

## Brochure Lesson Plans and Resources for the K-12 Classroom

Lesson Plans by Jacci Howard Bear, Your Mining Co. Guide to Desktop Publishing  
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<http://desktoppub.miningco.com>  
Author email: [desktoppub.guide@miningco.com](mailto:desktoppub.guide@miningco.com)

*Notes to the Instructor:*

### **Brochures**

**The brochure can inform, educate, persuade, explain, or instruct.** Lesson 1 has a team of students writing and designing a brochure describing a specific place or organization. This may be a contemporary, historical, or fictional time and place. In Lesson 2 the students must create a brochure describing a specific process or project (assigned by the teacher or of their own choosing) such as “How to Dissect a Frog” or “Description and Assembly of a Basket of Fruit”. Lessons can be applied to a variety of ages and subject areas including Language Arts, Technical Writing, History, Social Studies, Mathematics, and Science.

### **Lesson 1: Create a Brochure Describing a Place or Organization (Informs, Educates, Persuades)**

This project could be assigned to individual students or to teams of 2 or more students. You may want to assign specific topics or provide the class with a list of approved or suggested topics. Suggestions include:

- Where you live (city, county, state, country);
- An entire country or specific regions or cities that tie in with your current unit of study (contemporary or assign a specific time period, such as *London, England in the 1860's*);
- A fictional location (*The Land of OZ*);
- Mars, Saturn, the Moon, etc.;
- An organization or group related to your current unit of study (*The Sons of Temperance, An American Indian Tribe, the Whigs*);
- A local or school organization (FTA, the Art Club, the school football team, the Junior Rotary Club).

In evaluating the brochures, you may want to have classmates not involved in that particular brochure project read the brochure then take a simple quiz (written or verbal) to determine how well the brochure writers/designers presented their topic. (After 1 reading could most of the students tell describe what the brochure was about, what key points were made, etc.)

**Lesson 2: Create a Brochure about a Process or Project (Educates, Explains, Instructs)**

This project could be assigned to individual students or to teams of 2 or more students. You may want to assign specific topics or provide the class with a list of approved or suggested topics. This type of project is good for “how-to” subjects. *How to Make and Read a Sundial, How to Determine the Diameter of Any Circle, or How to Make a Rainbow with Red, Yellow, and Blue.* It is also a good format for explaining how or why something works. *How a Prism Works, Why the North Pole is Covered in Ice, or How the Two-Party System Developed in the United States.*

In evaluating the brochures, you may want to have classmates not involved in that particular brochure project read the brochure then take a simple quiz (written or verbal) to determine how well the brochure writers/designers presented their topic. For a how-to brochure you might have some of the students try to follow the instructions and recreate the project or perform the task.

**Attachments:**

*A - Brochure Checklist:* List of items commonly found in brochures. Not every item will or should appear in all types of brochures.

*B - Place or Organization Checklist:* Applies only to Lesson 1. Includes questions to help guide the student in deciding what type of information the brochure needs to include.

## **Lesson 1:**

# **Create a Brochure Describing a Place or Organization (Informs, Educates, Persuades)**

### **Introduction**

One way that people learn about places, people, or things that they do not know is by reading about them. But what if they don't have time to read a whole book or they just want a quick overview of the subject? Businesses often use brochures to inform, educate, or persuade—quickly. They use a brochure to grab the readers attention and get them interested enough to want to know more.

A brochure for a new convenience store might have a map and list of all the locations around town and a brief description of the types of food products it sells. The brochure for an Animal Shelter may give facts about abandoned animals, pet overpopulation, and the importance of spaying and neutering programs. A travel brochure may show beautiful pictures of exotic places—making you want to visit that city or country.

These types of brochures tell enough about a place or an organization to get your interest and make you want to know more.

### **Task**

Create a brochure about \_\_\_\_\_ (PLACE/ORGANIZATION) that informs, educates, or persuades. The brochure is not an in depth study of a topic but it should give enough information to grab and keep the readers interest from start to finish.

A brochure may cover a broad topic but it shouldn't contain so much information that it overwhelms the reader. Choose 2 to 3 key points about PLACE/ORGANIZATION to describe. If there are other important elements, consider listing them in a simple bullet list or chart somewhere in your brochure.

In addition to what your brochure says, you must decide the best format to present your information. Different formats work best for brochures with lots of text, lots of pictures, small blocks of text, lists, charts, or maps. You'll need to find the format that works best for your information.

### **Resources**

- Brochure Checklist (attachment A).
- Place or Organization Checklist (attachment B).

### **Suggested Minimum Resources**

- Collection of brochures from family, friends, local businesses. (Travel brochures and brochures from local clubs are good examples.)

- Brochure design books and portfolios (optional).
- Classroom or Library Reference Materials.
- Access to Internet Resources (optional).
- Page Layout Software (with Brochure Templates if possible).
- Scanner, clip art books, graphics software (optional).
- Plain or color paper, staples (if doing booklet style brochures).
- Laser or inkjet printer able to handle chosen paper stock.

## Steps

1. First, write down what you currently know “off the top of your head” about your topic. If it is a place, describe the location. Write down any key landmarks, interesting tourist spots, or historically significant locations that you now know about. If it is an organization, write down what you know about that group, its’ mission or purpose, its’ membership.
2. Look at sample brochures you or your class have collected. Identify those that have a style or format you might like to imitate or borrow. See how much detail each type of brochure includes.
3. Research your topic. Use the materials provided in the classroom or from other sources to gather more details about your topic. From these materials and what you already know about the topic start picking out 5 to 6 significant or interesting facts that you think you will want to highlight in your brochure.
4. Use the Place Checklist or the Organization Checklist for questions and ideas on what to include in your brochure.
5. Using the Brochure Checklist, list the major components of your brochure. Mark out any components you wish to omit from your brochure. Write headlines and subheads. Write the descriptive text. Make lists.
6. Sketch out some rough ideas of how you want your brochure to look—including any graphics you think you want to include. (Your software may come with a collection of clip art; if you have access to a scanner you may be able to scan artwork from clip art books; if you have access to graphics software you may be able to draw your own graphics.) Try out different formats to fit your text. Edit your text to fit your layout. Experiment.
7. Using the page layout software available to you, transfer your rough sketches to the computer. Your software may have templates or wizards that will provide you with even more ideas.
8. Print your final design and fold as necessary.

**Evaluation**

Your teacher and your classmates will use the criteria listed in the checklists accompanying this lesson (Brochure Checklist and Place or Organization Checklist) to see how well you have presented your topic. You will be using the same criteria to judge the work of your classmates and providing input to your teacher. Not everyone will agree on the effectiveness of a single brochure but if you have done your job well, most readers will agree that your brochure gives them the information they want and need, is easy to follow, and makes them want to know more.

**Conclusion**

The brochure as an informative, educational, or persuasive device must present information in a clear, organized manner. It should give enough information that the reader won't be left wondering "what's this really about" but should also be a "quick read" so that the reader doesn't become bored before reaching the end. Because it doesn't tell the whole story, it should contain the most important parts of the story. Give the reader the most significant, most interesting facts—the information that will make them want to find out more.

## **Lesson 2:**

### **Create a Brochure about a Process or Project (Educates, Explains, Instructs)**

#### **Introduction**

Sometimes you don't need a whole book to tell you how to do something. Companies often write simple instruction sheets or brochures that outline how to assemble their product or how to use it properly.

These types of brochures tell how to do something or explain how something works using simple descriptions, diagrams, or lists of steps. They are intended for readers who don't need to know absolutely everything on a subject but do need the basics.

#### **Task**

Create a brochure about \_\_\_\_\_  
(FILL IN SELECTED OR ASSIGNED PROCESS/PROJECT) that educates, explains, or instructs. The brochure is not an in depth study of a topic but it should give enough information that the reader can perform the task or understand the process.

In addition to what your brochure says, you must decide the best format to present your information. Different formats work best for brochures with lots of text, lots of pictures, small blocks of text, lists, charts, or maps. You'll need to find the format that works best for your information.

#### **Resources**

- Brochure Checklist (attachment A).

#### **Suggested Minimum Resources**

- Collection of brochures from family, friends, local businesses. (Instruction booklets for watches, assembly instructions for small toys, and brochures from your local utility company explaining water conservation practices, etc. are good examples.)
- Brochure design books and portfolios (optional).
- Classroom or Library Reference Materials.
- Access to Internet Resources (optional).
- Page Layout Software (with Brochure Templates if possible).
- Scanner, clip art books, graphics software (optional).
- Plain or color paper, staples (if doing booklet style brochures).

- Laser or inkjet printer able to handle chosen paper stock.

### Steps

1. First, write down what you need to accomplish with your brochure. What process are you explaining? What task should the reader be able to accomplish after reading this brochure?
2. Look at sample brochures you or your class have collected. Identify those that have a style or format you might like to imitate or borrow. See how much detail each type of brochure includes.
3. Research your topic. Use the materials provided in the classroom or from other sources to gather more details about your topic. If you are explaining a process, decide what background information the reader will need. If describing a task, will you need a list of parts or supplies? Must the steps in the project be completed in a certain order?
4. Using the Brochure Checklist, list the major components of your brochure. Mark out any components you wish to omit from your brochure. Write headlines and subheads. Write the descriptive text. Make lists.
5. Sketch out some rough ideas of how you want your brochure to look—including any graphics you think you want to include. (Your software may come with a collection of clip art; if you have access to a scanner you may be able to scan artwork from clip art books; if you have access to graphics software you may be able to draw your own graphics.) Try out different formats to fit your text. Edit your text to fit your layout. Experiment.
6. Using the page layout software available to you, transfer your rough sketches to the computer. Your software may have templates or wizards that will provide you with even more ideas.
7. Print your final design and fold as necessary.

**Evaluation**

Your teacher and your classmates will use the criteria listed in the Brochure Checklist (attachment A) accompanying this lesson to see how well you have presented your topic. You will be using the same criteria to judge the work of your classmates and providing input to your teacher. Not everyone will agree on the effectiveness of a single brochure but if you have done your job well, most readers will agree that your brochure gives them the information they want and need and is easy to follow. For how-to type brochures your teacher may have other students follow your instructions to complete your project or task. If most students can easily follow your instructions, you've probably done a good job.

**Conclusion**

The brochure as an educational or instructional device must present information in a clear, organized manner. It should give enough information that the reader can understand the process or reproduce the project. When explaining a process or telling how to build or assemble a project, the format of the brochure is especially important. You will probably want to present information in a chronological (1, 2, 3...) order. In explaining a complicated process you need to boil it down to its most important elements—leave lengthy explanations and detailed descriptions for the textbooks and research papers.

## ATTACHMENT A

### **Brochure Checklist**

Many of the items in this list are optional. You must decide which ones are appropriate for your brochure.

- Name of Location, Business or Organization.
- Address.
- Phone Number.
- Fax Number.
- Email Address.
- Web Page Address.
- Headline that creates curiosity, states a major benefit, or otherwise entices the reader to open and read your brochure.
- Headline that states the name of the Product, Project, or Described Process.
- Subheads.
- Short, easy to read blocks of text.
- Lists, charts.
- Key Benefits (2-3).
- Features.
- Instructions, steps, parts (for a procedure, to assemble a product, etc.)
- Biography (of business owner, key members of organization, officers, etc.).
- Mission Statement.
- History.
- Logo.
- Graphic Image(s) (including purely decorative elements).
- Photographs of product, place, people.
- Diagram, flow chart.

- Map.
- Call to Action (What you want the reader to do: call, visit, fill out a form, etc.)

## ATTACHMENT B

### **Checklist for a Brochure about a Place**

These are a few things to look for specifically related to brochures about a place. Not all will apply to your brochure.

- Does the brochure give enough information that the reader knows where to find this place? (Map, directions)
- Does the brochure tell what is significant about this place (historical importance, tourist attractions, famous residents, significant industries, etc.)?
- Are there interesting pictures? (Pictures with people are usually more effective but pictures of well-known landmarks or beautiful scenery can work with or without people in the photos)
- Are the pictures or clip art useful? Do they help to tell the story or do they just seem to be filling up space?
- Does the brochure make the reader want to visit this place (if that is the purpose of the brochure)?
- Does the brochure make the reader want to avoid this place (if that is the purpose of the brochure)?

### **Checklist for a Brochure about an Organization**

These are a few things to look for specifically related to brochures about an organization. Not all will apply to your brochure.

- Does the brochure give the name of the organization?
- Is the purpose of the organization clearly stated?
- Does the brochure list the organizations activities?
- If appropriate, is there a calendar of events?
- If the organization has a product or service that it sells (or gives away) is that in the brochure?
- Does the brochure state the membership requirements (if any) for the organization?
- Does the brochure tell how to contact the organization?

- Are the most important activities of the organization highlighted?
- Does the brochure make the reader want to join the organization (or find out more about it)?

