

The Personal Project at Guajome Park Academy

All 10th grade students must complete and pass a Personal Project with a satisfactory grade.

What is a Personal Project?

- The Personal Project is a required, culminating activity of the IB Middle Years Program. It provides an opportunity for students to produce a truly creative and PERSONAL piece of work while they demonstrate the skills they have acquired through their years in the IB Middle Years Program.
- The Personal Project is a piece of independent research and/or investigation that takes the form of a student's choice (such as a research paper, an original written play or short story, the building of a piece of furniture, etc., etc.) The project must be centered on at least ONE of the Areas of Interaction.
- It is a significant body of work produced over an extended period of time, usually starting in summer at the end of 9th grade year and extending into spring of the 10th grade year.
- The Personal Project includes 3 components:
 - Regular reflection in a Process Journal
 - Completion of an Area -of -Interaction- centered project in the form of student's choice
 - Completion of the Written Statement, a process essay about the student's project
- For students continuing as juniors and seniors at GPA, the Personal Project is excellent preparation for completing other large assignments such as the Extended Essay or Senior Project.

The Personal Project may take many forms or be demonstrated in many ways such as:

- An original work of art (visual, dramatic or musical)
- A written piece of work on a special topic related to an Area of Interaction issue (research paper)
- A piece of literary fiction (creative writing)
- An original science experiment
- An invention or specially designed process
- The presentation of a developed business, management or organizational plan for an entrepreneurial venture or for a new student organization, for example.
- The presentation of a developed community service project that the student carries out

Whatever form the project takes, it is critically important that it focus around one or more Areas of Interaction.

Supervision and Advising:

The student receives guidance from his or her Advisor during the course of the project. Beginning in August of the 10th grade year, the Advisor serves as a supervisor to ensure that the student has selected and developed a focused project topic and is meeting deadlines and following requirements of the project. He or she can also refer the student to another adult who is able to help with the project should the student need more assistance than the advisor can provide. **The**

advisor is not required to be an expert in the topic of the student's project, nor is it their job to give the student ideas on the topic or type of project to do. However, once the student has completed his or her own general brainstorm and research on possible topics and can show this evidence to the Advisor, the advisor can then guide the student in developing a focused and achievable goal for the project.

Although it is not mandatory, GPA strongly encourages students to obtain a mentor for their project—someone who is experienced in the topic that the student has chosen. Many students form a mentor relationship with architects, musicians, art teachers, etc.

The Process Journal:

Students are required to keep a process journal throughout the Personal Project process. All students are expected to document in the journal each time they work on or do research for their project. It is important that students keep accurate notes from research sources, AND also EVALUATE the inspiration or help the source gives them. A well-kept journal is invaluable to the students when they write their Written Statement. The journal is turned in with the final project. A small journal, composition book, or spiral notebook is fine for this purpose.

The Written Statement:

The final but very important component of the Personal Project is the Written Statement. This is a reflective essay in which the students discuss their Personal Project plan, process and evaluation of outcome. The essay is usually divided into subsections including an Introduction Section, a Process Section, an Analysis Section and an Evaluation Section. Students receive more information on this statement as the school year progresses. English 10 classes will also help with teacher-led Peer Editing sessions in January/February.

The Presentation

Each spring (March or April), 10th grade students present their projects to the 9th grade students. This presentation serves as an orientation to Personal Project for 9th grade students and allows 10th grade students to show quality work. Many 10th grade students also display their projects at the annual Stakeholders Day in March. Presentation is a required component of the Personal Project at Guajome.