Grade Nation, which lays heavy emphasis on city pride, this "school pride" curriculum will start with researching each of the school's namesakes. In this case, students will begin the curriculum by doing research about the man, George Westinghouse. The school library will be used to gather biographical information from books, magazines, and the internet as well as any information that may be stored in the schools historical records and archives. Yearbooks are also a useful source for information. Students will learn that the school name is oftentimes a direct connection with neighborhood and local history. Students will be prepared to become experts of the biographies that carry the school's namesake.

Promote and preserve oral history.

With all of the alumni and people that have been associated with Westinghouse High School readily available, students and teachers need to arrange interview sessions and record the history. This will enhance student research and communication skills while providing an oral/visual archive. Students will also share information with younger students who attend the feeder schools surrounding Westinghouse thus forming collaboration between area schools.

Keep the positive traditions alive.

In the case of most schools, there are some traditions that help build pride in a positive manner while other traditions should be abolished altogether. The objective is to not to

throw out the baby with the bath water. Every student should be guaranteed a safe learning environment that supports the best academic curriculum at the appropriate grade level. Students also have the right to all educational elements agreed to in the classic case of Brown VS. The Board of Education. No student should be subjected to violence or hazing activities to become a member of any particular group or system. If the traditions maintain school integrity and fosters academic and social success it should be continued and passed down.

Classroom Activities

Students will use traditional and non-traditional research methods to obtain information about the origin of their school's namesake. (George Westinghouse, Mary Schenley, Oliver Hazard Perry, etc.) Students will be encouraged to read biographies, encyclopedias, newspaper and magazine articles along with the Internet to gather information. Students will prepare a written report that will include a classroom presentation and visuals. (PowerPoint, tri-fold, mock newspaper, and video taped interviews, etc.) This practice will support the research necessary for required curriculums such as the Senior Project, which all students must complete for graduation.

Each activity should take one-two weeks to complete. This entire unit should be completed in four weeks. Any teacher can tailor these lessons to maximize their school objectives.

Students will be required to accomplish the tasks in weekly stages. Teacher will monitor progress and will only allow students to proceed to next stage after satisfactory completion of previous section.

Week 1- Students will research history of school. The expectations of this part of the unit should be an increase of knowledge of the school history and should ultimately build school pride.

Week 2- Students will research history of neighborhood. The expectations of this part of the unit should be an increase of knowledge of the neighborhood history and should ultimately build positive neighborhood pride.

Week 3- Students will interview alumni or person of interest from the school or neighborhood. The expectation of this part of the unit should be that the students would gain knowledge from individuals that are connected to the school and community. Students will incorporate the components of oral history in their research. Students will work together and record information using audio/video/digital equipment.

Week 4- Students will present information to their class or students of a feeder school. The expectation of this part of the unit that the school pride will be passed to younger students through oral history and documented research before they arrive to the high school. It is hoped that this will foster a community of achievers and learners.

1st-2nd day activity-Week one: Be True to your School

Name _____ Date: _____

Directions: Use high school yearbooks, newspapers, magazines, the Internet, or other sources to answer the following questions about your high school. Completing this sheet should provide you with information that will help you with your final presentation.

1. Who or what is your school named after? _____

2. Explain how your school got its name _____

3. What are your school colors? _____

4. What is the significance associated with your school colors? _____

5. What is your school mascot? _____

6. Why was this mascot chosen? _____

7. Has any of the above information changed during the history of your school?

8. When was your school built? _____

9. What is your school motto? _____

10. Write the words to your school ALMA MATER.

3rd-4th Day activity-Week one: Be true to your school-Biographic information about your schools namesake.

Name _____ Date: _____

Directions: Use high school yearbooks, newspapers, magazines, the Internet, or other sources to answer the following questions about your high school.

1. If your school was named after a person, when did the person live? _____

2. Where did the individual live? _____

3. What level of education did this person receive? _____

4. Did this person belong to any organizations? _____

5. List achievements. _____

6. Briefly describe this person's family life.

7. Why was this school named after this person? _____

8. What other places share this person's name? _____

1st WEEK: School and neighborhood history report

Name: _____ Date: _____

Directions: Use both traditional (books, encyclopedias, almanacs, magazines, newspapers, school yearbooks) and electronic, (internet, computer software encyclopedia) resources to research information about an individual or origin that a Pittsburgh Public School is named after. Include pertinent information that describes the role of the neighborhood that supports the school. (5 pages typed-12 font, double spaced) Should include title page and works cited page. Use any of your previous work sheets to complete this report.

Your research should include but not be limited to the following information:

Birth date of individual

Where the individual lived

Education individual received

Organizations individual belonged to

Family life

Inventions

Accomplishments & Achievements

Namesakes (Other places or establishments, named after individual)

Reason why school was named after individual

History of school community and neighborhood

Research the school colors, mascot, and history of area where school was built.

Note how school and neighborhood went through transitional periods through city and national history.

What were the major jobs, industry and commerce in neighborhood?

What was the neighborhood/school population?

What were the records of sports activities throughout the years?

What musical/drama/artistic activities did the school support?

1-2 Day activity-Week two: You can't represent your neighborhood properly unless you know its history.

Name _____ Date: _____

Directions: Use high school yearbooks, newspapers, magazines, almanacs, books and the Internet, or other sources to answer the following questions about your neighborhood. A lot of the information that you need can be found at <http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/portal/neighborhoods.html>

1. Which district do you live in? _____

2. What other neighborhoods are within your district? _____

3. Who represents your district on city council? _____
4. How old is your neighborhood? _____
5. What is your neighborhood's population? _____
6. What type of homes are found in your neighborhood? _____

7. How did your neighborhood get its name? _____

8. What is the racial make-up of your neighborhood? _____

9. What major businesses are in your neighborhood? _____

10. What schools and churches are in your neighborhood? _____

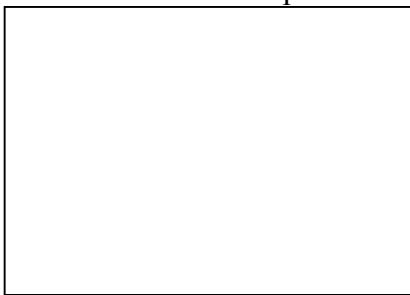
3rd-4th Day activity Week Three-Creating the storyboard for the interview.

Name: _____ Date _____

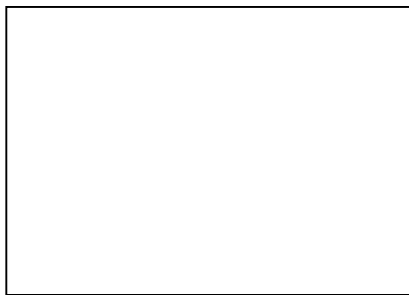
In order to have a productive, informative interview, planning must take place. A storyboard helps the director, interviewer, and cameraperson stay on track with time, what is being done in front of the camera, (moving subjects, still subjects, background, etc.) and what is happening behind the camera, (close up shots, zoom, far away shots, etc)

A storyboard helps everyone keep track of time, and what is going on scene-by-scene much like a comic book. It can also include what is being heard.

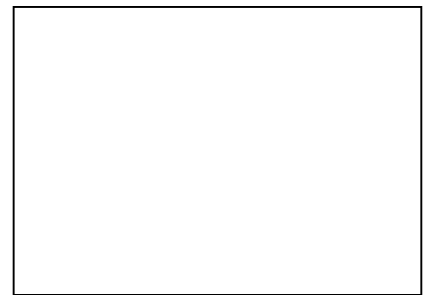
Here is an example.



Camera: close up.
Audio: Hi my name
Is Butch the Bulldog
And I will be interviewing
Westinghouse alum,
Time: 6 seconds



Camera: medium shot
Audio: This person is
interesting because they
were the first person
from a city school to
become president
Time: 6 seconds



Camera: medium
Audio: Could you
tell us how you
made it?
Time: 4 seconds

Although there are only three panels on this example storyboard, the idea is that everything is planned out. The interviews that you plan to do with the oral history will dictate how long your storyboard will be.

To get more ideas about creating a storyboard, get a library book about screenplay or search “storyboard” online.

Example interview questions to get the ball rolling.

- What activities were you involved in while you were a student at Westinghouse?
- How did Westinghouse prepare you for your life after high school?
- Explain how the neighborhood was when you were growing up.
- What kept you motivated?
- Who were your inspirations?
- What setbacks or hurdles did you overcome to reach your success?
- What advice would you give to Westinghouse students?

TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

Name: _____ **Date** _____

Directions: Divide into groups of no more than three. Choose who will be the director, interviewer, and cameraperson.

Director's responsibility:

Set appointment to arrange interview

Direct interview. (Give cues to interviewer and camera technician.)

Choose camera angles

Select interview questions

Create storyboard for interview

Make Cue Cards for interview if necessary.

Keep time

Edit

DIRECTORS NAME: _____

Interviewers responsibility:

Research pertinent information about the interviewee and subject

Write and edit questions for interview

Ask engaging questions to interviewee

Allow interviewee time for response

Keep conversation on task but moving

Seize opportunity to ask in-depth questions if presented

Make interviewee comfortable

Edit

INTERVIEWERS NAME: _____

Camera Person's responsibility:

Make sure that all equipment is accounted for and working properly

Create interesting camera shots and angles. (Over the shoulder of interviewer, close-ups, pan, etc)

Record interview session and assist editing with Director

CAMERA PERSONS NAME: _____

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End Notes

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² The Westinghouse High School Wall of Fame
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<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/07050/762745-85.stm>

³ Wall of Fame extols Westinghouse High grads
Monday, February 19, 2007
<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/07050/763271-53.stm>

⁴ Black Horizons-“The House”
February, 2004

⁵ District Web page-Westinghouse High School
<http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/14311012791719437/blank/browse.asp?a=3838BMDRN=2008BC08=08c=57181>

⁶ City offering transfers from lagging high schools to Langley, Allderdice
Students can shift from lagging schools to Langley or Allderdice
Wednesday, September 13, 2006
<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/06256/721324-53.stm>

⁷ District Web Page-Allderdice High School
<http://www.pps.k12.pa.us/14311012791719437/blank/browse.asp?a=3838BMDRN=2008BC08=08c=57181>

⁸ Student shot outside Westinghouse High
Tuesday, February 21, 2006
By Jonathan D. Silver, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/06052/658782-100.stm>

⁹ City League Girls' Championship: Wilson lifts Westinghouse
Her free throw with 1.6 seconds to go sinks Schenley, 52-51
Friday, February 22, 2008
By Chris Adamski, Tri-State Sports & News Service
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¹⁰ Family Dollar says no
4:51 PM 8/17/2007
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¹¹ Boy, 15, killed in Homewood; may have been retaliation
Wednesday, January 30, 2008

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¹² <http://www.city.pittsburgh.pa.us/district9/html/homewood.html>

¹³ Tyler, John, Personal Interview 21 March 2008
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¹⁴ Jr., John M. Brewer. The Room. -: Authorhouse, 2007.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE STANDARDS

Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening

1.3. Reading, Analyzing and Interpreting Literature

1.3.8–F Read and Respond to nonfiction and fiction including poetry and drama

1.3.8-C Sound techniques (e.g., rhyme, rhythm, meter, alliteration).

Figurative language (e.g., personification, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, Allusion).

1.4 Types of Writing

1.4.8-

A. Write short stories, poems and plays. APPLY varying organizational methods. Use relevant illustrations. Utilize dialogue Apply literary conflict. Include literary elements. Use literary devices

B. Write multi-paragraph informational pieces (e.g., letters, descriptions, reports, instructions, essays, articles, interviews) Include cause and effect. Develop a problem and solution when appropriate to the topic. Use relevant graphics (e.g., tables, illustrations, photographs). Use primary and secondary sources.

C. Write persuasive pieces. Include a clearly stated position or opinion. Include convincing, elaborated and properly cited evidence. Develop reader interest. Anticipate and counter reader concerns and arguments.

D. Maintain a written record of activities, course work, experience, honors and interests.

1.5 Quality of Writing

1.5.8

- A. Write with a sharp, distinct focus.
- Identify topic, task and audience.
 - Establish a single point of view.
- B. Write using well-developed content appropriate for the topic.
- Gather, determine validity and reliability of and organize information.
 - Employ the most effective format for purpose and audience.
 - Write paragraphs that have details and information specific to the topic and relevant to the focus.
- C. Write with controlled and/or subtle organization.
- Sustain a logical order within sentences and between paragraphs using meaningful transitions.
 - Establish topic and purpose in the introduction.
 - Reiterate the topic and purpose in the conclusion.
- D. Write with a sharp, distinct focus.
- Identify topic, task and audience.
 - Establish a single point of view.
- E. Write using well-developed content appropriate for the topic.
- Gather, determine validity and reliability of and organize information.
 - Employ the most effective format for purpose and audience.
 - Write paragraphs that have details and information specific to the topic and relevant to the focus.
- F. Write with controlled and/or subtle organization.
- Sustain a logical order within sentences and between paragraphs using meaningful transitions.
 - Establish topic and purpose in the introduction.
 - Reiterate the topic and purpose in the conclusion.
- G. Write with an understanding of the stylistic aspects of composition.
- Use different types and lengths of sentences.
 - Use tone and voice through the use of precise language.

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- E. Revise writing after rethinking logic of organization and rechecking central idea, content, paragraph development, level of detail, style, tone and word choice.
- F. Edit writing using the conventions of language.
- Spell common, frequently used words correctly.
 - Use capital letters correctly.
 - Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses).
 - Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
 - Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).
- G. Present and/or defend written work for publication when appropriate.

1.6.8 Speaking and Listening

- A. Listen to others.
- Ask probing questions.
 - Analyze information, ideas and opinions to determine relevancy.
 - Take notes when needed.
- B. Listen to selections of literature (fiction and/or nonfiction).
- Relate them to previous knowledge.
 - Predict content/events.
 - Summarize events and identify the significant points.
 - Identify and define new words and concepts.
 - Analyze the selections.
- C. Speak using skills appropriate to formal speech situations.
- Use complete sentences.
 - Pronounce words correctly.
 - Adjust volume to purpose and audience.
 - Adjust pace to convey meaning.
 - Add stress (emphasis) and inflection to enhance meaning.
- D. Contribute to discussions.
- Ask relevant, probing questions.
 - Respond with relevant information, ideas or reasons in support of opinions expressed.

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- Listen to and acknowledge the contributions of others.
 - Adjust tone and involvement to encourage equitable participation.
 - Clarify, illustrate or expand on a response when asked.
 - Present support for opinions.
 - Paraphrase and summarize, when prompted.

E. Participate in small and large group discussions and presentations.

- Initiate everyday conversation.
- Select a topic and present an oral reading.
- Conduct interviews as part of the research process.
- Organize and participate in informal debates.

F. Use media for learning purposes.

- Describe how the media provides information that is sometimes accurate, sometimes biased based on a point of view or by the opinion or beliefs of the presenter.
- Analyze the role of advertising in the media.
- Create a multimedia (e.g., film, music, computer-graphic) presentation for display or transmission.

1.8.8 Research

A. Select and refine a topic for research.

B. Locate information using appropriate sources and strategies.

- Determine valid resources for researching the topic, including primary and secondary sources.
- Evaluate the importance and quality of the sources.
- Select essential sources (e.g., dictionaries, encyclopedias, other reference materials, interviews, observations, computer databases).
- Use tables of contents, indices, key words, cross-references and appendices.
- Use traditional and electronic search tools.

C. Organize, summarize and present the main ideas from research.

- Identify the steps necessary to carry out a research project.
- Take relevant notes from sources.
- Develop a thesis statement based on research.
- Give precise, formal credit for others' ideas, images or information using a standard method of documentation.
- Use formatting techniques to create an understandable presentation for a designated audience.

