

# ONE WORD PROJECT



2026 Naomi Louise  
Innovative Educator Consulting

# THE ONE WORD PROJECT

## A YEAR OF PURPOSE, GROWTH, AND POSSIBILITY

### Step One: Discover Your Direction (Brainstorm & Dream Big)

Purpose: Help learners clarify what truly matters to them this year.

Students or staff begin by reflecting on who they are now and who they want to become. Using guiding questions and a graphic organizer, they identify four meaningful goals—academic, personal, social-emotional, or leadership-focused.

From these reflections, students choose one powerful word that captures their intention for the year—a word that will anchor their mindset, guide their decisions, and motivate them through challenges. *This is not about perfection—it's about intention.*

*\*(Provide an optional word bank for inspiration, while encouraging original thinking.)*

### Step Two: Activate Your Word (Define, Connect, Commit)

Purpose: Turn a word into a lived commitment.

Participants define their chosen word in their own voice, not a dictionary's. They explain:

- Why this word matters to them right now
- What experiences or challenges influenced their choice
- How this word connects directly to each of their four goals

Students then create a simple action connection—a sentence or statement explaining how their word will guide their choices, behaviors, and learning habits throughout the year.

*\*This step builds metacognition, goal clarity, and ownership.*

### Step Three: Visualize the Journey (Design & Create)

Purpose: Make learning visible and personal.

Students transform their word into a visual representation—a piece of art, typography design, collage, digital slide, infographic, or mixed-media creation that reflects:

- Their personality
- Their goals
- The meaning behind their word

*The finished designs are displayed as a One Word Gallery or Bulletin Board, creating a shared culture of purpose, growth, and inspiration in the classroom, hallway, or staff space.*

### Step Four: Reflect, Revisit, and Reset (Growth Over Time)

Purpose: Track progress and celebrate growth.

At multiple points throughout the year, students revisit their One Word using a reflection tool.

- Rate their progress on each goal
- Identify moments when they truly lived their word
- Reflect on successes, setbacks, and lessons learned
- Set a next step or adjustment moving forward

*This reflection can be done through writing, discussion, video, or conferencing making growth visible and intentional. \*The word evolves as the learner evolves.*



# K-2: “MY ONE WORD PROMISE”

Focus: Identity, feelings, belonging, simple goal-setting

Developmental Lens: Concrete thinking, oral language, visual expression

## Step 1: Discover (Teacher-Guided)

- Teacher introduces the idea: “One word that helps you be your best self.”
- Students choose 1-2 simple goals (e.g., listening, kindness, trying).
- Use picture-supported word banks (happy, brave, kind, try, calm).
- Students say their word aloud and explain it verbally.

***Sentence Frame: “My word is \_\_ because it helps me \_\_.”***

## Step 2: Activate (Guided Discussion)

- Students explain when they might use their word (recess, reading, lining up).
- Teacher models examples daily (“I’m using my word patience right now.”)

## Step 3: Design (Hands-On Art)

- Students create a visual word poster using:
  - Drawing
  - Stickers
  - Colors
  - Chalk

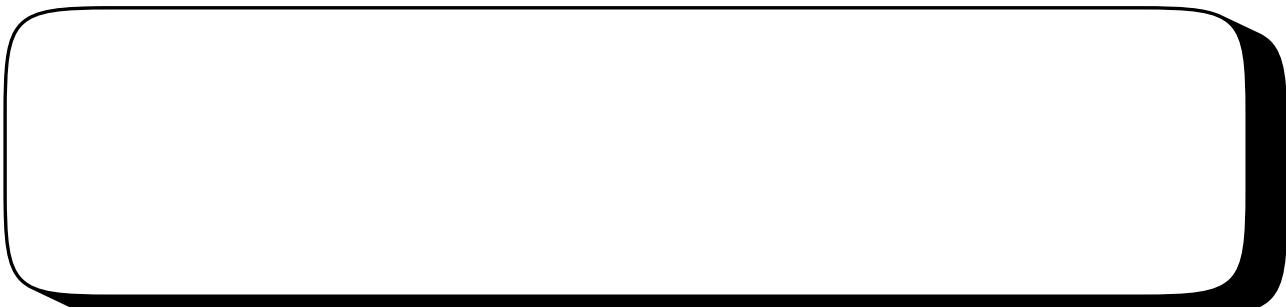
## Step 4: Display as a “Our Words Wall” and Reflect (Oral and Visual)

- Reflection through:
  - Thumbs up / sideways / down
  - Circle time sharing
  - Drawing “me using my word”

***Reflection Prompt: “Did you use your word today? How?”***



## K-2: "MY ONE WORD PROMISE"



**Sentence Frame:** "My word is \_\_\_\_\_ because it helps me \_\_\_\_\_."

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**Reflection Prompt:** "Did you use your word today? How?"



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# GRADES 3–5: “MY ONE WORD GOAL”

Focus: Ownership, effort, and growth mindset

Developmental Lens: Emerging independence, written reflection

## Step 1: Discover

- Students set 3 goals (academic, behavior, personal).
- Choose a word that connects to how they want to grow.
- Introduce student-generated word brainstorming.

*Prompt: “What kind of learner do I want to be this year?”*

## Step 2: Activate

- Students define their word in their own words.
- Write 1–2 sentences explaining how it supports each goal.

*Example: My word is focus because it helps me finish my work and listen better.”*

## Step 3: Design

- Create word art using:
  - Typography
  - Symbols
  - Color meaning
- Optional digital or paper format.

## Step 4: Reflect

- Quarterly written reflection:
  - What’s going well?
  - Where is my word helping me?
  - What can I improve?

**Optional:** Self-rating scale (1–4 stars)



## **GRADES 3–5: “MY ONE WORD GOAL”**



## Goal #1: Academics

## Goal #2: Behavior

## Goal #3: Personal

**Reflection prompt: "What kind of learner do I want to be this year to support my"goals?"**



# GRADES 6–8: “MY ONE WORD IDENTITY”

Focus: Self-awareness, habits, resilience  
Developmental Lens: Metacognition, identity exploration

## Step 1: Discover

- Students set 4 goals (academic, social, emotional, personal).
- Reflect on challenges, strengths, and transitions.
- Choose a word tied to character or mindset.

*Prompt: “What do I need more of this year to succeed?”*

## Step 2: Activate

- Students:
  - Define their word
  - Explain why it matters now
  - Connect it to real-life situations
- Write a personal commitment statement.

## Step 3: Design

- Design includes:
  - Quotes
  - Symbols
  - Visual metaphors
- Display as a gallery walk to promote voice and belonging.

## Step 4: Reflect

- Midyear + end-of-year reflection:
  - When did I live my word?
  - When did I struggle?
  - What did I learn about myself?
- *Extension: Peer discussion or journaling reflection*



## **GRADES 6–8: “MY ONE WORD IDENTITY”**



## Goal #1: Academics



## Goal #2: Social



### Goal #3: Emotional



## Goal #4: Personal

## Personal commitment statement: “What do I need more of this year to succeed?”



# GRADES 9–12: “MY ONE WORD VISION”

Focus: Purpose, agency, future readiness

Developmental Lens: Autonomy, future planning, self-leadership

## Step 1: Discover

- Students identify 4–5 goals aligned to:
  - Academics
  - Leadership
  - Wellness
  - Career or postsecondary plans
- Choose a word connected to identity and direction.

***Prompt: “Who do I want to become by the end of this year?”***

## Step 2: Activate

- Students write a Word Manifesto:
  - Why this word?
  - How it will guide decisions
  - How it supports long-term goals

## Step 3: Design

- Digital or mixed-media design
- Optional:
  - Vision board
  - Portfolio cover
  - Lock-screen version

## Step 4: Reflect

- Formal reflection or conference:
- Evidence of growth
- Adjustments made
- Impact on mindset and choices
- Optional: Tie to advisory, SEL, or capstone portfolios



## **GRADES 9–12: “MY ONE WORD VISION”**



## Goal #1: Academics

## Goal #2: Leadership

## Goal #3: Health & Wellness

## Goal #4: Future Ready Career

**Write a Word Manifesto reflection: “Who do I want to become by the end of this year?”**



# STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## “OUR ONE WORD COMMITMENT”

Audience: K-12 Educators, Staff, Leadership Teams

Purpose: Culture, clarity, collective efficacy

### Step 1: Discover

- Educators reflect on:
  - Instruction
  - Well-being
  - Relationships
  - Professional growth
- Choose one word for the year or semester.

### Step 2: Activate

- Define the word personally and professionally.
- Discuss:
  - How it shows up in classrooms
  - How it supports students and colleagues

***Table Talk: “How would our school feel if we all lived this word?”***

### Step 3: Design

- Create a shared or individual word visual.
- Display in:
  - Staff lounge
  - PLC rooms
  - Meeting slides

### Step 4: Reflect

- Revisit at:
  - Midyear PD
  - PLC check-ins
  - End-of-year reflection
- Tie word to impact, not perfection.

***Outcome: A shared language for growth and purpose***



# "OUR ONE WORD COMMITMENT"

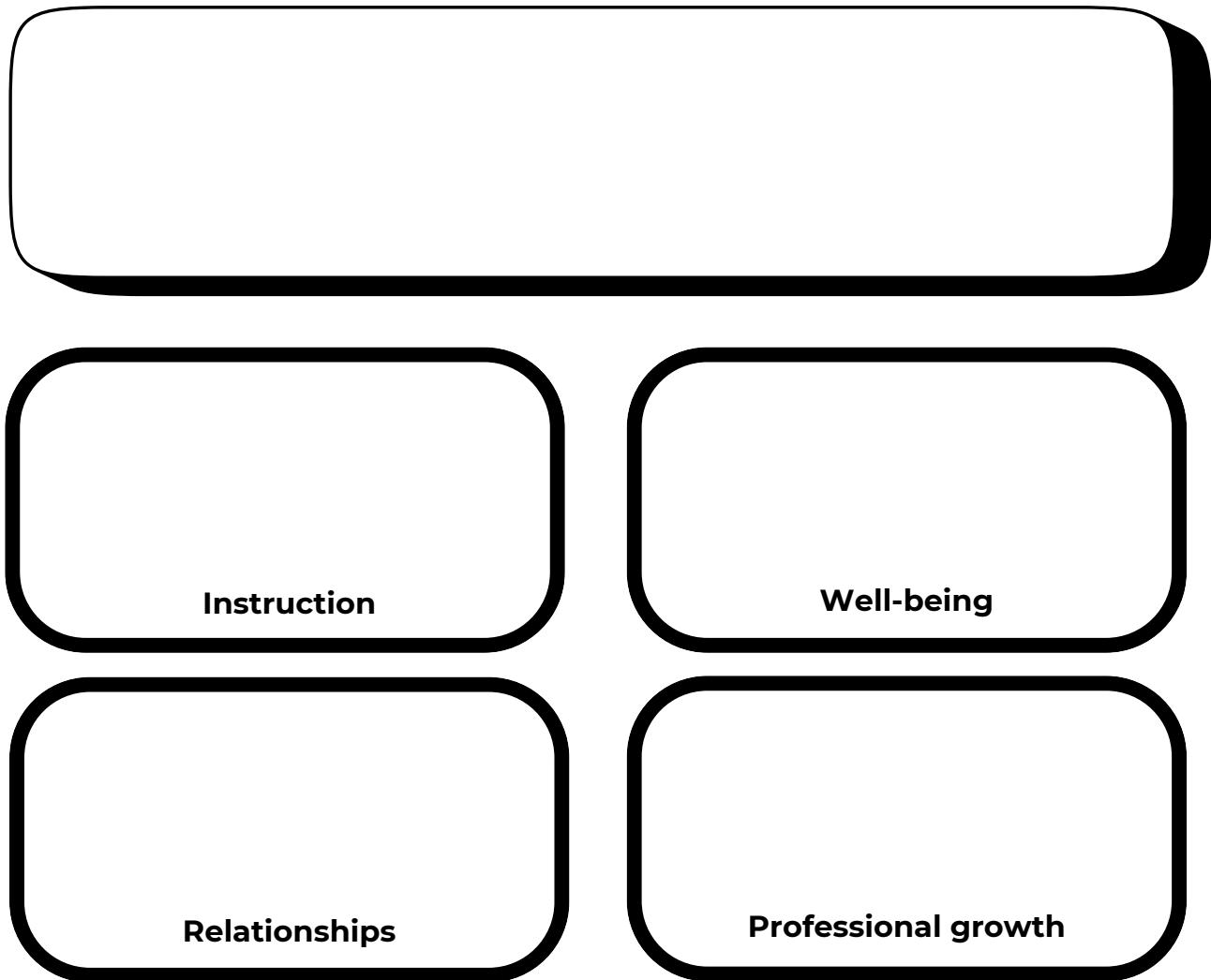


Table talk: "How would our school or grade level feel if we all lived by this one word?"

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