

# 10 Steps to a Winning DigiSites Entry in 2012

Complete the 10 steps below and you WILL have a great site to enter into the 2012 competition.

1. Make the Judges Happy: **Know the Rubric – Know the Rules**
2. **Build a Strong Foundation with Preplanning** and Content Development
3. **PRESENT Your Plan/Content Development Ideas and REVISE** based on comments
4. **Write 1<sup>st</sup> Drafts:** Don't forget Citation, References, and Fair Use
5. **Create Multimedia** for Maximum Content Impact
6. **Site Design** Development
7. **PRESENT** Site Design, Content updates, **and REVISE**
8. The Ultimate **About Us** Page
9. **FINAL PRESENTATION** of entire site
10. **Final Submission** Form Completed, **CELEBRATE!**

## Step 1. Make the Judges Happy: Know the Rubric – Know the Rules

If you want the judges to score high on your DigiSites entry, this is IMPORTANT TO KNOW:

**The purpose of DigiSites is to “Teach the Reader”!** Therefore:

- DigiSites' is based on planning and creating educational content **FIRST**, and
- Technical components and Web Design are **SECOND**

You will do this by introducing the readers to a topic that is best understood through diverse or new perspectives. **Good DigiSites topics can include but are not limited to:** 1. a real-world problem, 2. a topic of global interest, or 3. a community topic.

The Rubric is designed to help you create an educational website. Using the DigiSites Rubric, note that:

- **10 points** applies to Project Management/Preplanning
- **10 points** applies to Introducing the topic on the Home page. You will need to describe the topic and why it's important and who the audience is. You will also need to provide a mission statement and what you want the readers to learn. The Home page also contains clear links to the About Us page and the Reference page as well as provides an attachment of your Preplanning document.
- **60 points** applies to the content within the Content pages. All content should enhance the purpose/mission of your site. Critical elements for your content are: 1) it is engaging, original, and of high quality, 2) it contains original and creative media components, as well as good presentation elements to further engage the learning of the viewers, 3) it is technically sound, and 4) it has high impact value. *NOTE: See specific details within the Rubric under Content Pages.*
- **10 points** applies to telling us about you on the About Us page.
- **10 points** applies to being intellectually honest.

**NOTE: REVIEW the RUBRIC and REVIEW the RULES often, familiarize yourself with the details under each of these elements, and apply them to your site. Understanding and addressing these elements within your DigiSites entry will make the judges very happy.**

## Step 2. Build a Strong Foundation with Preplanning and Content Development

The three components within this step are the most important of all 10 steps.

Taking some time to plan and think about your topic will make the rest of the steps much easier. Not only will it build a strong foundation for your topic, it will also help your site to be in the final rounds of the competition.

Follow steps 2A, 2B, and 2C below to help you choose a Topic, develop a Mission Statement about the topic, and develop a preplanning document to help you organize information around the topic. Follow these steps and you will have the beginnings of award winning content.

- 2A. Choose an Original Educational Topic to Impact the Reader
- 2B. Develop your Mission Statement
- 2C. Preplanning Content for Maximum Impact (Text & Multimedia)

### 2A. Choose an Original Educational Topic to Impact the Reader

Follow the tips below and complete the "[Find a Perfect Topic](#)" exercise to find your perfect topic:

- **Make sure the topic is something** that "impacts" the readers. That is, the topic should **make the readers react and/or want to get involved** in some way. For example, a reader could react in the following ways:
  - "I didn't know that! I wonder what else I can learn?"
  - "That's so cool! What else does this site have to say?"
  - "Wow, this issue is important! I wonder if there are any resources to help me get involved?"
  - "This truly is a problem! I wonder if there are any solutions?"
- **Choose something you're interested in** and/or that you know something about.
  - Is there a social, political, educational, or environmental topic that you are interested in and that could be a real-world problem topic, a global topic of interest, or a local community topic?
  - Note: A topic doesn't have to be a heavy research topic (like global warming, etc.); it can be *creative* as well. Just make sure your creativity has a purpose, it is educational, and it will impact the readers with a unique approach or diverse points of view. For example:
    - If you take photographs for a hobby, you can create an educational website explaining how you take images, why you focus on certain things, and illustrate that knowing this is a unique perspective for the world to see.
    - Maybe you create a site with songs, letters, poems, etc. for orphaned children of the world
- **Ask yourself if you are an expert or knowledgeable on something?** If you or someone on your team is knowledgeable about something (slack key guitar, organic gardening, etc.) you have a great start on a topic.
- **Your topic should not be based solely on others' research! You should choose a topic where you can create your own research!** For example, you may want to capture oral histories that are disappearing from a culture within your state, or present letters to children living in a disaster zone that your team has gathered through an online tool, etc.
- **Check the web to see if there is already a lot on your topic;** if so, how can you make it unique?
- **Pick a topic that can allow multiple viewpoints/discussion.**

- **Ask: is it a topic that can produce multimedia content as well as written content?** This is very important if you want to make it to the finals.
- **Make sure that the topic is manageable** and one that you **can narrow down to a defining purpose**. **Think:** How broad is the topic? What is it *specifically* that we want our readers to know about this topic? How much time is there to work on our site? How can we simplify, simplify, simplify (i.e., narrow, narrow, narrow) so that we can meet our time restraints and our audience needs?
- **You will have to do at least one of the following well** with your topic: **describe, explain, analyze**. Therefore, choose a topic based on your interests and decide whether description, explanation, and/or analysis will work best to present the topic. **HINT: use all three to best impact the reader; this can be done through *compare and contrast*, or *cause and effect*, or *process steps*, etc. It should also allow a depth of information to support the purpose of your topic.**

Keeping these points in mind, it's best to find a topic through a brainstorming activity.

Print out "[Find a Perfect Topic](#)" and get started choosing the perfect topic.

## 2B. Develop a Mission Statement

Now that you have thought through a Topic (Step 2 A), develop your Mission Statement for your DigiSite.

**A Mission Statement will answer the following:**

1. What is the purpose of your site?
2. Who is your audience? Who is your site aimed at?
3. What type of information will you provide? (e.g., primary research such as interviews, surveys, field research, etc.; or, secondary research such as other subject matter expert material)
4. What do hope the readers will learn or do with the site's information? Based on your topic and the purpose for developing an educational website around that topic, what are your educational objectives, i.e., list three to four things that you want the readers to learn or understand.\* (These items will organize your content into possible headings/pages.)

**IMPORTANT:** As you develop your content, come back and revise your Mission Statement to meet any changes to your purpose, audience, and what you hope they learn.

\*Note: Although the creators of a DigiSite will most probably not observe and measure what a reader has learned (as traditionally would happen in a teacher setting and in developing educational objectives), TRIO Quest believes that developing a Mission Statement for this competition will result in better and more organized material that will impact the reader's learning at a higher level.

### EXAMPLE

Here is an example from a previous DigiSites' home page; they called this their "Mission Statement". Note how it answers the questions above.

The purpose of our website is to bring awareness of the potential dangers of oil spills to whomever it may or may not concern. Our principal intent is to portray the causes, effects and possible solutions for the problem of Oil Spills. This website will include information about the top ten oil spills of the past and how they have affected

us in direct and indirect ways, the ecological aspects and impacts, and how the sciences – particularly chemistry – apply to why these spills are substantially harmful and how we can restore the existing damages.

Our site is generally made for anyone and everyone concerned and/or passionate about healing the environment – or at least interested in bettering the conditions of our current surroundings. (The age range would typically be – but not limited to – around the ages of 12 to 45.) The website will also include an interview from a fellow Anthropology professor from the University of Washington, surveys, secondary and primary resources, and interactive activities.

We hope to influence many individuals out there to get involved in environmental issues around the world, or at the least, in their local communities. As stated "Small things can make a big difference" (Timothy Noah).

—*Oil Spills, Gold Medalist, 2010*

**From this example:**

1. We know immediately their purpose. What is it?
2. We know the audience. Who are they?
3. What do the creators hope the audience will learn? (the educational objectives)
4. What type of information will this team provide?
5. What do you think the possible headings for pages will be?
6. Can you tell how this statement could help this team to develop and organize their content? Does this statement help them organize their content research and development?

## **2C. Preplanning Content for Maximum Impact**

BEST ADVICE: Follow your Perfect Topic exercise and Mission Statement in 2A and 2B.

You have completed a Brainstorm activity where you found a great original and/or unique topic; and, you have created a Mission Statement that defines your purpose and goal for creating the site.

*NOTE: The steps you took to develop your topic and your Mission Statement will become the foundation for preplanning your content.*

Below are possible steps to create a preplanning document.

### **2C Step 1:**

**Follow your Mission Statement - it provides all the elements to draft a preplanning document.**

For example, below is a Mission Statement that can be used to build a storyboard:

*Current farming trends are harming the environment, but Seattle, WA is trying to help by moving toward local farming and food distribution through farmer's markets, food co-ops, and weekly delivery subscriptions. This educational website is for anyone interested in the environment and how we can help the environment through different farming techniques. This site will provide some basic background about current farming trends and how those trends harm the environment. In contrast, this site will also provide solutions through primary research and resources - local farmers and organizations.*

## 2C Step 2:

Based on your Topic development with “Find a Perfect Topic” exercise and from your Mission Statement, PLAN your site. You can outline/mindmap/draw how you want your readers to navigate through your website. *Tip: Pull out the Main Idea, Headings, and Subtopics from “Find a Perfect Topic” and use your Mission Statement to decide on you’re a natural order of pages for viewers to navigate through. Don’t forget to include other pages that are required: Home Page, About Us, and Reference Page. You must save your preplanning steps as a document to attach within your Home page!*

### PREPLANNING EXAMPLE

#### A. Home Page: Changing Current Farming Trends

- a. Introduce the Problem: Current farming trends harm the environment
- b. Provide the Mission Statement (which includes significance of topic, the intended audience, and what type of impact will occur with viewers)
- c. Provide attachment to Preplanning document

#### B. Major Heading Pages with Supporting Detail Pages:

(For all pages, provide 1) secondary research: background information and facts, and 2) primary research and multimedia: interviews, images, videos, surveys)

- a. Causes of the Problem
  - i. Shipping from great distances
  - ii. Growing Population, Growing Demand
- b. Effects of the Problem
  - i. Energy dependence
  - ii. Pollution
  - iii. Soil depletion and erosion
- c. Solutions to help alleviate the problem
  - i. Grow local foods
  - ii. Buy local foods
  - iii. Get involved
- d. Resources to Help:
  - i. Local Farmers
  - ii. Farmer’s Markets
  - iii. Local Food Distribution Associations

#### C. About Us Page (follow Rubric and Rules)

#### D. Reference Page (follow Rubric and Rules)

## 2C Step 3:

Save your Preplanning document! Attach it within your Home page!

### Step 3. PRESENT Your Content Development Ideas and REVISE

Presenting your content ideas to your peers and/or your coach(es) will let you know if you are on the right track. Do this and you will save time AND help to assure higher points in the judging process. If you are a team, divide presentation tasks. Here is what you should do:

- A. Introduce the Topic and explain why and how you chose it. Explain
  - i. Why it interests you
  - ii. How it can incorporate different media elements to present the content
  - iii. How primary research can be a big part of the content
- B. Explain how you narrowed the topic to a specific purpose and how the purpose can impact the readers
- C. Explain who the audience is and why
- D. State what you hope the readers will learn or understand (the impact of your topic)
- E. Present your preplanning document and explain how it represents how you plan to develop your site
- F. Conclude your presentation with your next steps; e.g., task division among the team members, first draft materials, etc.
- G. Receive feedback from your coach and peers
- H. Revise your topic, purpose, objectives, the preplanning document, tasks, etc. based on comments

#### Presentation tips

- Be prepared – know enough about your topic that you can explain what it is you would like to accomplish the most with the topic
- Be organized – decide who is going to present point above
- Practice – practice your presentation beforehand so that it moves smoothly with transitions between each point and so it fits within any time limitations set by your coach.
- Ask for questions, comments, suggestions. If people do not respond, ask "What did you like best?" "What did you like least?" "Will your preplanning ideas address the Mission Statement?"

### Step 4. Write 1st Drafts: Don't forget Citation, References, and Fair Use

#### Avoiding Plagiarism on Your Web Site

It is easy to cut and paste images, audio files, video, and text directly from one Web page to another, making copyright law violations and plagiarism a big problem on the Web. You may have made personal Web pages in the past without worrying about copyrights and plagiarism, but for all academic work that you do (including DigiSites), follow the four guidelines below.

#### Guidelines for avoiding online plagiarism and copyright law violations:

##### 1. Use original material whenever possible.

Create your own graphics, audio, and video. Come up with your own material rather than modifying what someone else has already written, illustrated, or performed.

##### 2. Use free use Resources such as [Creative Commons](#)

##### 3. Get permission before using text, audio, images, or video from other sources.

This is especially important for copyrighted material, since there are laws to protect it against unauthorized reproduction and modification. See our [DigiSites Fair Use Guidelines](#) for rules to follow when using images, video, and audio created by someone else.

#### 4. Cite all sources used.

This gives credit to the source of the information and provides Web users a way to verify the information is correct. Use parenthetical citations for each piece of information from another source, and a works cited list. Once you have obtained permission for multimedia materials, be sure to credit the author and cite the permission as well. If you use free use resources, such as Creative Commons, follow their rules for citation.

#### 5. Put it in your own words.

Do not "cut and paste" or copy directly from a source to your Web site. Use quotation marks when appropriate and paraphrase. Be sure to cite the sources you have paraphrased from.

### RESOURCES

[DigiSites Fair Use Guidelines](#)

[Citation Game](#)

[Creative Commons](#)

### Step 5. Create Multimedia for Maximum Impact: First Steps

The use of multimedia can help enhance the overall presentation and interactivity of your website. We encourage students to create their own original images, audio, and video; and we would also like to teach them to comply with the [Fair Use rules](#) by citing and giving proper credits when they use multimedia content that they did not create themselves. Please check out the following tutorials on working with images, audio and video.



#### [Working with Images](#)

Learn how to work with images on the Web, from finding and using images to optimizing images for the Web. Links are provided to a number of software tutorials, including Adobe Photoshop and Apple iPhoto.



#### [Working with Audio](#)

Guidelines for using sound files, help you find sound files on the Web, and show you how to insert sound on a Web page.



#### [Working with Video](#)

Guidelines for using videos and animations, help you find video and animations on the Web, and show you how to insert video on a Web page.

Resources checked January 2012

### Step 6. Site Design Development

Want more TRIO and Google Sites tutorials? [Click here.](#)

- A. Set up your Google Sites
  - i. [Creating a site](#)
  - ii. [Adding uwtrio@gmail.com as owner](#)
  - iii. [Creating pages](#)
- B. Based on your Audience, Topic, and Purpose
  - i. choose a layout that will help the audience find information and that fits your content

- ii. choose colors and fonts that is easy to scan and read as well as fits the tone of your content
  - a. [Changing themes, colors, and fonts](#)
- iii. add multimedia
  - a. [Adding images to your page](#)
  - b. [Embedding photos from Picasa](#)
  - c. [Embedding a Youtube video](#)
  - d. [Embedding a Google Calendar](#)
  - e. [Embedding Google Maps](#)
  - f. [Embedding Google Docs, Spreadsheets, Presentations, and Forms](#)

## Step 7. PRESENT Site Design, Content Updates and REVISE

- A. Brief the audience on your topic, mission statement, and purpose
- B. Present your Site Design. Ask your audience:
  - i. Does this design help the reader to view and learn the content?
    - 1. What helps?
    - 2. What doesn't help?
  - ii. Does the design fit with the topic of our site?
  - iii. Does the design enhance the mission statement?
- C. Receive feedback
- D. Revise Design

## Step 8. The Ultimate About Us Page

### Now is your chance to talk about you!

- A. Introduce **each member** of the team. Let the readers see your personality. (Who are you? What is your background? What are your interests? What are your plans for the future?) Be sure not to put last names for any member under 18 unless your program has parental permission forms on file that states it is OK to have last names.
- B. What did **each person** on your team do to **contribute** to the finished site and how did each contribution apply to the purpose?

You might also include:

- **How did working on this project impact** how you learn, work with others, and/or how you see the importance of 21st century communication/collaboration through the “clouds”?
- **Discuss the types of content** you chose to use in your site **and why**; for example, 1) other expert's research, or 2) personal or class project research and findings such as surveys, interviews, polls, etc. Note: if you used other experts' findings, illustrate how you credited those findings, etc.
- Discuss whether your site **effectively met the topic's purpose and impact** on the reader. What parts were met? What could have been done better to help the reader? Explain how you know (the positive and the negative)
- Discuss **how your team was impacted** (positively and negatively) by participating in this competition and what you learned from the experience.



## Step 9. Final Presentation of Completed Site

Presenting your completed site is a moment to take pride in what you've accomplished and to present yourself and your site in a professional manner.

Here is what you should do: (Note: If you are a team, divided presentation tasks.)

- A. Have completed site on screen at the home page. Have someone at the computer to move through slides as you choose to present certain sections/elements of your site. Be sure to highlight sections of your site by showing those pages/elements as you explain each of the elements below.
- B. For your part in the presentation, introduce yourself: name, grade, school, and what your part was in creating your educational web site. (If a team, make sure everyone introduces him/herself at the beginning of his/her section of the presentation)
- C. Introduce the Topic, explain why and how you chose it, and who the audience is. Include:
  - i. What category you picked: Real-world problem, Global topic of interest, Community Topic, and
  - ii. How you narrowed the topic to a specific purpose (mission)
  - iii. Why it interests you, and
  - iv. How it allowed you to incorporate different media elements into the content
- D. State what you hope the readers will learn or understand (**be sure to emphasize how you developed the site to impact the reader's learning and/or reaction/action steps**)
- E. Show-off and discuss those elements of your site that are original/unique and how you accomplished those elements
- F. Conclude your presentation with by thanking the viewers for their attention and ask if they have any questions or comments.
- G. Go back to the site to address any questions/comments your audience might have.
- H. End the presentation with another thank you when it appears that the audience has no further questions or comments

### Presentation tips

- Dress in a nice clothes for a professional appearance (No shorts, t-shirts, halter tops, etc.)
- Be prepared – know enough about your topic that you can explain what it is you would like to accomplish the most with the topic
- Be organized – decide who is going to present point above
- Practice – practice your presentation beforehand so that it moves smoothly with transitions between each point and so it fits within any time limitations set by your coach.
- Ask for questions, comments, suggestions. If people do not respond, ask "What did you like best?" "What did you like least?" "Did the site address the Mission Statement?"

## Step 10. Final Submission Form Completed and Submitted and CELEBRATE!