



**Dobbs Ferry High School
Personal Project Guidelines**

Informational Packet

Culminating Activity of Year 5 - Middle Years Programme

September 2025 - June 2026

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What is the Personal Project?

The personal project is an individual project completed in 10th grade, during the Intro to Research course. It consists of three main components: a **process journal**, the **product**, and a **report**. It is a vital component of the Middle Years Program, providing students the opportunity to demonstrate the skills learned from previous classes, grades 6-9. Because it is an individualized project, students have the opportunity to choose a topic, and enjoy learning about it as a chosen product is researched and developed.

All 10th grade (Year 5 students) are enrolled in a section of the Intro To Research course. During the year, students are guided by a supervisor, who is the teacher of the section. The supervisor meets frequently with students during class time and, if needed, during Tutorial periods. Supervisors provide students with both feedback and support in completion of the project and explain what the different components are of the Personal Project. Records of these meetings will be recorded on your ManageBac Personal Project account as necessary, as well as on an Academic Honesty form. Google Classroom is also used by supervisors to provide feedback, so it is important that Classroom is checked regularly for updates.

While working on the project, students will complete a process journal. This journal will be of great help when the written report is being written. Well-written process journal entries will help track the project's progression and a student's journey through this process. At times, working on the Personal Project can be difficult for any number of reasons; these difficulties should be added to the process journal as well. The report is very strict in its format, with guidelines from IB. The format of your report can be written, visual, oral electronic or a combination of written and one other medium. Supervisors will provide support as the report is worked on. Specific guidelines for each format can be found on pages 8 and 9 of this document.

The Personal Project is assessed by three different criteria in the same manner as all MYP subjects. These criteria are Planning; Applying Skills and Reflection. See the Personal Project Criterion Rubrics (starting on page 11) for more specific information on how this project is assessed .

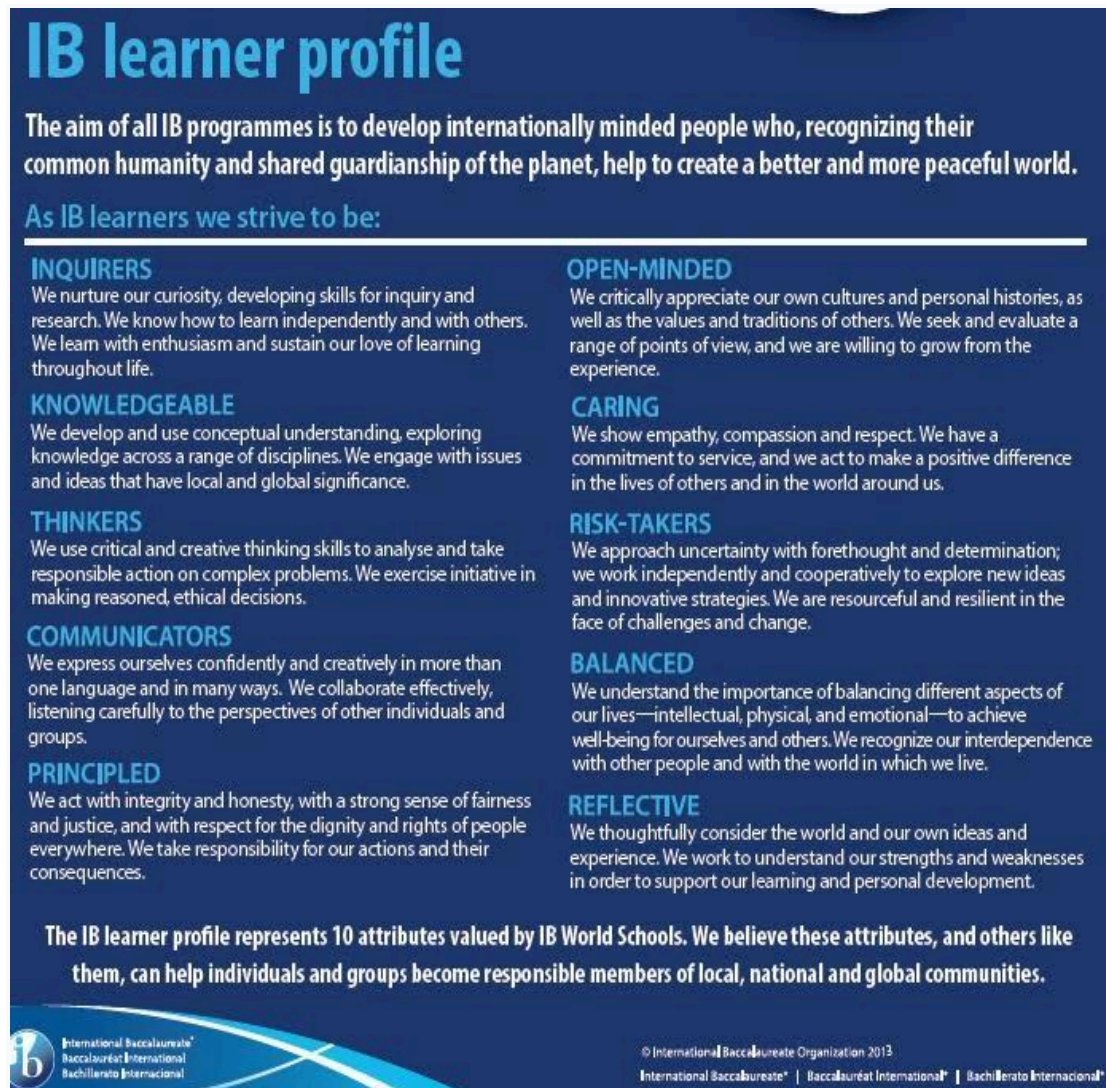
Global Context + Examples of Personal Project Ideas

Global Context	Possible Projects Ideas
<p>Identities and relationships: Students will explore identity; beliefs and values; personal physical, mental, social, and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities and cultures, what it means to be human.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two sides of social networking; an awareness campaign about digital citizenship and cyberbullying - How online identities impact offline relationships; a research essay. - Keeping culinary traditions; a video series following family recipes with historical relevance. - The effect of a mass media on teenage identity; a short film.
<p>Orientation in space and time: Students will explore personal histories; homes and journeys; turning points in humankind; discoveries; explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations from personal, local and global perspectives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Euclidean space perspective of the universe; a 3D model - Explorers in search of a new world; immigration over the ages through visual texts. - The Mayflower and the dream of religious freedom; a personal family history. - Charting a family history through archives and a representational statue.
<p>Personal and cultural expression: Students will explore the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Video games as a form of cultural expression; a short film using five video games that shows how they are an expression of our culture. - The art of Manga in Japanese culture; a Japanese anime and a survey of the understanding of my peers. - Culture and self - expression through dance at the local community arts center; a performance.

<p>Scientific and technical innovation: Students will explore the natural world and its laws; the interaction between people and the natural world; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on communities and environments; the impact of environments on human activity; how humans adapt environments to their needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nanofibers build stronger bikes; a prototype bike with nano fibers. - What's the matter with the anti-matter?; an international talk. - Why are genetics and genomics important to my health?; a media presentation - Can stem cells replace organ transplants?; an investigative report.
<p>Global and sustainability: Students will explore the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the relationship between local and global processes: how local experiences mediate the global; the opportunities and tensions provided by world-interconnectedness; the impact of decision - making on humankind and the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The struggle for water in developing countries; an awareness campaign - The impact of the financial crises of Europe and the European Economic Community on the United States; a visual presentation. - Education as the tool to change the future of Peru; a workshop for adults - The role of the developing countries in protecting the tropical rain forest; a collection of slides
<p>Fairness and development: Students will explore rights and responsibilities; the relationship between communities; sharing finite resources with other people and with other living things; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting fair trade: Cocoa trade in Ghana; an awareness campaign for our school restaurant / cafeteria to promote fair trade. - Open - market economies and their role in fair trade; a talk for students. - Exploring the intersections of race and inequality; a radio broadcast. - Asylum seekers and their right to live like us; a painting.

THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

The ten aspects of the IB Learner Profile highlighted below will be developed and improved in each student throughout the course of the Personal Project. One of the best aspects of the Personal Project is that each student will develop and refine these qualities in their own individual way, depending on which topic they choose for their project.



IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

<p>INQUIRERS We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.</p>	<p>OPEN-MINDED We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.</p>
<p>KNOWLEDGEABLE We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.</p>	<p>CARING We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.</p>
<p>THINKERS We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.</p>	<p>RISK-TAKERS We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.</p>
<p>COMMUNICATORS We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.</p>	<p>BALANCED We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.</p>
<p>PRINCIPLED We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.</p>	<p>REFLECTIVE We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.</p>

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.

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Six Steps to Successful Research:

Step	Hints, Tips, and Questions to ask while you conduct research:
1. Planning	<p>Answer the following questions in your Process Journal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you know already? • What do you want to know more about? • What are key terms and critical questions to help guide your research?
2. Locating and Gathering Resources	<p>Explain your progress as you complete the following in the Process Journal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Mrs. Elsen in the Library Media Center. What resources would be helpful as you begin your research? • Seek advice from Ms. Marino, Ms. FitzMorris, Ms. Evans, Ms. Newhouse or Ms. Hickey • Speak to a specialist. This might be a neighbor, a relative, a company representative, or more. If you do not know a specialist, who might introduce you to one? • Find websites that are reliable. • Find books that are helpful. • Seek newspapers with relevant articles. • Are there specific magazines and/ or journals about your area of interest? • Look for documentaries or movies that might provide information. • Visit a museum or an exhibit that is most relevant to your subject.
3. Selecting and Assessing Resources	<p>The Annotated Bibliography: Assess the sources' reliability in an annotated bibliography using OPVL (origin, purpose, value, and limitation). The annotated bibliography should include the following for each source:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full MLA citation - (can use NoodleTools to keep track of sources.)
4. Research and Bibliography	<p>Take notes in the Process Journal while you research. Every time you use a book, read an article, consider a web page, or talk to a specialist, you must gather bibliographic information, copy quotes, and summarize resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Bibliography (or Works Cited) following MLA format. This is where NoodleTools is helpful!
5. Organizing and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take notes in the Process Journal. • Read over your notes and highlight the relevant information. • Organize your ideas in a clear and logical way. • Establish a plan and share it with your Supervisor. • Revise plans as needed.
6. Reflecting and Evaluating	<p>Answer the following questions in the Process Journal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did your research help you to make decisions? Give several examples. • How did your research expand your understanding? • What did you do well while researching? • What obstacles did you have to overcome while researching? • Is there anything in your research process that you would do differently next time?

What should a Personal Project look like?

The personal project includes **three components**:

- process journal extracts
- an outcome or product
- a report

Process journal:

Throughout the duration of the Personal Project, students will be writing reflective pieces about their experience researching the personal project. The process journal acts as a means of documenting the learning process. Out of the completed process journal entries, a maximum of ten extracts will be selected by the student, for the grading process. Students are expected to have ten journals **COMPLETED** by **March 13, 2026**.

The process journal serves as a continuous record of reflection and active learning throughout the project. The student should be able to access their journal to clarify future problems. There are also elements of study / research skills that should be improving as time goes on and the process journal will serve as tangible proof and as an example of that growth.

Examples of items that may be included in process journal:

Visual Thinking Diagrams	Charts, Lists	Short paragraphs
Notes	Timeline, action plan	Annotated Illustrations
Annotated research	Artifacts from visits to museums, performances, galleries	Pictures, photographs, sketches
Up to 30 seconds of visual or audio material	Screenshots of a blog or website	Self and/or peer assessment feedback

Product:

Students are expected to have a **COMPLETED** product by **March 13, 2026**. Products can include apps, songs, films, awareness or fundraising campaigns, artifacts, photography exhibits, models, investigations, and debates. **Please note the term COMPLETED.** The project must be completed in order to receive a grade. **Incomplete projects will not be accepted.** (Note: If your Project is selected by IB for moderation purposes, the final product itself does not have to be sent away. Students may photograph or scan or record the end product.)

Report:

Toward the end of the process, students will complete a report on their findings. Students are expected to have a **COMPLETED** report by **March 13, 2026**.

The report can be done in various formats:

- Written (most students choose this option!)
- Electronic
- Visual
- Oral

There are length requirements, set forth by IB, regardless of which type of report the student chooses. Students may submit their report and evidence in any combination of **documents and recordings** that fits within the limits outlined in the table which can be found on the IB website.

Structuring of the Report

The section headings in the left hand column below can be used in any Report format.

Section	Content
Title Page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Should include your name, title of your Personal Project, supervisor's name and total word count
Table of contents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number the pages of your report to match the Table of Contents
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What was your research question? ▪ Which Global Context did you use to focus your Project? ▪ What was the goal of your Project? ▪ Why did you choose this goal? ▪ Did your main question change, and if so, why? ▪ Briefly describe how you intended to achieve your goal
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What were the production steps or processes involved in your Personal Project? ▪ What are the various characteristics, aspects or components of your Project? ▪ Describe what your project looks like in words. ▪ How will you determine if you achieved your goal?
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What research was important in guiding you to produce a quality product? ▪ Which ATL skills helped you throughout the Personal Project process? ▪ What did you learn during the completion of the Personal Project? ▪ What were the challenges and difficulties you encountered during the completion of your Personal Project? ▪ What were the solutions that you devised to solve these challenges and difficulties? ▪ How would you do the Personal Project differently if given another chance?
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What impact has your Personal Project had on your own personal development? ▪ What did you want others to understand through your work? Did you achieve your original goal and answer your research question? ▪ What are some new perspectives or insights that have come from you completing the Personal Project?
Bibliography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Refer to the Academic Honesty and referencing guides
Appendices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Optional: You may include copies of patterns, designs, plans, surveys etc. in here. Label each part as a separate appendix.

Personal Project Grading

The Personal Project is assessed in two different ways: internally by DFHS staff and externally by raters at the International Baccalaureate.

Internal assessment consists of the following:

Quarter 1: Process journals, checkpoints, class assignments, attendance and participation

Quarter 2: Process journals, checkpoints, class assignments, attendance and participation

Quarter 3: Personal Project report, process journals, checkpoints, class assignments, attendance and participation

Quarter 4: Personal Project presentation at Expo Night, process journals, class assignments, attendance and participation

Grades from internal assessments will be recorded in the gradebook. The Personal Project report will be assessed using a rubric created and provided by the International Baccalaureate, which can be found below. The rubric should be used to both understand the expectations for the report and to check the report before submission. The report is graded using three different criteria; each criteria is worth 8 points. This grade is then converted into a percentage grade, using the Dobbs Ferry MYP Equivalency Chart and recorded in eSchool.

Additionally graded assignments that are **internally assessed** will be reported on eSchool by the Personal Project teachers.

External assessment:

Moderation is a procedure where an International Baccalaureate external examiner reviews a percentage of Personal Project work and awards a final grade for all Personal Projects. This externally assessed grade is reported on an IB transcript only; not on a DFHS transcript. If there are any questions about the externally assessed grade, please contact the MYP Coordinator, Ms. Jennifer Hickey (hickeyj@dfsd.org).

Personal Project Report Criterion Rubrics:

	7-8	5-6	3-4	1-2
<u>Criteria A:</u> <u>Planning</u>	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. states a learning goal and explains the connection between personal interest(s) and that goal ii. states their intended product and presents multiple appropriate, detailed success criteria for the product iii. presents a detailed plan for achieving the product and all of its associated success criteria. 	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. states a learning goal and describes the connection between personal interest(s) and that goal ii. states their intended product and presents multiple appropriate success criteria for the product iii. presents a detailed plan for achieving the product and most of its associated success criteria. 	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. states a learning goal and outlines the connection between personal interest(s) and that goal ii. states their intended product and presents basic success criteria for the product iii. presents a plan for achieving the product and some of its associated success criteria. 	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. states a learning goal ii. states their intended product iii. presents a plan that is superficial or that is not focused on a product.
<u>Criteria B:</u> <u>Applying Skills</u>	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. explains how the ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their learning goal, supported with detailed examples or evidence ii. explains how the ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their product, supported with detailed examples or evidence. 	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. describes how the ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their learning goal, with reference to examples or evidence ii. describes how the ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their product, with reference to examples or evidence. 	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. outlines which ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their learning goal, with superficial examples or evidence ii. outlines which ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their product, with superficial examples or evidence 	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. states which ATL skill were applied to help achieve their learning goal ii. states which ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their product.
<u>Criteria C:</u> <u>Reflecting</u>	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. explains the impact of the project on themselves or their learning ii. evaluates the product based on the 	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. describes the impact of the project on themselves or their learning ii. evaluates the 	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. outlines the impact of the project on themselves or their learning ii. states whether 	<p>You are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. states the impact of the project on themselves or their learning ii. states whether

	success criteria, fully supported with specific evidence or detailed examples.	product based on the success criteria, partially supported with evidence or examples	the product was achieved, partially supported with evidence or examples.	the product was achieved.
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Command Term Definitions:

Command Terms	MYP Definitions
Describe	Give a detailed account or picture of a situation, event, pattern or process
Explain	Give a detailed account including reasons or causes
Evaluate	Make an appraisal by weighing up the strengths and limitations
Outline	Give a brief account or summary
Present(s)	To offer for display, observation, examination or consideration
State	Give a specific name, value or other brief answer without explanation or calculation

IB Definitions: All definitions included below are directly from the Personal Project Guide.

<u>Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills</u>	Skills that have relevance across the curriculum designed to help students “learn how to learn”. The five categories of ATL skills are: Communication; Social; Self Management; Research and Thinking.
<u>ATL Skills Clusters</u>	Groupings of ATL skills (under a category): communication, collaboration, organization, affective, reflection, information literacy, media literacy, critical thinking, creative thinking, transfer.
<u>Bibliography</u>	An alphabetical list of every source used to research the Personal Project.
<u>Criteria</u>	Specific elements the Personal Project product must meet to be a quality outcome, as defined by the student.
<u>Learning Goal</u>	What students want to learn as a result of doing the personal project.
<u>Product</u>	What students will create for their personal project.
<u>Report</u>	A spoken or written account of something observed, heard, done or investigated, which aims to inform as clearly and succinctly as possible.

Science Research Addendum

Students who are enrolled in Introduction to Science Research are expected to follow the curriculum of the Science Research Program, which covers the Personal Project guidelines set forth by IB. There will be many areas where the requirements for the two projects overlap, yet Science Research students will be expected to adhere to Science Research expectations and due dates. The materials provided by Ms. Marino at Back to School Night provide more information about this.