Personal project Example 3

Blog
How can I help students to improve their study habits?

On this page, you'll find everything I've done for my personal project. My process journal divided into weeks, my product, my action plan, and my habits.
How can I help students to improve their study habits?
To start with my personal project I have to choose a topic which I am going to work for the next 5 months. It has to be something which interests me, something which I think is important and something which is going to make an impact to the community.

The first thing that came to my mind was to make a brainstorm of ideas:

- **Teenage problems**
  - Teenage pregnancies
  - Violent behavior

- **Social problems in school**
  - Displacement
  - Lack of healthcare
  - Nutrition
  - Contamination
  - Street children

- **Social problems in the community**
  - Violence to women
  - How is it viewed in different cultures and countries

- **How the brain works**
  - Different intelligences
  - Do we all learn in the same way?
  - How can we improve our learning and studying?

- **Manage of resources**
  - How can we reduce water consumption?
  - Palliative care

- **How to stop and detect it**

From the brainstorm, the topics I find the most interesting and the ones I think I could help to change and make a big impact in my community are:

- **How the brain works**: This has been a topic that has always called my attention. When I was younger I attended a conference in neuroeducation, which is the area that centers on learning how the brain works. One of the things that I took from that conference was that everyone has different learning styles, which is why we learn differently. Recently in a biology class we looked at the same topic and I think it would be very interesting to help the community by teaching them that there are different learning styles and that if they figure out which one each person is best at, studying and learning will be more easy.

- **Violence to women**: I could make an awareness campaign about why this is a modern issue that is being found more often in our country and city so people know how to act (where to call, who to tell, how to stop it). I could also help raise signs for a problem that are recently facing some women, victims of this violence, who leave their kids everyday in some “hogares de paso” so they can go to work, but the government has said they are going to close them because there’s not enough money to keep them.

In the end, I decided to do the first option (how the brain works) because it is something essential for a person’s education, not only in school, but throughout life, and it is something that not everyone is aware of. Truth is, I decided to help people to change the way they study because it was something I thought about during December, while we were taking our cumulative exams. For most of them we had to learn by hard "loads of information, and I found out I wasn't the only one stressing about how I was going to be able to do it. That's when I realized that throughout my years in school no one has ever taught me how I'm supposed to study. I also thought about why studying is not so easy for some people, and why some prefer to study in a group while others need to be in complete silence and alone. So, in the end, I really want to try to bring a connection between the multiple intelligences theory and our study methods and see if I can help me and my peers to study easier.
Weeks 4-5

Now that I’ve formulated a goal and a context, I need to move on and actually learn a bit more about my topic by selecting relevant resources and applying them to my project.

Week 4

Theory of Multiple Intelligences

To start with this stage, I’ve been researching a lot about the theory of the multiple intelligences. I found that Howard Gardner was the creator of this theory, and he wrote a book (Frames of Mind: The Theory Of Multiple Intelligences) explaining it. These are the 7 types of intelligences according to Gardner:

Linguistic intelligence: People with this type of intelligence are sensitive to spoken and written language, so they have the ability to learn and express language easily. They like to use language to express themselves poetically and they find it easy to remember information through language.

Logical-mathematical intelligence: The ones with this intelligence tend to analyze problems logically and answer to their questions using science and logic. According to Gardner, they have the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively, organize and categorize things and have abstract thinking, which is why this intelligence is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking.

Musical intelligence: People have sensitivity for rhythm, pitch and intonation. They can remember the tune of a song easily and have impressive skills for the performing, composition and appreciation of musical patterns. According to Gardner, this type of intelligence is really linked to linguistic intelligence.

Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence: They use the body or parts of the body to solve problems. Gardner sees mental and physical activity as related, so kinesthetic intelligence include those who have good body control and motor skills.

Spatial intelligence: People with this type of intelligence tend to be great observers and have the ability to recognize the pattern of a wide space and to think in three dimensions (aware of their space). They are likely to use metaphors.

Intrapersonal intelligence: The capacity to understand oneself, to appreciate one’s feelings, fears and motivations, are the skills someone with this type of intelligence has. In Howard Gardner’s view it involves having an effective working model of ourselves, and to be able to use such information to regulate our lives.


The thing is, this intelligences are not only referring to the way we learn but also to the way others see us, and our relationship with the outside world, so it gets a bit out of the focus I’m trying to give to my project, which is improving people’s study methods. Looking for more theories I found this one, which fits more what I’m looking for:

Learning Styles

This theory is very similar to the Multiple Intelligences, but it reduces it self to 4 ways in which people learn. People learns using visual, auditory, read write, and kinesthetic learning styles, but there’s always one which is more dominant in each person. “The way a person prefers to receive, store and retrieve material is known as a person’s preferred learning style”.

Weeks 8-9
(To do and Product Plan)

Week 8
I've decided to make a plan on the things I need to do form this stage. I'm very behind on the things I should've included in my journal as I went along and they are the skills. I'm going to work on them throughout this week.

March
- Collect survey answers in 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th grades: DONE
- Make interview and interview questions: Decide who to interview: DONE
- Research of different schools around the World which have the learning styles very present: DONE
- Choose the questions for the multiple intelligences quiz (which is going to go in the booklet): DONE
- Pick the quotes for the posters with study tips I'm going to place around back: DONE
- Research ways to make the booklet attractive for readers (different techniques, then pick the best one): NOT GOING TO BE DONE
- Update process journal (work on the skills I've shown in each part of the cycle).
- Analyze survey results, make any modifications in the planning of my final product (Reflection stage): DONE

April
- Make a conclusion based on the survey results: DONE
- Start working in the first draft of the booklet: NOT GOING TO BE DONE
- Paste the posters around back: DONE
- Keep an advancing in the process journal: DONE
- Plan the proposal I'm going to make to the head of sections (a word document with interesting survey results, the explanation of what are learning styles and some ideas of how could the class to teach students about it): DONE
- Write the report: DONE
Last Week
(Report, Action Outcome and Presentation Plan)

Action Outcome

1. Posters
The posters were up (completely) for about one week and a half, but unfortunately, some had been taken off because someone ripped the edges of two of them. However, the time they were there I saw students taking their time to read them and to stop while walking to have a look at them. Here is a video of how they looked across the hallway.

video
Assembly and Presentation

Assembly:
I did my assembly to 7th graders and you could tell some of them were really interested in knowing what their learning style was and how to study according to it. I gave them all a test and in my powerpoint I had 10 questions they had to answer and those questions determined their learning styles. After this I gave them a short idea of how each learner should study, and then I showed them what they could find on my webpage. I gave them the link of my webpage in a piece of paper at the end.
Presentation to the community:
I did the same thing to the students which came to my stand. To parents I showed them my process and explained to them what I did with students, what I showed them and what my action was. Some people were very interested in my project and congratulated me a lot for my results. :) Here are some pictures of how my stand looked like.