

Genius Hour

Coach: Geri Coats
Ernest Righetti High School
Santa Maria Joint Union High School District
Grade(s) 9-12
ELA

Genius Hour allows the students to take the lead and explore their own interests. This strategy engages students but still meets the learning goals for the course with direction from the teacher. Both teachers and students will love that 20% of the classroom instructional time is devoted to projects determined by student interests.

Reading, writing, research, speaking, listening, and technology skills are all used while students develop a full-featured, multifaceted approach to project-based learning goals.

This strategy supports skills essential to meeting CCSS. The team meetings will be flexible and supportive of team members' own level of implementation. Teachers and students will need access to technology tools such as a computer and Internet access.

This link: <http://coatsclassroomblog.blogspot.com/search/label/%23geniushour> shows some of the projects that students created. These were the presentations that went along with their culminating project. Students created many different final projects ranging from food from a particular culture (that they prepared and shared in class) to videos teaching the classroom about Deaf culture and so much more.

English 2A for student AC

Category	Points	Max	Perc
<i>Paperwork</i>	8	8	100%
<i>Classwork</i>	69	107	64.48%
<i>Homework</i>	19	76	25%
<i>Teacher Assessments</i>	11	40	27.5%
<i>Course Assessments</i>	7.6	30	25.33%
Total	114.6	261	43.9%

English 2B Summary for studentAC

Category	Points	Max	Perc
<i>Paperwork</i>	0	0	0%
<i>Classwork</i>	135	167	80.83%
<i>Homework</i>	139.5	178	78.37%
<i>Teacher Assessments</i>	89.5	105	85.23%
<i>Course Assessments</i>	7.9	15	52.66%
<i>Total</i>	371.9	465	79.97%

Above are summaries of the grade reports for a single student compared from the fall semester (before Genius Hour was implemented) to the spring semester (with Genius Hour). The student improved in every area of the course, aside from paperwork (which was not utilized in the spring semester at all).

Strategy Team Meetings

Meeting 1:

A meeting prior to deployment would be essential because there are many ways to get started, but whatever a teacher decides has to fit their particular classroom community. This meeting would be focused on sharing different ways of introducing Genius Hour to students to get them interested and motivated as well as how to manage the logistics in the classroom and maintain both parental and administrative support.

Meeting 2:

The second meeting should take place while students are in the research stages. Topics for discussion could include research methodologies as well as maintaining student momentum and how to push students' thinking to deeper levels of Critical Thinking.

Meeting 3:

The third meeting should focus on project development and supporting student projects. Teachers can/should share student work completed thus far and discuss methods for presentation. This meeting could also plan a culminating "Reveal" or "Showcase" where students share their work with other students or a larger community group.

Throughout the process teachers can have check-ins as needed via Google Hang-Outs or other conferencing options.

About the Coach

Geri has held various leadership roles over her ten years at Ernest Righetti High School. As a representative for her school site, She has participated in a number of committees ranging from Shared Decision Making, CAPP Grant Committee and Title III committee for the school district as well as being the Department Chair for the English Department and a Teacher on Special Assignment focused on Data and Intervention needs. Geri is also a Google Certified Teacher and Certified Apps for Education Trainer and participates frequently in Professional Development events like the CUE and iSTE conferences and smaller events for school districts or individual school sites.