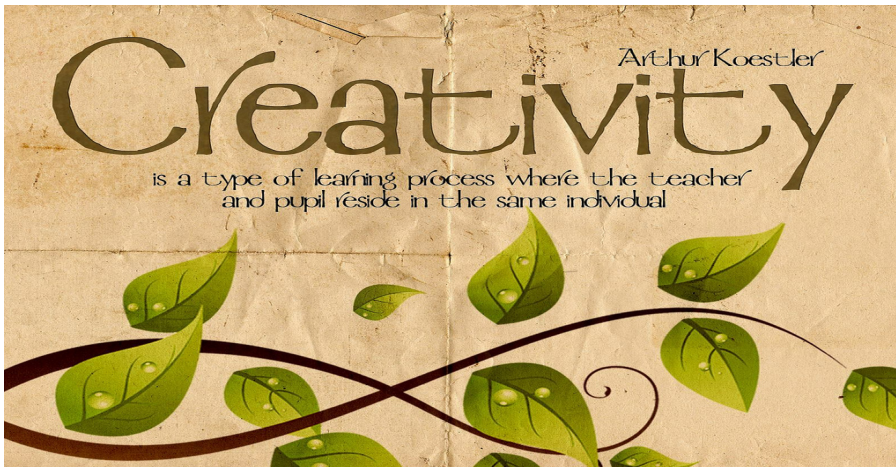


# **Fall Creek High School Senior Capstone Project**



**Student Guide  
2023-2024**



# Capstone Project

## Creativity, Critical Thinking, Communication & Community

Dear Students,

You are about to begin an exciting opportunity to explore your future and fulfill our district project based learning graduation requirement. This activity is called the Senior Capstone Project. The purpose of the Senior Capstone Project gives you the opportunity to demonstrate the skills and talents you have developed during your academic career and to explore future career possibilities. You will choose a topic that interests you and will allow you to grow in ways that are exciting and challenging. We hope this will be an extremely relevant activity that will also be a strong addition to your resume.

The Senior Capstone Project has three phases:

**PHASE I - Introduction/Proposal.**

**PHASE II - Project.**

**PHASE III - Presentation.**

This is a significant project and could have a major influence on your future. Completion of the Senior Capstone Project is a requirement for graduation. Although you may feel a bit overwhelmed at the moment with the size of the task before you, rest assured that by meeting deadlines and making the most of the resources at your disposal, you will have a successful and exciting experience.

Sincerely,

Fall Creek Senior Capstone Committee

# Senior Capstone Project Timeline

<b>Date</b>	<b>Phase I: The Proposal</b>
3/31/23	Capstone Student Guide Introduced
4/21/23	Topic/Project Approval Form Due
5/19/23	Project Consent Form Due

<b>Date</b>	<b>Phase II: The Project</b>
5/26/23	10 Hour Checkpoint
9/8/23	20 Hour Checkpoint
9/22/23	30 Hour Checkpoint
10/6/23	40 Hour Checkpoint
10/20/23	50 Hour Checkpoint
11/10/23	Final Capstone Project Work Log Due
11/10/23	Final Project/ Evidence/ Presentation Turn in

<b>Date</b>	<b>Phase III: The Presentation</b>
12/11/23 - 12/15/23	Oral Presentations
12/18/23	Final Capstone Feedback will be given

## Introduction and Overview

In a world that is requiring an increase in collaboration of varying disciplines, genuine ability to problem solve, ability to demonstrate more complex levels of independent critical thinking, and the capacity to authentically make a difference in the community around us; the capstone project creates an ideal opportunity to develop, showcase and refine those skills.

## Capstone Goals

- To provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in their courses
- To allow students to expand their academic experiences to personal career interests that could include working with new ideas, organizations, and community members
- To encourage students to think critically and creatively about academic, professional, and/or social issues and to further develop their leadership skills within their community
- To provide students with the opportunity to refine their research skills and to demonstrate their growth in their written and verbal communication skills

## Components of the Project

**PHASE I - Introduction/Proposal.** You and your parent(s)/guardian(s) will be introduced to the Senior Capstone Project during the second semester of your junior year. Each student will receive the Student Guide identifying the requirements as well as timelines for completing assignments related to the Capstone Project. Students will be working on research and skill development for the project in their World History and English courses. The selection of your topic will be completed by the end of your junior year.

**PHASE II - Project.** To prepare you to be an independent thinker in a global society, you need to be aware of career and social opportunities in your community and beyond. You will be developing a career exploration project based on your identified area of interest that allows you to apply your knowledge and mastery of your research area. Ideally this will lead to greater understanding of the paths available as you begin your post secondary journey. Your evidence at the conclusion of the career exploration phase should accurately reflect the amount of time and effort you spent. A **minimum of 60 verified hours** is required in this phase of the Senior Capstone Project.

**PHASE III - Presentation.** You will be delivering an 8-10 minute oral presentation that describes your research and demonstrates your project in order to display your mastery of your chosen subject area. This presentation is done before a review panel, and it is the culminating element to your Senior Capstone Project. This presentation is your chance to demonstrate what you know and what you can do.

## The Bridge to the Community

A core piece of the capstone project is for students to network connections with the community and to have the opportunity to develop their skills to engage with *business leaders* in a meaningful and professional way.

This project is a chance for *parents* to see student work showcased on an elevated level and an opportunity to offer valuable insight as a community member.

The role of *teachers* and *administration* is to evaluate the cross-curricular connections demonstrated by the student throughout the development of the project.

The Student Guide will aid each student through this exciting journey. It includes the information and forms they will need to complete the Senior Capstone Project.

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## **Junior Year**

Preparation for the project will begin during junior year, focusing on the skills and exploration of potential topics in specifically the courses of World History and English 11.

### **World History**

- Document analysis skills developed via the DBQ (Document Based Question) done weekly throughout the year
- Purposeful document assessment that builds the skills of identifying the use of a research article, graph, or series of data using the technique of POV (point of view) CAP (context, audience, purpose) highlighting when reading a document

**Third Quarter Project:** a trial run, or beginning of senior project, where students will focus on the critical thinking skills they have developed. They will identify a field they are interested in pursuing in the future and create a presentation that addresses the following:

- Why does this career draw their interest?
- Description of what the career entails
- What is required (schooling/training) to obtain this type of position
- Why would they be a valued addition to the field?
- What is one way in which they would like to improve this field?

### **Social Studies Priority Standards Addressed**

D.12.2 - Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion

D.12.6 - Use economic concepts to analyze historical and contemporary questions about economic development in the United States and the world

D.12.10 - Analyze the ways in which supply and demand, competition, prices, incentives, and profits influence what is produced and distributed in a competitive market system

D.12.14 - Use the research procedures and skills of the behavioral sciences (such as gathering, organizing, and interpreting data from several sources) to develop an informed position on an issue

## **English 11**

- Composition of informative speeches to prepare for the presentation component of the capstone project
- Identifying and vetting of evidence to use as support for informative speech
- Practice of public speaking and the art of conveying information
- Establishing strong opening statements, having evidence to support position, enhancing hand gestures, appropriate tone, and strong closing
- Assists in developing presentation and interview skills
- Preparation to answer interview questions from an interview panel
- Anticipate and address items of opposition/areas of concerns with their project proposal
- Complete a career clusters interest survey

## **English Priority Standards Addressed**

R.6 - Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

W.1 - Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

W.2 - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

L.1 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.2 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

W.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.5 - Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

SL.4 - Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

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## Phase I - Introduction/Proposal

We have provided an approach for brainstorming and selecting a topic. This is a project that will require a significant amount of time and energy. It should be something that you are passionate and excited about so that you will learn from the experience and have a great time doing it.

The following steps are guidelines for brainstorming and selecting an exciting and interesting Proposal.

### Step I

You may use the information from your Xello and Conferencing data to help you decide upon a topic to explore for your Senior Capstone. If information from one of these two sources allows you to generate your topic, move to Step III. If not, you may go to Step II and use a different approach to developing your topic.



## Step II

You are now asked to think about all of the things you are interested in - things you would like to do, learn, understand, see, improve, create, or experience. You will brainstorm and write down your ideas as they pop into your mind; you should not limit yourself at this point. Ideas should be narrowed down to three or four ideas which are "do-able," and prioritize them. When deciding whether or not a particular project idea is "do-able," consider whether or not research information and resources to complete the project are available. Your project should maintain your interest for an extended period of time and should also stretch your abilities and allow you to grow as a learner.

## Step III

You are now ready to develop four questions that you would like to answer through research on your topic. You may use the questions below to begin this process.

Possible starting points for research questions might be ...

- Some career areas I'm particularly interested in ...
- I would like to improve ...
- I am very curious about ...
- I want to learn more about ...
- I am passionate about ...
- Something I think would really make a difference is ...
- I am perplexed by ...

## Additional Ideas to consider ...

A Senior Capstone Project is about doing and learning about a topic related to an interest or a potential future career path. This is their chance to choose a topic that will be interesting and worthwhile and will extend their knowledge. As each student begins the Senior Capstone Project they should think about the following questions ...

- Is the topic one that is reflective of my career interests?
- Is the topic one in which I am interested, but not an expert?
- Is the topic one that is broad enough to allow me to access enough information, yet narrow enough to make the research scope reasonable?
- Is the topic one that is challenging to my academic and creative abilities?
- Have I avoided choosing a topic that might be unsafe?
- Have I used good judgment to be certain that the topic I chose is appropriate for presentation to a review panel and the general public?

Before leaving for summer vacation, all students (juniors) **must have** selected a topic and developed four questions that they want to research directly related to their topic. Each student must submit to their Capstone Google Classroom a completed copy of the **Topic Approval Form** and signed paper **Parental Permission Form to Mrs. Loewenhagen (Capstone Coordinator)**.

## **Phase II - The Project**

The Project phase of the Senior Capstone Project is the aspect that sets the total endeavor apart from most other high school assignments. You will now have the opportunity to do something hands-on, to actually get involved outside of school in an area that interests you or is related to a possible career choice. This phase requires you to apply the knowledge you have gained in the research and reporting phase to a real-life experience around the same - or very similar topic. There must be a project at the end of the project experience. The project can be something that you have built, created, or it can be a visual representation of something that you have developed.

\*At least 60 documented hours are required to complete the capstone project. These hours can be fulfilled outside of school hours and students will be given a scheduled time during first semester of their senior year to work on the project and will be supervised under the direction of one or more adults from the school or community. You must complete the documentation log whenever you spend time working on your project. You should also keep a notebook to record journal notes that will be used for your final presentation.

### **Guidelines for completing a project:**

1. The project must be student generated.
2. The project topic must be related to the area of interest or potential career choice.
3. Each student must spend a minimum of sixty (60) hours on their project. This includes preparation, research, project work, and the oral presentation.
4. The project must represent a challenge, and an opportunity for growth. It is very important to show how you have grown through the project and show relevance to their future plans.
5. Projects cannot include any illegal, immoral, or unsafe activities.
6. Verification of the 60 hours must be done in the following ways:
  - **Required Work Log:** The work log is a form that all students will use to keep a record of the time and resources used in completing the project. It includes: the date and length of time spent, what was done, any resources used and the mentor or teacher's signature.
  - **Required Pictures or Videos:** Pictures or videos which show progress the student has made should be included as a form of verification.

When the physical project is complete all students will need:

- Capstone Project Consent Form
- Capstone Topic/Project Approval Form
- Documentation Log
- Presentations prepared for the panelists

### Phase III - The Presentation

The presentation represents the final step in the Senior Capstone Project process. It is a self-evaluation and reflection by you of all that has been accomplished and serves as a synthesis of all learning. It involves a speech of 8-10 minutes before a panel of 3-5 people consisting of teachers, administrators, business owners and community members, some of whom are experts in the field represented by the topic. The presentation describes what has been learned from conducting research and fulfilling the requirements of the project. The presentation should include whom the student contacted, what worked, what didn't work, and how problems were solved. Of special importance is a description of what has been learned from the total experience.

You should be rehearsed and professional in their manner, dress, and appearance. To build confidence, practice their presentation in front of family members, teachers and peers. Following this advice will allow you to be prepared when they are ready to present.

#### Presentation Minimum Requirements

Your presentation must:

- Be 8-10 minutes in length, with an additional 2-3 minutes for a question and answer session.
- Include your project to provide physical evidence of your accomplishments.
- Address not only the project and the research, but challenge(s) along your project journey that led to your personal and academic growth.

Key points to remember before and during the presentation:

- Make eye contact with your Capstone Review Panel members. Rehearse enough so you do not have to read from your notes.
- When facing the audience, be sure to avoid blocking your project, display or powerpoint.
- First impressions last. Dressing for success will extend a positive impression about the content you are presenting. Appropriate grooming and clean clothes are very important. If the project lends itself to a specific uniform or costume and wearing it would enhance the presentation, feel free to be creative in dress.
- Be prepared. One of the most effective strategies for reducing nerves is to know the subject thoroughly. Remember you know more about your senior project than anyone.
- You must include a visual aid during your presentation. This could be a PowerPoint presentation, charts, graphs, actual project, video, etc. Make sure your visual aid is relevant to your project and presentation.
- PLAN - Prepare a sentence outline. Assign minutes for each phase of your presentation.  
Introduction \_\_\_\_\_  
Research/project/self-growth \_\_\_\_\_  
Demonstration/performance/audiovisual \_\_\_\_\_  
Conclusion \_\_\_\_\_  
Question and answer \_\_\_\_\_
- Decide how to integrate your project or visual representation of your project into your presentation. Will it be part of the introduction, the conclusion or be a part of

the entire presentation?

- Rehearse often. When rehearsing, practice the entire presentation. Place the outline sentences on separate cards. Students may wish to include transitional sentences to help move to the next topic. Use the cards as the practice, and include the visual aids in the rehearsal. Time yourself to make sure the presentation is 8-10 minutes long, leaving time for questions and answers once your presentation is completed.
- Make sure that all technology is working before you begin.
- Be prompt and show up on time.

### **What should I say?**

#### **Introduction**

- The goal in a solid opening is to catch the audience's interest and curiosity by skillfully introducing the presentation topic.
- Begin with a pause. When first approaching the audience, take a moment to adjust notes and make sure that you are comfortable.
- Present the first sentence from memory. By memorizing the opening, rapport is established with the audience through eye contact.
- There are several ways to begin the presentation such as: with a surprising fact, humor, video clip, story, rhetorical question, dramatic reading, quotation, overhead, projecting into the future, looking into the past.
- Explain the motivation for choosing the topic.
- Use transitional words such as: therefore, such as, however, because of, similarly, firstly, secondly, after all, despite, on the other hand, yet, regarding.

#### **Body**

The body of the presentation is the center of it. Information from the research, personal growth and the project are all included. As the speech is planned, ask yourself what things do you want the audience to know. Here are a few suggestions:

- Project description including details about the project
- Reference to interactions with mentor or teachers
- Reference to research, interview, etc.
- Demonstration of performance (visual aids)
- How did the research and the project connect?
- Reflection on personal growth

#### **Conclusion**

The conclusion has attributes like the introduction. Leave everyone thinking about what you said. Select how you plan to end it all: surprising fact, humor, video clip, story, rhetorical question, dramatic reading, quotation, overhead, projecting into the future, looking into the past.

## How should I say it?

### Body Language

- Eye contact - Practice often so that you will only glance occasionally at the cards. Your peers and panel members your work. Looking at them provides reinforcement and encouragement.
- Posture - Stand proud. This is your time to shine. This is a great accomplishment and you have a right to be proud. Do not chew gum or have food in your mouth. Keep your hands quiet or move to make a point. Gestures should be natural and spontaneous, not choreographed and mechanical. Avoid wiggling, shaking and fidgeting.

### Voice

*Quality* - vary pitch and tone.

*Rate* - Slow down and listen to what is being said, do not speak too rapidly

*Volume* - speak moderately, but loudly enough to be heard.

*Articulation* - use appropriate language that is clear; enunciate, breathe, eliminate verbal static such as ah, er, um or you know.

*Enthusiasm* - display enthusiasm as it will produce interest.

*Humor* - use humor when appropriate.

### At the End of the Presentation

- Thank everyone for his/her attention.
- Ask the panel if they have any questions.
- Try to anticipate questions and answer questions professionally.
- Give the person who asks the question direct eye contact.
- Do not answer with short, "I dunno," or "yeah," responses. Instead, restate the question into the context of the answer.
- Extend and expand on the information already shared in the speech.
- If the answer is not known, do not try to fake it. Instead you could say, "That's a good question. I did not cover that in my research, but would like to find out about it. Thank You."
- At the end of the question and answer period, look at the judges and thank them for their time and interest.

### Tips for Audiovisuals

- Audio and visual aids make the presenter appear more professional and better prepared.
- The audiovisual component will enhance the presentation, but should not overshadow it.
- Make sure that everyone in the audience can see the visual aids.
- Pause and give the audience a minute to study a visual before explaining it.
- Practice using the visuals before the actual presentation. Rehearse the presentation, perfecting the handling of the visuals. Be sure to talk to the audience and not to the visual. Also, practice making the transitions from speaking to using charts, graphs, videos, CD's, overheads or slides smooth and polished.
- Make sure all visuals are neat, clear, professional and grammatically correct.
- Make sure all technology equipment needed for the presentation is available.

## **Guiding Questions for the Presentation**

Reflect on the Senior Capstone experience by including all of the topics from the list below in your presentation.

1. How and why did you choose your topic and your idea for a physical project
2. How many total hours did you spend working on your physical project? Discuss your experiences as you worked on it.
3. What were some of your experiences when conducting research?
4. What were some of the biggest problems you encountered as you worked on the project?
5. How did you manage your time? How did you balance the project with work, school, sports, or volunteer time?
6. What did you learn about working with other people, especially your mentor or teacher?
7. Were your original goals for your project carried out to completion? If they changed, how were they different?
8. What was the "outside your comfort zone" for you? How did you challenge yourself through the project you picked? How did you face any fears and overcome obstacles?
9. What would you like the committee to know about your project that would help them understand what you have accomplished?
10. What grade would you give yourself for what you accomplished through your Senior Capstone Project? Explain this grade.

## Topic and Project Approval Form

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cricket Time Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

For the topic I have chosen:

\_\_\_\_\_

My four research/thesis questions are:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Description of Physical Project \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Form of Project (check all that apply):

\_\_\_\_\_ Website/CD \_\_\_\_\_ Video/audio tape \_\_\_\_\_ Original work

\_\_\_\_\_ Art work/photography \_\_\_\_\_ Model \_\_\_\_\_ Documentation of Service

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please explain)

Project Summary/Plan:

1. Describe the connection between the project and the presentation.
  
2. List the materials necessary to complete the project.

3. Estimate and explain the number of hours necessary to create the project.
  
4. Explain the process for documentation of work (pictures, video, journal).
  
5. Identify any issues/concerns you may encounter in completing the physical project, and then explain how you will address them.

PLEASE NOTE: The Fall Creek School District is in no way responsible for any expenses the student might incur with the completion or implementation of this Capstone Project.

**After reviewing your topic and project, the following action has been taken:**

<p>Your topic has been _____ Approved</p> <p>Good luck! You may proceed on to the next Phase of the Capstone Project. Remember, if you decide to change your topic you will have to submit a Topic Change Form.</p>	<p>Your topic has been _____ Not Approved</p> <p>Recommendations:</p>
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Thank you,  
 Senior Capstone Committee Member

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Topic/Project Change Form

(This form must be accompanied by a new topic and project approval form)

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Cricket Time Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

I request permission to change my Capstone Project topic for the following reasons:

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I would like to change my topic to: (brief description)

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- o In addition, I understand that I must submit this form to my Cricket Time teacher and get his/her signature and a copy of this form in addition to a new topic/project approval form . I must also have my parent/guardian complete the permission form below.
- o Senior Capstone Committee member will approve or not approve my topic change.
- o I agree to abide by the decision.

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Capstone Committee Member \_\_\_\_\_

Date of submission \_\_\_\_\_

No more than one approved revised topic change will be accepted per student.

## Senior Capstone Project Consent Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am aware that I must complete all three components of the Senior Capstone Project to receive credit for the course. I understand that each phase builds upon the previous one and all phases must be completed in order and according to set deadlines. I will not be permitted to proceed to another phase of the project without successfully completing the previous one. This means that if the assigned work is not done within the time frame given, my Capstone Project completion and graduation is jeopardized. It is my responsibility to complete the work, seek help as needed, and utilize the resources available.

I understand the three major phases to the Senior Capstone Project consist of:

1. Research and the submission of a well thought out proposal
2. A project of your choice, that requires a minimum of sixty documented hours of work.
3. An eight to ten minute oral presentation overviewing the entire process of the project..
4. I understand that this is a requirement in addition to all other class assignments.

<b>Capstone Component</b>
Research and Topic Proposal
Career Exploration Project
Presentation Format: PowerPoint required and other visuals to supplement the oral presentation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Capstone Committee Member's Signature

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): I have read my child's Capstone Project Proposal as outlined in the Project Approval Form. I realize that the sixty hours necessary to complete the physical project prior to the presentation. I hereby indemnify and hold harmless Fall Creek School District and its employees for any accident, injury, or expenses that may result from participation in the Capstone Project Process.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





## Project Analysis Form (Panelist)

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Descriptors	Satisfactory	Needs Work	Comments
Topic and project were clearly defined.			
The student provided rationale of why this topic was important to them and their futures.			
The student provided detail as to where a majority of the 60 hours was spent on the project. They talked about time management and balancing their time.			
The student provided examples of new learning. The student highlighted items that were outside their comfort zone and /or challenged them.			
The student provided examples of problems encountered and how they overcame them.			
The students explained how they worked with other people and what they learned from working with others.			
The student described how their project followed the original plan or was changed and how.			
The student provided a detailed summary of their project from start to finish.			

Comments:

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Capstone Panelist \_\_\_\_\_

## Senior Capstone Project Feedback Form

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Descriptors	Satisfactory	Needs Work	Comments
Project Achieves Purpose: The purpose of the project is clear, indicates learning has taken place, high level of quality and provides an excellent model for others.			
Use Of Resources: Project reflects a creative use of available resources and effective use of available technology.			
(For performance-oriented project) Performance Is Appropriate For Intended Audience: The performance is highly appropriate in content, audience's interests, level of maturity, background, and knowledge.  (For physical oriented project) Project Reflects Craftsmanship: Project reflects a high degree of plan designing, creativity (or precision), and a clear sense of the proper sequence of construction steps.			

Comments:

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