

PURSUIT OF PASSION



ELA & READING

9–12

GRADES 9–12



This guide links the *Pursuit of Passion* unit to the research strand of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR). *Pursuit of Passion* can be linked to additional TEKS from ELAR and other subjects as well based on the student's choice of topic. *Pursuit of Passion* allows students in kindergarten through grade 10 to explore the relationship between their personal interests and future opportunities. By connecting the two, students will gain well---rounded perspectives that help guide them toward professional or academic future goals. For example, students may understand the dynamic relationships between self and environment, as addressed in the Social Studies TEKS, and students may relate the arts to history, society, and culture, as addressed in the Fine Arts TEKS. Since this unit involves a variety of learning experiences, its products can document student learning over time through annual Pursuit of Passion projects, demonstrating student growth and providing a reflection of progress. The following text details the *Pursuit of Passion* unit and includes the applicable English Language Arts and Reading TEKS. The final section of this document presents the applicable Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) adopted by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) on January 24, 2008.

Description of Unit

Students will research a topic of their choice based on an interest---directed area and will relate it to curriculum standards in two subject areas. Students will learn about the history of a chosen field of study and its current development. They will also report their personal involvement with the topic and its significance. Students are expected to spend an appropriate amount of time choosing a topic that serves both academic and personal learning. Each student's final product will include a creative presentation of the student's work.

Pursuit of Passion (Kindergarten–Grade 10)

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Goals

Students will meet these goals in their explorations:

- Understand the relationship between personal interests and society
- Become familiar with various career and study opportunities related to interests
- Learn about the purpose of their field of study within society
- Develop the essential skills of logical thinking, creative problem solving, intellectual risk taking, and communication
- Explore unanswered questions and generate new questions
- Generate new ideas
- Build and apply critical thinking skills

Teacher Directions	Additional Teacher Preparation & Notes
<p>Elicit</p> <p>What activities do you love to do? What are your hobbies and interests inside of school? What are your interests outside of school? What do you do on weekends for fun? What do you do to alleviate boredom? If you could choose your favorite activity, what would it be and why?</p>	<p>Allow students time to brainstorm and free write in their journals.</p>
<p>Engage</p> <p>Introduce the idea of exploring hobbies and interests in depth and from different perspectives. Describe a path connecting one's personal hobby or interest to a related profession and the importance of being open to related topics found in research. Online tools such as interest inventories can be useful in seeking topics related to interests. Helpful websites include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.onetcenter.org/IP.html • http://www.texascareercheck.com/ 	<p>You may wish to share a personal story, or bring in a guest speaker who can help connect personal interests to his/her chosen profession. Help students understand that the tools and skills learned in the classroom can become directly applicable to studying an area of interest that can build into future endeavors explored through college or a career.</p>
<p>Explore</p> <p>Demonstrate how brainstorming with webs or graphic organizers can help students map thoughts and ideas easily. By connecting related topics, students will produce their own topic pool to choose from. In order to help students document ideas, offer quick brainstorming tips before they begin, such as starting with simple ideas, writing down all</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

<p>possible topics, and developing related areas of focus.</p>	
<p>Explain</p> <p>Have a class discussion about why each project is important. Incorporate personal experiences and discuss the benefits of enjoying work (academic and professional). The discussion goal is to engage students by pointing out the project’s focus on their individuality and application of interests. You may use these questions to guide the discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the difference between work you enjoy and work you dislike? • What is your favorite hobby/interest and why? • What aspects of your hobby/interest make it fun? • What careers also involve these aspects? • How can involvement in your hobby/interest impact others? • If you had unlimited resources and time available for your hobby/interest, what would you do? 	<p>Lead students in a discussion. You may choose to break students into pairs or small groups and allow time for sharing in the smaller groups. Then peer--- group partners can share what they learned about the other student’s project ideas and goals.</p>
<p>Explore</p> <p>Present an overview of a hands---on activity. Through observation and involvement outside of their own lives, students can gain a literal understanding of how individual interests can drive life decisions and create ways to impact society. You may want to provide examples of activities for students, such as photography, interviews, and community service involvement. Allow students time to explore activities related to their interests.</p>	<p>Help students connect scholarly activities to their particular fields of interest. Ensure that students can access and engage with the tools of the chosen discipline during their explorations.</p>
<p>Explain</p> <p>Explain to students about the state curriculum standards and why it is important to connect their areas of study to the TEKS. Ask students to think about what TEKS they could identify related to possible topics of interest. Be sure to explain the concept of TEKS so students have a clear understanding of what to look for. Introduce the TEKS applicable for each class’s specific grade level (or higher grade levels as appropriate) and provide examples of how a project can make use of various subject area TEKS. Show students where to find the TEKS online at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=6148.</p>	<p>Both the TEKS and research methodologies can help students focus the designs of their research. For example, students with very broad topics can review the TEKS for their grade levels and focus in on a few standards that align to their area of</p>



<p>Have a class discussion about why discipline-based research is essential to pursuing scholarly interests in such diverse fields as medicine, education and communication. Discuss different research methodologies. Explain various strategies for planning research and designing effective qualitative and/or quantitative data collection. This will be helpful for students to understand how different information can be useful for different topics and settings. The <i>Gifted and Talented Teacher Toolkit</i> includes a section on research processes that may be useful for this discussion and can be found at http://www.texaspsp.org/toolkit/GT_Teacher_Toolkit.html.</p> <p>Students should provide proof of research outside of the classroom, and flexibility with the project requirements will allow them to explore original ways to investigate their topic.</p>	<p>study. For example, if a student is interested in nature broadly, an examination of the Science TEKS may help the student focus on a particular cycle or system, such as the water cycle. Similarly, the various research methodologies used to gather and record data can help students with a lot of competing interests sift out those areas where they may be more deeply committed to study. For example a student may identify animals in nature as an interest but may not be as interested in the hands-on processes of field or laboratory research and dissection. The student may not wish to become a field biologist, but pursue the study of animals through different means, such as through wildlife photography, environmental policy, or training service animals.</p>
<p>Explore</p> <p>Have the class develop a sample timeline and/or checklist detailing tasks and targeted deadlines. Such tools can be helpful in remaining organized and continuing to move forward with the project. Both can be combined into one document that students include in their project.</p> <hr/>	<p>Prior to developing the task/timeline you may wish to have students articulate an overall goal or big idea for their research. Students may then work backwards by designing outcomes, then product ideas that might yield those outcomes. At that point students can break out the tasks needed for conducting the research and developing the products. Ensure students are aware of the</p>

	class/product timeline's duration and help them modify the scope of their projects if needed.
<p>Elaborate (Phase II)</p> <p>Research process</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selecting a topic. Class discussions, brainstorming tools, and interest inventories should help the student choose a topic. Once the student uses these tools and reaches a preliminary decision on a subject of study, he should conduct initial research to confirm the availability of information and to help narrow the topic. 2. Asking guiding questions. Once the student has selected a topic, she should think of three to five guiding questions, such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the historical context of my topic? • What are important points in my topic's history? • Who affected my topic's history? • What purposes does my topic serve? • What would society/the world be like without my topic? • Why would other people consider my topic important? • What may be the future of my topic? <p>While these examples are general, the student's questions about the area of study should be specific to the chosen topic. The questions should lead her to form individual research-based opinions. The student should also develop a hypothesis or some possible answers to the questions.</p> 3. Creating a Topic Proposal. The student should include appropriate components in the Topic Proposal. (See attachment #2.) Examples follow: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chosen topic • Resources he will need to find answers to questions, such as primary and secondary sources, correspondence with experts on the subject, etc. • Hands-on activity ideas • Related TEKS <p>The student should identify TEKS from two topics--related subject areas that will be addressed throughout this</p> 	<p>Throughout the research process for <i>Pursuit of Passion</i>, students will self-direct study on a topic of their own choosing. Teachers should serve as facilitators and guide students through challenges of identifying and narrowing topics, locating resources, articulating a proposal, and developing a product. This task is open-ended and allows students the flexibility to design and develop a course of study unique to their interests and needs.</p>

<p>project. The Topic Proposal must be approved by the instructor.</p> <p>4. Creating a timeline. Using the sample timeline/checklist prepared by the class, the student will map out a timeline for her specific project. This will help the student stay organized as she progresses toward project completion.</p> <p>5. Conducting the research. The student should use resources identified in his Topic Proposal as well as additional resources he discovers. During this stage, the student needs to keep a log, notes, and/or resource process sheets to document all the sources he uses and what he learns from each one. The student should remain focused on the purpose of his research as determined by his guiding questions. However, that purpose may evolve as the student conducts his research.</p> <p>6. Discussion of progress. Throughout the research process, the student may run into challenges due to lack of available information or even evolving interest. Allotting class time to discuss research concerns and issues while also exchanging tips with other students can help provide a status report for the student and instructor and help the student find ways to overcome obstacles.</p>	
<p>Explain</p> <p>The product</p> <p>The student should express, through the design and creation of an original product, what she has learned about her chosen topic of study. The complete project should include quotations, examples, and details as appropriate and should follow appropriate stylistic rules. Since the goal of the project is to encourage student examination of her own passion and its bigger picture, the student's point of view, voice, and reflection should be included. Also, the relationship between topic and the real world should be evident. An important factor is the product's authenticity; therefore, the student should be creative in designing her product. For example, product ideas that incorporate research could be filming a movie or designing and carrying out an experiment.</p>	<p>Students design their own product to communicate findings of their research. As an additional extension, you may wish for students to develop their own rubric for assessing their product. How will students know when they have achieved success with their work?</p>

<p>The student should be able to provide confirmation of participation in an outside activity. If the product is tangible and used in presentation nothing more may be required. The instructor may want to consider requiring evidence for proof of completion. The student must complete a reference list/Works Cited page that includes an appropriate collection of references.</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Each student presents his research. The student is free to design and create a presentation fitting for the topic and information that includes key aspects of the product. Depending on the grade level, the presentation may range from 5---20 minutes in length and should be followed by an unscripted Q&A session with audience members.</p> <p>Instructors may want to provide ideas and examples of creative ways to present, for instance through a student---designed class lesson or an interactive game. The websites used previously for product ideas may be useful to help generate presentation ideas.</p>	
<p>Evaluate</p> <p>Use the TPSP High School/Exit Level Rubric to assess each student’s learning. Additionally, you may wish to develop self--- or peer--- assessments based on the rubric that students could use to evaluate their products.</p> <p>A completed project includes all the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Topic Proposal including TEKS addressed 2. A log, notes, or resource process sheets 3. Timeline/checklist 4. The product 5. Proof of participation in an outside activity, if needed 6. A Works Cited page 7. An audiotape or videotape of the presentation, including an unscripted Q&A session <p>In what ways did the student:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop sophisticated, open---ended questions about the self---selected topic; • Use a variety of sources that access advanced content and include multiple perspectives; • Collect data using the tools of the discipline; 	<p>The TPSP High School/Exit Level Rubric can be downloaded at http://www.texaspsp.org/intermediate/intermediate-assessment.php.</p>

- Analyze and interpret the data;
- Capture and apply their analysis through an original product; and
- Communicate his/her research findings, learning, and ideas to an audience using the language of the discipline.

Extend

Since the *Pursuit of Passion* task is open-ended and allows for student-directed learning, a variety of methods exist to extend student projects to incorporate interdisciplinary connections. A few ideas include the following activities.

Science

What cycles, systems or processes in the environment might intersect with the student's area of study? What technological innovations might impact the area of study? Examine the connections between science and industry and the chosen topic. Choose one system or area of technology to examine and redesign. In light of what you know about your topic, how might you develop a device, scientific experiment, process, or new technology to further the goals of your research? Sketch an illustration of the new innovation and list how you think it might benefit society.

Social Studies

What is the history of research on the student's chosen topic and what are the social impacts of those projects? Where are the intersections between social, cultural and governmental institutions and the area of study—how might the institutions stand to benefit or become imperiled by the outcomes of the research (e.g., the health impacts research exposing the dangers of cigarettes paved the way for serious consequences for tobacco companies who pushed the sale of their products in light of the findings)? How might your findings impact the larger society? What policy implications might need to be addressed? Develop a timeline illustrating the history of study on your topic. Create a visual campaign to build awareness about your area of study and identify a partner institution (e.g., school, community center, neighborhood association, church, or governmental agency) to help disseminate your message.

English language arts

Encourage the student to build onto his/her project by developing a marketing campaign that tells the "story" of the research to a specific audience (e.g., younger students). What literary devices might you use in writing about your research (e.g., onomatopoeia, alliteration, metaphors, similes). From what point of view will your story be told?

As the *Pursuit of Passion* task spans multiple grade levels, teachers may wish to modify these extensions for grade-level appropriateness.

Mathematics

The findings of many research projects can be told equally well through the language of numbers. Allow students to reexamine their findings looking for areas in the research that might be quantifiable. Help students determine the research methods needed to obtain quantitative data. Students might design and analyze surveys or conduct observational research to tally, count, and record data related to their project. Presentations of quantitative data might include graphical representations such as charts and graphs as well as student---designed informational graphics.

Resources

Students are encouraged to work with their teachers and parents/guardians to conduct the research necessary to support and enhance each task, following local district guidelines. Online resources like The Smithsonian Museum, The Library of Congress, The Texas State Archives, Texas State Historical Association, and National Geographic’s Kids offer information on a variety of topics and could serve as a good starting place.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

The unit may address the following TEKS:

English Language Arts:**English I**

*Research---related TEKS – These are the same for **English I---IV** (Prefix = course number)*

I.20 Asks open---ended research questions and develops a plan for answering them

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| I.21 | Determines, locates, and explores the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically records the information they gather |
| I.22 | Clarifies research questions and evaluates and synthesizes collected information |
| I.23 | Organizes and presents ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience |

Texas College and Career Readiness Standards

This unit may address the following Texas College and Career Readiness Standards:

English Language Arts:

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| V.A.1 | Formulates research questions |
| V.A.2 | Explores a research topic |
| V.A.3 | Refines research topic and devise a timeline for completing work |
| V.B.1 | Gathers relevant sources |
| V.B.2 | Evaluates the validity and reliability of sources |
| V.B.3 | Synthesizes and organizes information effectively |
| V.B.4 | Uses source material ethically |
| V.C.1 | Designs and presents an effective product |
| V.C.2 | Uses source material ethically |

Cross---Disciplinary Standards:

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| I.B.2 | Constructs well---reasoned arguments to explain phenomena, validate conjectures, or support positions |
| I.B.3 | Gathers evidence to support arguments, findings, or lines of reasoning |
| I.B.4 | Supports or modifies claims based on the results of an inquiry |
| I.C.1 | Analyzes a situation to identify a problem to be solved |
| I.C.2 | Develops and applies multiple strategies to solving a problem |
| I.D.3 | Strives for accuracy and precision |
| I.F.1 | Attributes ideas and information to source materials and people |
| I.F.2 | Evaluates sources for quality of content, validity, credibility, and relevance |
| II.A.1 | Uses effective prereading strategies |
| II.A.4 | Identifies the key information and supporting detail |
| II.A.5 | Analyzes textual information critically |
| II.A.6 | Annotates, summarizes, paraphrases, and outlines texts when appropriate |
| II.A.8 | Connects reading to historical and current events and personal interests |
| II.C.1 | Understands which topics or questions are to be investigated |
| II.C.2 | Explores a research topic |

- II.C.3 Refines research topic based on preliminary research and devise a timeline for completing work
- II.C.4 Evaluates the validity and reliability of sources
- II.C.5 Synthesizes and organizes information effectively
- II.C.7 Integrates source material
- II.C.8 Presents final product
- II.D.3 Presents analyzed data and communicate findings in a variety of formats
- II.E.1 Uses technology to gather information
- II.E.2 Uses technology to organize, manage, and analyze information
- II.E.3 Uses technology to communicate and display findings in a clear and coherent manner
- II.E.4 Uses technology appropriately

Attachment #1



Student Profile and Participation Agreement

Name: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Student I.D. Number: _____

Course enrolled in as a participant: _____

For students:

I am aware of the requirements for the Texas Performance Standards Project. I agree to full participation. I understand that written materials I submit will not be returned to me, so I should keep copies of everything submitted. I also understand that my project may be used for future training; if so, every effort will be made to disguise my identity.

Student signature: _____ Date: _____

For parents/guardians:

I am aware of the requirements for the Texas Performance Standards Project. I approve of my child's participation. I understand that written materials my child submits will not be returned, so he/she should keep copies of everything submitted. I also understand that my child's project may be used for future training; if so, every effort will be made to disguise his/her identity.

Parent/Guardian signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed name: _____

Please return to your teacher.

Attachment #2

Sample Topic Proposal

Chosen research topic: _____

Why you chose this topic:

What you hope to gain through research of this topic:

How this topic relates to your life:

Sources you are considering using to find information on your topic:

Activity you are considering for the hands-on portion of the project:

Subject-related TEKS addressed throughout your project:

(These can be found here: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=6148>)



Documento adjunto #1



Perfil estudiantil y acuerdo de participación

Nombre: _____

Escuela: _____ Grado: _____

Domicilio del hogar: _____

Ciudad: _____ Código postal: _____

Número de identificación del estudiante: _____

Curso en que se matriculó el participante: _____

Para los estudiantes:

Soy consciente de los requisitos para el Proyecto de los estándares de desempeño de Texas (Texas Performance Standards Project). Estoy de acuerdo en participar completamente. Entiendo que los materiales que entregaré no se devolverán, así que yo retendré copias de todo lo que entregaré. También entiendo que mi proyecto se podrá usar para capacitación en el futuro. Si se utiliza, se hará todo lo posible para ocultar mi identidad.

Firma del estudiante: _____ Fecha: _____

Para los padres/tutores (guardianes):

Soy consciente de los requisitos para el Proyecto de los estándares de desempeño de Texas (Texas Performance Standards Project). Yo doy permiso para que mi hijo/a participe en el proyecto. Entiendo que los materiales que entregaré mi hijo/a no se devolverán así que él/ella debe retener copias de todo lo que entregaré. También entiendo que el proyecto de mi hijo/a se puede usar para capacitación en el futuro. Si se utiliza, se hará todo lo posible para ocultar su identidad.

Firma del padre/tutor (guardián): _____ Fecha: _____

Nombre en letra de molde: _____

Favor de regresar este papel a tu maestro/a.

Documento adjunto #2

Ejemplo de una propuesta de tema

Tema elegido para investigar: _____

¿Por qué elegiste este tema?

¿Qué esperas aprender a través de tu investigación de este tema?

¿Cómo se relaciona este tema a tu vida?

¿Qué recursos estás considerando usar para encontrar información sobre tu tema?

¿Qué actividad estás considerando para la experiencia directa del proyecto?

¿Qué TEKS relacionados con la materia se abordan a través de tu proyecto?

(Estos se pueden encontrar en: <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=6148>)

