

Developing Project Titles



Using ideas from previous blogs, here are some outlines of how a few different projects have developed during our teaching of the Certificate. We've written up the outlines as dialogues between a student and teacher that, in reality, continued over the course of several lessons and involved several dead ends and a good deal of head scratching. In good Socratic style, everything the teacher says is framed as a question, making use of some of the teaching techniques outlined in our blog asking, **How do you teach creative thinking?**

Sample 1: Amur Leopards

Student: *I'm interested in animal welfare.*

Teacher: *Which particular animal(s)? Which particular aspect of their welfare?*

Student: *I want to find out about how Amur leopard sanctuaries can be designed in a humane way.*

Teacher: *What do you need to find out about this topic?*

Student: *I need to conduct research into Amur leopards and existing Amur leopard sanctuaries.*

Teacher: *Now that you've conducted your background research, how can you frame your project according to the 'use X to solve Y' structure?*

Student: *I want to use X to develop a proposal for a humane sanctuary for Amur leopards.*

Teacher: *What are the different aspects of your problem?*

Student: *Leopards need the right kind of space, food and terrain, so I could do research into these and design something using information from geography and architecture.*

Teacher: *What is your final research statement?*

Student: *I will be using geographical and architectural research to design a humane sanctuary for Amur leopards.*

Sample 2: Garden Restaurant

Students: *We're interested in wellbeing and how a building can make you feel comfortable or uncomfortable.*

Teacher: *What kind of buildings are you interested in?*

Students: *After thinking about it we're interested in how a restaurant could make you feel a sense of wellbeing.*

Teacher: *We've begun to talk about the skills of subtraction, multiplication, and addition. Which of these might work for your project?*

Students: *After reflecting we think the most interesting method to use is subtraction. We want to take away normal walls and ceilings and replace them with glass, so there is lots of sunlight.*

Teacher: *Beyond adding light, what are the benefits of doing this in relation to wellbeing?*

Students: *We've thought about it and we think we could add in an indoor garden, with grass and flowerbeds.*

Teacher: *How could you begin to frame this with 'use X to solve Y'?*

Students: *We will be using glasshouse architecture to develop an indoor garden restaurant.*

Teacher: *What further problems might there be with having a glass building with a garden inside it?*

Students: *We need to do research into providing shade, keeping the restaurant ventilated, and considering how chairs won't sink into the grass.*

Sample 3: Utilitarianism and War

Student: *I'm interested in utilitarianism.*

Teacher: *What further ideas might you be able to apply that theory to?*

Student: *I've looked into this and it can be applied to any kind of ethical decision.*

Teacher: *Now that you've looked into utilitarianism, which ethical decision do you want to apply it to?*

Student: *I've looked into some of the biggest ethical decisions that have been made recently, and I've decided I want to apply the theory to the decision to start the Iraq War.*

Teacher: *What is your 'use X to solve Y' statement?*

Student: *I will be using the theory of utilitarianism to judge whether the decision to go to war with Iraq was ethical.*

Teacher: *Who or what will you apply your theory to?*

Student: *I want to apply my theory to the people of Iraq and the people of the UK.*

Sample 4: App for the Elderly

Student: *We're interested in helping to improve mental health.*

Teacher: *Whose mental health would you be interested in researching?*

Student: *After thinking about it we're interested in looking into the mental health of older people.*

Teacher: *What do you need to find out about your topic to get you started?*

Student: *We need to look into common mental health problems in people over 80.*

Teacher: *Now that you've done your research into old age mental health, how can you frame your project using the 'Use X to solve Y' structure?*

Student: *We want to use X to design something to help the elderly.*

Teacher: *What do you think might particularly help older people's mental health?*

Student: *After thinking about this we want to design an easy-to-use app to help lonely older people to feel connected to their loved ones.*

Teacher: *What will you need to research to help you design this app?*

Student: *We need to look at whether there are any existing apps that we can be inspired by, and also research the kind of things that will make older people feel most connected.*

Teacher: *What is your final research statement?*

Student: *We are using technology and knowledge of old-age mental health to create an app that combats loneliness by putting older people in touch with their grandchildren.*