

# Approaching Worthington

---

Joanna Stubenrauch ♦ Enriched Language Arts, Grade 8 ♦ August 9, 2011  
McCord Middle School ♦ 1500 Hard Road ♦ Columbus, Ohio 43235

*“We are acquainted with the mere pellicle of the globe on which we live. Men have not delved six feet below the surface nor leaped as many above it. We know not where we are. Beside, we are sound asleep half the time. Yet we esteem ourselves wise, and have an established order on the surface.”*

-Henry David Thoreau, from the chapter “Conclusion” of *Walden*

## Approaching Worthington: Abstract

The purpose of this unit is to help the students become more connected to their surroundings and community through investigating Worthington’s history and exploring our natural surroundings. During class time, the students will read American essays on which to model their own nature and place writing assignments. We will take one day to go on a field trip to Highbanks Metro Park to hear from guest speakers about Central Ohio’s settlement by American Indians and by the Scioto Company during the Westward Expansion period of the early 1800’s. During the unit, the students will produce observational journals and finally choose an independent study topic on an aspect of Worthington in order to create a multi-genre presentation that will include interviews, an excursion, a visual presentation, and a personal essay.

## Essential Questions

- What is a sense of place, and how do I find mine?
- How has our community’s historical and ecological past shaped the present?
- What impact do I have on my community?

## Duration and Objectives

The duration of the lessons provided is seven class days, and students will have approximately three additional weeks to work on their independent study project, including class time to plan, draft, implement, and revise.

Prior to beginning the “Approaching Worthington” unit, students will have completed a unit of study on Thoreau and the Transcendentalists. Applicable readings from that unit include the chapters “Where I Lived and What I Lived For”, “The Ponds”, and “Conclusion” from *Walden*. Students will

be able to connect the ideas of Thoreau to the key idea of sense of place, which will be introduced in the “Approaching Worthington” unit.

Following the unit, students will be completing an independent study on an aspect of Worthington’s social or natural history.

The objectives of the unit are the following:

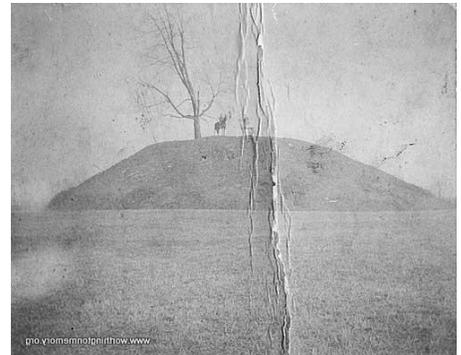
- Gain an understanding of sense of place, especially as it applies to our community
- Create real-world writing and multi-modal products
- Plan and implement an independent study

## Background



McCord Middle School is located in Worthington, Ohio, a northern suburb of Columbus in the heart of Ohio. Worthington plays an important role in Ohio history, as it was one of the earliest cities to be settled in Ohio, in May 1803, only two months after Ohio became a state in March 1803. The early American settlers were a part of the Scioto Company who traveled along the National Road by foot and covered wagon, commissioned by Thomas Worthington and lead by James Kilbourne, the two men for whom our two high schools are named.

Prior to the settlers arriving in and establishing the city of Worthington, Central Ohio was home to both the Wyandot and Shawnee Indians. Leatherlips, a Wyandot leader who worked for cooperation with the early settlers, was sentenced to death a few miles outside of Worthington in Dublin, Ohio. Central Ohio has been home to Native Americans for thousands of years, and two miles from our school, although little known and accessible only with a permit, exists the Jeffers Hopewell Prehistoric Burial Mound, dating between 100 BC and 400 AD.



## Outline

### Lesson 1: Unit Introduction (One 50 minute class period)

1. Begin with short quiz: “How well do you know Worthington?”  
(Following the quiz, students will not be given answers, rather they will have to gather the answers when they go on the field trip)
2. Discussion over “What is a sense of place”?

### Lesson 2: Grasping our place (one 50 minute class period)

Students will begin the day with a reflective journal followed by a reading of Annie Dillard’s essay “Seeing”. For homework, students will be asked to finish the reading and construct a response that will serve as our an opening for the next day’s discussion.

### Lesson 3: Field trip to Highbanks Metro Park (all day)

Goals for the day: introduce nature/observational writing, go on a guided hike with a naturalist, complete first observational journal, learn about Worthington's past from Ohio historian

### Lesson 4: Writing as a Means of Discovery

Students will read and analyze "The Ponds" from *Walden* as a model for community research. Some of Thoreau's many roles in his own hometown included naturalist, surveyor, and historian, all of which are evident in this passage. Students will work together to find evidence of these roles in the passage, as well as respond to some discussion questions over the passage, especially as it relates to discovering our own community.

Afterwards, students will switch to reading some poetry to evoke to the creative side of place-based writing in order to encompass many perspectives of authors who write with a sense of place.

### Lesson 5: Research Foundations

The goal, by this point in the unit, is for students to have a grasp of the idea of place, having gone on a field trip, produced thoughtful journals, and read authors who demonstrate a connection to place. Students will now be assigned to complete their own research project on an aspect of Worthington that will result in a multi-genre product that will be presented to the class.

## Lesson Details

### Lesson 1: Unit Introduction

**Objective:** To gain an understanding of what is meant by "sense of place" and to begin thinking about their own "sense of place"

**Length:** one fifty-minute class period

**Materials needed:** journals, Worthington quiz, poster board on which to write "sense of place" definition

**In-class activities:**

1. Opening: Journal prompt: What does it mean to be a part of a community? How do you know when you belong? What communities do you belong to?
2. "How Well Do You Know Worthington?" Quiz. (Located at end of packet.) This quiz is aimed at provoking interest in learning some basic information about our community, as well as to show the students how much there is to learn about where they live. Quiz is short and designed to take no more than 10 minutes.
3. Post-quiz discussion. Show of hands for who got how many correct. How did it make you feel? Does it matter to know the history of your community? Why or why not? Is the natural preservation of our community important? Why or why not?
4. Definition of sense of place. The goal of this unit is for students to develop a sense of place. What does it mean to have a sense of place? Why is this important?

What is a community without a sense of place? Develop a class definition of sense of place that will be posted at the front of the room for the duration of the unit.

**Homework:** Ask two adults the same quiz questions you were asked today in class. How well do they know our community? Write down their responses. Due on day of field trip.

## Lesson 2: Grasping Our Place

**Objective:** For students to see place through the eyes of writers and draw from their own experiences in order to create their own essays placed on place, to be turned in at the end of the unit. Students will also have to connect to background lessons from previous Transcendental unit to connect ideas of what it means to be awake and to commune with nature.

**Length:** One fifty-minute class period

**Materials needed:** journals, copies of the essay “Seeing” by Annie Dillard, copies of selected poems

### **In-class activities:**

1. Opening Activity: Journal topic: Describe one or two outdoor places around your neighborhood or around town that are special to you. These could be places where you go to be yourself, a place that holds a special memory because of something that you did there with a friend or family member, a place you visited as a child, or any place you know well that is special for any number of reasons. Where is this place? How did you come to know it? When was the last place you visited it? Has it changed over time? What emotions does this place evoke?
2. In class, begin to read aloud together Annie Dillard’s essay “Seeing”.

**Homework:** Finish reading “Seeing” and write a response to the question, “Which ideas that we learned from Thoreau are echoed in Dillard’s essay? What message is she trying to send by what it means to really see? Have you ever had an experience where you felt you were able to truly see nature, in the sense meant by Dillard?”

Wear outdoor walking clothes and bring a sack lunch tomorrow!

## Lesson 3: Field Trip to Highbanks Metro Park

**Objective:** For students to begin exploring Worthington’s natural history and to learn from local historians about the social history.

**Length:** One full school day

**Materials needed:** Field trip permission forms (ahead of time), busses, sack lunches, appropriate clothing and footwear. Each student also needs to bring his/her journal and a pencil.

### **Field trip activities:**

1. In the morning, students will meet in Mrs. Stubenrauch’s room to go over the day’s agenda and expectations. At this time we will also discuss the Dillard essay as our opening activity for the day.

2. Questions to discuss: How are Dillard's words an example of how we can all be more observant on our field trip today? What kinds of things should we be on the lookout for?
3. Board school busses, drive to Highbanks Metro Park (five miles away).
4. Upon arriving at Highbanks, students will meet their guides for the day: a curator for the Worthington Museum and Historical Society, a park guide/naturalist, and a few teachers from around the district. As students are learning from their field trip guides throughout the day, they are to gather the answers that they didn't know when they took the Worthington Quiz on Monday.
5. Overview of Highbanks and the purpose of the metro park.
6. Listen to guest speaker from Worthington Museum about the history of Worthington and the significance of the park's location, especially as it lies along the Olentangy River and Olentangy River Road.
7. Guided nature walk with park guide. Learn about park's natural features and preservation efforts. Visit historical markers related to settlement of Worthington and the wagon trail.
8. Lunch
9. Time for students to spread out, find a spot, and take an hour for natural journaling.
10. End-of-day-wrap up: Students will be given a 3-2-1 exit ticket and fifteen minutes to jot down three things they learned today, two things they can apply to their lives, and one thing they observed in their journal.
11. Collect exit tickets, board busses, head back to school and then home.

**Homework:** Begin brainstorming which aspects of Worthington interest you that you would be willing to complete further research about for your upcoming projects.

#### Lesson 4: Writing as a Means of Discovery

**Objective:** For students to analyze both essay writing and poetry for conveyance of place

**Length:** Three class periods

**Materials needed:** Copies of poems, copies of "The Ponds" from *Walden*

**In-class activities:**

**Day One:**

1. Journal prompt: Thoreau wrote, "I've never met a man who was truly awake." What does it mean to be truly awake? What might we miss if we are asleep or drifting through life? How awake are you?
2. In small groups, read "The Ponds" from *Walden*. Students should highlight examples in the text where Thoreau takes on various roles, including naturalist, historian, and surveyor. Students must respond to analysis questions:
  - a. What physical description does Thoreau give of the Walden Pond?
  - b. When describing the ant battle, what metaphor is suggested about humans?
  - c. Provide examples for where Thoreau has described the Ponds using with human attributes. What purpose does this serve?
  - d. Thoreau uses metaphors about the pond's depth and purity, colors, physical position, role as "earth's eye", and mirror-like qualities to express how humans should strive to live. How can we learn from these attributes of the pond?

- e. Compare and contrast Walden Pond and Flint Pond.

Homework: Finish questions for homework if you did not finish in class.

**Day two:**

1. Journal prompt: If you could turn yourself into any animal in order to better observe and live in accordance with your natural surroundings, what animal would you be? Why do you think this animal's perspective would help you gain a better understanding for your surroundings?
2. We will be conducting a poetry pass with the following poems, found in *Good Poems* by Garrison Keillor:
  - "Summer Morning" by Charles Simic
  - "Living" by Denise Levertov
  - "On a Tree Fallen Across the Road (To Hear Us Talk)" by Robert Frost
  - "Another Spring" by Kenneth Rexroth
  - "The Life of a Day" by Tom Hennen
  - "How to See Deer" by Phillip Booth

Poetry Pass instructions:

- a. Create enough copies of poems so that each student will have one poem. If there are 6 poems you want the student to read and 24 students, make 4 copies of each poem.
  - b. Each student must keep the Poetry PassPort handout on their desk, as well as a pen or a pencil. Move desks into a large circle and clear everything else off of desks. Hand one poem to each student.
  - c. Give students 5 minutes with each poem, then have them pass the poem until they get one they have not had before. Students will have 5 minutes to read their new poem and briefly answer questions on their PassPort. After 30 minutes, each student will have read each poem.
3. At the end of class, tell students that tomorrow they will be sharing their reactions to these poems and writing a poem of their own.

**Day three:**

If the weather permits, this lesson works nicely outside.

1. Spend the first twenty minutes of class discussing the poems and having students share the responses they wrote down on yesterday's Poetry PassPort.
2. Students will take their journals and get a copy of their favorite poem from yesterday and spread out around the school lawn. Their task is to write their own poem that may be about their own place or observing nature or being awake. For students who are struggling, George Ella Lyon's poem "Where I'm From" works nicely as an example students can easily model from.

Homework: Poem due tomorrow

## Lesson 5: Research Foundations

**Objective:** Students will research an aspect of Worthington in order to gain a better understand of their own community and to share the knowledge with others through a comprehensive class project.

**Length:** One class period to introduce, three weeks to complete their interviews, drafts, and final products.

**Materials needed:** Research guidelines handouts, computer lab

**In-class activities:**

1. Opening activity: Students who wish to may share the poems they wrote while outside yesterday.
2. Pass out Research Guidelines and review expectations. Students will have three weeks to conduct their research and put together their final product. Throughout the process, some class time may be used to drafting and peer editing.
3. Move to computer lab and begin working on proposals. Since the Highbanks field trip, students should have been deciding where they may want to conduct their research. In the computer lab, students can explore some of the provided websites to gather more initial information on topics they may be interested in. Students who have decided what they want to do may begin working on and typing research proposals, which are due two days after this lesson.

**Questions they must answer in their research proposal:**

- a. What do you want to research and why?
- b. What will be the goal of your research that you wish to show?
- c. Where will you do your field research? Who will drive you there?
- d. List two people who have expertise in the topic you will be researching who could be interview subjects.
- e. List the five interview questions you can ask these people.

**Homework:** Proposals are due in two days.

## [Link to Standards](#)

### [English Language Arts - Reading \(Literature\) Standards - Grade 8](#)

RL.8.1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

RL.8.5. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

### [English Language Arts - Reading \(Informational Text\) Standards - Grade 8](#)

RI.8.1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RI.8.3. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).

RI.8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

RI.8.6. Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

### [English Language Arts - Writing Standards - Grade 8](#)

W.8.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

W.8.7. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

W.8.8. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

### [English Language Arts - Speaking and Listening Standards - Grade 8](#)

SL.8.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

SL.8.4. Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

SL.8.5. Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.

## Bibliography

Dillard, Annie. "Seeing." *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*. New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 1998. Print.

Keillor, Garrison. *Good Poems*. New York: Penguin Books, 2002. Print.

"Marker #36-35 Jeffers Mound." *Remarkable Ohio*. The Ohio Historical Society, 2011. Web. 1 Aug. 2011. <<http://www.remarkableohio.org/HistoricalMarker.aspx?historicalMarkerId=468>>

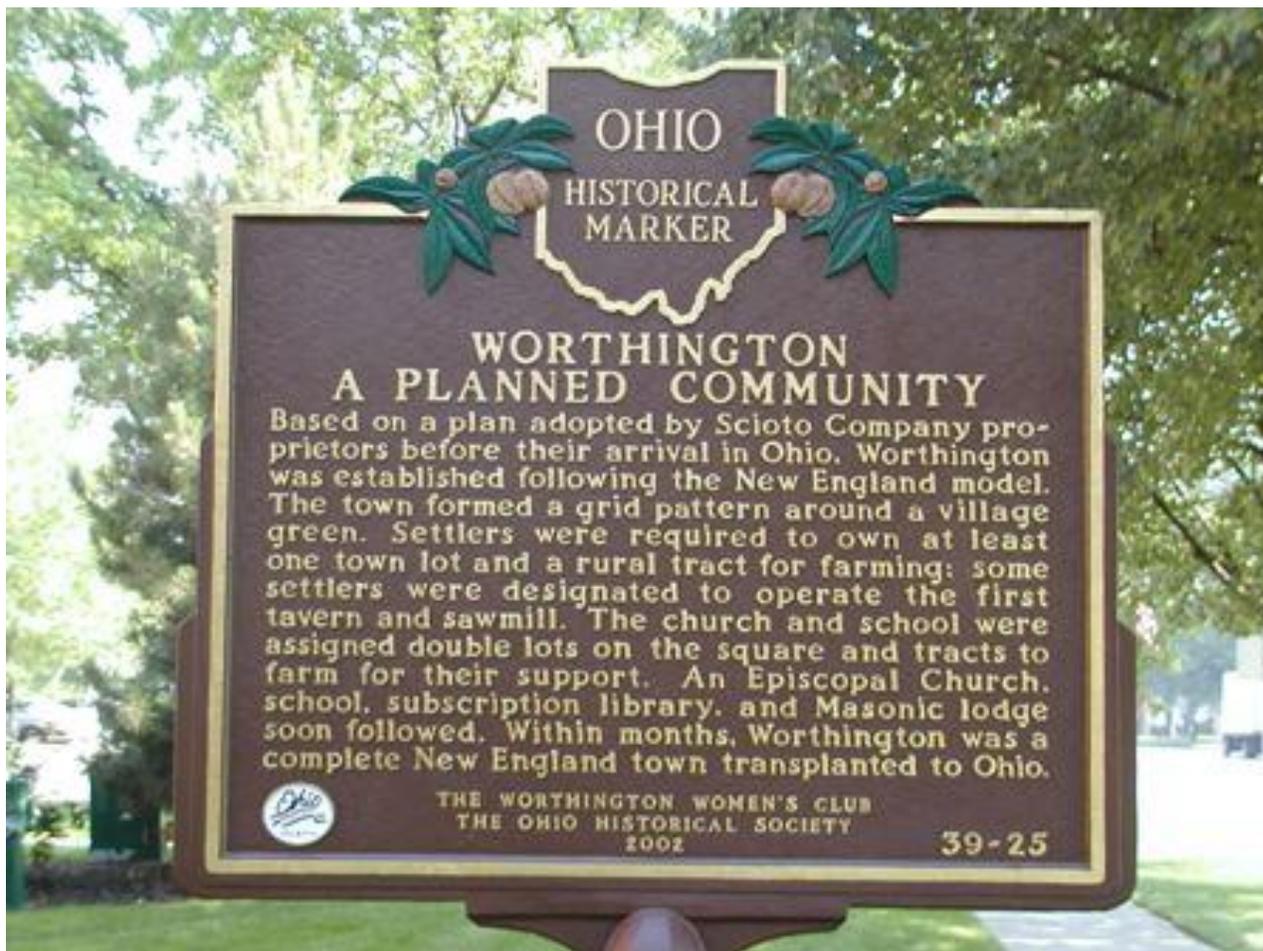
*Remarkable Ohio*. The Ohio Historical Society, 2011. Web. 1 Aug. 2011. <<http://www.remarkableohio.org>>

"Teacher's Guide: *Walden*." *Beacon.org*. Beacon Press, n.d. Web. 1 August 2011. <[http://www.beacon.org/client/teachers\\_guides/1425tg.cfm](http://www.beacon.org/client/teachers_guides/1425tg.cfm)>

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*. Ed. Laura Ross. New York: Sterling Publishing, 2009. Print.

*Worthington Memory: An Online Scrapbook of Worthington History*. Worthington Historical Society, 2011. Web. 1 August 2011. <[www.worthingtonmemory.org](http://www.worthingtonmemory.org)>

## Appendix: Handouts and Readings



Quiz: How Well Do You Know Worthington?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name all of the rivers that flow through Worthington.
2. Who or what is Kilbourne High School named after?
3. When did the earliest settlers come to Worthington? How did they arrive?
4. Where can you find three major ravines?
5. What Indian tribes lived in Worthington?

# Poetry PassPort

	Initial reaction to the poem	Is there any place the author plays with sound (assonance, Consonance, meter, rhyme) to evoke tone?	Descriptive nouns, verbs, and adjectives that you think give the poem meaning	Does this poem evoke any memories that you can relate to?	What message d you think the author is trying to send?
<b>"Summer Morning"</b>					
<b>"On a Tree Fallen"</b>					
<b>"Living"</b>					
<b>"Another Spring"</b>					
<b>"Life of a Day"</b>					
<b>"How to See Deer"</b>					

## Approaching Worthington Research Assignment Guidelines

As the final assessment for our Approaching Worthington unit, your goal is **to go beyond** our preliminary classroom activities to develop an educational **multi-media product** that you will use to teach your classmates more about an aspect of Worthington of your choice.

The final product **must include all of the following**:

- Two typed interviews with local experts, minimum five questions each;
- One “field research” report from a historical site in or around Worthington;
- Three reflective journals, preferably completing one each week.
- photographs from your experiences;
- a two-page spread about your piece for our class collective Worthington Tourism guide.

What is “**field research**”?

- As part of this project, you are required to take your own field trip to a site related to your topic, no more than five miles away. **Plan ahead now** so you and your parents can plan a good time to do this! While planning your field trip, call the location, and arrange to meet with someone you can interview - and bring a camera!

**You must choose one** person, place, or event on which to conduct your research. Choose one from the list, or suggest an alternative idea to me for approval. Possibilities include:

- Highbanks Metro Park
- Jeffers Hopewell Prehistoric Mound
- Scioto Park
- Olentangy Indians Caverns
- Olentangy River
- National Trail
- Bicentennial
- Scioto River
- Rush Run Ravines
- Adena Ravine
- James Kilbourne
- Thomas Worthington
- Leatherlips
- Hopewell Indians
- Adena Indians
- Shawnee Indians
- Wyandot Indians

**Websites** to aid your research:

- Worthington Historical Society / [www.worthingtonhistory.org](http://www.worthingtonhistory.org)
- Worthington Memory Project / [www.worthingtonmemory.org](http://www.worthingtonmemory.org)
- Ohio Historical Society / [www.ohiohistory.org](http://www.ohiohistory.org)
- Worthington’s National Register of Historic Places / [www.worthington.org/about/nationalregister.cfm](http://www.worthington.org/about/nationalregister.cfm)
- Friends of the Ravines / [www.friendsoftheravines.org](http://www.friendsoftheravines.org)
- Ohio Historical markers / [www.remarkableohio.org](http://www.remarkableohio.org)
- [www.ohiohistorycentral.org](http://www.ohiohistorycentral.org)

# Approaching Worthington Research Assignment Rubric

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Point Values:** 0 (F) = component not present

6 (D) = Present, but does not meet expectations. General concepts. Little to no detail provided, application of novel's ideas not understood by presenter, mainly summary, sloppiness of project design

7 (C) = Lacks detail that would add sophistication. Multiple errors in presentation. Delivery not smooth. Presenter seems unprepared. A project that shows potential but may lack development. Meets expectations, with room for improvement.

8 (B) = Interesting and rehearsed presentation. Project shows some original thought. Author is able to apply knowledge of novel to project, but needs more support to carry analysis throughout. Meets expectations. Only a few errors in spelling and facts. Subject knowledge appears to be good, but a full demonstration of "A" quality is not developed. Makes good use of design to enhance presentation. Some details, but lacks the thorough attention to depth of an "A" quality project.

9 (A) = Presenter(s) are confident and clearly focused. Project more than meets expectations. Interesting and well-rehearsed presentation. Thorough knowledge of subject matter and application of ideas are demonstrated. Excellent product design. Answers entire prompt with original ideas throughout. Topic is covered in-depth. High quality and attractive design. Project is enriched through significant details.

10 (A+) = Everything from 9, and in addition: Thoroughly exceeds expectations. Author shows inspiration and desire to truly present his/her best work. Author demonstrates personal engagement with ideas and project. Polished and professional quality.

## Project Components /60

- (a) Proposal \_\_\_\_\_ / 10
- (b) Interview #1 \_\_\_\_\_ / 10
- (c) Interview #2 \_\_\_\_\_ / 10
- (d) Three Journals \_\_\_\_\_ / 10
- (e) Photographs \_\_\_\_\_ / 10
- (f) Two-page magazine spread \_\_\_\_\_ / 10

Field Research Report \_\_\_\_\_ / 36 (six-trait rubric on back)

## Project execution / 30

- (a) Neatness of project \_\_\_\_\_ / 10
- (b) Content sufficient for available time and information \_\_\_\_\_ / 10
- (c) Ability to apply and manipulate themes and concepts from the unit within the project \_\_\_\_\_ / 10

## In-class presentation / 20

- (a) Preparation for and quality of actual presentation \_\_\_\_\_ / 10
- (b) Ability to answer spontaneous questions \_\_\_\_\_ / 10

## Approaching Worthington Field Report Rubric

Attribute	6	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Ideas</b>	The topic, focus, and supporting details make the report truly memorable. A great variety of sources is used.	The report is informative with a clear focus. Supporting details come from many sources.	The report is informative with a clear focus and supporting details, but a greater variety of sources is needed.	The focus of the report needs to be clearer. More supporting details are needed, and more types of sources should be used.	The topic needs to be narrowed or expanded. The report needs to show the research that was done.	A new topic needs to be selected, and research needs to be done.
<b>Organization</b>	The organization makes the report very informative and makes sources easy to find.	The beginning is interesting. The middle supports the focus. The ending works well. Text citations are correct and match the works-cited page.	The report is divided into a beginning, a middle, and an ending. Some text citations are used. A works-cited page is included, and most entries are correctly formatted.	The beginning or ending is weak. The middle needs a paragraph for each main point. More citations should be used, and their form should be correct. The works-cited page needs to correctly list all sources cited in the report.	The beginning, middle, and ending all run together. Text citations and a works-cited page are needed.	The report should be reorganized.
<b>Voice</b>	The voice sounds confident, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic. Quotations from other sources demonstrate strong understanding.	The voice sounds knowledgeable and confident, and sources are quoted appropriately.	The voice sounds well-informed most of the time. The report uses too many or too few quotations from other sources.	The voice sometimes sounds unsure. Some quotations from other sources are inappropriate or awkward.	The voice sounds unsure and needs to quote other sources.	The voice cannot be heard.
<b>Word Choice</b>	The word choice makes the report very clear, informative, and enjoyable to read.	Specific nouns and action verbs make the report clear and informative. Unfamiliar terms are defined.	Some nouns and verbs could be more specific. Unfamiliar terms are defined.	Too many general words are used. Specific nouns and verbs are needed. Some words need to be defined.	General or missing words make this report hard to understand.	Many more specific words are needed.
<b>Sentence Fluency</b>	The sentences flow smoothly and are enjoyable to read.	The sentences read smoothly. A variety of sentences is used.	Most of the sentences read smoothly, but more variety is needed.	Many short, choppy sentences need to be combined to make a better variety of sentences.	Many sentences are choppy or incomplete and need to be rewritten.	Most sentences need to be rewritten.
<b>Conventions</b>	Punctuation and grammar are correct. Spelling is correct.	The report has a few minor errors in punctuation, spelling, or grammar.	The report has several errors in punctuation, spelling, or grammar.	Some errors are confusing.	Many errors make the report confusing and hard to read.	Help is needed to make corrections.