Personal Project
Guide book on how to write an essay on 4 subjects.

STUDENT
Word count: 3 257

2020-2021

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Objective A. Investigating.

Goal:

My goal of the project is **to contribute to the learning process of MYP students by creating and designing a guide book based on investigation on how to write a proper essay for any subject that requires it, by recalling my personal experience and getting recommendations from the teachers**. I expect my product to be finished by December2020.

The main challenge of this goal is that according to it, my product should consist of clear, precise and very helpful instructions on how to write an essay for any subject that requires it. It means that the guide book should be not only voluminous in the amount of information in it, but also as useful and understandable as possible for students of the MYP. Therefore, my work must bring something new to the explanation of teachers in order to supplement the knowledge acquired by students during the lessons and lead them to success. Not having enough experience in teaching and giving instructions to others complicates my task. In addition, I understand that most of the product creation process will be during the academic year, because my book must include not only my advice, but also recommendations from teachers. Considering the year 10 program my goal is challenging from this perspective too. Beyond this, the understanding and perception of information is also influenced by how it is organized. That is why I have to think a lot about product design.

Global context:

 The global context for my project is Fairness and Development, because I want my product to be an access to equal opportunities for all students (to not only get high or good marks, but also) to fill the knowledge gaps and get writing skills that will undoubtedly be useful for them in the near future. The "Fairness and Development" is also about human capability. I believe that studying one's capability will lead to his development as an open-minded and knowledgeable person. For this reason, this global context would let me focus on answering the question to myself: "Am I capable of creating the successful solution, considering my acquired knowledge from MYP?". The answer for this question will hopefully help me in self-development.

The idea of creating the guide book came to me right after the first semester of 9th grade. I've always enjoyed writing essays for any subjects, but all the excitement from getting this type of assessment had vanished right after I started my ninth academic year. Throughout that year I understood that different subjects have different ways of writing the same assignment. Each of them has its own features and difficulties and of course, since it is the ninth grade, assessment

criteria were harder to achieve. This change has brought me confusion and even stress, because essays are usually assignments which could cover 3 or 4 criteria at once. It took me 2-3 tries before I got an acceptable grade for me, simply because I was not ready. I don't want others, especially 7 graders and 9 graders, to experience the same situation and lose all enthusiasm for the learning process.

That's why, the guide book is meant to be not only an instruction resource that anyone could get at any time, but also a source, which differentiates one subject requirement for essay, from other subject requirements.

Prior learning & subject-specific knowledge:

From the design lessons (particularly from product design course), I know that in order to develop a successful solution I should follow the Design Cycle, which includes: "inquiring and analysing the existent solutions", "developing the ideas", "creating the solution" and "evaluation" steppes. That is why, it is easier and more likely for me to create a comprehensive and successful product by following the Design Cycle. I have written essays for every subject, which I want to cover in my guidance book. Thus, I already have some ideas and advice for the book in my mind. Moreover, I developed my research skills at every subject throughout the 9th academic year, because the amount of project summative assignments was increased.

Research skills:

After three years of learning, I've developed the skills of planning the research process and collecting information at a sufficiently high level. I know and use the research methods, which include deduction, induction and also thinking methods (such as brainstorming, information analysis etc.). I also developed the principle of completing an action plan and organizing the collected data, which will certainly help me in this project.

I want to develop the skills of interpreting of data as I will be interpreting

collected advice, requirements and instructions on how to write a proper essay into one guidance book with a certain design. I also want to develop a skill of presenting research findings, because I hope that my guidance book will be a proper representation of the research done.

Objective B. Planning.
 Criteria:
The investigation stage was mainly aimed at developing the criteria for my product. Thus, by the end of it and, after the 2nd official meeting with my supervisor, I had come up with 4 final criteria for the guide book: materials, aesthetics, size, content (come together as one criterion) and function. The clarification as follows:

i. Materials
i. The design of the guide book includes a variety of **visual details** (ex. different font colors, highlights, frames) that fully contribute to the reader's understanding of the content.
ii. The guide book includes **direct quotes** from teachers of Economics, World history, Kazakh history and Russian language, which are coherent to the content of a page and contribute to the reader's understanding of the presented information.
 ii. Aesthetics
i. The guide book is created by efficiently using elements of design, correctly applying the color theory and hierarchy of the text; fully respects the unity in the design of textual information.
iii. Size, content.
i. The content of the guide book is written, using "active voice" in a way that supplements the knowledge acquired by students during the lessons and leads them to success*.
ii. The content of the book is written, excluding use of scientific language and a wide range of terminology, making information easier to comprehend for a student.
iii. The textual information in the guide book does not exceed the word limit of maximum 500 words for a page.
iv. Function
i. The guide book supplements the knowledge acquired by students during the

lessons and leads them to success*.

*For me, a "successful work" is not only a good grade, it's a satisfaction one gets from writing and finishing it. Therefore, my guide book must not be all about getting high marks from writing an assignment. **I want to show other students the fact that essay is just another format of assessment, and just like any assessment it can be written "stress-free" simply by understanding what it's aimed at.** In fact, I see an essay as a good way of organizing acquired knowledge from the lessons in your head. Thus, **my perception of a "successful essay" lies in two things: being able to organize and demonstrate one's knowledge through this type of work and get the satisfaction from it.**

Plan:

My plan for creating the guide book consisted of 3 components: timeline, mini-smart goals and check-lists (*appendix 1 & 2*). The timeline was made for the visualization of the process -it has acted as a schedule for me to track down the deadlines. Each deadline was chosen on the basis of the school curriculum -- not only for the reason of a simple time-management between the routine schoolwork and the project, but also because the summative works in the second quarter were in the essay format. So, for example, I knew for sure that for the time of "collecting material for the book" I had at least two essays on two subjects: economics and the Russian language. Thus, in my opinion, both me and the teachers found it easier to formulate their "advice" for the guide, because the knowledge of this format of work was still up-to-date. In the result, I had my product making process divided into 3 parts: collecting the material, interpreting data and the creation of the guide book itself. However, given that these 3 parts of my plan took a long time to complete, I needed to establish certain deadlines within each as well. Thus, I have realized that for me, the best way to plan the project is not only divide it into 3 parts, but also to formulate a relatively small SMART goal for each of them and set deadlines to achieve these objectives. For example, according to the final timeline, my first "mini-SMART goal" is to write available teachers in economics, Russian language, Kazakhstan and World history to approve interviews and schedule online meetings by the 6th of November, 2020. Finally, in order to record and check my progress throughout each part of the project, I have created the check-lists with a similar structure as the ones that the supervisors gave us (*appendix* 2).

Self-management skills:

During the investigation stage I have managed to formulate the SMART goal, which has helped me to organize my research into mind maps that were very helpful to me (*appendix* 3). I assume it speaks to my organizational skills. I tried to follow my plan according to the set deadline(s). However, during the first stage of the project I faced a stressful situation due to the fact that I set the wrong deadlines in my action plan: some of the investigation aspects in my plan were taking more time than they should. This meant that there was little time left for the most important steps in my plan to complete. My main mistake then was not prioritizing the steps inside of the action plan. Although I've managed to cope with the stress, my further plan fully reduced it, because regarding the process of creation of the product I had more specific and narrow deadlines and each part of it was <u>arranged and prioritized logically</u>.

Objective C. Taking Action.

Creating the product:

As mentioned earlier, the creation of the product was divided into three parts: collecting material from teachers, interpreting the received data, and creating a guide (which includes the design part). In order to complete the first part of my plan, I had to arrange interviews (*appendix 4*) with teachers of four subjects (see which ones above). During the investigation stage, I already had formulated 4 conceptual questions for teachers (*appendix 5*), taking into account the fact that "advice" from them is only the basis of my product, and not its main component, and also the fact that I may have additional questions during the interview. I kept a record of every interview I did except one (it was done offline by providing a list of questions that I would like to receive answers to). This gave me the opportunity to listen carefully to the interlocutor, and not to worry about writing down his words in a notebook directly during the conversation. I also had the ability to return to the teachers' answers - primary source - during the creation of the guide, which was very useful. The success of the third part depended on the second part of the plan: I had to listen / look through each interview separately and highlight the most valuable and necessary words and phrases to include in the book. But more importantly, I had to analyze the information received in order to compress it into a guide format (taking into account the criteria I created as well) and formulate my own advice and

the project: Fairness and Development, because as it was mentioned earlier, the «Fairness and Development» is about human capability. Hence throughout th process of developing and creating the guide book I was testing as well as **developing** my own capabilities: my thinking, communicative, organizing skills especially. Based on my own assumotions, the commentary of the supervisor, teachers ad most importantly students, I am quite capable of creating the successful product. I indeed implemented my knowledge from the World History, Kazakh History, Russian Language & Literature and economics into the pages of the guide book. I used the desig principles and elemets in my design, which I have learnt from the design lessons. My skills and knowledge is exactly what helped me to create the product, which is suitible for this kind of the project, and hopefully useful for the NIS community

At the end, my guide book itself is a representation of the global context – it is a source of information, which all the students have the equal oppurtunity to download and use – this is fair. It is also a visual demonstration of all the skills that I was able to develop throughout the project.

IB profile:
Of all the profiles of the student of IB, I have identified four, which, in my opinion, I have shown to one degree or another throughout my personal project. Firstly, I was an **open-minded** student. In order to create my product, I considered four subjects, each of which has its own characteristics and requirements for writing an essay. I was ready not only to receive, but also to interpret a large amount of information and provide different material on each page of my guide. I was open to evaluating my product by other people - teachers and classmates, as I think in this case, their opinion is more valid, than my own.

Since I have used and applied my knowledge and skills in the project, I can call myself **knowledgeable**. For my communication skills - conducting interviews and effective meetings with a supervisor, I can call myself a **communicator**. I was not afraid to ask questions and go out to one-on-one conversations with other people in order to find answers. I was also a **risk-taker** because I shared my own knowledge and ideas with such a large audience for the first time. Therefore, I couldn't be completely sure whether my product would be successful. Thus, I can say with confidence that the personal project gave me the opportunity to learn the importance of the process of creating a product over its success. It was in the process of writing and designing the guide that I was able

PERSONAL PROJECT, Guide book on how to write an essay on 4 subjects.

to test my capabilites, apply my knowledge and skills outside the academic program.

Appendixes

PERSONAL PROJECT, Guide book on how to write an essay on 4 subjects.

Appendix 1: the timeline for creation of the guide.

Pic 1. (STUDENT, 2020)

Appendix 2: the example of the check-list I've used to record my progress during the 3rd stage.

Date: 26.11.20

My check-list for today:

#	Question:	Check? (yes/no)
1	Have I found the platform where my guide book would be created?	yes
2	Have I had an online meeting with the Kazakh History teacher?	yes
3	Have I had an online meeting with the Economics teacher?	yes
4	Have I had an online meeting with the Russian Language and Literature teacher?	yes
5	Have I received the list of answers from the World History teacher?	no

One more thing to accomplish |until I've finished the first part of the plan.

Pic 2. (STUDENT, 2020)

PERSONAL PROJECT, Guide book on how to write an essay on 4 subjects.

Appendix 3: the mind map from the procedure journal.
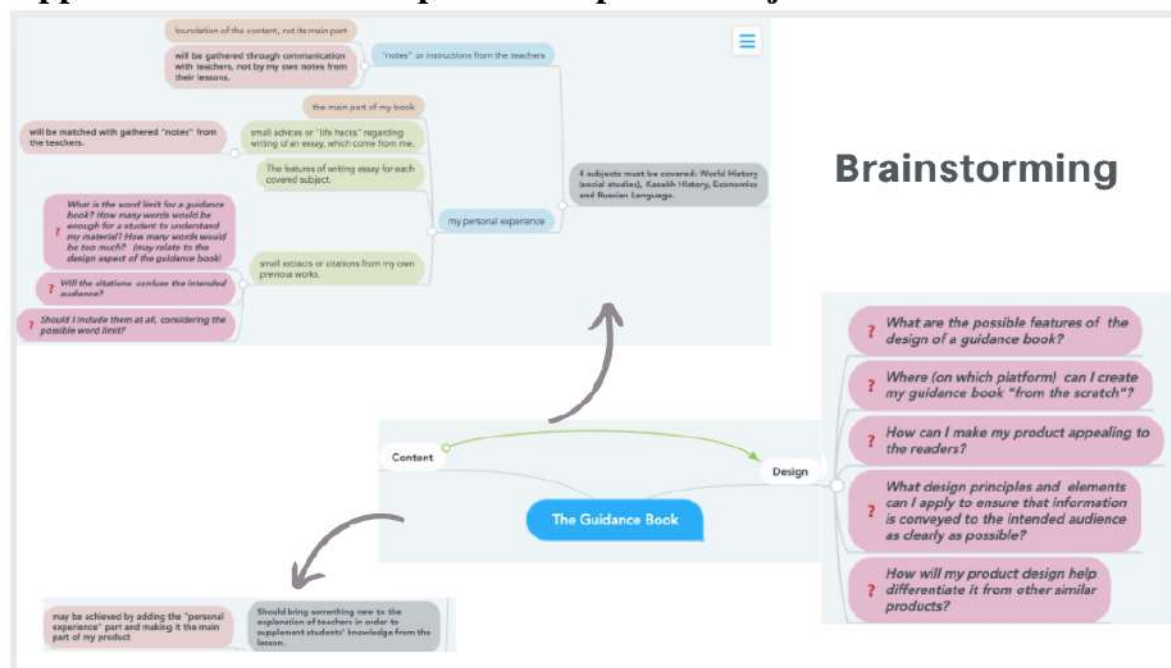
Pic 3. (STUDENT, 2020)

Appendix 4: the emails for the teachers of World History, Kazakh History, Economics and Russian language and Literature.

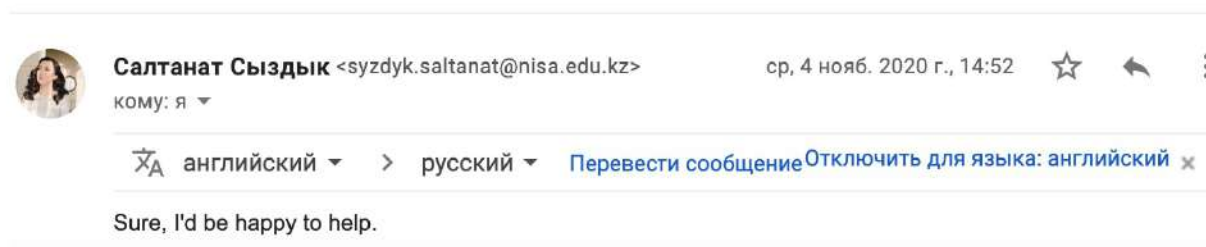Good afternoon, miss Saltanat! I'm sorry for disturbing You, but I am creating my personal project and Your opinion is important to me. That is because the goal of my project is to create a guide book for students in grades 7-9, which would explain methods / tips / instructions for writing a good essay on 4 subjects. In order for my "instructions" to be reliable, I also need advice (sort of life-hacks) from teachers.

Do You have time next week (Tuesday-Friday, to be precise) to arrange an online meeting with me to discuss the topic of the essay on the World History subject? If not, then I can also send You a small list of questions that I would like to receive an answer to.

Thank You in advance!

Sincerely,

Салтанат Сыздык <syzdyk.saltanat@nisa.edu.kz>   ср, 4 нояб. 2020 г., 14:52

кому: я

Ⓧ английский > русский   Перевести сообщение Отключить для языка: английский ✕

Sure, I'd be happy to help.

Pic 4. (STUDENT, 2020)

Сәлеметсіз бе, мисс Ақтоты! Сізді мазалағаныма үшін кешірім сұраймын, бірақ мен жеке жобамды бастағаныма байланысты Сіздің көмегіңіз қажет болды. Менің жобамның мақсаты - 7-9 сынып оқушылары үшін 4 пәндер бойынша жақсы эссе жазу әдістерін/нұсқауларын/дағдыларын сипаттайтын кітап жасау. Менің «нұсқауларым» сенімді болу үшін, маған мұғалімдердің кеңесі ("лайф-хактері") де қажет. Сондықтан келесі аптада менімен «Қазақстан тарихы» пәні бойынша эссе тақырыбын талқылау үшін кездесу ұйымдастыруға уақытыңыз бар ма? Егер олай болмаса, мен жауап алғым келетін сұрақтардың шағын тізімін жібере аламын.
Жауабыңыз үшін алдын-ала рақмет!
Құрметпен, ▓▓▓▓▓▓▓▓

Ақтоты Газиз <gaziz.aktoty@nisa.edu.kz>   вт, 3 нояб. 2020 г., 13:53   ☆ ↩ ⋮
кому: я ▾

文A казахский ▾   >   русский ▾   Перевести сообщение   Отключить для языка: казахский ✕

Сәлеметсің бе ▓▓▓▓ саған әрқашан көмектесуге дайынмын. Мен дүйсенбі, жұма күндері түстен кейін боспын сол аралықта кездесу ұйымдастырсаң болады. Егерде қандайда бір сұрақтарын туындаса 87776278300 нөміріне хабарлассаң болады

Pic 5. (STUDENT, 2020)

Good afternoon, miss Ayim! I'm sorry for disturbing You, but I am creating my personal project and Your opinion is important to me. That is because the goal of my project is to create a guide book for students in grades 7-9, which would explain how to write a good essay on 4 subjects from the perspective of a student. However, in order for my "instructions" to be reliable, I also need advice (sort of **life-hacks**) from teachers - it would also complement my book.
Therefore, do You have time next week (Wednesday-Friday, to be precise) to arrange an online meeting with me to discuss the essay on the Economics subject? If not, then I can also send You a small list of questions that I would like to receive an answer to.
Thank You in advance!
Sincerely, ▓▓▓▓▓

Айым Алибекова <alibekova.aiym@nisa.edu.kz>   пн, 16 нояб. 2020 г., 08:24   ☆ ↩ ⋮
кому: я ▾

文A английский ▾   >   русский ▾   Перевести сообщение Отключить для языка: английский ✕

Hello ▓▓▓▓

Yes, sure I will help. let's meet on Wednesday at 14.00

Pic 6. (STUDENT, 2020)

Добрый день, мисс Зейнель! Прошу прощения за беспокойство, но я хотела бы организовать с Вами персональную встречу, потому что в рамках Персонального проекта я собираю информацию о том, как правильно и эффективно писать эссе, и русский язык входит в список предметов, которые я хотела бы покрыть. Удобно ли Вам уделить мне время завтра, после уроков? Если нет, то я могу выслать небольшой список вопросов, на которые мне хотелось бы получить ответ.
Заранее спасибо за ответ!

Зайнел Баубекова <baubekova.zainel@nisa.edu.kz>   пн, 23 нояб. 2020 г., 15:35   ☆ ← ⋮
кому: я ▼

Да, █████ можно встретиться. Примерно в 14.00 или чуть позже.

С уважением,
учитель русского языка и литературы
Баубекова Зайнель Жагипаровна
моб. тел. 8 701 795 05 71
          8 700 271 30 09

Best regards,

Pic 7. (STUDENT, 2020)

Appendix 5: the list of questions I used for the interviews.

1. What advice would You give to students who usually have a limited time to write an essay: what is the first thing to focus on and what can a student not get hung up on?

2. On which criterion, assessed in the essay do many students consistently receive the lowest score? Why is this happening?

3. What advice can You give on how to write an argument in a World History Essay? What mistakes do students make when formulating an argument and how to avoid them?

Additional question: Please, briefly explain the structure of the essay and why is it important to follow it.

Pic 8. (Student, 2020)

Appendix 6: some extracts from the copybook I used to brainstorm and interpret the information given by teachers.

15
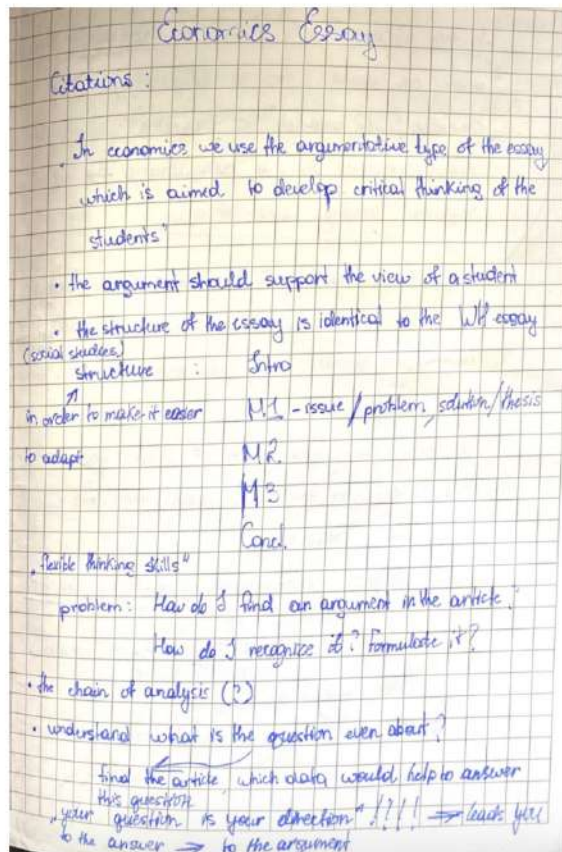
Pic 9. (Sopidi, 2020)
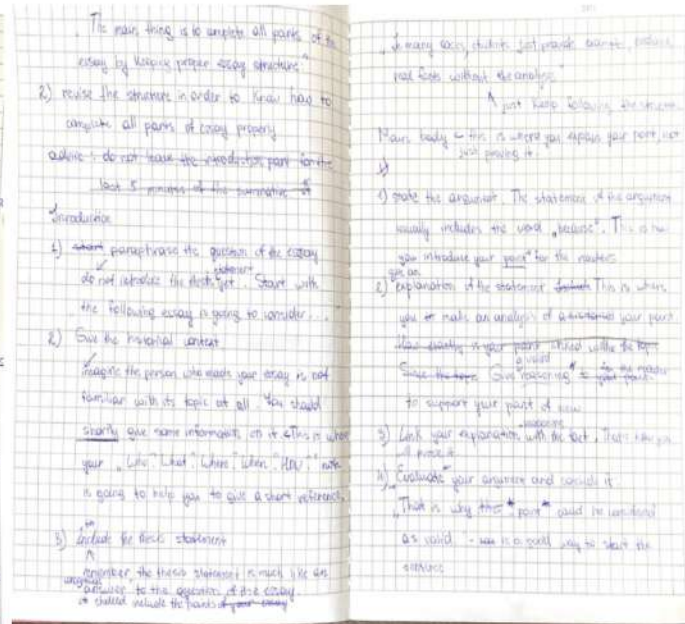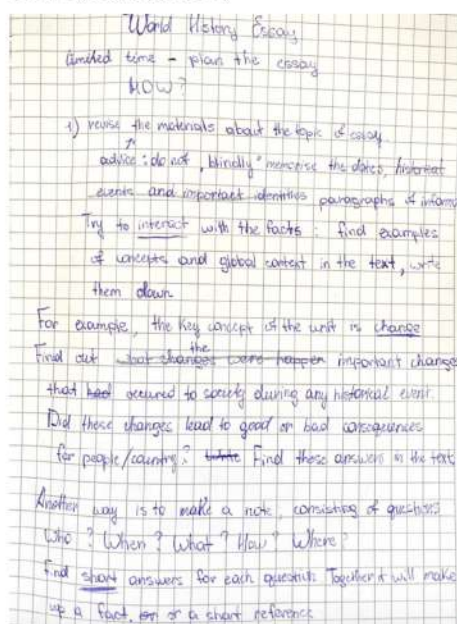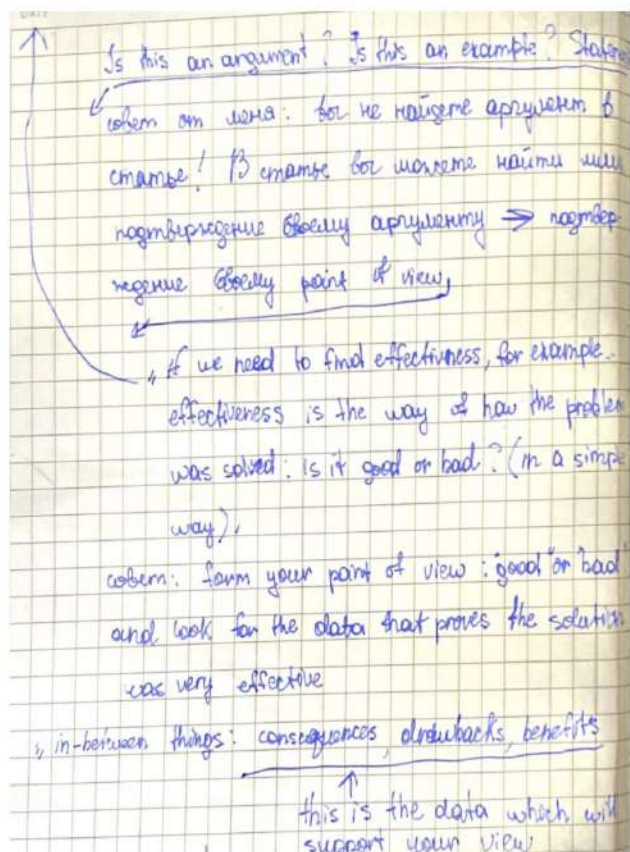
Pic 10. (Student, 2020

Appendix 7: illustrative examples of the use of design principles and elements in infographic design.

PERSONAL PROJECT, Guide book on how to write an essay on 4 subjects.

Pic. 11 (Velarde, n.d.)

Pic. 12 (Velarde, n.d.)

Pic. 13 (Velarde, n.d.)

Pic. 14 (Harney, 2017)

Appendix 8: comparison of my guide book design with the examples, mentioned above.

Design Elements
12 basic elements to consider in your designs

balance

line

colour

negative space

contrast

scale

emphasis

shape

harmony

texture

hierarchy

typography

The straight lines are used to create the notebook style; the smooth line creates an arrow

The balance and color in the guide

The frame creates a negative space here

The contrast and emphasis are made by the color choice

The textures of ripped piece of paper and adhesive tape make the design of the book more realistic.

The variety of shapes in the guide book dilute the information, makes it easier to comprehend.

The hierarchy and typography in my book

Pic. 7 (Sopidi 2020)
Pic. 8 (Horney, 2017)
Pic. 9 (Sopidi 2020)
Pic. 10 (Sopidi 2020)
Pic. 11 (Sopidi 2020)
Pic. 12 (Horney, 2017)
Pic. 13 (Sopidi 2020)
Pic. 14 (Sopidi 2020)
Pic. 15 (Horney, 2017)
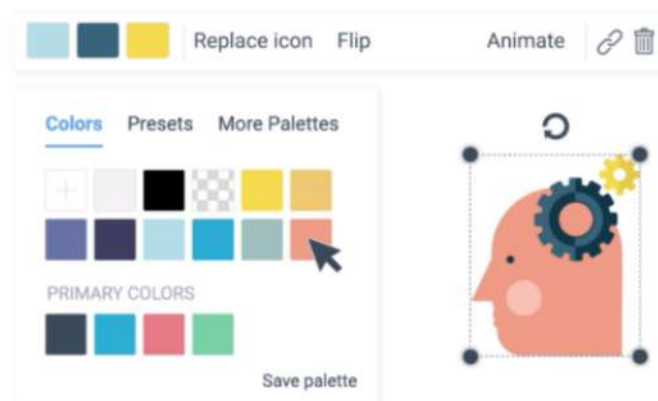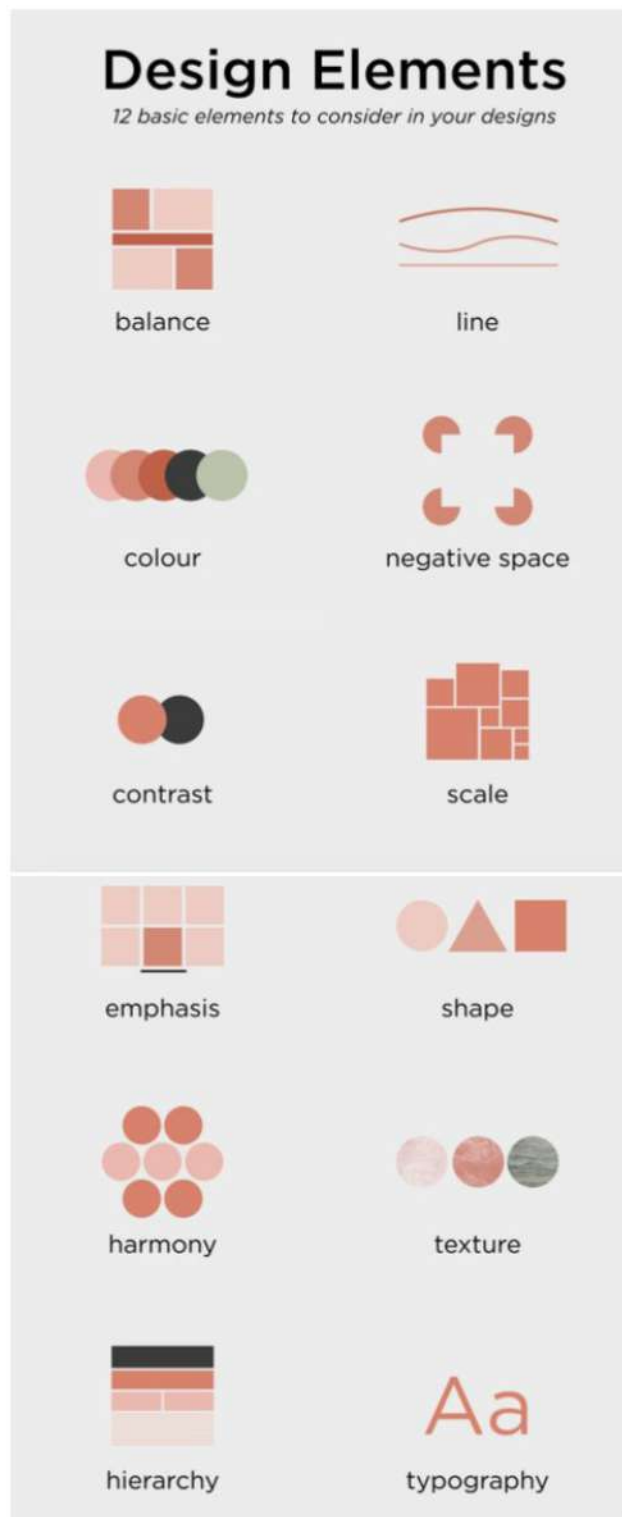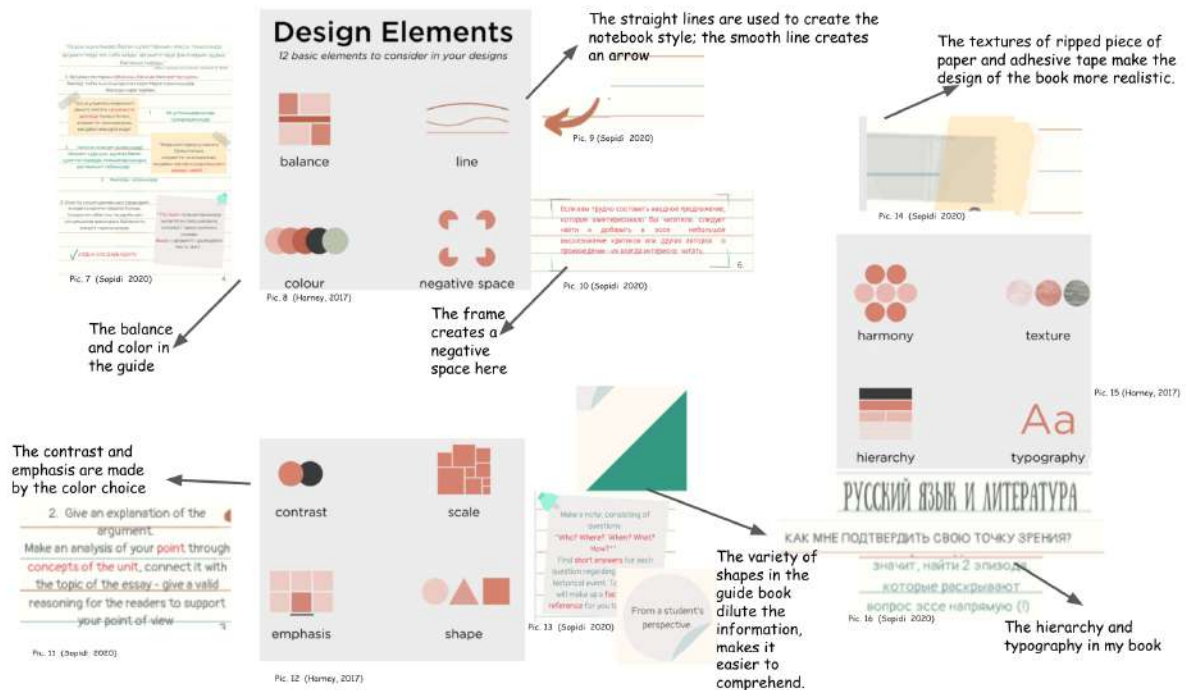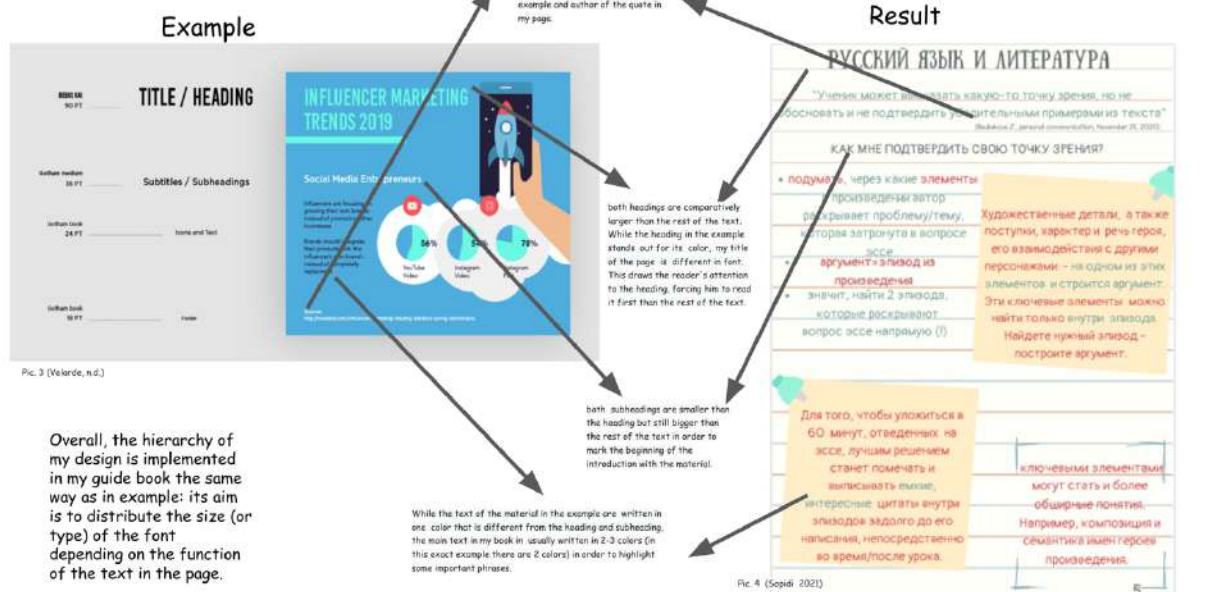Pic. 16 (Sopidi 2020)

2. Give an explanation of the argument.
Make an analysis of your point through concepts of the unit, connect it with the topic of the essay - give a valid reasoning for the readers to support your point of view

From a student's perspective

Pic 15. (Sopidi, 2020)

The hierarchy in design:

Example

Result

The citations are written in the smallest font, but still are noticeable for acknowledgment of the author of the source in the example and author of the quote in my page.

both headings are comparatively larger than the rest of the text. While the heading in the example stands out for its color, my title of the page is different in font. This draws the reader's attention to the heading, forcing him to read it first than the rest of the text.

both subheadings are smaller than the heading but still bigger than the rest of the text in order to mark the beginning of the introduction with the material.

While the text of the material in the example are written in one color that is different from the heading and subheading, the main text in my book is usually written in 2-3 colors (in this exact example there are 2 colors) in order to highlight some important phrases.

Overall, the hierarchy of my design is implemented in my guide book the same way as in example: its aim is to distribute the size (or type) of the font depending on the function of the text in the page.

Pic. 3 (Velarde, n.d.)
Pic. 4 (Sopidi 2021)

Pic 16. (Student, 2020)

Did you find the answers to the questions that crossed your mind during the preparation for the essay on any subject?

7 ответов

- Yes
- No, but the information is still useful
- No, not at all

42,9%

57,1%

Pic 25. (Student, 2021)

Are you planning on using the guide book while preparing for the essay assignments?

7 ответов

- Yes
- No

100%

Pic 26. (Student, 2021)

What pages did you like the most in the guide book? (due to the design / information provided)

7 ответов

The "Kazakh History" pages	2 (28,6 %)
The "Russian language & Literature" pag...	1 (14,3 %)
The "Economics" pages	2 (28,6 %)
The "World History" pages	1 (14,3 %)
I didn't like any of the pages.	0 (0 %)
I liked all the pages.	4 (57,1 %)
I find it difficult to answer this ques...	0 (0 %)

Any comments regarding the guide book?

7 ответов

this was extremely helpful

Thanks for clarifying main points of essay writing, I think it will help me a lot especially data about world history essay writing. Mira)

thank you!

No comments)

It is a good project! Well done!

thank you for this book <3

/

Pic 27. (Student, 2021)

Appendix 12: The full explanantion of the marks for the product.

Criterion	Mark (out of	Explanation of the mark

	8)	
Materials	6	i. The book does include **the variety of visual details: different font colors, frames, figures and each of the details has its own function towards the contribution to the readers' understanding** of the content in the book. Different types of frames and figures are making the textual information interesting and **easier to comprehend** for the students. The use of different font colors **emphasizes** some parts of the text to draw the readers' attention to some ideas inside of a certain page. ii. For each section of the book (Economics, World History etc.) **there are at least 2 direct quotes from the teachers included.** Their function is to make an epigraph for the page. Thus, they are **coherent to the content of the page and contribute to the readers' understanding** of the presented information, since the quotes are indicating the theme of the page.
Aesthetics	5	i. **According to the analysis** carried out in the form of comparing the product with other examples of infographic design, the guide book **fully respects the unity of the design, by correctly applying the color theory and hierarchy of the text.** However, **not all of the respondents** (MYP students, who answered the survey) **find the design** of the book (the choice of colors, arrangement of elements on page) **appealing, which may indicate that some of the design elements weren't used efficiently enough.**
Size, content.	6	i. **All the content** is written in the book, using the "active voice". According to the respondents of the survey (MYP students), **the information presented in the guide book was able to give some clarity about writing an essay.** ii. There is **no use of scientific language** in the text, which makes it easier for the readers to understand the presented information. iii. **Not one page in the book exceeds the limit** of 500

		words in a page.
Function	6	i. Some of the MYP students were able to find answers to their questions regarding the writing of an essay, the rest found the material useful nevertheless. Moreover, all of the respondents are planning on using the guide book while preparing for the essay assignments, which means that the product could lead them to success eventually.