**Genius Hour**

**Teacher’s Guide**

Welcome to [IWonder](https://www.infohio.org/resources/item/iwonder), INFOhio’s home for educational and engaging websites for your students to explore!

The IWonder Genius Hour activity helps to strengthen student inquiry and research skills. Students gather background information on their topic using websites from IWonder. Next, students refine their research using resources available through INFOhio. Finally, students will create a project to share their research with their teacher, classmates, and additional audiences.

Read the articles listed below to learn about bringing Genius Hour and inquiry-based learning into your classroom.

* [Bringing Inquiry-Based Learning into Your Class](https://www.edutopia.org/article/bringing-inquiry-based-learning-into-your-class-trevor-mackenzie/)
* [Inquiry-Based Learning](https://www.edutopia.org/topic/inquiry-based-learning/)
* [Using Genius Hour Projects to Help Students Find Meaning](https://www.edutopia.org/article/using-genius-hour-projects-help-students-find-meaning/)

Career exploration, biographies, and historical events are suggested themes to use for the INFOhio Genius Hour activity and worksheet. Teachers can generate a list of topics for each theme. Students can choose a topic from a teacher-generated list.

**Time Needed**

The Genius Hour project will take about 4 hours to complete. Set aside a block of time each day for Genius Hour. Give specific outcome expectations for each day.

Example Genius Hour Daily Schedule

Duration: Minimum 8 days

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| Day 1 | Model for students how to navigate IWonder. Give students time to freely explore IWonder question categories, subcategories, and linked websites and resources. |
| Day 2 | Print copies of the IWonder Genius Hour Worksheet. Ask students to select a topic from the 11 question categories on IWonder or provide a list of topics and ask students to select from the list. Allow students time to collect background information from three sites they find on IWonder. |
| Day 3 | Demonstrate how to conduct a keyword search. Use the resources in the subcategory, [Do you want to find information?](https://iwonder.infohio.org/category/do-you-want-to-find-information). |
| Day 4 | Give students time to refine their research questions and collect information. Support students as they use the eBook and video collections or the Explora resources linked on IWonder. |
| Day 5 | Students finish collecting information. |
| Day 6 | Provide students with a list of project-creation tools they can use for their project. Consult with your school district’s technology director, technology coach, or library media specialist for web-based tools for your students. |
| Day 7 | Work on the project. |
| Day 8 | Share the project with peers. Encourage students to share their projects outside of the classroom with relevant audiences they identified. |

**Lesson Plan**

1. Distribute the [IWonder Genius Hour Worksheet](https://www.infohio.org/document-library/item/iwonder-genius-hour-worksheet-editable-version) to students. Explain to them that they will be learning more about a topic of their choice and using multiple search strategies and sites to find information. Students will share what they learned about their chosen topic with their classmates and additional audience.
2. Show student the [IWonder](https://www.infohio.org/resources/item/iwonder) site. Model for students how to navigate IWonder. Show students the search feature. Demonstrate how to use the question categories and subcategories to narrow a topic.
3. Ask students to pick a question from the 11 question categories that connects to their topic. Click on the icon/picture. Ask them to use the subcategory questions to narrow their topic. If they can’t find something that they would like to learn more about, encourage students to go back to the homepage and start again. It would be a good idea to give a time limit so that students have a chosen topic in a set time frame.
4. Students use the IWonder Genius Hour Worksheet to record the information they find about their topic. On the worksheet, students can select up to three websites linked from IWonder. Search [OpenSpace](https://openspace.infohio.org/) for note taking lessons, tips, and graphic organizers.
5. After gathering background information using three websites, students should be ready to refine their research. Ask students to write down additional questions about their topic. Consider using a [graphic organizer](https://openspace.infohio.org/courseware/lesson/2688/student/31?section=2) to help students formulate additional questions about their topic.
6. Select the best resource for your students from the subcategory, [Do you want to find information?](https://iwonder.infohio.org/category/do-you-want-to-find-information). Model how to use keywords to search the resource. Use [New Explora-Basic Search](https://connect.ebsco.com/s/article/New-Explora-Basic-Search?language=en_US) to learn how to conduct a basic keyword search using Explora for Grades PreK-5 and Explora for Grades 6-8. Use the how-to guides for [World Book Kids](https://www.worldbookonline.com/training/products/kids/how-to/kids-how-to-find-content.htm) and [World Book Student](https://www.worldbookonline.com/training/products/student/how-to/student-how-to-search.htm) to learn how to conduct a basic keyword search in these resources.
7. Review the project goals and requirements with your students. For help establishing project goals and requirements, browse the lesson plans in the [Resources](#Resources) section below.
8. Consult with your library media specialist or technology department about the web-based content creation tools. Share an approved list of tools for your students to use to create their project.
9. Help students decide on an audience for their presentation. This step is optional but allowing them a choice is a good way to help them think about the needs of different learners. For example, do they think their grandparents would prefer the same kind of presentation as kids their own age?
10. Provide students with time to create their presentation. Make sure they use the information they have collected. For fun, have a multimedia afternoon with popcorn and view the students’ work. Create a rubric or select a rubric from the [Evaluation](#Evaluation) section listed below to assess student skills and learning.
11. Make sure the students complete the IWonder Genius Hour Worksheet by answering the reflection questions in step 5.

**Evaluation**

Browse the sample rubrics below. Consider using, modifying, or developing a rubric to assess student learning.

* [Kathy Schrock: Assessment and Rubric Information](https://openspace.infohio.org/courses/kathy-schrock-assessment-and-rubric-information)
* [Assessment Strategies: Rubrics](https://openspace.infohio.org/courses/assessment-strategies-rubrics)
* [Student Created Rubrics](https://openspace.infohio.org/courseware/lesson/1082)
* [Digital Video Grades 6-8: Assessments](https://openspace.infohio.org/courseware/lesson/2595/student/31?section=5)

**Resources**

Explore additional research and inquiry lessons and units listed below. Or search [INFOhio Open Space](https://openspace.infohio.org/) and [Create, Lead, Empower Ohio](https://cleo.infohio.org/) for additional lesson and unit plans to support research and inquiry. You can modify an existing lesson or unit plan or develop your own.

* [Getting Started with Project-Based Learning: Content Package for PreK-6](https://openspace.infohio.org/courseware/lesson/2606/overview)
* [Creating Question and Answer Books Through Guided Research](https://openspace.infohio.org/courses/creating-question-and-answer-books-through-guided-research-2)
* [Searching for Gold: A Collaborative Inquiry Project](https://openspace.infohio.org/courses/searching-for-gold-a-collaborative-inquiry-project)
* [Animal Inquiry](https://openspace.infohio.org/courses/animal-inquiry)
* [Digital Storytelling Collection](https://openspace.infohio.org/curated-collections/72?batch_start=20)

**Ohio’s Learning Standards for English Language Arts**

**College and Career Readiness Standards for Reading**

Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

1. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
2. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

1. Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

**College and Career Readiness Standard for Writing**

Text Types and Purposes

1. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

Production and Distribution of Writing

1. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
2. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
3. Use technology, including the internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

1. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
2. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.
3. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.