**Topical Project Instructions & Grading Criteria**

The topical project is designed to present important information about children and/or child development in a developmentally appropriate way. In designing your project, consider the following:

- The topic must fit the target audience. The information you are presenting must be accurate and based on scholarly research, but it must also be valuable for the people to whom you are presenting it. Do not include information or vocabulary that is too complicated for the people who will be using your project.

- The form of the project should ensure that the target audience is interested in the material and can understand the material. For example, if you are creating a children’s book, both the appearance and text of the book should match the interests and cognitive abilities of children in the target age range. The story of the book, the characters, etc. must all be appealing as well as informative.

  In contrast, if you are creating a pamphlet for parents, the information, terminology, and detail should be appropriate for a high-school-educated adult. Keep in mind the cultural expectations, socio-economic status, etc. of the parents you intend to inform.

- The project (the actual book, PowerPoint, pamphlet, game, etc.) must be turned in on the due date. It will be returned to you after grading is completed.

Because projects vary greatly in their form, style, and target audience, not all of the criteria listed here will apply to all projects. You should determine which are most relevant to your particular project.

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| **Content (10 points)** | - Relevant aspects of development should be explained. If a skill or ability is being described, the stages/phases of development should be linked to the appropriate ages and/or experiences.  
- Relevant cultural and/or demographic information should be presented in a nonjudgmental manner. It should be clear if certain strategies, instructional approaches, etc. are appropriate for only some ages or demographic groups.  
- Empirically-documented information should be clearly differentiated from theoretical information. The target audience should understand which information represents “facts” (i.e., is based on research on children, empirically tested strategies, etc.) and which information represents theory or opinion.  
- Recommendations for parents or teachers should include an explanation of why the recommendation is being made. For example, recommendations about teaching strategies should be linked to specific outcomes that can be expected, or theories upon which the strategies are based, or both.  
- If explicit statements of fact are made (e.g., in a presentation or pamphlet), they should be both correct and at the appropriate level for the audience. |
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| **Clarity**      | • Both vocabulary and the complexity of the language used should be appropriate to the target audience. If particular professional/scholarly terms (jargon) are important for this topic, they should be clearly defined.  
• Images should be used to explain and support verbal descriptions when appropriate (e.g., to explain physical development, or room arrangement, or child positions). Images should also be used for projects for younger children who may not understand text.  
• The project should be “usable” by the target audience. For example, children should be able to understand the instructions for a game or the story in a book. Teachers should be able to understand how to apply the information in a pamphlet to their classroom interactions with children. |
| **Interest**     | • The project should be attractive and visually-appealing to the target audience.  
• The project should use the existing/innate motivation of the target audience. For example, information for parents should be clearly linked to a topic of concern to parents (such as toilet training, diet, etc.) rather than presented in a decontextualized, scholarly manner.  
• Activities designed to be fun or enjoyable should be. For example, children’s games should be fun as well as conveying certain information or enhancing certain skills. |
| **Quality**      | • Written text should use correct grammar and spelling.  
• The project should be well put-together. |
| **Overall Value**| • The project should convey meaningful information or develop useful skills in an engaging and effective way.                                                                                               |

| **40 Points Total** |