

## Implementing Vision Boards as an Assessment Tool: How to Make Them Work for Your Course

By Louise Krug, Assistant Professor of English, Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas, U.S.



A student's vision board for her memoir includes personal photos, icons and graphics that were touchstones of her childhood, and typed anecdotes that explain some of the visuals.

### Vision Board Rubric: Criteria : Does/Is the Vision Board...?

Exemplary	Solid	Not there yet
Explores your ideas and their possibilities in a coherent and visual format.	Some ideas and their possibilities are explored in a coherent and visual format.	A few/ few of the memoir's ideas and/or possibilities are coherent or displayed in a visual format.
Make use of a range of interesting materials.	The board includes a few different materials.	The board does not include interesting materials.
Purposefully organized, with design and placement of objects adding to understanding of story.	There seems to be some thought in organization of the board.	The board does not seem to be organized, and placement of objects seems random.

- Introduction: I began using vision boards as an assessment tool for my memoir writing class last year. We usually think of vision boards as motivational tools promoted by self-help gurus, but when my students created visual pieces to communicate the overall sense of their memoirs, it was clear that they were labors of love, and it ended up being the most-liked assignment of the semester.
- Vision boards add the element of the concrete visual to begin to articulate the subconscious inspiration and creativity beneath the surface. To compose, students use what a visual artist might call ready-mades: clippings from magazines, photos, even 3D objects to communicate underlying themes and emotions before they are articulated on the page.
- This exploration of students' abstract ideas in a visual format is a creative and innovative approach to discovering what it is students have to say as it encourages different ways to tap into it pre-language.
- How to design a vision board assignment for your course:
  - Step 1: Write down three classes, and then specific assignments, in which they could implement vision boards as an assessment tool.
  - Step 2: Pick one of the three classes and one assignment you brainstormed. Write down these important points: **The goal of the assignment** and how it can be helped by visual representation, the particulars of the board itself (mine are the vision board should have at least three different types of materials, including at least one 3-D element (but may have more), as well as be at least 24" by 24" (but may be larger).
  - Make a rubric to assess your assignment. This is mine, which may be modified as needed: