

What is Project Based Learning?

Definition from the Autodesk Foundation

We believe that PBL is at the heart of good instruction because it brings together intellectual inquiry, rigorous real-world standards, and student engagement in relevant and meaningful work. It is a comprehensive instructional model in which project work is central to student understanding of the essential concepts and principles of the disciplines. Well crafted projects:

- Engage and build on student interests and passions
- Provide a meaningful and authentic context for learning
- Immerse students in complex, real-world problems/ investigations without a predetermined solution
- Allow students to take the lead, making critical choices and decisions
- connect students with community resources and experts
- Require students to develop and demonstrate essential skills and knowledge
- Draw on multiple disciplines to solve problems and deepen understanding
- Build in opportunities for reflection and self-assessment
- Result in useful products that demonstrate what students have learned
- Culminate in exhibitions or presentations to an authentic audience

Characteristics of PBL

- Learning is student centered.
- Learning occurs in small student groups.
- Teachers are facilitators or guides
- Problems for the organizing focus and stimulus for learning.
- Problems are a vehicle for the development of clinical problem-solving skills.
- New information is acquired through self-directed learning.

Process of PBL

- Students confront a problem
- In groups, students organize prior knowledge and attempt to identify the nature of the problem.
- Students pose questions of what they do not understand.
- Students design a plan to solve the problem and identify the resources they need.
- Students begin to gather information as the work to solve the problem.

Objectives and Outcomes of PBL

- Problem-solving skills
- Self-directed learning skills
- Ability to find and use appropriate resources
- Critical thinking
- Measurable knowledge base
- Performance ability
- Social and ethical skills
- Self-sufficient and self-motivated
- Facility with computer
- Leadership skills
- Ability to work on a team
- Communication skills
- Proactive thinking
- Congruence with workplace skills