Using Literature for Project Based Learning

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CA Reading Association
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“The single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children.”

Literature for Project Based Learning

• Fosters cognitive, linguistic, and vocabulary development, and motivation that promotes further reading
  (Cunningham & Stanovich, 2001; Schleper, 1996; Whitehurst, Arnold, et al., 1994, Whitehurst, et al., 1999)

• Supports receptive language acquisition
  (Dickinson, McCabe, Anastasopoulos, Peisner-Feinberg, & Poes, 2003),

• Increase their expressive languages
  (Senechal, LeFevre, Thomas, & Daley, 1998; Whitehurst & Lonigan, 2001)

• Exposes them to various aspects of language found in print
  (Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005)
“The combination of deficient decoding skills, lack of practice, and difficult materials results in unrewarding early reading experiences that lead to less involvement in reading-related activities.”

(Cunningham & Stanovich, 2001, p. 137)
• Amount of new info produced between 1997-2002 was equal to the amount produced over the entire previous history of the world! (Darling-Hammond et al., 2008)

• Instead of teaching information, we need to teach how to be independent learners, critical thinkers, and successful, motivated readers.
What is Project Based Learning (PBL)?
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Researching to:
• Explore questions
• Solve real word problems
• Engage in design challenge
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Prompt can be answered in multiple ways; open-ended task
What is Project Based Learning (PBL)?

Active student involvement:
• Choice & voice
• Collaboration
• Learn content, skills
• Develop product
• Present information/findings/theories
Why Project Based Learning?

“With project-based learning, students learn by designing and constructing solutions to real world problems.”

--George Lucas
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- Develop 21st Century Competencies:
  - Critical thinking skills
  - Problem solving skills
  - Collaboration
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- Better performance on high stakes test
Shifts in CCSS:

- Inquiry
- Critical Thinking
- Complexity
- Synthesis of Knowledge
- Evidence
PBL & Assessments

- Maximize reading across texts
- Not “best” answer: identify and provide evidence
- Real world application
- Student agency: decision-making & use of strategies
Steps in PBL

Choosing area of interest

Building background knowledge of content
  • how much from teacher, from student?

Providing appropriate texts/resources, vs student finding
  • Appropriately leveled, challenging
  • Accurate sources (google search, primary texts)

Research techniques
  • Guidance through research techniques

Recording findings

Reporting findings
Resources

Buck Institute for Education: bie.org


Larmer, J., Ross, D. & Mergendoller, J. (2009). *Project based learning (PBL) starter kit: To-the-point advice, tools and tips for your first project in middle or high school.* Novato, CA: Buck Institute for Education.