

## Honors in Action Rubric Workshop

**Directions:** The following is an *abbreviated* write-up for an Honors in Action (HIA) project based upon the written questions for an HIA Award entry. Briefly read through the HIA write-up, then score it using the HIA rubric provided. Keep notes about what the chapter is doing well? What could be improved? What elements of the rubric did the chapter miss? Be prepared to discuss your answers.

- 1. Provide a brief abstract of your Honors in Action project including the following components: academic research and analysis, leadership roles, leadership development, action, collaboration, reflection and outcomes.**

Our Honors in Action project involved the study of the use of social media on a global scale and the side effect of cyberbullying that has developed. After researching several academic sources, we concluded that online bullying is a global problem. We addressed this problem by creating a “buddy system” whereby Phi Theta Kappa members would mentor junior high students and teach them positive strategies on interacting with others online. We worked with Smith Station Middle School for this project. After our work, we wrote a reflection piece for our college’s newspaper. This piece included tips to share with kids on how they can avoid being cyber bullies.

- 2. What theme in the current Honors Program Guide did your chapter focus on?**

We focused on Theme 2: Individualism and Collectivism: How are the principles of individualism and collectivism manifested differently across the world?

- 3. Why and by what process did you choose this theme?**

Most of our chapter members grew up as “digital natives.” We wanted to research how this digital age that shaped us influenced youth behavior, including bullying. Though we looked at several themes within the guide, this topic interested the most students in our chapter.

**4. List the 8 academic/expert sources that were most enlightening regarding multiple perspectives of the Honors Study Topic Theme you selected. Briefly explain why these were the most important sources and what you learned from each of them as you researched your theme.**

1. **The Cyberbullying Solution: A Guide to Overcoming Internet Bullying Quickly.** Andrew Lawton. This book was instrumental in allowing us to do more than frame the problem of online bullying. Instead, it encouraged us to look for solutions.
2. **Cyberbullying: Bullying in the Digital Age.** Robin M. Kowalski and Susan P. Limber. This book explained how general bullying morphed into cyberbullying.
3. **Cyberbullying Wikipedia entry.** This entry gave us a general knowledge of cyberbullying.
4. **American Girls: Social Media and the Secret Lives of Teenagers.** Nancy Jo Sales. This source explained to us how so many kids live out their lives via social media.
5. **Survey.** We surveyed 175 students at our college about the power and perils of social media use.
6. **The Culture of Connectivity: A Critical History of Social Media 1st Edition.** Jose van Dijck. This book gave us a sweeping history of social media.
7. **The Survival Guide to Bullying: Written by a Teen Paperback.** Aija Mayrock. This book talked about bullying from a painfully personal perspective.

**5. What conclusions did your chapter reach based on our research and how did these conclusions guide you to select the action part of your project?**

We concluded that online/cyberbullying has reached epidemic proportions, both at home and globally. We also concluded that we wanted to be part of a long-term solution. That is, we wanted to stop the problem before it happened. Therefore, we determined that a mentoring program could teach kids early not to bully.

**6. Summarize your objectives for this Honors in Action Project and the process by which the chapter set these objectives.**

Our objectives included educating kids on the importance of not cyberbullying and on how to report cyberbullying if they witnessed it on social media. We also set an objective to share our research through our school newspaper.

**7. With whom did you collaborate for this Honors in Action project?**

We collaborated with Smith Station Middle School and with our own school newspaper.

**8. Describe the leadership of chapter members that contributed to the planning, preparations, and implementation of this Honors in Action project. The exercise of leadership may come from groups/committees, officers, and non-officers. Leadership roles are not necessarily those that come with “titles.”**

Leadership roles we assumed included:

1. Researchers.
2. Lesson Plan Developers.
3. Teachers//Tutors to work with the middle school kids.
4. Online mentors.
5. Writers to reflect upon our work.

**9. Describe leadership education and training activities taken to specifically help chapter members be more effective leaders for *this* Honors in Action Project.**

We attended our Regional Phi Theta Kappa Leadership Conference. We also all took the Myers-Briggs test to learn about our personality traits and the strengths/weaknesses we bring to the table when it comes to leadership.

**10. Describe the service or “action” components of this Honors in Action project that were inspired by your Honors Study Topic research. (Action can also include advocacy.)**

We created an anti-cyberbullying curriculum that we then presented to three sixth-grade classes at Smith Station Middle School. After presenting the curriculum, we served as online mentors for these kids, many who were

just now receiving their first personal social media accounts. We “paid it forward” by teaching the kid to be online peer mentors for their friends.

**11. What were the quantitative and qualitative outcomes of your project, including the lessons learned by your chapter members and others?**

Quantitative outcomes—75 middle-school students learned how to avoid cyberbullying and how to encourage their friends to do the same.

Qualitative outcomes—One student told us that she was, in fact, being bullied. Because of our work, she talked to her parents and to a teacher. These adults then addressed the situation with the bully’s parents, and the behavior stopped. Our project, then, had a direct positive effect on the life of a young student!

**12. What is left undone or what opportunities remain for the future?**

In many ways, social media may still be in its infancy. Our project can be modified and replicated by other groups as new forms of social media emerge so that students can continue to learn to not be bullies.