



This is not a
PEN

CASE STUDY

MDB UX, 2023

The PRODUCT

This Is Not A Pen (TINAP) is an experiential, project-based bridge program for incoming college students ages 17-25. During the program, students participate in interactive activities across the city, culminating in a major project and final presentation to the group

Overview

STUDY GOAL #1

To design an initial working prototype of the TINAP website

STUDY GOAL #2

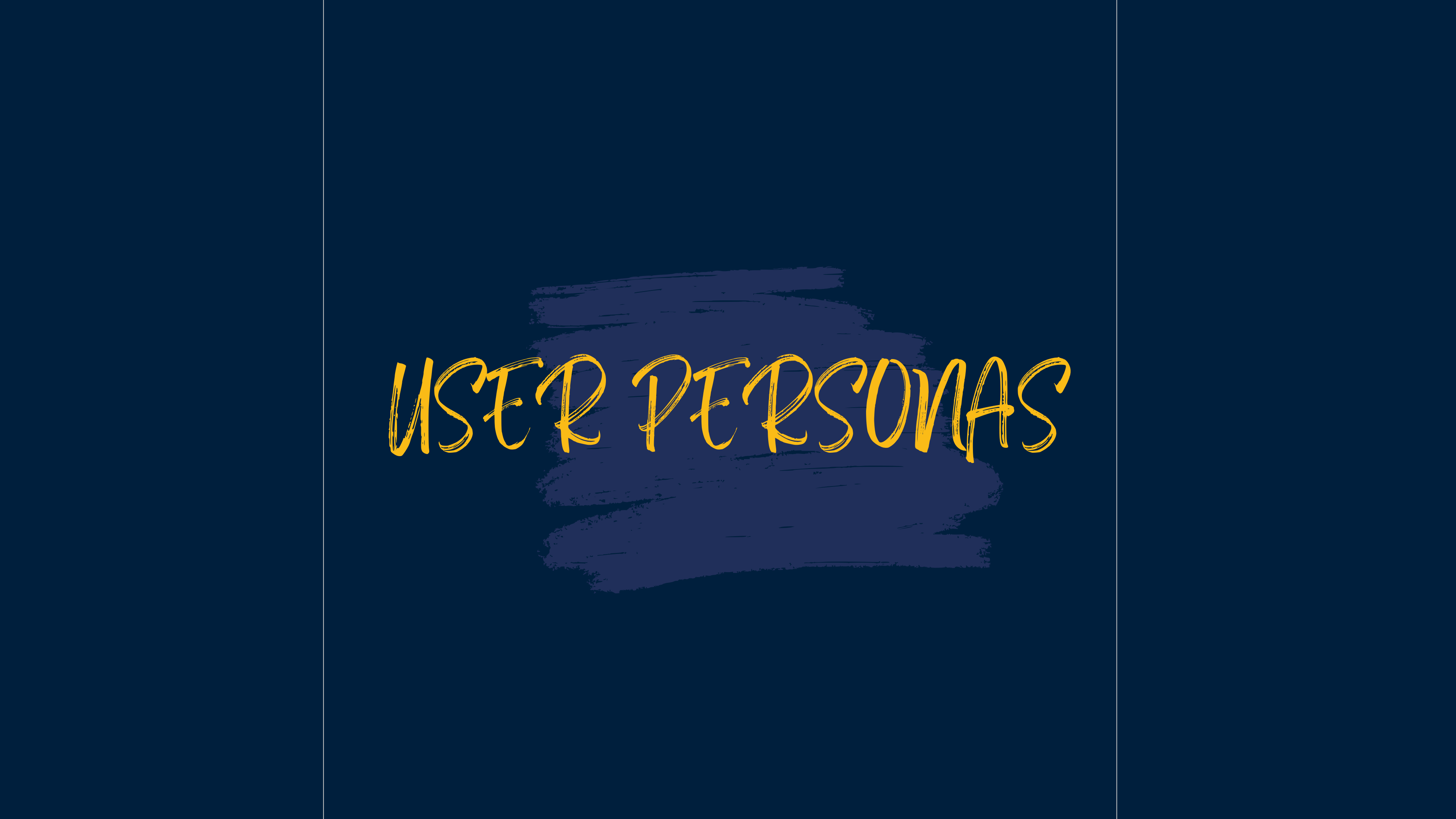
To create programming and a UI experience that is engaging, inclusive, and city-sensitive



my ROLE

- +Lead UX Designer
- +Instructional Designer





USER PERSONAS

LES



WHO

Les is an 18-year-old incoming first-year at Georgetown University who plans to major in Global and Comparative Literature

WHAT

Originally from Gary, Indiana, Les's high school class consisted of only 30 graduates, and due to her social anxiety, she never connected with her peers

WHY

Les is moving to D.C. in June so that she can get acclimated to her new city. She would like to connect with other people her age, outside of her school community, so that she has some non-school friends

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Accessibility

Les has Lupus, and can become tired quite easily during long walks or periods of standing

Personality

Les has struggled with social anxiety for most of middle and high school, due to some previous experiences with bullying. She has a strong desire to make connections, but a lot of apprehension about others' intentions



LES

LOUIS



WHO

Louis is a 20-year-old transfer student to George Washington University who plans to major in Business Administration

WHAT

Louis is transferring from his community college in Baton, Rouge, Louisiana and has never been to the East Coast

WHY

Louis would like to get to know his new city in a unique, cost-efficient way, but is not sure how to accommodate some of his special considerations such as his visual impairment

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Accessibility

After suffering from an illness as a young child, Louis is fully blind in his right eye, and has a slight visual impairment in his left. He often uses assistive technology such as screen readers, and color and contrast adjustments

Personality

Louis prefers to spend time in relaxed, calming environments and has some challenges with crowded places and extremely loud noises



LOUIS

ANNETTE



WHO

Annette is a 17-year-old incoming freshman at George Washington University who plans to major in History and International Relations

WHAT

Annette is originally from the NoVa area, and finished high school early, in part, so that she could get away from a friend group that was not a positive influence for her

WHY

Annette would like to keep her academic skills sharp over the summer, while potentially meeting some new people who are also academically-minded

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Accessibility

Annette will be 17 until the day before the program begins, so she is younger than some of her peers, and may not be able to participate in all activities if they are age-precluding

Personality

Annette can hold her own, academically with her peers, but is still learning how to manage her time properly, and be completely accountable to deadlines and assignment due dates



ANNETTE

COMPETITIVE AUDIT



I examined the following companies, products, and services:

DC Creative Writing Workshops ([here](#))

PBL Works ([here](#))

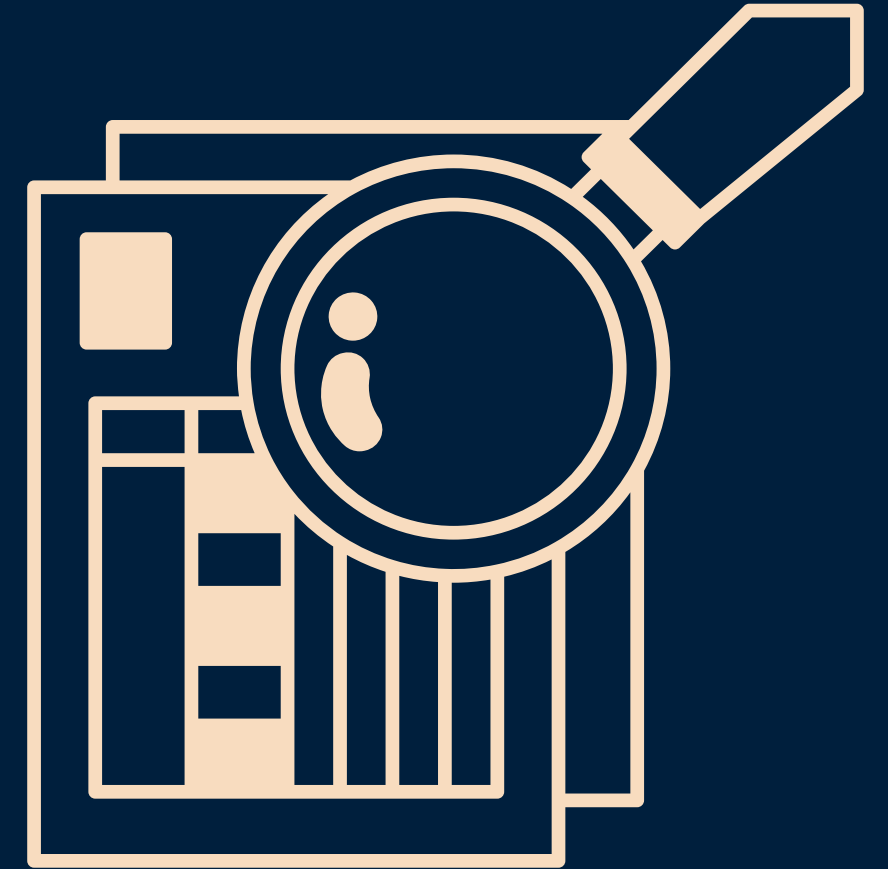
Imagine Learning ([here](#))

Classes at Politics & Prose ([here](#))

Meetup ([here](#))

Split This Rock ([here](#))

OBSERVATIONS



1

DIRECT COMPETITORS

There were no direct competitors offering college-focused, project-based, experiential and fully web-integrated workshops for the Washington, D.C. area

2

INDIRECT COMPETITORS

There were several indirect competitors offering K-12 or adult writing workshops or project-based activities to be done independently or as a class



ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS

1

Geared toward K-12 OR Adults

Most of the workshops offered were specifically geared toward K-12 students or adults; there were no major offerings for incoming (or current) college students

2

Genre OR Subject specific

Workshops were subject specific (Writing, STEAM, etc.) rather than project-based workshops with opportunities for interdisciplinary work

3

Simple Virtual Accessibility

Workshops which offered virtual participation (mostly) via Zoom did advertise full programming through the website

IDEATION

To begin user research I created a Value Survey provided to 10 participants in the following categories:

Incoming College Freshman
(ages 17-19)

Current College Students
(ages 18-21)

College Transfer Students
(ages 19-22)



SURVEY HERE



PAPER WIREFRAMES

member:
The reflection has
3
parts
The MOOD ID
The Paradigm Tracker
Optional ~~notes~~ ^{journal}

MOOD ID

PARADIGM TR.

JOURNAL

Should all of
this exist on
this page or should
each reflection type
have its own page?
accessibility of each?

THIS IS NOT A PEN

City Name

a 2 week integration intensive...

ACCOUNT

TEXTS

REQUIRED

OPTIONAL

PREVIOUS DAYS

DATE:

THEME:

ACTIVITY

Location:

Time:

CHALLENGE & DEBRIEF

YESTERDAY

TOMORROW

PROJECT PORTAL

MOOD TRACKER

RESOURCES

REFLECTION

Type:

160

takes you to either the discussion board or an individual submission page

Should only live on this page

Should only live on this page

needs a page built out

maybe make seeing this optional?

maybe make optional?

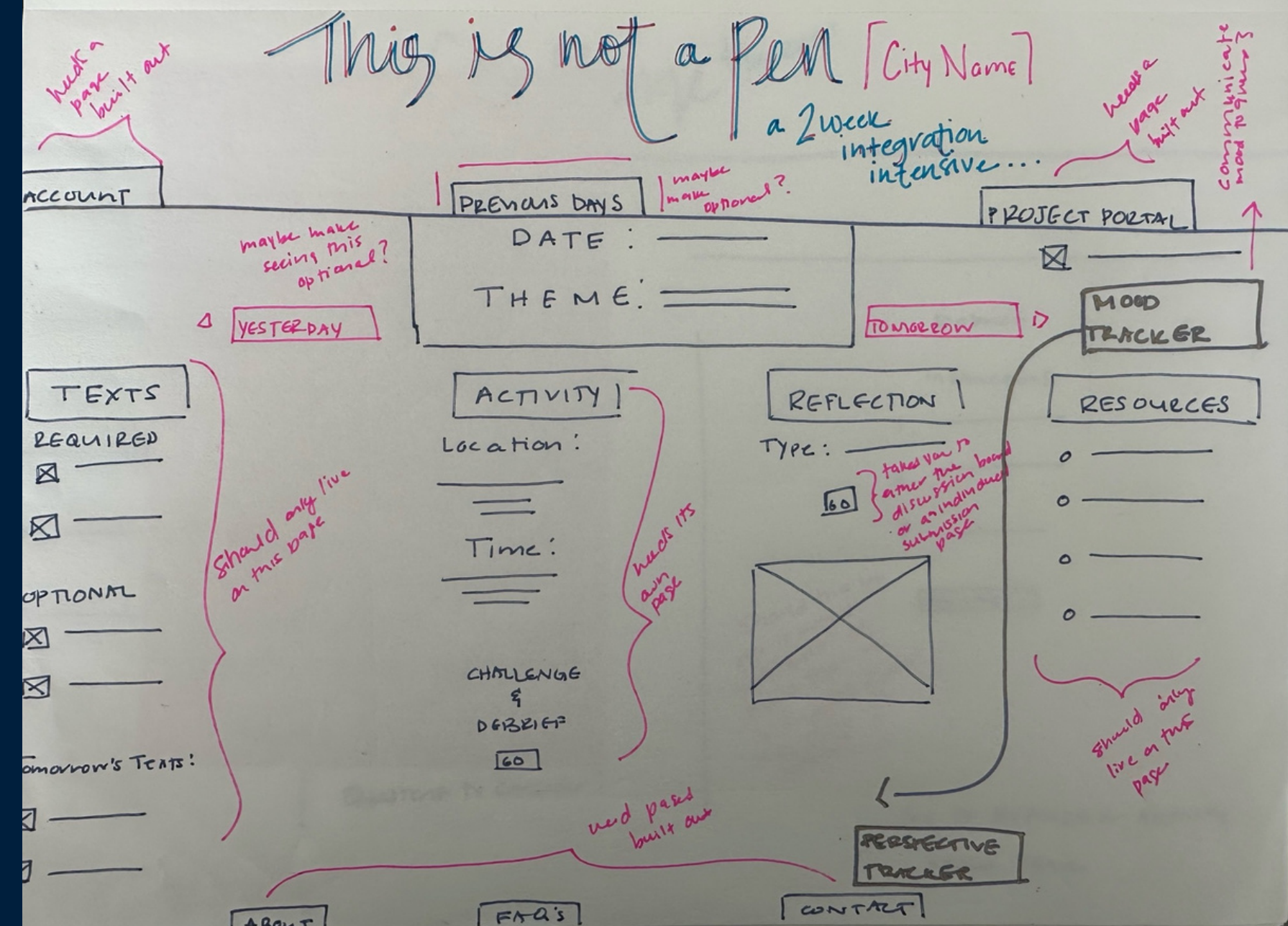
needs a page built out

needs its own page

Should only live on this page

Considerations

- Ensuring that the most important information is above the fold
- Including recognizable iconography, language, and imagery
- Multi-column layout that can be easily made into a responsive screen
- Clearly labeled buttons



USER JOURNEY

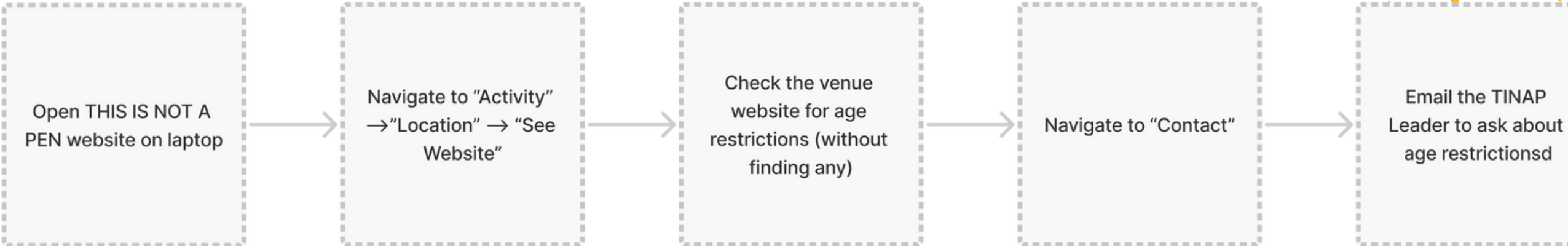
ANNETTE



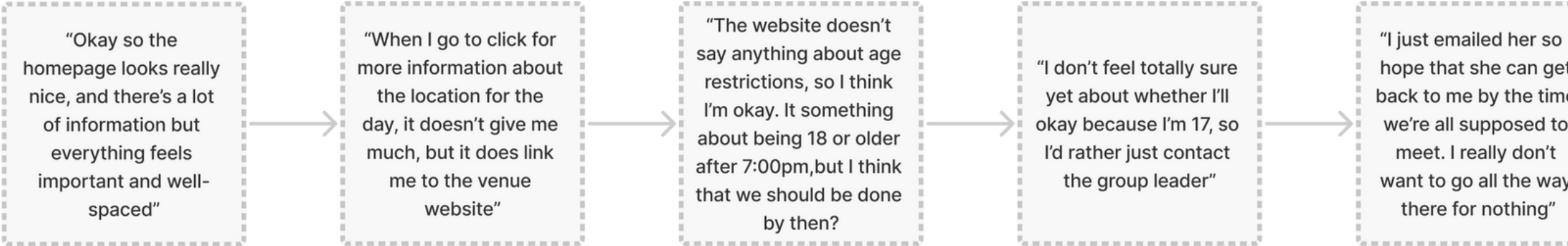
User goal or problem

Annette recently registered for a two-week THIS IS NOT A PEN intensive in Washington, D.C. Tomorrow is her first day, and she would like to make sure that there are no age restrictions on the meeting locations for this week.

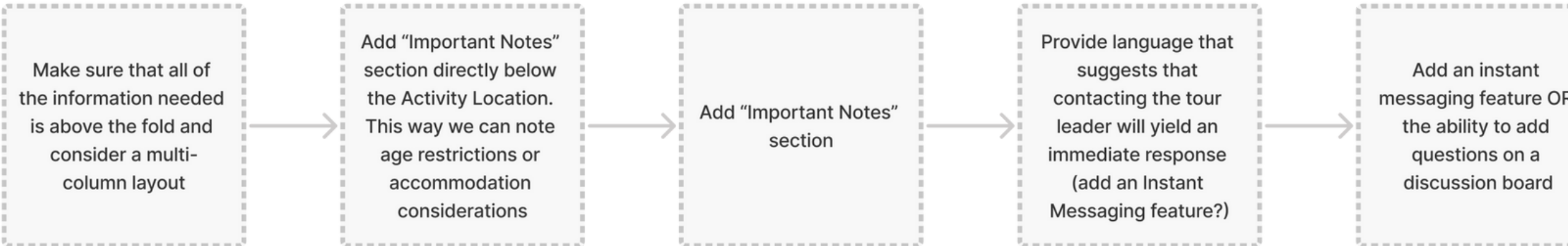
User action
What actions are they currently taking? How are they doing it? What information are they seeking?



Quotes and sentiment
How do they feel in this moment?



Opportunity
What are some things that could improve this moment? Could this be skipped or solved elsewhere?



Site Hierarchy

HOMEPAGE

Account

Previous Days

Texts

Today's Activity

Today's Reflection

Mood Gauge

Resources

Project Portal

Required Texts

Optional Texts

Tomorrow's Texts

Location

Time

Special Notes

Challenge + Debrief

Type

Related Image

Location

Time

Special Notes

Challenge + Debrief

More About
Today's Subject

Guidelines

Final
Presentation
Information

Group Folder

Questions?

Contact Leader

About TINAP

Lo-Fi Digital Prototype

Account Project Portal

Previous Day

DATE: Monday, July 3rd 2023
THEME: REVISIONIST AMERICANA

Preview Tomorrow

TEXTS

Required

Optional

ACTIVITY

Location

Time

What to Know:

REFLECTION

Type

Perspective Questionnaire

GO

View Activity

RESOURCES

CONTACT YOUR LEADER: KELCE

About TINAP

FAQS

See Prototype ([here](#))

ACTIVITY

Know Before We Go:

WHAT:

WHY:

INSTRUCTIONS

Group Debrief

Go to Reflection Activity

Home Page

Get Directions

HIGH FIDELITY MOCKUPS

Landing Pages

Clear headings for assistive technology ease

Simple background color for visual accessibility

Most important information such as times and locations are prominently featured

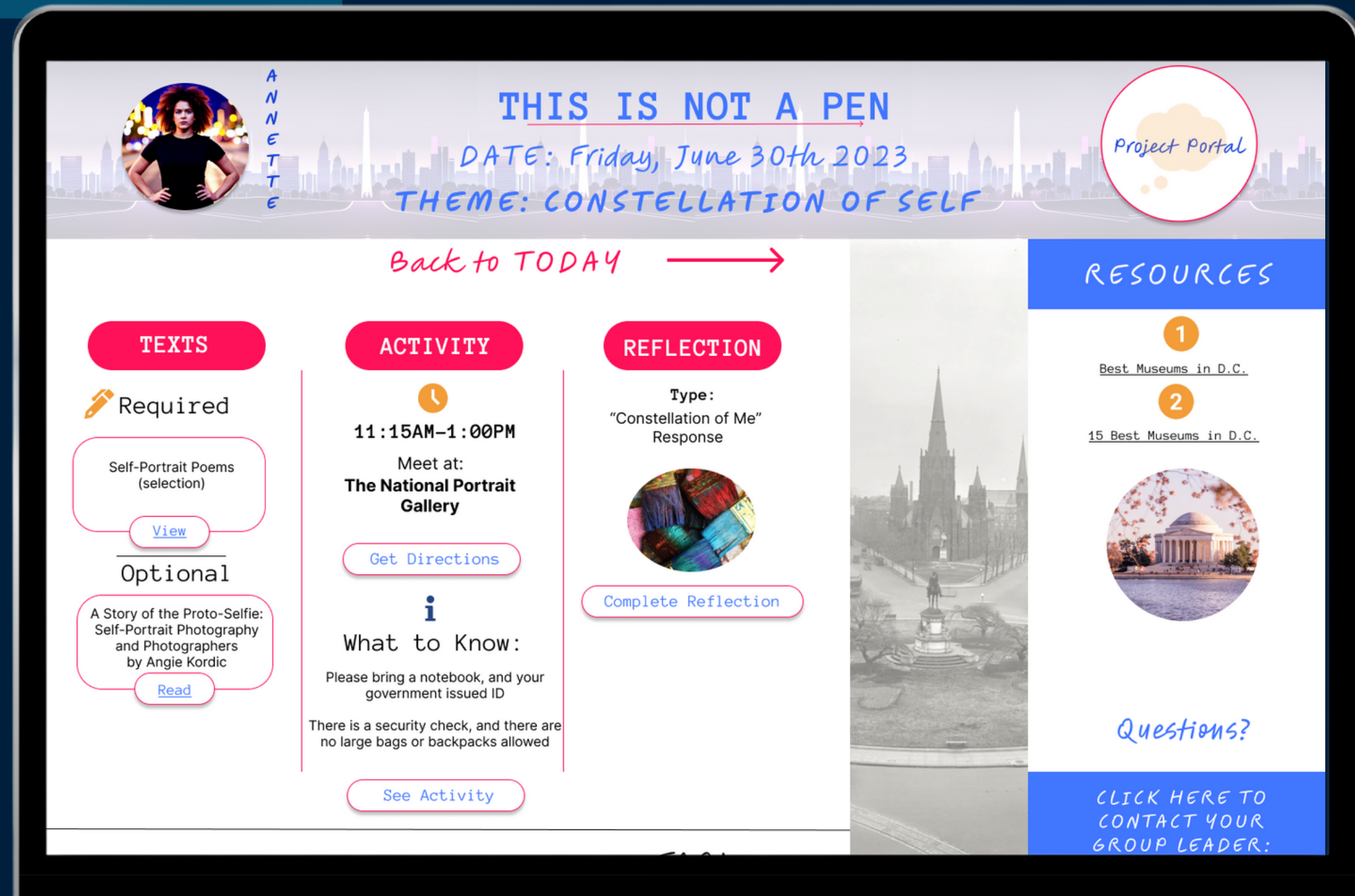


HIGH FIDELITY MOCKUPS

Landing Pages

Accent and button colors change daily to provide visual novelty, but all other UI elements remain consistent to maintain accessibility considerations

Texts, Activities, and Reflections are updated daily



HIGH FIDELITY MOCKUPS

Daily Activity Pages

REVISIONIST AMERICANA ACTIVIT



 **10:00AM-1:00PM**

Meet at:
African-American Civil War Memorial

[Get Directions](#)



WHAT:
Today we will be exploring the areas of 14th Street and U Street, two of the most historically critical, and frequently visited locations in the city. We will make stops at the following locations:

The African American Civil War Memorial Museum
Ben's Chili Bowl
Busboys & Poets

WHY:
As we think about how we can better understand, appreciate, and respect the history of the space we call "home," we want to patronize and learn about businesses which have been owned and operated by members of the BIPOC D.C. community.

When You Arrive:
Your Group Leader will be stationed next to the Memorial (located across the street from the museum) to give you instructions and guidance.

[Home Page](#)

GROUP DISCUSSION

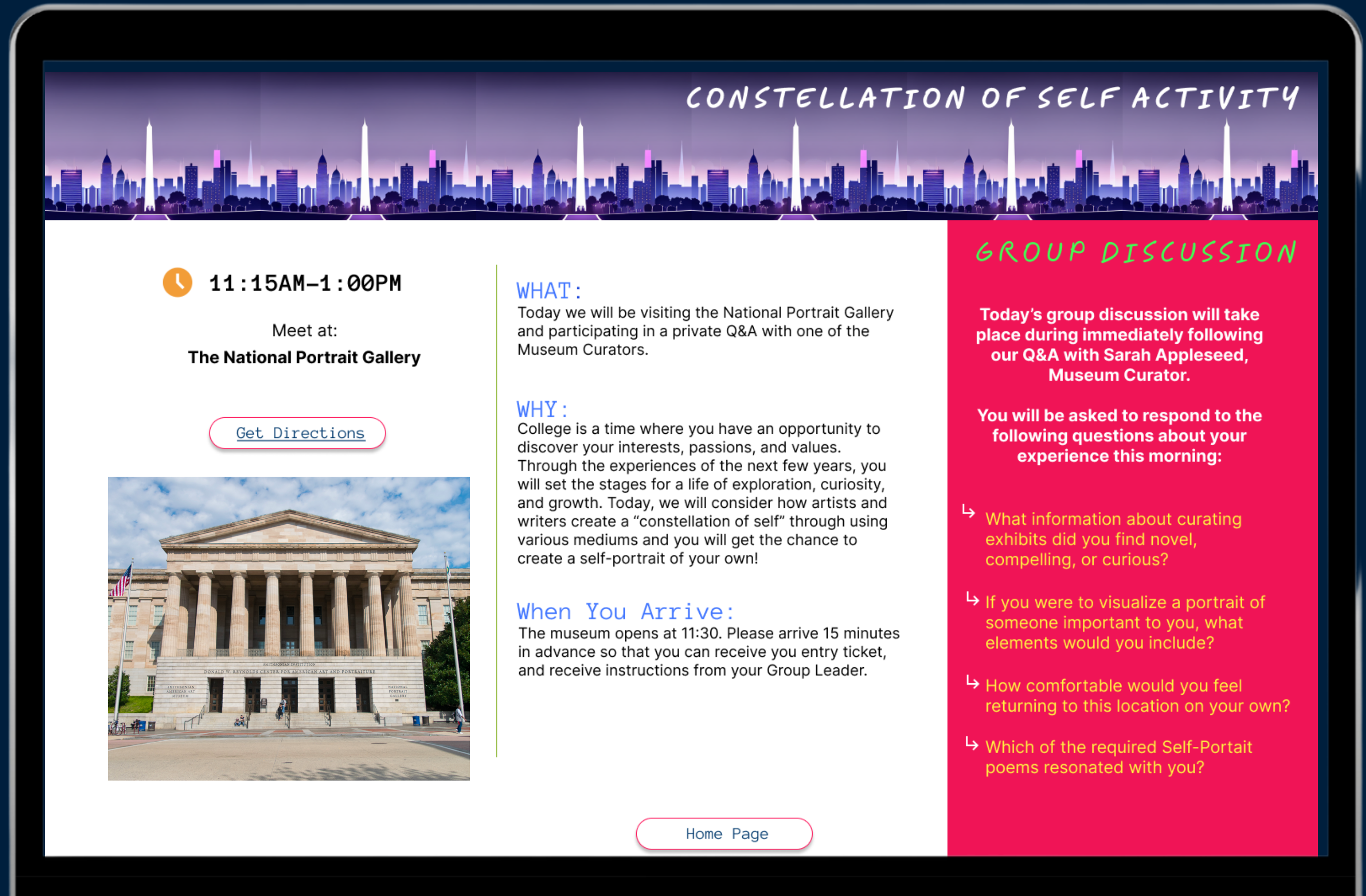
Today's group discussion will take place during Lunch at Busboys & Poets.

You will be asked to respond to the following questions about your experience this morning:

- ↳ What did you notice about the demographic makeup of the neighborhood?
- ↳ What did you learn from speaking to at least 1 business owner?
- ↳ How comfortable do you feel coming back to this neighborhood on your own? Explain your response.
- ↳ How familiar are you with the concept of "gentrification"? What kinds of thoughts or feelings come up when you hear that word?

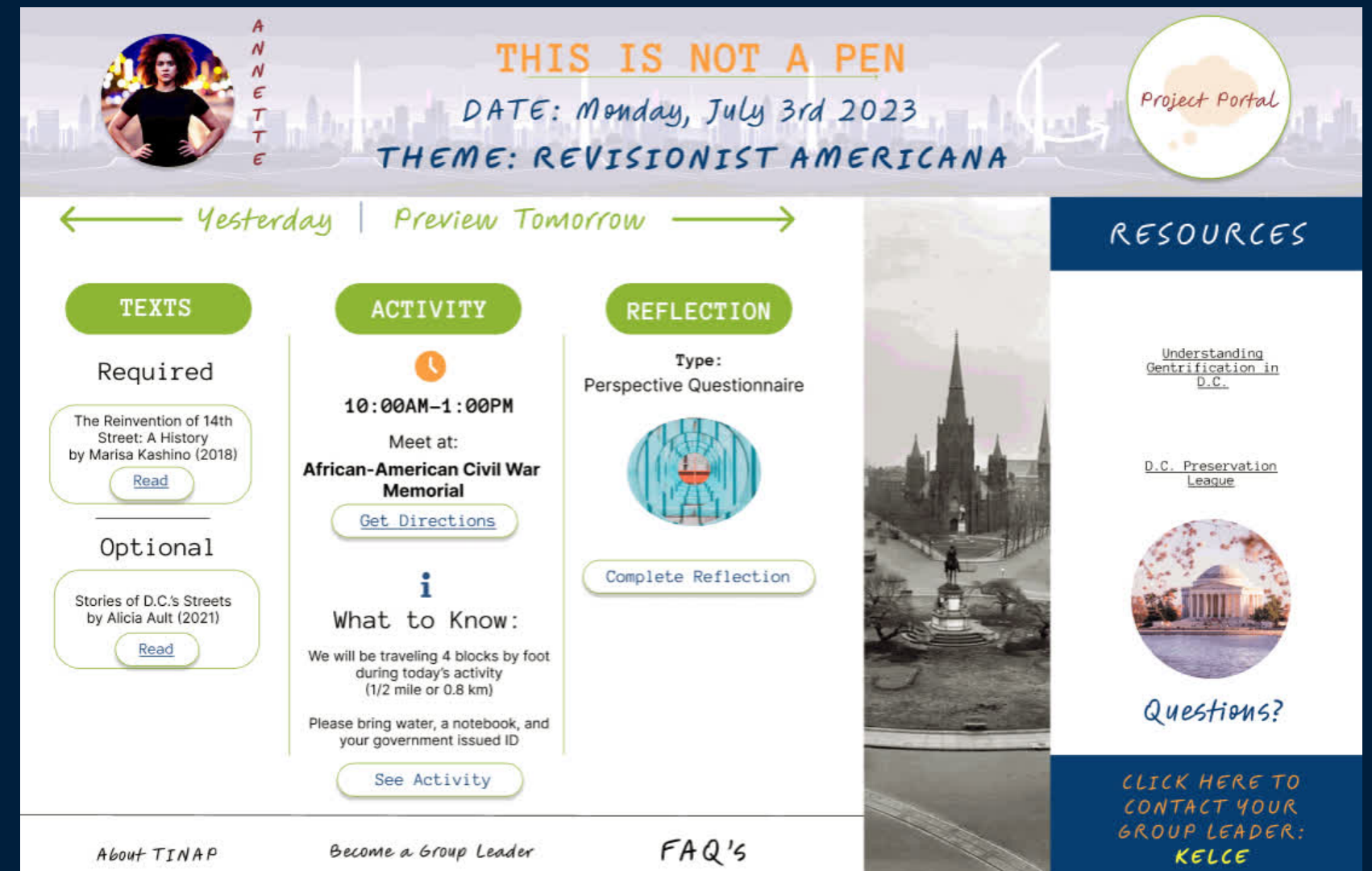
HIGH FIDELITY MOCKUPS

Daily Activity Pages



High Fidelity Prototype

[CLICK HERE](#)



Usability Test Driving Questions

1

Navigation

Remote

20-30
minutes

5
Participants

Can users easily navigate to Activity, Reflection, and Project Portal pages without hitting pain points?

Are the buttons and navigation tools intuitive for the target user age group?

2

Sample Activities

Is the language, tone, and content of the example activities useful, engaging, inclusive, and aligned with the objectives of the TINAP program?



USER INSIGHTS

1

Great use of color + typography

3/5 participants noted that they liked the daily color changes and that the colors and typography enhanced, rather than detracted from, their experience

2

Buttons were intuitive

5/5 users were able to complete the required tasks of: locating the daily activity and reflection + navigating to their Project Portal

3

Activities felt inclusive

4/5 participants stated that the example activities, as well as the example project options, were of interest to them

3

FAQ's, About, Leadership?

5/5 participants attempted to click on one of the links provided in the footer upon completing the first flow

USER INSIGHTS

1

Great use of color + typography

"I really, really like that the color changes with the day but everything else is the same. It's like juuust enough change for someone like me."

2

Buttons were intuitive

"I didn't have any problems finding what I needed, but I was curious why the 'Project Portal' button is shaped that way?"

3

Activities felt inclusive

"I'd actually want to do some of these activities. They don't seem that hard, if I'm being honest, but I like that they're all connected to doing something in-person in the city. I missed A LOT of that in high school."

3

FAQ's, About, Leadership?

"It would be good if I could click on the FAQ's to get more information, but I know that this is just a tester."

FINAL INSIGHTS

1

TINAP is in a good place!

There is a need for this product, and the initial prototype testing suggests that incoming college students would find participation useful and enjoyable

2

Responsive Site Design

In order to facilitate the experiential facets of TINAP, the website must be designed to be easy-to-navigate on all screen sizes (phone, tablet, and computer)

3

Icons for Chronology

Participants expressed a desire for a more clear indication of which section to go to first, if there is supposed to be a linear movement to their journey

NEXT STEPS

1 Build Out at least 1 week of pages

2 Create responsive site design

3 Add icons for indicating progression on the landing page

