

# Task Management for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learners

You have been assigned a project – a task with multiple parts that requires special effort and organization. You have probably been given a due date and a list of criteria that must be met. How will you go about completing the task on time and to specification? Be guided by the questions and examples in the charts below. Each represents a phase in the project management process.

## Know Your Project

Questions	Actions
<b>Description and Scope</b> What is the project about? What is the big idea? What is the end product? What is the scope or extent of the project - what does it involve? Are there a number of things that you must hand in along the way?	State the project topic . State what needs to be done / delivered.
<b>Objectives</b> What are the objectives of the project? Why are you doing it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What content will you learn?</li><li>• What skills will you learn / demonstrate?</li></ul> Will anyone else benefit from your project?	State the project objectives.
<b>Audience</b> Who is the audience? Do they have specific needs (e.g., large print, multiple illustrations, simple / technical language)? What hardware and software will they use to view your product? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Are there technology specifications that you need to consider?</li></ul>	List project specifications.
<b>Task Criteria</b> What are the task criteria? What does a good project look like?	See assessment rubric. Add criteria of your own.

## Plan Your Project

Questions	Actions
<b>Project Breakdown</b> What work needs to be done for this project? What are the major milestones or completion points? What do you have to do to reach each milestone? What steps – or individual tasks – are involved? Is there work to be submitted?	Break the project into component parts.  Make a task list.

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<p><b>Plan for Time: Due Date</b>            When must the project be completed?            How much times does this give you?</p>	<p>Confirm the due date.</p>
<p><b>Plan for Time: Estimate Time Required</b>            How much time will it take to complete each step?</p>	<p>Estimate times.</p>
<p><b>Plan for Time: Determine Time Available</b>            What is a realistic time schedule for you?            How much time can you make available on specific week nights / weekends?</p>	<p>Look at your existing schedule.            Block-out time to work on your project.</p>
<p><b>Plan for Time: Task Sequence</b>            How will you sequence the tasks?            Are there things that must be done before others can be started?            (Is one task dependent on another?)            Are there some tasks that you can work on simultaneously?</p>	<p>Create a Gantt diagram showing the sequence of tasks.</p>
<p><b>Plan for Time: Time Allocation</b>            How can you divide the work up over the time available?            When do you want to reach each milestone?            When will you complete each part?</p>	<p>Create a timeline. Aim to finish your project before the due date.            Set deadlines for milestones.            Allocate time to individual tasks.</p>
<p><b>Plan Resources</b>            What resources – books, audio visual materials, equipment, materials – do you need to complete individual tasks?            What people do you need to help you?</p>	<p>List the resources needed to carry out the work.            Assign work to team members.</p>
<p><b>Plan for Communication</b>            Who needs what information?            When will they need it?            How will you keep team members informed?</p>	<p>Meet with team members to develop a communication strategy. Record contact details.</p>
<p><b>Plan for Risks</b>            What might go wrong?            How will you handle it?</p>	<p>Brainstorm a short list of risks.            Consider solutions.</p>
<p><b>Plan for Improvement</b>            Think about the last project that you completed:            Was there anything that you want to do differently?            Can you improve on the process or product?</p>	<p>Record your improvement objectives.</p>

## Execute Your Project

Proceed through the planned work sequence generating product components.  
Document the process and your learning in a log book.

## Manage / Control Your Project

### Questions

### Actions

#### Manage Time

Track your progress on tasks. Compare your planned schedule to your actual progress. Is your project on schedule?  
Are your team members completing the work required in the prescribed time?

Adjust / refine the timeline as needed. Inform team members of changes to the schedule.  
If not, follow up.

#### Manage Resources

Are the resources that you have chosen appropriate?  
Do you need additional resources?  
Does everyone have access to the resources they need?  
Are your resources stored in an organized way?

If necessary, obtain additional resources.  
Manage shared resources.  
File digital materials appropriately.  
Keep other resources in one place.

#### Manage Communication

Do your team members know the status of the project?  
What milestones have been reached?  
What can they expect?

Report to your team members.  
Inform them about the status of the project.  
Forecast completion.

#### Manage Risks

How can you reduce the likelihood of something bad happening?  
How can you reduce the impact of a setback?

Implement risk reduction plans  
Respond to the risk.

#### Manage Quality

What is the quality of your work?  
What is the quality of work completed by team members?  
Is any testing of the product required?  
Have you fulfilled the goals of the project?  
Does the project include all the work required?  
Have you met all task criteria?  
Does the project meet the needs of the audience for whom it was created?  
Is there anything that you need to revise?

Make necessary revisions.  
(If necessary, work with team members to enhance performance.)

## Close Your Project

### Questions

### Actions

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#### **Publish Your Project**

How will you publish or share your project?

Publish or share your work appropriately.

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#### **Store Your Project**

How will you preserve your project?

Do you want to showcase the project in a portfolio?

File your work appropriately.  
Include your project in a portfolio.  
Optional: Link parts of the project to relevant rubric items.

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#### **Reflect**

What have you done?

What have you learned by doing it?

Record the knowledge that you have gained.

What did you do well?

What would you do differently next time?

Complete a self evaluation.  
Plan for improvement.

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## Appendix 1

### Sample Table to Determine Time Available

	Mon Mar 3	Tues Mar 4	Wed Mar 5	Thu Mar 6	Fri Mar 7	Sat Mar 8	Sun Mar 9	Mon Mar 10	Tues Mar 11	Wed Mar 12	Thur Mar 13	Fri Mar 14	Sat Mar 15	Sun Mar 16
Existing Commitments	Choir 4 – 6		Math project	Swimming		Guests	Guests	Choir 4 – 6			Swimming		Concert 7 - 9	
Planned Time Allocation (hrs)	1	2	0	1	3	0	0	2	3	3	1	3	3	3
Cumulative Total	1	3	3	4	7	7	7	9	12	15	16	19	22	25

**I know that:**

- Mondays and Thursdays are the only days of regular commitment. (I will work 1 hour only on these nights.)
- We have guests arriving on March 8 and I will not be able to work that weekend.

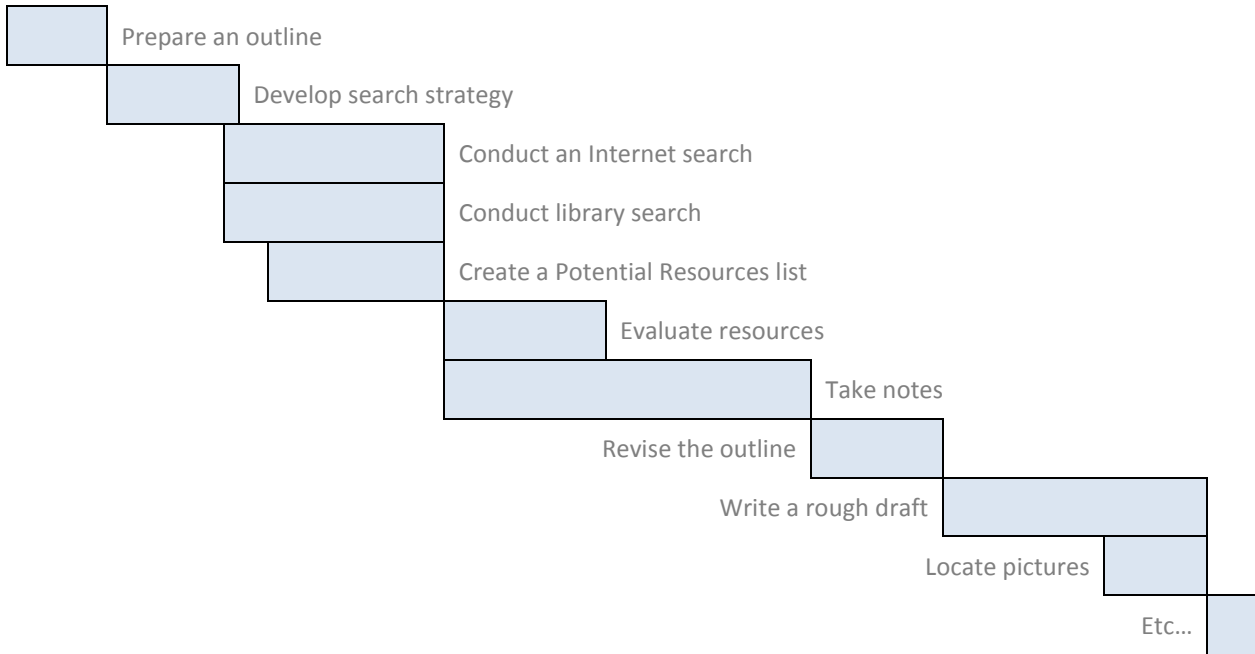
**I assume that:**

- I can devote 2 hours to the project on all other week nights.
- I can work three hours on each day of all other weekend other than March 8 - 9

## Appendix 2

### Sample Gantt Diagram Showing Planned Sequence of Tasks

This diagram was created using a table in Word. The length of each cell indicates the proportion of time allocated to each task.



You could create a similar diagram by using text boxes in Word, or you could use a spreadsheet like this:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1										
2	Outline									
3		Search Strategy								
4			Information search: Internet							
5			Information search: Library							
6			Create Potential Resources List							
7					Evaluate Resources					
8					Take Notes					
9										etc
10										

### Appendix 3

#### Sample Plan for Time Allocation

Week #	Time Available	Milestone Dates	Component	Time Allocated	Time Taken	Ahead or Behind		
1	7		Prepare a preliminary outline	1				
			Develop a search strategy	0.5				
		<b>Mar 4</b>	<b>Milestone: Complete planning</b>					
			Conduct an Internet search	2				
			Conduct a library search	2				
			Create a potential resources list	1.5				
		<b>Mar 7</b>	<b>Milestone: Complete information search</b>					
2	18		Take notes	5				
			Order notes	0.5				
			Revise outline	0.5				
			Add to notes	3				
		<b>Mar 11</b>	<b>Milestone: Complete notes</b>					
			Write first Draft	5				
		<b>Mar 14</b>	<b>Milestone: Complete first draft</b>					
6	10	<b>Apr 9</b>	<b>Milestone: Complete project</b>					
		<b>Apr 14</b>	<b>Milestone: Submit project.</b>					