

Papyrus to PDA: Visual Communication through the Ages Project Directions

1. Introduction and Overview

We have discussed the power of visual communication, both in graphic and written forms. We considered inventions or developments that have occurred across time and reduced the list to those we agree are most significant. You will now select one invention to study and make a case for its significance. You will conduct independent research using electronic and print resources, then combine your work with the ideas of others who studied the same invention. Together you should synthesize your research into an effective, well-reasoned oral presentation for the class. You can use your choice of supporting media during the presentation. The audience will take notes during the presentations and use them as they develop an argument and counterarguments for the subsequent juried debate. Finally, we'll see if we can agree on which invention is the most important of all.

2. Individual Research Procedures:

Note: Use the [Research scoring guide](#) to guide your efforts through Parts 2-4. Your research is the persuasive evidence that your invention had the greatest impact on social, economic and political change. You may type or handwrite your notes, but either way, organize your information into a readable format. Keep track of all print and electronic citations. Turn in a copy to the teacher before group work begins.

You must include, but are not limited to, the following information in your research:

- Who invented it
- Where and when it was invented
- What earlier innovations or inventions it sprang from
- How it was made and distributed
- How it affected social change (examine the following criteria):
 - What social impact it produced and how
 - What political impact it produced and how
 - What economic or job impact it has produced (statistics and numbers)
- Bonus! Track the innovations in this device, method, material, or product since its origin. Compare our most modern version to the original.

3. Group Research Procedures

After individual research is completed, join into groups by invention topic. Compare and share answers and strategies for finding the information. This is the point where we will use the *Seeing Reason Tool* to guide and organize research. Organize cumulative data into a single report format. Bonus! You may want to conduct a school survey to gauge which of the four inventions students believe had the greatest impact on social and political change.

4. Presentation Plan

Work in your invention groups to produce an oral presentation with supporting media. Your presentation has two major purposes, to INFORM and PERSUADE. Use the bottom portion of the [research scoring guide](#) to focus your efforts.

5. Practice and Present

Once you have planned your oral presentation, decide which supporting media serves you best, either a slideshow, pamphlet, or Web page. Develop these media and determine how they will be used during the presentation. Refer to your [presentation scoring guide](#) as you practice. Think ahead to questions the audience may ask. You will field five questions from the audience. When you are in the audience, take notes. Notes will help you plan your debate argument and counterargument.

6. Debate!

An informal, juried debate will be held, with one member of each team serving on a panel of judges, and one or more team members acting as debaters. You will not be graded for participation in the debate, but will receive extra credit if you do so!

7. Assessment

You will be assessed for individual research, group work and your presentation plan using the [research scoring guide](#). You will be graded for the presentation using the [presentation scoring guide](#). The applicable scoring guides are handed out at each new phase of the project, so you will be aware of the objectives. Copies are posted on the bulletin board as well for your reference. Good luck and have fun with this project!