



## Creative kickstarters for any class

As a K–12 curriculum director or educator, you’ve got a lot on your plate. If you’re finding it a challenge to integrate creativity and digital literacy into your courses, you’re certainly not alone.

Adobe is here to help with a set of kickstarters you can use to inspire your students’ creativity, critical thinking, creative problem solving, and collaboration in any class. In these hands-on projects, your students will create images, graphics, videos, and other digital media as they explore texts, interpret source material, explain complex concepts, and more.

Explore these kickstarters to engage your students while improving their learning outcomes.

*You’ve got this.*

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## EXPLAINING COMPLEX CONCEPTS WITH

### **Ai** Adobe Illustrator

In this project, students use visual design to break down complex ideas, understand them better, and explain them more effectively.

#### 1 GATHER INFORMATION

Ask your students to collect information about their project topic. Once they have gathered enough details and context, have them start sketching out some ideas for how they might represent these facts visually.

#### 2 START CREATING

Once their initial ideas are sketched out, get your students to open Adobe Illustrator and create a new project by hitting **Create New**. For sizing, we recommend clicking on the **Web** tab on the window that appears and selecting **Web-Large**.

#### 3 BUILDING SHAPES

As an example, use the **Ellipse** tool to create some circles to represent scientific concepts or events on a timeline. To combine simple shapes into new ones, go to the **Window** menu at top of the screen and select **Pathfinder**. Select two or more overlapping shapes and hit one of the buttons on the Pathfinder tab to experiment. Don't forget you can reverse any decision by hitting **Ctrl+Z** (**Cmd+Z** on Mac).

#### 4 ADD YOUR INFORMATION

Try to find engaging ways to present your facts. Perhaps the simplest way to include written information is to add captions to your images using the **Type** tool. Maybe even experiment with the **Type on a Path** tool to get your text running around the outside of your shapes.

#### 5 EXPORT AND SHARE

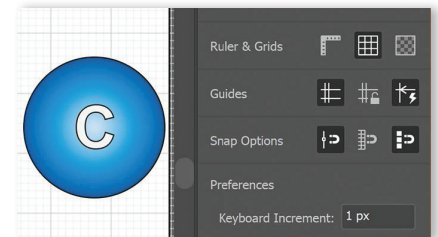
When you're happy with your design or infographic, hit **File > Export > Export for Screens**, then choose a location to save your work to and hit **Export Artboard**. By default, this will create a PNG file of your project that you can share and add to presentations, web pages, and more.

### Project Ideas

- Simple graphics and text that map out a timeline, like key events in a war, for history classes
- Illustrations of processes like cell division or terminal velocity for science classes
- Infographics showing the elements of plot and story for language arts classes

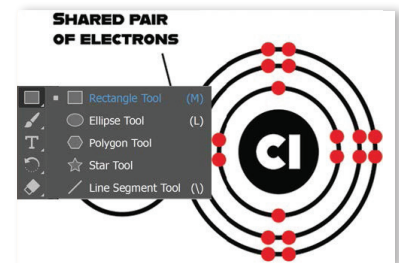


### Grids and rulers



Designing in Illustrator is much easier with guides, grids, and rulers. They are invaluable in keeping your graphics aligned and logically placed, perfect for creating and linking shapes together in this exercise!

### Shape tools



Shape tools are located in the Tools panel. To show other shape tools, click and hold the Rectangle tool in the Tools panel. When you draw shapes, Smart Guides (View > Smart Guides) help by showing the shape size and snapping to other objects.

Now that you've experimented with these examples, find images that inspire you and create amazing work for any subject.

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## CREATIVE COMMUNICATION WITH

### Ch Adobe Character Animator

In this project, students build storytelling and communication skills by creating, animating, and giving voice to unique digital characters.

#### 1 DOWNLOAD A CHARACTER

Go to [headsofcurriculum.com](https://headsofcurriculum.com) and download a pre-made character. This will give you a puppet file that you can use to get started. For future projects, your students may want to create their own custom characters, but let's start with the basics for now.

#### 2 IMPORT YOUR CHARACTER

In Adobe Character Animator, click **New Project** in the top left, then save your project file. Hit **File/Import** and select your puppet—it should then appear in the project panel. Next, drag the puppet down to the timeline at the bottom of the screen.

#### 3 SET THE SCENE

If you have a webcam connected, you should be able to see yourself in the top right—notice that the character follows your movements! To align everything, simply adopt a neutral, front-facing pose in the webcam view and press the **Set Rest Pose** button. Next, import a relevant image (repeat step 2), and add it to your timeline, making sure to place it underneath the character on the timeline so it doesn't obscure them.

#### 4 RECORD A VOICEOVER

Get yourself centered in your webcam and hit the red record button to start recording a take. All you have to do is speak as if you're appearing on the screen explaining a concept, but the puppet will be doing all the work! Remember, you can delete takes you don't like, and move the timeline slider back to the beginning to set up a new recording.

#### 5 EXPORT AND SHARE

When you're happy with your video, hit **File/Export/Video via Adobe Media Encoder**, then choose a location. When Media Encoder opens, simply hit the green play button, which will create a shareable mp4 file containing your video, ready for sharing.

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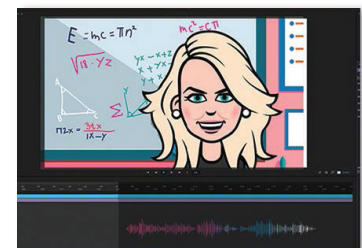
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#### Project Ideas

- Puppet shows for creative writing classes
- Biography presentations for social studies classes
- Student-led lectures for math or science classes



#### In-app tutorials



Character Animator comes with a full set of user support in the form of in-app tutorials and online help. Get valuable information and tips on recording, arming, staging, and editing your scenes, including adding backgrounds and controlling the camera view.

#### Heads of Curriculum



Heads of Curriculum is a website offering educators a one-stop shop for everything needed to get started with Character Animator. There are beautifully crafted puppets such as Einstein, Queen Elizabeth I, and Goethe, all available for free.



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## EXPLORING TEXTS WITH

### **Id** Adobe InDesign

In this project, students learn to create, interpret, and publish written content for different purposes so they can build their comprehension and communication skills.

#### 1 NAVIGATE PAGES

First, download these [assets](#) and open the InDesign file 'Macbeth'. When you see the file appear in the workspace, go to the panels on the right and select the page tab. Double click on Page 2 of the document to open up that page spread.

#### 2 USE FRAMES FOR LAYOUT

Building a layout is easy with frames. Frames show where content will be eventually placed. Press (F) to switch to the Rectangle Frame tool and draw a rectangular frame in the orange space at the top of page 2 that aligns with the guides on the page. Press (V) and click on the frame. Go to **File > Place** and select the 'Blood' image. The image should place inside the frame.

#### 3 CONNECT TEXT FRAMES

InDesign helps students control the flow of their text from column to column. Look at the text frame on the bottom left of Page 2. There is too much text to fit that box (we know this because the bottom right of the frame has a red plus sign). Clicking on this plus sign will 'load up' the remaining text so you can draw a text frame to the right of the original and it will flow text between the columns.

#### 4 ADD A DROP CAP

Create a cool looking Drop Cap on Page 2! Highlight the first letter 'L' of Lorem in the left text frame. In Paragraph Properties panel, find the 'Drop Cap Number of Lines' icon (hovering your mouse over an icon will reveal a tooltip). Change the value from 0 to 5 and you will have created a large drop cap at the beginning of your text on page 2.

#### 5 USE STYLES

For your last step, in the panels, select **Paragraph Styles > Article Text** and click on the pencil icon next to it to edit the Paragraph Style. In Character Style Options, change the Character Color to [Paper] and your page should update with the new style change.

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### Project Ideas

- Interactive PDFs containing research and analysis for science classes
- Flyers or brochures delivering persuasive arguments for English or social studies classes
- Detailed glossaries of vocabulary words for language classes

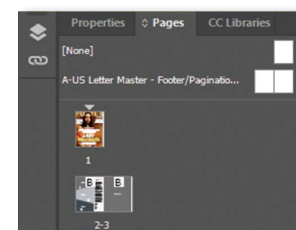


### Guides and Frames



Guides and Frames help you to layout a page to get the design you want before you start adding text and images. Students can use this to plan and design how to best organize information for their audience. For instance, when creating a newspaper article, students can choose the number of columns and size of the headline.

### The Pages Panel



The Page Panel controls the number of pages in your files. Here you can swap pages around, add master pages to individual spreads, remove or duplicate pages within the document.





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## CREATIVE VISUALIZATION WITH

### **Ps** Adobe Photoshop

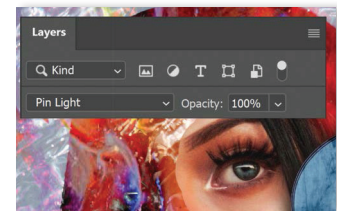
In this project, students learn to convey a mood, express an idea, and illustrate a concept including techniques like blending to let them tell stories in powerful, visual ways.

#### Project Ideas

- Digital collages representing key moments in a historical period for social studies classes
- Simple GIF animations showing chemical or biological processes for science classes
- Image representations to help visualize vocabulary words in language arts classes



#### Using blend modes



Blend modes change the way that a layer reacts with the layer underneath it. There are six main categories: **Normal, Darken, Lighten, Contrast, Comparative and Color**. Experiment with them to find out how to blend layers to achieve creative effects in composite images.

#### Clipping masks



The text in the image shows a clipping mask in action. The colorful liquid texture image is placed on the layer directly above the slab text. Right-clicking and selecting 'Create Clipping Mask' instantly fills the text shape with the layer above. The shape of the text has become the mask!

#### 1 PLACE YOUR LAYERS

First, download these [image assets](#). In Photoshop, open the image of the young woman, then use the **File>Place Embedded** command to add two more texture layers on top of the background image. Use the pick-up handles to scale the textures over the top of the whole image.

#### 2 APPLY BLEND MODES

Choose the texture image layers and experiment with the **blend mode** options available in the layers panel. You will see how the layers interact with the background image and choose whichever ones achieve the aesthetic effect you are after.

**TIP: You can use the eraser tool to 'cut through' the layers to reveal the background.** (See the eye example on the right).

#### 3 MAKE A SELECTION

Use **File > Place Embedded** to add the guitar image. Press 'W' to start quick selection and select the background behind the guitar. Hit DEL to remove the background (and press 'V' to return to Move tool). Position your guitar to the right of the screen.

#### 4 ADD A CLIPPING MASK

Place another texture layer in the layer directly above the guitar. Right-click and select '**Create Clipping Mask**'. The texture should automatically fit inside and overlay onto the guitar image. See example on the right.

#### 5 ADJUST IMAGE

Finally, we can make adjustments to the color of layers like the guitar, or we may want to enhance the color of some of the texture layers to create different effects. For the blue guitar, select **Image > Adjustments > Hue/ Saturation** and move the sliders to change the color of the guitar. Once your image is complete, **File > Save As** and select **JPG** as your file format.

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## INTERPRETING SOURCE MATERIAL WITH

### **Ru** Adobe Premiere Rush

In this project, students learn to analyze source video footage and explain it to others using simple editing techniques.

#### 1 SOURCE YOUR FOOTAGE

Students can search Creative Commons or Public Domain sites to source relevant video footage concerning a topic of study (e.g. social justice, political conflicts, historical events, etc.).

#### 2 CREATE AND RECORD SCRIPT

With source material captured, students can now think about planning their audio voiceover as a narration for their video sequence. Students could have a rubric specifying topic and assessment criteria (including guidance on audience, length of video, etc.) to keep the video documentary focused.

#### 3 SEQUENCE YOUR FOOTAGE

Open Adobe Premiere Rush and select **Create New Project**. From here you can browse for the footage you will use for your documentary and specify an order to sequence it. It doesn't have to be perfect at this stage and you can always change your mind later. Give the project a title and you can begin editing.

#### 4 EDIT YOUR SEQUENCE

Edit the clips by trimming the video in the timeline or using the editing tools such as the Split, Duplicate, and Delete icons next to the video/audio tracks. More advanced tools for adjusting speed, color, and applying transitions are accessed by the panels on the right hand side of the workspace. Separate music and audio tracks can be added into the timeline too!

#### 5 APPLY GRAPHICS

Budding documentarists can apply professional looking titles and end screens to the project with the graphics panel, but the text graphics are also useful for explanatory subtitles or adding important elements such as timestamps or extra contextual information.

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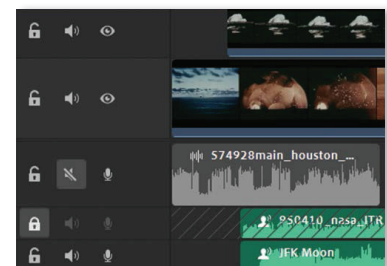
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### Project Ideas

- Video montages showing aspects of a different culture for language or social studies classes
- Fictionalized video interviews with famous book authors for English classes
- Documentaries about public health issues for science classes

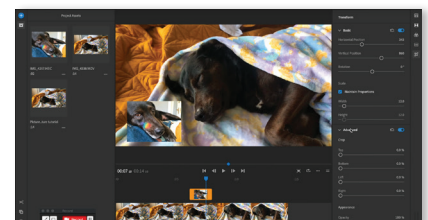


### Track Control



The Layers Panel helps you control and organize all of the elements in your document. You can lock layers, hide and reveal layers by toggling the 'eye' icon, and you can change the opacity (transparency) of each layer using the opacity slider.

### Transform Panel



More adventurous documentary-makers can access the transform panel to adjust a host of visual options, including creating picture-in-picture effects.

**TIP:** Scaling and cropping options in the Transform Panel are useful when using older film clips that may have smaller resolution or different aspect ratios.





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## USER EXPERIENCE DESIGN WITH

### **Xd** Adobe XD

In this project, students develop their design thinking and learn to create with an outside audience in mind as they build a digital experience using modern design and prototyping tools.

#### 1 DO THE RESEARCH

Ask your students to gather information about their project topic. Once they have gathered enough details and context, have them start sketching out some ideas for how they might represent these facts in a web app.

#### 2 WHAT'S THE USER JOURNEY?

Adobe XD allows your students to test and design the user's experience through the app or website. Opening XD, you can choose your format with which to start designing (e.g., mobile phone type, tablet, or web, and even presentation slides). When in the Design Screen, you can set a **grid** to help plan your layout.

#### 3 START WIRE-FRAMING

In the left-hand panel, there are three distinct shape tools that can be used to begin drawing out the components (such as buttons, banner images, or logo graphics). Try drawing out a simple title page with a header, circular start button, and a footer.

#### 4 CREATE LINKS

To make a new screen view that duplicates the first one (to maintain consistency of design, for instance), click on the object label (in this case the name of the phone format above the page), hold **ALT** and drag a new duplicate across. To create a link between these states, go to **Prototype** mode. Click on your start button and drag the blue arrow to the next page to connect them.

#### 5 TEST YOUR DESIGN

Once you have created your workflow through the app or site, you can test your design using the mobile or desktop preview buttons at the top right of the interface. Mobile previews can be viewed directly on your device so you can test the user experience for yourself, or use the **Share** option to get others to test the design using a bespoke URL.

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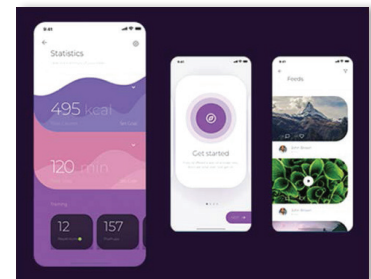
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### Project Ideas

- Web pages that teach fellow students formulas for math classes
- Mobile apps that quiz students on verb conjugations for English, Spanish, and other language classes
- Simple games that help students test their knowledge of the periodic table of elements for science classes



### UI kits and add-ons



Why re-invent the wheel? XD provides access to huge numbers of extra plug-ins, add-ons, and pre-created kits that can be downloaded and repurposed. These range from Apple iOS icon sets and Amazon interfaces to integrating database information. XD offers a massive variety of choice.

### Components



XD makes it easy to design key elements such as buttons or backgrounds, and then convert them into **components**—reusable elements that can be dragged into your design from the assets panel. These components can be placed in consistent layout using the automatic spacing gridlines and guides that appear.

Adobe resources to help you engage students

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## Need more ways to inspire your students' creativity and enhance their digital skills?

### Explore the following resources:

- The [Adobe Education Exchange](#) is a free online portal for educators that offers cross-discipline use cases, lesson plans, rubrics, learning modules, examples of student work, full professional development workshops, and more.
- The Adobe [Distance Learning Resources hub](#) offers courses, classroom activities, articles, and more to help you engage your students through online learning.
- [Khan + Create](#) activities extend Khan Academy lessons with creative projects for students of all ages.
- [Adobe for Education Video Bytes](#) offer quick overviews of how you can create presentations, videos, and web and app designs using Creative Cloud apps.
- Adobe's [standards-based curricula](#) make it easy to incorporate creativity in your classes with engaging activities and clear instruction.
- Adobe's [K-12 licensing program](#) enables schools to get Creative Cloud for just US\$5 per user per year.



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