

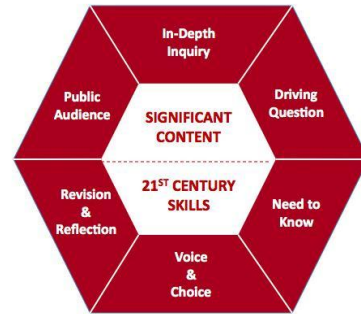
Activity 1.03

Project Based Learning

Excerpt from the Buck Institute for Education: *Project Based Learning for the 21st Century*

Project Based Learning for the 21st Century

Rigorous, meaningful and effective Project Based Learning:



- is intended to teach significant content. Goals for student learning are explicitly derived from content standards and key concepts at the heart of academic disciplines.
- requires critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and various forms of communication. To answer a Driving Question and create high-quality work, students need to do much more than remember information. They need to use higher-order thinking skills and learn to work as a team. They must listen to others and make their own ideas clear when speaking, be able to read a variety of material, write or otherwise express themselves in various modes, and make effective presentations. These skills, competencies and habits of mind are often known as *21st century skills*, because they are prerequisite for success in the 21st century workplace.
- requires inquiry as part of the process of learning and creating something new. Students ask questions, search for answers, and arrive at conclusions, leading them to construct something new: an idea, an interpretation, or a product.
- is organized around an open-ended Driving Question. This focuses students' work and deepens their learning by framing important issues, debates, challenges or problems.
- creates a need to know essential content and skills. Project Based Learning reverses the order in which information and concepts are traditionally presented. A typical unit with a *project* add-on begins by presenting students with knowledge and concepts and then, once gained, giving students the opportunity to apply them. Project Based Learning begins with the vision of an end product or presentation. This creates a context and reason to learn and understand the information and concepts.
- allows some degree of student voice and choice. Students learn to work independently and take responsibility when they are asked to make choices. The opportunity to make choices, and to express their learning in their own voice, also helps to increase students' educational engagement.
- includes processes for revision and reflection. Students learn to give and receive feedback in order to improve the quality of the products they create, and are asked to think about what and how they are learning.
- involves a public audience. Students present their work to other people, beyond their classmates and teacher, in person or online. This *ups the stakes*, increasing students' motivation to do high-quality work, and adds to the authenticity of the project.

If we are serious about reaching 21st Century educational goals, Project Based Learning must be at the center of 21st Century instruction. The project contains and frames the curriculum, which differs from the short *project* or activity added onto traditional instruction. Project-based learning is, "*The Main Course, not Dessert.*"

Resources

Edutopia (<http://www.edutopia.org>)

• Project Based Learning from Start to Finish (<http://www.edutopia.org/stw-project-based-learning-best-practices-new-tech-video>)

Buck Institute: Project Based Learning for the 21st Century (<http://www.bie.org>)

• Base URL (<http://www.bie.org/>)

(all links will open in a new browser window)

Procedure

1. View Edutopia's *Project Based Learning from Start to Finish* (www.edutopia.org/stw-project-based-learning-best-practices-new-tech-video).
2. Throughout each Term you will be working on a project with a collaborative team; this is known as Project Based Learning. Your team will work together to complete Module 10, the culminating event of Term One. Your team can be face-to-face or virtual. The teams will be formed at the beginning of Module 6. Your planning for collaboration starts now. In addition to a reflection for each Module, you will identify how the concepts might be applied to the Module 10 project.



The icon to the left indicates that this information will be useful in your collaborative project presentation.

Preview Module 10 to see how the concepts from each of your Modules will be put to use in your collaborative project.