SENIOR PROJECT
(Supported by the Career Choices Curriculum)

This project can be accomplished through a variety of classes (e.g., English, Freshman Orientation, Advisor/Advisee, Career/Technical) where you would be using the Career Choices curriculum. Students begin the process in the freshman year and continue through to graduation. This process would necessitate the purchase of a copy of the Workbook/Portfolio for each student. The Workbook/Portfolio will be utilized by the student throughout the four years of the project.

Elements of the Senior Project

- Portfolio (begins freshman year and continues throughout)
- Project proposal (created sophomore year)
- Research paper (created junior year)
- Product (proposed sophomore year but planned and executed senior year)
- Presentation (accomplished senior year after project is executed)

Freshman Year
Students will begin the process of building a personal Portfolio. During the freshman year, students will work through the Career Choices textbook and, following the recommended outline in the Instructor’s Guide for Career Choices (pp. 4/13-4/14) and the Workbook/Portfolio (pp. 125-126), create “Section One—Career Exploration Activities” of their Portfolio.

Sophomore Year
As a part of English class (or any elective classes and career and technical classes), students write a tentative Project Proposal. Project proposals should establish the foundation of the proposed project taking into consideration individual interests, abilities, passions, values (see student’s completed Personal Profile – bulls eye chart in Section One of their portfolio), along with school/community needs. A teacher/mentor panel will then review proposals before moving to the final project/product approval.

Continue with the Portfolio process during the sophomore year, creating “Section Two—Your Professional Development Plan” as students review and revise their responses to the final five chapters of Career Choices (see student’s completed Workbook/Portfolio).

Junior Year
The Research Paper will include research on careers related to the project/product topic. This paper will include Internet research, information interviewing of mentors and career role models, as well as hands-on evaluation, assessment, and information gathering.

Students will:
- Finalize project/product proposal, including a timeline
- Get approval from teacher/mentor panel
- Begin to finalize their Portfolio, Section Three—Interview Portfolio
Senior Year
The Project/Product should be directly related to career research and the student’s ten-year plan from Career Choices. The Project/Product will meet a community and/or school need. The project/product should require students to apply the knowledge gained during all the phases of the process (e.g., personal interests, abilities, and values; short- and long-term goal setting; future personal, school, and/or community needs).

The Project/Product phase should be ongoing, challenging, and should require at least ten hours of work done on the student’s own time.

Sample Projects/Products
- Start and lead an outdoor recreation adventure club for disadvantaged youth
- Learn sign language
- Design and build a guitar
- Teach a student to play piano
- Coach a youth athletic team
- Organize a health fair at the mall or other local gathering place
- Design and construct a gazebo
- Organize and choreograph a middle school show choir
- Conduct and record/film interviews with WWII Veterans for a documentary
- Become certified by the American Red Cross as a CPR instructor
- Start a pet sitting business
- Start a bilingual Saturday morning story time at the public library
- Assemble and sell first-aid kits for pets to benefit the Humane Society
- Design, create, and build shadow boxes and planters for beautification at the local nursing home
- Teach a special needs child to fly fish
- Create a website to promote the assets of the city
- Organize and direct a special youth presentation at a local church
- Perform hearing screenings on newborns
- Create a haunted corn maze to use as a school fund raiser
- Build a wheelchair accessible ramp for grandparents porch
- Organize a homework support group for middle school students
- Remodel a bathroom
- Design an automobile using an industry standard three-step design process

Student Presentation
In the final step of the Senior Project/Product process, the student delivers a ten-minute presentation of their Portfolio, which should now include the three units recommended from the Career Choices curriculum, the research paper, the initial proposal, a work log and timeline, and summary and self-evaluation of the final Project/Product. The student should make their presentation to a panel of judges composed of community members. The presentation should include visuals to support the oral presentation and portfolio.
Benefits of the Senior Project
Students participating in the Senior Project will:

- Gain self-awareness and participate in self-evaluation
- Demonstrate writing, speaking, and research skills
- Practice goal setting, decision making, and problem solving abilities
- Gain experience working in their community and learn to “network”
- Make real-world connections
- Practice time management and organizational skills
- Gain personal fulfillment and psychic rewards

Questions?
If you have questions about implementing this Senior Project using the Career Choices materials, please contact Tanja Easson, VP of Curriculum Support, at (800) 967-8016, ext. 327 or by email at tanja@academicinnovations.com.