

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION
ACTION PLAN

Highlight each line as you complete the steps.

STEP 1: BRAINSTORM

1. Brainstorm: think about a topic, cause, issue that interests you.
2. Create a list or cluster of all the ideas you have that are associated with that particular subject. Start with the Five Ws.
3. Now list all the reasons why you are interested in this issue.
4. Review both lists. If you have many ideas associated with them, then you have a topic you can develop or feel passionate about. If not, go back to the drawing board and find a new topic. If you need to, review the list of charitable organizations to see if you can get a new idea. *Remember, you must care deeply about your topic because it will be the focus of your research and promotion all quarter long.*

Deadline: Nov. 14

BRAINSTORM: page 1

STEP 2: ACTION PLAN

1. Develop your own action plan. You should create a day-by-day plan that will guide your research and promotion. At first, your plan will be loose because you don't know what direction your research will take. But starting with a map, your efforts will be more purposeful.
2. Brainstorm a list of sources. Who should you talk to? What ideas do you have for your Internet research?
3. Use the storyboard action plan or create an outline.
4. Title your preliminary action plan:
The Name of Your Cause/Campaign
ACTION PLAN 1
Date
5. Place the plan in a plastic sleeve and put it in a 1" binder.

Deadline: Nov. 18

ACTION PLAN: page 2

STEP 3: STATEMENT/QUESTION

1. Create a preliminary statement. In a paragraph, write down why you want to research this particular subject. Place this page in a plastic sleeve and put it into the binder.
2. Create a list of at least two-dozen questions, things you're eager to know, about your subject. Place your questions in a plastic sleeve, then three-ring binder.
3. What do you hope to learn from your research? Write down your paragraph-long response on the backside of the questions.

Deadline: Nov. 17

STATEMENT/QUESTION: pages 3, 4

STEP 4: WEB RESEARCH

1. Internet research. With questions in hand, look up everything you can think of that's tied to your subject. See what's being done to shed light on this issue. Who else cares? Get all the facts you possibly can, such as:
 - the reason for the problem
 - the cost(s) of the problem economically, socially, physically, spiritually
 - who has tried to help prevent the problem
 - stories about individuals
 - what it would take to solve the problem
2. Collect information from **at least six different websites and/or online newspapers and magazines**. You need printouts of the material. Clearly label material, *Internet Research*.
3. Circle and highlight pertinent information from your research. Take notes. Make observations in the margins.
4. Place your Internet research in plastic sleeves and include it in your binder.
5. Be sure to write down website address, author(s), page number, and date retrieved. You will need this information for the bibliography.

Deadline: Nov. 21

WEB RESEARCH: pages 5—11

STEP 5: RESEARCH II

1. To round out your understanding of your topic, you must extend your research by contacting agencies, reading pamphlets, etc, and interviewing individuals.
2. In a plastic sleeve, include transcripts of your interviews, pamphlets, etc. Be sure to label the material *Secondary Research*.
3. Take notes. Place your observations in a plastic sleeve.

Deadline: Jan. 6
RESEARCH II: pages 12,13

STEP 6: ACTION PLAN REVISION

1. Go back and look at your action plan. Based on your research, based on new information, revise your plan.
2. Decide:
How will I campaign on behalf of my issue?
How will I let the community know that this is a problem?
Who is my audience?
What do I hope to accomplish?
 - raise awareness • correct the problem
 - raise funds • get someone else to correct the problem
3. In your Action Plan, include all the steps you will need to take to accomplish your goals. Include deadlines: highlight so the dates stand out.

Deadline: Dec. 5
ACTION PLAN REVISION: page 14

STEP 7: WRITE A LETTER

1. Find an individual or company that can shed light on your issue. Or, find an individual who cares, like you do, about your subject. Write him/her a letter.
2. Your letter must be properly addressed, include correct grammar and punctuation, be thorough and adequately represent your passion and commitment to your topic.
3. You must turn in a copy of your letter, along with a rough draft that includes evidence of editing. You will receive a rubric: staple to the very back of your rough draft.
4. Your original letter must be placed in a stamped, addressed envelope. It will be mailed. Please include the following school address:

Your name
c/o Your teacher's first and last name and Room No.
Parras Middle School
200 Lucia Ave.
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

Deadline: Nov. 22
WRITE A LETTER: page 15

STEP 8: PRESENTATION

1. Begin thinking about how you want to present your research in January. You will need to decide if you're going to create:
 - television commercial
 - mini-documentary
 - radio advertisement
 - magazine/newspaper ads
 - billboards
 - approval
 - dramatic monologue
 - song
 - website
 - other (with teacher approval)

Your goal is to make your final product slick, professional and convincing. We want you to actually be able to use this campaign to create change on behalf of your cause. We want your end product to be something you can be proud of and use as evidence of your commitment to excellence.

2. Brainstorm your ideas. List all the things you will need to assemble, do, in order to accomplish your goal. How much money will it cost? How many people will it involve? How much time will it take?
3. Create a second ACTION PLAN dedicated your presentation. Title it, *Presentation Action Plan*.

Deadline: Jan. 12

PRESENTATION ACTION PLAN: page 16

STEP 9: READ AND WRITE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1. In class and for homework, read letters to the editor. Analyze the letters. How are they written, in terms of placement of the main subject and suggestion for change? How long are they? Where do they appear in the paper?
2. Write a letter to the editor of an appropriate publication on behalf of your cause.
3. Your letter must fit the criteria of outstanding writing.
4. Provide your teacher with a copy, rough draft, rubric, and address and mail the letter. Include the school's return address.

Deadline: Nov. 30

LETTER: page 17

The National Diversity Education Program, a multiyear joint project of the Japanese American National Museum (www.janm.org) and the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy (www.ncdemocracy.org) is generously supported by Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc.

STEP 10: OPINION OR PERSUASIVE WRITING

1. In class and for homework, read and analyze opinion pieces in newspapers and magazines. Determine how the author tries to sway the readers' opinion. Notice how the information is stacked and how the author wraps up the piece.
2. After analyzing four opinion pieces, write your own on behalf of your issue. Your persuasive essay must be about 400 words and follow the rubric requirements exactly.

Deadline: Dec. 14
OPINION PIECE: page 18

STEP 11: SPEECH

1. You will write a three to four minute speech on behalf of your subject.
2. All students will attend "Speech Seminar" in January and take detailed notes.
3. Your speech must follow the requirements specified in the rubric.

Deadline: Jan. 23-25
SPEECH: page 19

STEP 12: PRESENTATION

1. All students will make an in-class, stand up presentation of your final project.
2. All students will present their project at, "Democracy in Action: Parras Middle School Eighth Graders Take Action," an evening program that will be attended by community members, dignitaries and the media.

Deadline: Jan. 26
Deadline: Jan. 31

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NOTES:

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