

### The poster project

A poster is a visually-oriented stand-alone presentation of a topic, designed to convey an idea to an audience. The idea you are trying to convey in this presentation is an interesting aspect of geological history, and why it is significant and/or interesting. The audience to whom you are conveying this is the general public with an interest, but not necessarily knowledge, in fossils, plate tectonics and other geologic topics.

#### *Poster mechanics*

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). **One of your elements must have been produced by you (e.g., drawing, model, photograph).**
- 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!**

I require one more element:

- 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 (in other words, been subject to editing or review!).

The poster session itself will be on **Thursday, May 11**, promptly at **11 a.m.**. 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 two "**poster evaluation**" forms. You will peer review two other posters, 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.

Your grade will be a combination of your poster and the poster evaluation forms you turn in. In addition, you will write a **poster abstract** (details on later handout).

## 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 Earth's geological history. 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 those that concern Pacific Northwest geology (since I emphasize this in class), though you can ask and see if there are some PNW topics that I won't cover. I *encourage* you to work with a partner on this, though working individually is okay. **Be legible!**

Some ideas for projects:

- Evidence of prehistoric large earthquakes on the Washington coast
- The Cache Creek terrane of British Columbia: assembling the west coast of North America
- The drumlin fields of upstate New York
- Did dinosaurs evolve into birds?
- What the Chumstick and Swauk formations tell us about early Tertiary Washington
- Was *Tyrannosaurus rex* a hunter or a scavenger?
- The effect of Himalayan or Sierra Nevadan uplift on modern climate
- Evidence for meteorite impact sites and subsequent mass extinctions (pick one)
- The John Day, Oregon, fossil beds and their unique significance
- The Burgess Shale fauna (or other evidence of unusual Cambrian life)
- Laboratory experiments reconstructing life's beginnings on Earth
- Origin and development of flowering plants and/or grasses
- Wyoming's Green River fauna
- What can be inferred about mammoth habits from the frozen Siberian mammoth
- Did *Homo sapiens* kill off the Neandertals?

