

The poster project

Poster mechanics

A poster is a visually-oriented stand-alone presentation of a topic. As a visual presentation, posters follow the same rules as advertisements:

- The **title** (and the **name(s)** of the author(s)) are prominently displayed. The title is usually less than fifteen words long. Make the letters in your title at least two-thirds of an inch tall, or better yet, typeset them at 48-point or greater type.
- The **graphical elements** (e.g., photographs, drawings, graphs) do not overwhelm the reader. Avoid having too many (more than ten) or too few (less than three) graphical elements. Arrange them so that there is graphic around which the other graphics are placed (if one is much bigger).
- The **text** of the poster should contain at least 350 words. Don't do a word count, but be sure that you have both **captions** for the graphical elements and **body text** to tie what the graphics show into the larger idea. Typeset this; don't handwrite it. Use at least 12 point type (this size) for the captions and at least 16 point type for the body text. Hints: Do not paste 8.5 by 11 inch sheets of paper covered in text on the posterboard. If you use the exact wording of a source, place that wording in quotes; **don't plagiarize!**

In addition, I require two more elements:

- The **bibliography** of your sources must be shown in one of the bottom corners of your poster. Use standard research paper format for the bibliographic entries (for instance, they should all start off with an author's name) whether the source is a book, magazine or journal article, internet website or an interview. Ask me if you are unclear about the format. You must have at least **three** other sources than the textbook; at least **two** must be a book, or magazine or journal article. Please do not **plagiarize**; this includes lifting whole paragraphs off the Internet (even if you reference the paragraph)!
- At least **one** of the graphical elements (photograph, drawing or map) must be created (i.e., **photographed, drafted** or **drawn**) by you (or your partner). This graphical element cannot simply be a background illustration; whatever it is, it must have an explanatory **caption**.

The poster session itself will be on **Wednesday, November 21**, promptly at **noon**. As you enter the room, there will be a sign directing you to set up at a particular booth (they will be numbered). You will also get three "**poster evaluation**" forms. You will peer review the three posters to the right (clockwise around the room), according to the directions on the form; you will turn in these forms. In order to avoid chaos, there will be a schedule of when you will be reviewing and when you will be standing by your poster being reviewed.

- The **abstract** of your poster, which is a one or two paragraph summary submitted a week beforehand *as an e-mail attachment*. This will be “published” in an abstract handout so that everyone will know what your poster is about. More details will be given in a handout later. The abstract will be due by 9 p.m., **Wednesday, November 14**.

Your grade will be a combination of the abstract, the poster and the poster evaluation forms you turn in.

Ideas for Projects:

The following is a list of ideas to get you started thinking about your projects. The basic rule is that the poster must concern some aspect of geology. Your projects do not have to come from this list, but in *any* case please talk to me *before* you start work. The topics you **cannot** do for the project are topics specifically related to the two weekend field trips. Talk to me if you have questions about the appropriateness of a topic. I encourage you to work with a **partner** on this. **Be legible!**

Some ideas for projects:

- Recent mudslides and potential lahars off of Mt. Rainier
- Potential eruptions of Alaskan volcanoes
- The Washington coast >M9.0 earthquake of 1700: Native American oral histories
- Mining geology and history of the Republic or Wenatchee gold area
- Evidence for the Missoula floods: Touchet beds
- Recent dinosaur finds, filling in the gaps in the dinosaur record
- Possible meteorite impact sites and mass extinctions (pick one event)
- Recent archaeological evidence of ice age human migrations
- The Burgess Shale fauna (or other evidence of pre-Cambrian life)
- Human effects on the severity of flooding or landslides along local rivers
- The 1986 Mt. St. Helens eruptive episode – how similar or different it is from the 2004 eruptive episode
- Why are sapphires so rare?
- Lopez Island: A patchwork quilt of terranes
- What petrified wood can really tell us

