

Lancaster High School



CAS

Creativity, Activity, Service

IB CAS Coordinators

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This handbook is designed to answer questions that may arise during the course of the student's CAS experience. This document provides information taken/adapted from the IB CAS Guide as well as specific protocols students will be expected to adhere to as an IB Diploma Candidate at Lancaster High School.

Students are also expected to read the CAS Guide published by IB for further information and clarification on all guidelines. If students find that their questions are not answered by either of these sources, they should schedule a meeting with the CAS Coordinators immediately.

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Take a few moments to read and ponder the message of the poem...

“At a Day’s End”

*Is anybody happier
because you passed this way?
Does anyone remember
that you spoke to them today?*

*The day is almost over,
and its toiling time is through,
Is there anyone to utter
a kindly word of you?*

*Can you say tonight in parting,
with the day that's slipping fast,
that you helped a single person
of the many that you passed?*

*Is a single heart rejoicing
over what you did or said?
Does the one whose hopes were fading
now with courage look ahead?*

*Did you win the day or lose it?
Was it well or sorely spent?
Did you leave a trail of kindness,
or a scar of discontent?*

*As you close your eyes in slumber,
do you think that somebody will say,
"you have earned one more tomorrow
by the good you did today?"*

--John Hall

And let this one be your passport to exploration, imagination and opportunity!

“Oh, the Places You’ll Go”

*Congratulations!
Today is your day.
You're off to Great Places!
You're off and away!*

*You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself
any direction you choose.
You're on your own. And you know what you know.
And YOU are the guy who'll decide where to go.*

*You'll look up and down streets. Look 'em over with care.
About some you will say, "I don't choose to go there."
With your head full of brains and your shoes full of feet,
you're too smart to go down any not-so-good street.*

*And you may not find any
you'll want to go down.
In that case, of course,
you'll head straight out of town.*

*It's opener there
in the wide open air.*

*Out there things can happen
and frequently do
to people as brainy
and footsy as you.*

*And then things start to happen,
don't worry. Don't stew.
Just go right along.
You'll start happening too. —Dr. Seuss*

By the time you have read through this handbook, you will hopefully see the connection between these poems and your CAS experience!

Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization® aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programs encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

IB Learner Profile

The aim of all IB programs is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world. IB learners strive to be:

INQUIRERS: Develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

KNOWLEDGEABLE: They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

THINKERS: They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

COMMUNICATORS: They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

PRINCIPILED: They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

OPEN-MINDED: They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

CARING: They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

RISK-TAKERS: They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

BALANCED: They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

REFLECTIVE: They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

Why is CAS Important?

Because you are more than just a grade point average. CAS is intended to move you out of the academic arena and help you learn through life experiences. As an IB student, we know you are involved in interesting activities. What we are asking you to do is consider HOW these activities help you to become a better person.

CAS is about developing students who:

- enjoy and find significance in a range of CAS experiences
- purposefully reflect upon their experiences
- identify goals, develop strategies and determine further actions for personal growth
- explore new possibilities, embrace new challenges and adapt to new roles
- actively participate in planned, sustained, and collaborative CAS projects
- understand they are members of local and global communities with responsibilities towards each other and the environment

Guidelines for CAS Experiences

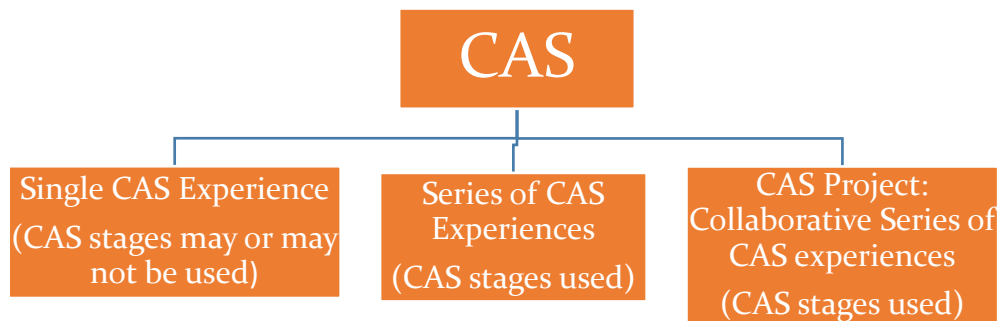
CAS is NOT about counting hours. CAS is NOT about just “showing up” to as many club meetings, sports matches, volunteer activities, etc. as possible. Students should focus on the **quality** of their CAS experiences, as well as quantity.

In order for an experience to be approved by the CAS Coordinator, the experience **MUST:**

- fit within one or more of the CAS strands
- be based on a personal interest, skill, talent, or opportunity for growth
- provide opportunities to develop the attributes of the IB learner profile
- not be used or included in the student’s Diploma course requirements

Students should also ask themselves the following questions for each experience proposed:

- Will the experience be enjoyable?
- Does the experience allow for development of personal interests, skills, and/or talents?
- What new possibilities or challenges could the experience provide?
- What might be the possible consequences of your CAS experience for you, others, and the environment?
- Which CAS learning outcomes might be addressed?



CAS Program: starts on day one of your junior year and ends in spring of your senior year. Your program must last **for at least 18 months** (this includes the summer months between junior and senior years).

↳ **CAS Experiences:** these are the individual experiences you complete as part of your CAS Program. There should be a **wide range** of experiences and a **reasonable balance** among the three strands of Creativity, Activity, and Service over the course of your 18 month program. You should be engaging in CAS related activities on a **weekly** basis. Experiences should **vary in length and in the amount of commitment required** from the student, but **none should be trivial**.

↳ **CAS Project:** one of your experiences must meet the qualifications of a CAS project (more on this can be found on page 10 in this handbook). It is perfectly acceptable to engage in more than one CAS project, but you must complete **at least one project** in order to fulfill the requirements of the CAS Program.

Creativity, Activity, Service Defined

Below you will find definitions for each of the three strands of CAS, along with a list of possible ideas and examples of appropriate experiences for each. Please note these lists are not exhaustive, but merely starting points for thinking about each.

Creativity: Exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance

- Planning lessons/creating resources for tutoring/teaching
- Digital design, computer programming
- Learning to paint with watercolor
- Taking a photography course
- Participating in Community Theatre
- Writing and/or performing music
- Creating a display for an art show
- Clubs such as Debate Team, Model UN, Yearbook/Newspaper, etc.
- Culinary arts
- Crafts

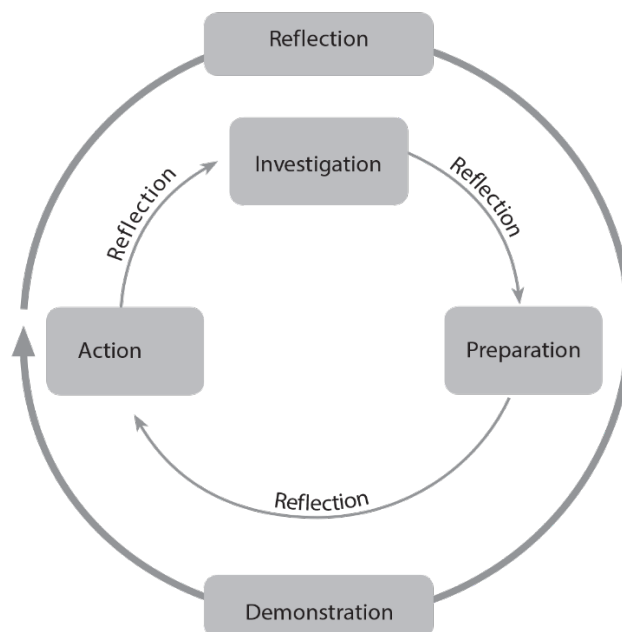
Activity: Physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle

- Individual and team sports (both in and out of school)
- Aerobic exercise
- Dance
- Fitness training
- Outdoor recreation (hiking, biking, rock climbing, expeditions, etc.)
- Rock climbing
- Yoga/Pilates

Service: Collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need.

- **Direct Service:** Student interaction involves people, the environment, or animals (one-on-one tutoring, community gardening, volunteering in an animal shelter or local hospital, etc.)
- **Indirect Service:** Students do not see the recipients, but have verified their actions will benefit the community or environment (re-designing a non-profit organization's website, packaging food at the food bank, etc.)
- **Advocacy:** Students speak on behalf of a cause or concern to promote action on an issue of public interest (awareness campaign for hunger, creating a video on sustainable water solutions, etc.)
- **Research:** Students collect information through varied sources, analyze data, and report on a topic of importance to influence policy or practice

CAS STAGES



Learning Outcomes

Each and every CAS experience MUST fit one or more of the seven learning outcomes outlined below. Some of the learning outcomes can and will be demonstrated many times across a variety of experiences. There must be at least some evidence of all seven outcomes in order to successfully complete CAS.

1. **Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth.** The student:
 - is aware of own strengths and weaknesses
 - is open to improvement and growth opportunities
 - is able to propose activities according to own interests and talents
 - is willing to participate in different activities
 - is able to undertake a thoughtful self-evaluation
 - is able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, some more developed than others

2. **Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process.** The student:
 - participates in an experience that demands an appropriate personal challenge; this could be with new or familiar experiences
 - is willing to become involved in unfamiliar environments and situations
 - acquires new skills and abilities
 - increases expertise in an established area
 - shows newly acquired or developed skills or increased expertise in an established area

3. **Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience.** The student:
 - is able to articulate the CAS stages including investigation, preparation, action, reflection (ongoing) and demonstration, moving from conceiving an idea to carrying out a plan for a CAS experience or series of CAS experiences
 - demonstrates knowledge and awareness by building on a previous CAS experience
 - shows initiative by launching a new idea or process
 - suggests creative ideas, proposals or solutions
 - integrates reflective thoughts in planning or taking initiative
 - is aware of roles and responsibilities when designing an individual or collective CAS experience
 - shows responsible attitude to CAS project planning
 - is able to develop a coherent action plan taking into account the aim or purpose, activities and resources

4. **Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences.** The student:
 - demonstrates regular involvement and active engagement with CAS experiences and CAS project
 - is able to foresee potential challenges to the initial plan and consider valid alternatives and contingencies
 - demonstrates adaptability to uncertainties and changes
 - gets involved in long-term CAS experiences and CAS project

5. **Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively.**
The student:
 - shares skills and knowledge
 - listens respectfully to proposals from peers
 - is willing to take on different roles within a team
 - shows respect for different points of view and ideas
 - makes valuable contributions
 - is responsible for participating in the group
 - readily assists others
 - is able to identify, demonstrate and discuss critically the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences

6. **Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance.** The student:
 - recognizes the global implications of local issues
 - is able to identify global issues in the local or national community
 - shows awareness of issues of global importance and takes concrete and appropriate actions in response to them either locally, nationally or internationally
 - gets involved in CAS projects addressing global issues in a local, national or international context
 - develops awareness and responsibility towards a shared humanity

7. **Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions.** The student:
 - recognizes ethical issues
 - is able to explain the social influences on one's ethical identity
 - takes into account cultural context when making a plan or ethical decision
 - identifies what is needed to know in order to make an ethical decision
 - articulates ethical principles and approaches to ethical decisions
 - shows accountability for choices and actions
 - is aware of the consequences of choices and actions regarding self, others involved and the community
 - integrates the process of reflection when facing an ethical decision
 - shows awareness of the potential and varied consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out CAS experiences

CAS Project

Definition: A CAS project is a collaborative, well-considered series of sequential CAS experiences, engaging students in one or more of the CAS strands. CAS students must be involved in at least one CAS project during their CAS program.

Purpose: To ensure participation in sustained collaboration, discover the benefits of teamwork and of achievements realized through an exchange of ideas and abilities. It challenges students to show initiative, demonstrate perseverance, and develop skills including cooperation, problem solving, and decision-making.

In order for an experience to be considered a “project”, it must meet the following requirements:

- It lasts for **at least one month at minimum (from planning to completion)**. It cannot be something you start and finish in one weekend. The importance of duration is that it provides opportunities to reflect on progress and adjust plans, in order to resolve problems that arise.
- It involves **collaboration**. This means you are working with others (students, teachers, a charity, etc.) to make your project happen.
- It must be, at least partially, **student-driven and initiated**. YOU must take the leadership role on this project. Your CAS project should have a defined purpose and goal and address all of the CAS stages.
- It **addresses any single strand, or combines two or all three strands** of CAS. Below are some examples of CAS projects designed to help you generate your own ideas:

Creativity: A student group plans, designs, and creates a mural.

Activity: Students organize and participate in a sports team including training sessions and matches against other teams (note: participation in an already-existing school or club team would NOT count).

Service: Students set up and conduct tutoring for people in need.

Creativity and Activity: Students choreograph a routine for their marching band.

Service and Activity: Students plan and participate in the planting and maintenance of a garden with members of the local community.

Service and Creativity: Students identify that children at a local school need backpacks and subsequently design and make the backpacks out of recycled material.

Creativity, Activity, and Service: Students rehearse and perform a dance production for a community retirement home.

Responsibilities of the Student

Students should “own” their personal CAS program. With guidance from their mentors, advisers, and/or the CAS Coordinator, students should choose experiences for themselves.

Students are **required** to:

- self-review at the beginning of their CAS program and **set personal goals** for what they hope to achieve
- **plan, do and reflect** (plan experiences, carry them out, and reflect on what they have learned)
- undertake at least one **interim review and a final review** with their CAS Coordinator
- take part in a **range of experiences, including at least one project**, some of which they have initiated themselves
- **keep records** of their experiences and achievements, including a list of the principal experiences undertaken
- **show evidence** of achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes.

Guide to Reflection

Think about the word “reflection”. In day-to-day life, this word most likely brings to mind the reflection we see in the mirror. So what is your reflection? What does it do? Why do we look at our reflections?

Your reflection shows you yourself. It shows you that you have a beautiful smile. It can also show you the spinach stuck in your teeth. Your reflection informs you about yourself – both the good and bad.

Your CAS reflections are no different. Think of writing a CAS reflection as looking in the mirror. Your reflections should tell you something about yourself, your experiences, your successes, your failures, and your learning.

Reflections are the key to successfully completing the CAS program. They should explain not just **WHAT** you did, but **HOW** you did it and what you **LEARNED** about yourself from the experience.

Your reflections should **NOT** be filled with a bunch of “buzzwords” from the learning outcomes. They should be genuine, authentic, and real – just like the reflection you see in the mirror. **YOU** are the audience, **NOT** your English teacher! It is the CAS Coordinator’s job to read your reflection and decide if you have shown evidence of.

It is the CAS Coordinator's job to read your reflection and decide if you have shown evidence of whatever learning outcome(s) you identify for that reflection. If you haven't, I'll simply ask you to "look in the mirror" a bit more and describe more specifically what you see.

Reflection should be an **ongoing** process over time: **Before** (planning), **during** (while doing) and **after** (evaluating) the experience or project. It is crucial that you keep up with their reflections as experiences or projects are initiated and carried out, rather than waiting until the end of your CAS program.

The **quality** of reflection is more important than the quantity. However, the amount of reflection should be in proportion to the duration and meaningfulness of the experience (i.e. don't write five pages about a one-day service event...and don't write two paragraphs about your CAS project!).

Here are some questions that can help you start writing your reflections:

- How did you feel?
- How did you interact with others?
- What did the experience mean to you?
- How did experience benefit others?
- How did experience measure up to the eight learning outcomes?
- Were the goals set too low, too high or just right? Why?
- If difficulties existed, how did you overcome them?
- What did you learn from the experience and how might this new knowledge be applied more widely elsewhere in your life? (For example, a change of perspective).

If you are having trouble with reflective writing, please see the CAS Coordinators for examples of successful reflective journal entries.

Important Reminders

- Your involvement in ANY experience must involve more than just having a pulse, showing up, or going through the motions. This means being a member of a team, group, club, band, cast, etc. is not enough. You can only make that experience qualify IF you can show that it involved one of the seven learning outcomes.
- An experience that gets approved for one student may not get approved for another. It's all in the presentation and reflection.
- Safety: your experience may be meaningful and wonderful, but if it is not safe for you to participate, you may not do so.

- Social impact: Will your participation in an experience cause or worsen social division? If so, it cannot be part of your CAS program.
- Plan your exit: If you are going to stop your involvement in an experience, create a graceful exit plan. Don't just stop showing up.
- YOU must be treated with dignity as well. If someone is using you, or mistreating you, you are not obligated to continue your service.
- Religious/political activity: An act of devotion, or any activity that can be interpreted as proselytizing cannot count for CAS. Service must be with "no strings attached".
- Any experience for which you receive a grade, payment, credit, or any form of compensation is NOT eligible for CAS. This means any work that is part of your IB Diploma coursework is NOT eligible for CAS.
- Your CAS coordinators are here to support and guide you through your CAS program.

Student Name _____
 Student Email _____
 Class of _____

Activity Proposal Map (APM)
 Lancaster High School (2995)
 CAS Coordinator Approval: _____/_____/_____

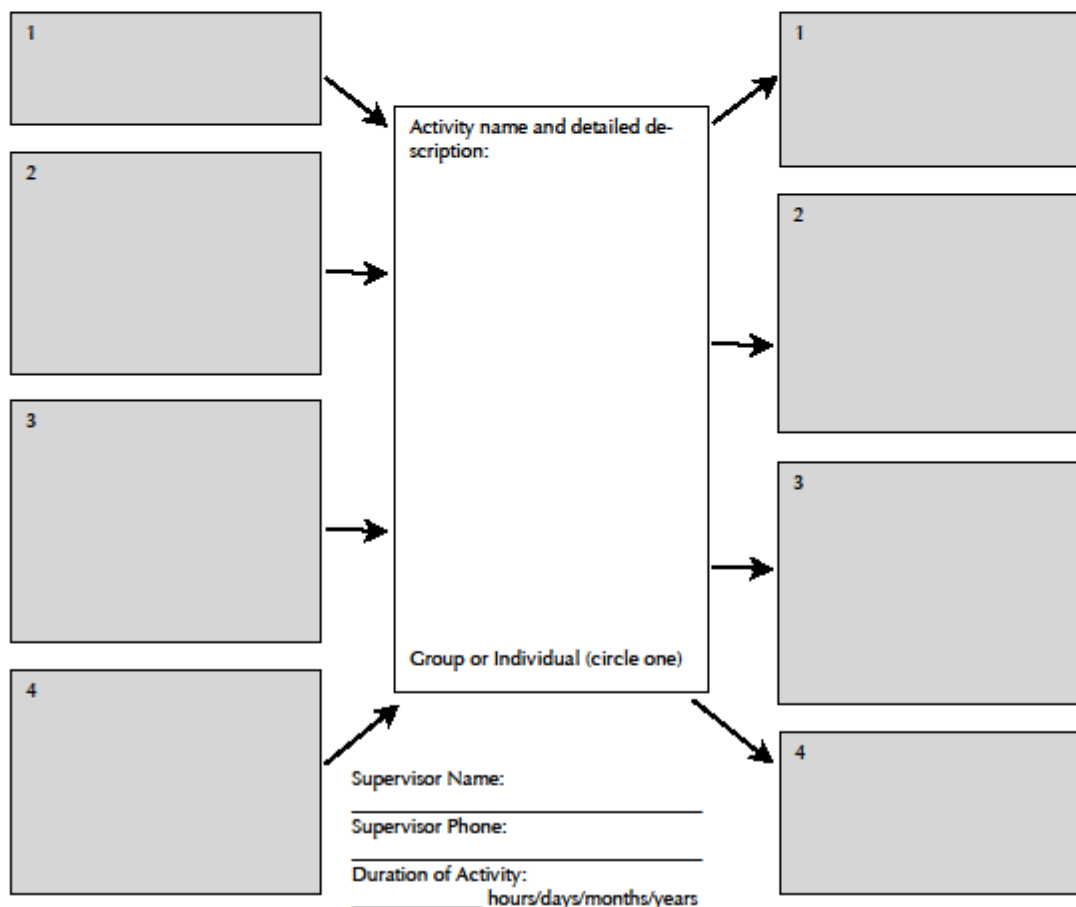
Directions: Complete this Multi-Flow Map, identifying the causes and effects of your choosing this activity as a way to complete your CAS hours. As you fill out the map, be sure to answer the following questions (in each corresponding box). You'll need to complete one APM for each activity and wait for my approval (at least one week) before starting the activity.

CAUSES:

1. What is the focus of this activity (international/global, social, local, environmental)?
2. How did you decide upon this activity? What kind of research did you do?
3. Why is this activity important to you?
4. How is this a meaningful, significant, new task that you are undertaking?

EFFECTS:

1. What areas on the Performance Criteria form do you anticipate being completed during this activity?
2. What goals do you aim to achieve by completing this activity?
3. How does this activity have real consequences for other people and for you?
4. How many hours do you expect to complete and in which areas?
 C _____ A _____ S _____



CAS Reflections Guidelines

What does IB want for a reflection?

Consider the following things:

- * How you felt
- * What you perceived
- * What you thought about the activity
- * What the activity meant to you
- * What the value of the activity was
- * What you learned from the activity and how this learning might apply more widely

Also provide evidence for how you met the Learning Outcomes you noted. See the brief example below. One could reasonably draw the conclusion that the following LO's were met: Increased awareness of strengths and areas and growth, Undertake new challenges, Engaged with issues of global importance, Worked collaboratively with others, and Considered the ethical implications of their actions.

Undertake new challenges

Worked collaboratively

Engaged with issues of global importance

Considered ethical implications

Increased awareness of strengths and areas for growth

I have a new appreciation for goats. Going into this project, I thought the idea of sending a family a goat was silly. I mean, come on, it's a goat. Is it really that big of a deal? I'd never sponsored an animal before, so the whole concept was foreign and new to me. However, I'm a team player so I eagerly began selling my box of chocolate to help raise the \$120.00 needed to send this barnyard animal to a family in need. The money came quickly. Within two weeks, my classmates and I had raised not only the \$120.00 needed for one goat, but we'd raised enough for 3! I began to think about how three families would now be able to support themselves by simply having what some people consider a pet. Wow! When I thought about it that way, \$120.00 doesn't seem like much money at all. For me, that's a pair of shoes. For a family across the globe, it's the difference between going hungry and having a full belly. I don't know that I'll ever see shopping the same way again. Do I really need to spend \$50.00 for a pair of jeans when I could get another pair for less and then donate the left over money to someone who cannot feed their family? Is it ethical for me to waste so much on a pair of jeans just because everyone else has them? Maybe having the latest trend isn't as important as I thought. Who knew a simple goat would make me rethink my spending habits? I feel as if I have grown as a person after completing this project. I have so much and give so little. I need work toward being more globally minded and generous because I am truly rich compared to many people around the world.

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