

ELT



Ireland bulletin

IN THIS EDITION

Exploring Online Reading: The Case of a WebQuest Lesson.

by Maria Karageorgou (Page 4-6)

Effective Teacher Professional Development for Educational Institutions in the Private Sector.

by Le Dinh Bao Quoc (Page 7-10)

What the Future Looks Like for Non-Native Teachers.

by Meri Maroutian (Page 11-12)

Project-Based Learning in the ESL Classroom.

by Paula Rosana Asad (Page 13-15)

Literature as a Bridge between Cultures.

by Vanesa Polastri & Stella Maris Saubidet Oyhamburu (Page 16-17)

Do you teach enough vocabulary? Vocabulary Practice vs. Grammar Overload.

by Domenico Locatelli (Page 18-19)

Making Content More Relevant to Students - How to do it.

by Ana Carolina Cardoso Bedenik (Page 20-22)

How Teachers Can Leverage the Power of Gaming.

by Sean Laurence (Page 23-24)

How to Develop Cultural Awareness Competence in the ELT class.

by Meritxell Blanco (Page 25-26)

Integrated Skills in ELT classes via LMS

by Firos Kalarikkal (Page 27-29)

No.8

19th February 2022

From the ELT Ireland Committee (Pages 2-3)

Welcome to our 8th Bulletin by Laura O'Grady

Letter from the Editor by Amanda McGeer

ELT Ireland Events by Gabriela Pozza

ELT Ireland Manager Meet-Ups: Because managers need a "Staff Room" too by Peter Lahiff

ELT Ireland on Social Media by Dimitra Gkotosopoulou

ELT Ireland Newsletter by Ben Dobbs

Email us to write for the next ELT Ireland Bulletin!

info.eltireland@gmail.com @ELTIreland

elt-ireland.com

Project-Based Learning in the ESL Classroom.

by Paula Rosana Asad

I discovered Project Based Learning while I was looking for alternative ways to assess my students. At that time, I was not satisfied with the way my students were learning. They acquired many concepts by heart, and during oral exams, they felt extremely nervous and anxious. Therefore, I wondered what I could do to make learning a more pleasant experience.

One day I came across this wonderful book called “Hacking Assessment” by Starr Sackstein, and it literally blew my mind! In this book, the author says that projects lead to optimal growth and opportunities to learn in a more relaxed and friendly way. That is what I needed for my students, and from that day on, I have devoted hours and hours to learn about PBL and design projects that spark curiosity and drive language learning.

PBL, as it is known today, evolved from schools of medicine in Canada. It was pioneered by Barrows and Tamblyn at the medical school program at McMaster University in the 1960s. They wanted to design a syllabus that emphasized student-centred and multidisciplinary education. Barrows understood that medicine students had to memorize a large number of facts that may not be relevant to medical practice, so he thought that learning through problem solving would be more effective and beneficial for future doctors. Then, the adoption of PBL expanded to elementary schools, middle schools, high schools and universities.

“ Project-Based Learning is a teaching method in which students acquire knowledge and skills by trying to respond to an engaging question, problem, or challenge. ”

Why PBL?

Project-Based Learning is a teaching method in which students acquire knowledge and skills by trying to respond to an engaging question, problem, or challenge. Students work collaboratively using and developing different skills like creativity, critical thinking and communication.

The Stages of PBL.

Stage 1: The Driving question

It is the challenge or problem that the students must solve. The answer of a driving question is not easily found on google. It makes students think, explore and stay focused. Driving Questions are also open-ended questions; they allow students to approach the challenge from different viewpoints. A driving question calls for in-depth learning exploration and critical thinking. Referring back to DQ for each stage of the project is crucial to push learners in the right direction.

Stage 2: Entry Event or Project Kick-off

It is the activity that will engage learners in the project. It might be a song, a short reading, a video, or a quiz. It is the hook that will generate interest and the need to know more. The entry event should be short but memorable. Novelty can also help to activate the dopamine system and speed up learning.

Stage 3: Knowledge Construction

During this stage, students will build the necessary knowledge to answer the driving question. This knowledge usually involves the subject content and knowledge of the target language. Language is used to mediate and structure knowledge.

Stage 4: Project Development

At this stage, students will work in groups to create a product or develop an activity or task. When students create something of their own, they feel empowered and the drivers of their own learning path. Giving them voice and choice at this stage will truly motivate them to achieve their goals. It is also important to teach collaborative skills to have an optimal learning experience.

Stage 5: Project Presentation

Presenting a product in PBL requires an authentic audience. This audience might be other students, parents, or the community. Authentic audiences help students connect what they did in the classroom to the real world. For the teacher, demonstrating what students have learned is a way of gauging how much knowledge and skills learners have acquired.

Stage 6: Self-evaluation and reflection

The use of rubrics is essential to help learners assess their own work. In education, a rubric means “a set of criteria for grading assignments”. It is important that students know the rubrics very well before doing their project so they know what is expected from them. Teaching students to be critical evaluators is key if we want to empower them and help them gain independence and autonomy.



Dream Up Academia de Ingles

Pic by Author

Examples of some of the projects I designed with my students:

Super Heroes!

Summary: Students will investigate superheroes and find out similarities and differences among them. What do they look like? What superpowers do they have? What can they do? What can't they do? Then, students will create their own superheroes, and describe their abilities and physical appearance.

Optional: They can also create a mascot/pet as their helpers. They will write a paragraph describing their Super Hero and finally, they will design their costumes.

Language Content: Physical Descriptions. Abilities.

Level: A1

The takeaway: We are ALL special.

Stages of the Project:

Stage 1: Driving Questions: How do my Superhero look like? What makes a Superhero?

Stage 2: Guess the Superhero Game: Students choose a card with the description of a Superhero and they try to guess their name.

Stage 3: Find information about your favourite Superhero and talk about it in class.

Stage 4: Students create their own Superhero and complete a worksheet with certain information like secret identity, physical appearance, mission and super powers. Then, they write a paragraph about it.

Stage 5: Students present their Super Heroes to their families.

Stage 6: Finally, they complete a simple form to do a self-evaluation based on the rubrics.

International Cuisine

Summary: Students will learn about food, collect different recipes from around the world and create a blog to teach others about Cultures through food.

Language Content: Food. The Language of recipes. Countries and nationalities

Level: A1+/A2

The takeaway: Food is an expression of cultural identity.

Stages of the Project:

Stage 1: Driving Question: How can I create a blog that will teach other people about Food around the World?

Stage 2: Students discuss in pairs the following quote "Food is an expression of cultural identity". Then, they share their opinions with the rest of the class.

Stage 3: Listening and Reading Comprehension Activities. Students watch a video about Food lunches across the world and then, read a short text about traditional foods from different countries.

Stage 4: Learners choose a country and in small groups (3 or 4), they create a blog that will teach other people about its food. They give their blog a name, share recipes, videos, pictures, interviews, etc.

Stage 5: Students present their blogs and visit other students' blogs to give positive feedback and ask questions if necessary.

Stage 6: Finally, they complete a worksheet to do a self-evaluation and reflection based on the rubrics.

You can see some of my learners' projects on this Padlet.

<https://padlet.com/academiadreamup/tu2r49q4tgrn1wqn>



My Vegetable Garden

Summary: Students will learn about plants and what they can grow in the garden school or their homes. They will prepare the soil; add organic compost, mineral rock pellets, etc. Then, they will plant the seeds in different containers and then put them wherever they want as long as the plants get plenty of sun and a good supply of water.

Language Content: Plants. Food. Environment.

Level: A1

The takeaway: Be patient, nature has its own process of growth.

Stages of the Project:

Stage 1: Driving Question: How can I create my own vegetable garden?

Stage 2: Students learn a song called "The Plant Parts"

Stage 3: Learners read a short text about how plants grow and then label a flower. They also listen to a story called "The Red Moon".

Stage 4: Students choose a location for their vegetable garden and start planting the seeds. They are given a worksheet to keep record of the growth of their plants.

Stage 5: Students share their learning experience on a Padlet that then will be shared with parents.

Stage 6: Students do a 3-2-1 self-assessment. That is, they draw THREE things they liked about their project, write TWO things they learnt and finally, write ONE thing they want to improve next time.

You can see some of my learners' projects on this Padlet.

<https://padlet.com/academiadreamup/lw78h80xwfhse13>



My Video Game tutorial

Summary: Students will plan their video game tutorial/walkthrough. Then, they will record and produce their video. They will pay close attention to grammar, vocabulary and how they pronounce words. Finally, students will add transitions, effects, and captions to their videos and publish their work!

Language Content: Vocabulary related to games. Conditionals 0 and 1.

Level: A2/B1

The takeaway: We can ALL teach something. We are always teachers and learners.

Stages of the Project:

Stage 1: Driving Question: How can I create an entertaining and useful video game tutorial?

Stage 2: Fishbowl: Two learners sit in the middle of a circle and discuss a question about video games. The rest of the class makes observations and then rotate into the circle. Questions: What do you think are the bad consequences of spending too much time on playing games? Would you like to be a game designer? What kinds of games would you design? Have you ever played pac-man? If your answer is "yes", how do you play that game?

Stage 3: Students do a reading comprehension activity about PAC-MAN. Then, watch different video game walk-throughs.

Stage 4: Students plan their video game walk-through, record and produce it. Then, add transitions, effects and captions to their tutorial.

Stage 5: They publish their work on YouTube.

Stage 6: Finally, they complete a worksheet to do a self-evaluation and reflection based on the rubrics

You can see some of my learners' projects on this Padlet.

<https://padlet.com/academiadreamup/wp4unkabnxjs5kt5>



Overall, I recommend using projects in the EFL classroom. It is highly motivating for students as they have a voice and choice, and it reproduces an authentic context. Students also learn to work in groups, develop autonomy and learn about multiple subjects apart from English. I hope you like the project ideas I mentioned here, adapt and adopt them in your own classrooms.

References:

Ross Cooper and Erin Murphy (2016), *Hacking Project Based Learning*, Hack Learning.

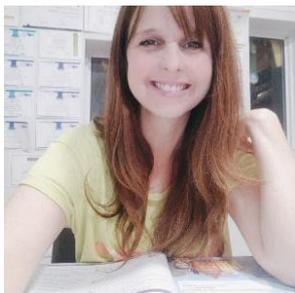
April Smith (2018), *Project Based Learning made simple*, Ulysses Press.

John Spencer and A.J Julian (2017), *Empower*, IMPress.

PBL Works <https://www.pblworks.org/what-is-pbl>

Edutopia <https://www.edutopia.org/project-based-learning>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Problem-based_learning



About the Author:

Paula Rosana Asad - English Language Teacher, teacher-author and mindful educator. She is the founder of the Dream UP! Academia de Ingles situated in Bahia Blanca. the founder of Dream Up! Academia de Ingles, situated in Bahia Blanca, Argentina.

Email: resourcefulenglishteacher@gmail.com

Website: <https://theresourcefulenglishteacher.com/>