

## Resources for Classroom/Grade Level Exhibitions

**Cushman, Kathleen. "A Culture of Exhibitions Begins to Take Hold." *Horace*, June 1994. [www.essentialschools.org](http://www.essentialschools.org).**

"By building senior year around a final project, Heathwood Hall Episcopal School has cast a shadow backwards over its earliest grades on through high school." Some very interesting senior topics are featured in the section titled "Outside the Comfort Zone." The "Planning Backwards" section discusses how a culture has been created that expects students to demonstrate their understanding in public throughout their high school experience.

**Cushman, Kathleen. "Performance and Exhibitions: The Demonstration of Mastery." *Horace*, March 1990. [www.essentialschools.org](http://www.essentialschools.org).**

This is an excellent article that lays out what "demonstration of mastery" really means. The focus is on creating the "exhibition...the cornerstone of what an Essential school is all about." Ted Sizer discusses "What Deserves a Diploma?" and "What Performances Look Like." Several schools, which graduate students through an exhibition, are used as models, and a couple of sample final grade-level performances across disciplines are outlined in sidebars.

**Cushman, Kathleen. "What's 'Essential' About Learning in the World of Work." *Horace*, Sept. 1997. [www.essentialschools.org](http://www.essentialschools.org).**

A long article, but one that features helpful sidebars on such topics as "The Six A's of Designing Projects," "Portfolio Assessment of a Work-Based Learning Experience," and "Assessing Habits of Mind in a Project of Internship." There is good section on project-based learning and its link to the world of work.

**Ewy, Christine with student authors. "Kids Take On 'The Test.'" *Educational Leadership*, Dec. 1996/Jan. 1997, pg. 76-78.**

A sixth grade class takes on the real world task of figuring out how to improve their school's scores on the Illinois Goal Assessment Program (IGAP). This very interesting article shows how a creative teacher scaffolded activities for her students to be successful in tackling their problem-based learning project. Students show their problem analysis chart where they brainstormed their ideas, the facts they knew, the questions they had, and the action plan they designed. A teacher learns that she doesn't have to be in control all of the time, and students learned how powerful planning their own work can be.

**Podl, Jody Brown. "Anatomy of an Exhibition." [www.essentialschools.org](http://www.essentialschools.org).**

This article describes Margaret Metzger's initial attempt to use "mini-exhibitions" or "course-level exhibitions" as a means of assessment in her Brookline High School English classes, after 22 years of frustration with paper and pencil final exams that didn't demonstrate what she felt her students actually knew based on their classroom discussions and written work. Inspired by the work of Ted Sizer, she embarks on changing the whole concept of her classroom practice. Sections include "The Vision," "The Plan," "Teacher Preparation," "Student Preparation," and "The Exhibition." Toward the end of the article, she shares the unexpected problems she faced as well as some keys to success.

**Schack, Dina D. "Involving Students in Authentic Research." *Educational Leadership*, April 1993, pg. 29-31.**

The importance of capitalizing on students' interests as they conduct research that matters to them is the focus of this article. Practical tips for helping students identify a topic, gather and interpret data, and share research findings are given.

**"Sidebar: Assessment and Exhibitions: Do we rearrange the furniture we've got, or get new furniture instead?" *Horace*, Feb. 1991. [www.essentialschools.org](http://www.essentialschools.org).**

The big questions addressed in this article are "How do you figure out what you want kids to know and be able to do? And how do you tailor your school to suit such outcomes?" Seven major problems are identified and a group of educators sets out to identify strategies for addressing each. Another group wrestled with a particular aspect of the exhibitions problem: "How does one arrive at a school-wide

consensus on learner outcomes across the disciplines for promotion or graduation.” They came up with four strategies.

**Sills-Briegel, Toni, Candace Fisk, and Vicki Dunlop. “Graduation by Exhibition.”**  
*Educational Leadership*, Dec. 1996/Jan. 1997, pg. 66-71.

Teachers and administrators at Greenwood Laboratory School on the campus of Southwest Missouri State University spent two years getting ready to deliver a culminating exhibition plan to students, based on the Coalition of Essential Schools’ Sixth Common Principle. The article takes the reader through the steps they took and reveals lessons they learned along the way. In the end, they saw more pros than cons.

**Smith, Ron and Steve Sherrell. “Mileposts on the Road to a Certificate of Initial Mastery.”**  
*Educational Leadership*, Dec. 1996/Jan. 1997, pg. 46-50.

The Lake Oswego district in Oregon tells about the enormous challenges and important lessons learned while getting ready to implement a performance-based student certification program mandated by state legislation. Major objectives included creating quality curriculum-embedded performance assessments, learning to use standardized scoring guides, implementing a filing system for certification materials, and gaining community support for a certification system.

**Wiske, Stone. “Using Technology to Dig for Meaning.”** *Educational Leadership*,  
Sept. 2004, pg 46-50.

One type of evidence that indicates that a classroom learning environment is emphasizing demonstration of mastery is “teachers modeling the use of varied media/technology for presentations and exhibitions” (CES Common Principle #6 benchmarks). This articles gives excellent examples of using technology to teach for understanding. A sensitivity for the learning process teachers need to go through in order to use new technologies is addressed, as well, including the WIDE World project at Harvard Graduate School of Education which brings educators together over the Internet to exchange ideas and resources on using research to improve teaching.