AN E-BOOK COMPANION TO
"KEEP IT REAL WITH PBL"

PBL-LITE

A Practical Guide for Modifying PBL for Virtual and Hybrid Learning

Dr. Jennifer Pieratt

About the Author 3

Why We Need PBL, Now.....4

Permission for PBL-lite.....6

Steps to designing PBL-lite 8

Create a rich context 8
GET Clear: Objectives, tasks, success criteria 10
CREATE A HUB: RESOURCE CURATION 11
prepare to launch 11
Asynchronous and Synchronous Learning Considerations 13

Assessment: The Virtual Feedback Loop.....18

Planning and Facilitating Field work 22

Virtual Exhibition 24

Appendix: 26

Model PBL-lite project.....26

Additional Virtual Learning Resources.....33

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jenny Pieratt, Phd is author of award-nominated “Keep it Real with PBL”, Speaker, Mom of 2 (age 9 and 10), and President and Founder of CraftED Curriculum-an education company that provides products and services to schools looking to implement Project Based Learning. Dr. Pieratt’s work has an international reach and is well-respected in her field and community; to learn more about her and read recent news stories about her work you can visit https://craftedcurriculum.com/ and follow her work on social media @crafted_jennypieratt.

WHY WE NEED PBL, NOW

The Pandemic and PBL

With school closures in March of 2020 schools were faced with some incredible challenges. Since then teachers and school leaders have worked tirelessly to develop systems and structures for teaching and learning. As we move toward a new era of hybrid and virtual learning I hope to build upon a case for leveraging project-based learning (PBL), or a new term that I will introduce "PBL-lite", as a framework for deeper learning in this new space.

The purpose of this guide is to provide practical resources for framing instruction in a non-traditional setting, meaning virtual or hybrid learning. The steps and tips provided are informed by both theory and practice-both virtual learning and project-based learning. While PBL remains a Progressive approach to instructional design at this point in time, PBL-lite provides a promising framework for improving the learner-experience and here is why:

Our students need to be engaged

Now more than ever our students need to be truly enrolled in their learning. In virtual learning it's easy to feel isolated-some days you may not interact with others and it's difficult to see how you fit into a bigger picture. Not to mention, right now our society is set up to distance us from many things: people, places and our world as we understood it a few weeks ago. For these reasons, asking a nine-year-old to independently plug away behind a screen for hours each day, complete printed worksheets or tap their way through never-ending math tutorials feels pretty trivial in the grand scheme of things. And while we know there is no shortage of frameworks for engaging students, I happen to think Project based learning (PBL) is possibly the best and here is why:

1. PBL allows for students to explore **real-world issues, And** insider tip: there is a whole lot going on around us right now!
2. PBL provides a nice balance of freedom and structure (AKA "**voice and choic**e")
3. PBL easily integrates **technology students are familiar with** as a tool for learning (not the other way around!)
4. PBL can easily integrate content we need to cover but positions it as a context for learning that students are **interested in and curious about**.
5. PBL provides **dynamic learning experiences** that can seamlessly adapt to online learning

Our students need 21st-century skills

In the turmoil of the current COVID-10 pandemic, 21st-century skills are more important now than ever. As we face an unknown future that is going to require problem-solving and innovative thinking it is clear that skills such as collaboration and creativity are no longer simply "soft skills", rather they are a necessity for our students entering the "real-world". But with our students at a distance, how do we continue to develop these important skills? Surprisingly it's not that different behind a screen, then in your classroom-best practices in teaching and learning still apply; however, the vehicle and route we take will require some rethinking.

Getting Smart Blog: "Why PBL Can't Wait"

"#Realtalk: Basic tasks that simply require rote memorization and mindless clicking don't engage students...Meaningful and complex tasks, such as those in [virtual] PBL, provide opportunities for students to flex important muscles such as criticial thinking and creativity."

-JENNY PIERATT

In the midst of the COVID-10 pandemic, **21st century skills** are more important than ever. As we face an unknown future that is going to require problem-solving and innovative thinking, it is clear that skills such as collaboration and creativity are no longer simply “soft skills”. They're now a necessity for our society to adapt to new challenges. But with our students at a distance, how do we continue to develop these important skills? Surprisingly it’s not that different in a virtual space than in a” brick and mortar" classroom. Best practices in teaching and learning still stand; however, the tools and mediums we use will require some adapting.

Engaging in meaningful tasks

Under the time crunch to frantically adapt to our new normal behind screens, our default is often to revert back to basic instruction. In a virtual learning setting this looks like uploading worksheets to complete, daily letters to students with isolated tasks listed, or perhaps long lists of links to online video tutorials for students to watch. Now more than ever our students need meaningful tasks to engage in. Basic tasks that simply ask for rote memorization and where information is solely exchanged in a one-way input/output don’t engage students, nor do they ask students to go deeper in their thinking. Meaningful and complex tasks provide opportunities for students to flex important muscles such as **critical thinking**. Meaningful tasks designed to scaffold the creation of student products can push students deeper in their knowledge and thinking.

Think about your immediate surroundings-who and what is being impacted most? What problem can students solve? There is no shortage of content and possibilities here! Then consider how your content can help students to grapple with these real-world issues. **Project-based learning** is one of many frameworks that can provide students with ample opportunity to engage in meaningful tasks, and a “teacher win” is that **PBL can also easily be adapted to online learning**.

The Real-world is ripe!

Another important component of project design is developing a statement of Enduring Understanding. This is a statement that contextualizes standards and disciplines in the real world; it also strives to answer the important question: “what do we want our students to remember ten years from now?”. I’m certain that any child older than five, no matter how much a parent may try to shelter them, will remember the term “Coronavirus” and what life was like during COVID-19. From media coverage to household conversations, the world is filled with critical issues and questions right now; heck, for many of us as adults the world is filled with more questions than answers and more problems than solutions. Ready for the silver lining? **All this social, emotional, physical and economic turmoil means that the world around us is ripe for PBL!** NOBODY has answers which means there truly is no one solution to any of the problems around us.

Can your students use “flatten the curve” graphics to make predictions and recommendations?

Can your students do an opinion writing and make proposals for canceled events due to COVID-19?

Can your students create an awareness campaign for the neighborhood to stay at home?

I could keep going ALL day with ideas for projects, but you get my point….there is not a lack of content for PBL right now, and these questions sound a lot more **interesting and rigorous** than moving through ST Math or doing comprehension questions about the Civil War. We know that as humans we need to be connected; and while social and physical connection is critical, I want to argue that academic connection is also important. Now is the time for us to think about how we can engage our students – we have a beautiful moment to reinvent teaching and learning right NOW; so no, PBL can’t wait!

PERMISSION FOR PBL-LITE

On a good day before COVID-19, most teachers would tell me PBL was overwhelming and too-time consuming; so it’s not lost on me what a big ask PBL is right now for many teachers who are feeling the pressure from technology overload and “social distancing fatigue”. Given the current circumstances, I hope teachers can find a way to give themselves permission to do “PBL-lite”, which is a modified version of PBL that can work in virtual and hybrid learning if we rethink our entry point to teaching and learning. In PBL-lite there are some key differences and important reminders that will make it feel like an easier lift:

- All learning doesn’t have to be collaborative. Keep projects general enough that they can be individualized to students, but don’t worry about frequent collaboration if that overwhelms you.

- Projects don’t have to last for an extended amount of time-keep it short and manageable for everyone; two weeks seems to be the sweet spot for our family.

- Feeling like you can't provide feedback to students on project work? The teacher doesn't have to be the only one giving feedback-think about how you can close the feedback loop by leaning on experts, adults at home and peers.

- Not all learning has to relate to the project. If connecting math to social studies feels like a reach, then it probably is. Consider keeping some of those basic learning activities included in your schedule (maybe as self-paced activities, or morning assignments with "PBL" in the afternoon) if that helps ease your fears of students not getting exposure to important content.

To hear Jenny talk to educators about PBL-lite visit this youtube video. You can also read this article by Jenny.

To learn more about Project-based learning as a pedagogy visit these resources:

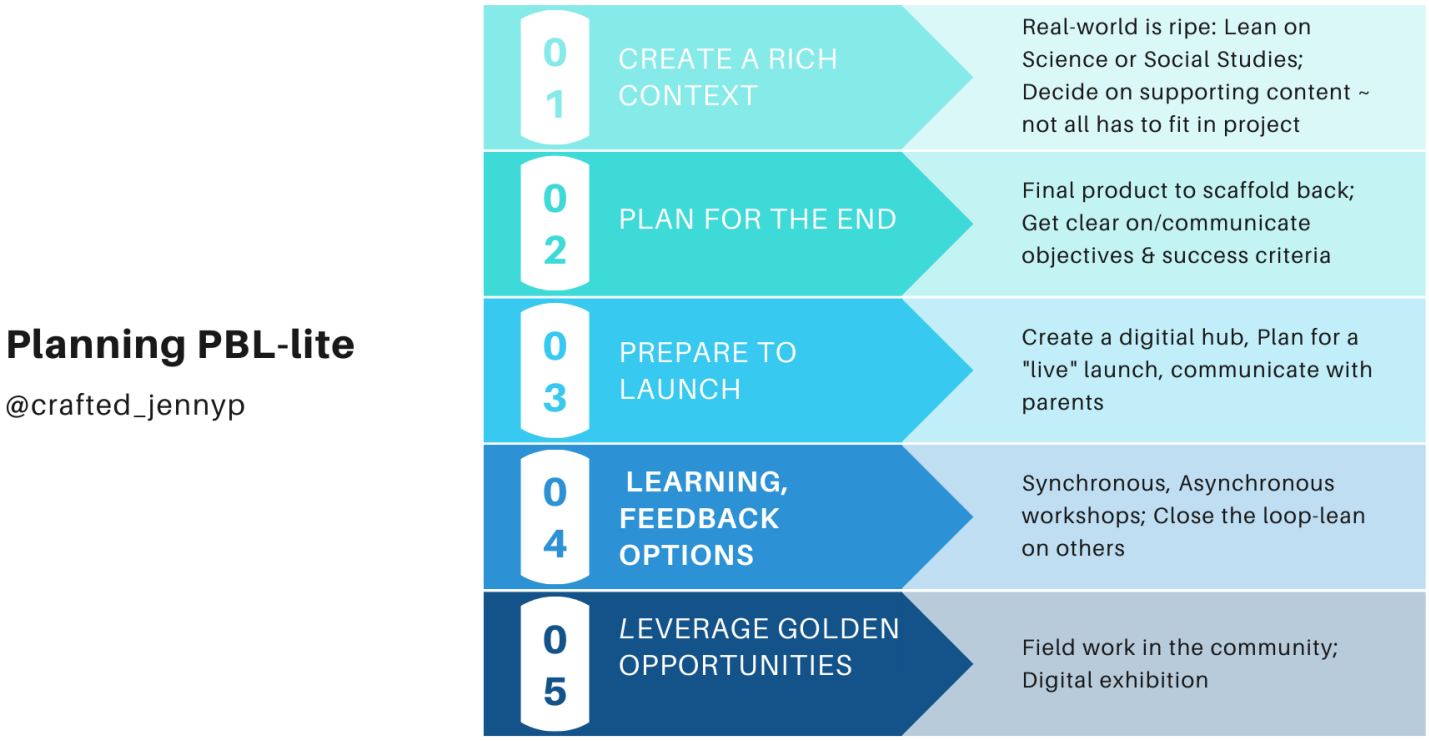
- How to plan a project and assessment , Cult of Pedagogy podcast interview
- PBL E-Courses and virtual learning support
- What is PBL explained
- Keep it Real with PBL: A guide to planning PBL and the Corwin Companion Site
- E-guide to modifying Keep it Real with PBL for virtual learning

What do you see as being the key differences between PBL and PBL- lite?

STEPS TO DESIGNING PBL-LITE

Designing PBL-lite in a Virtual, Hybrid Learning Environment

There are many challenges to designing learning in a setting that is completely new to us as educators. This guide is intended to provide a framework to help teachers and school leaders consider how to use pedagogical practices of PBL as a context for teaching and learning in a virtual or hybrid school environment. This new framework proposes 5 steps to planning, rather than the previous 10 outlined in Keep it Real with PBL by Dr. Jenny Pieratt. The following explains each step in detail.



CREATE A RICH CONTEXT

When I co-plan projects with teachers I encourage them to start with their “Driving Standards”: Social Studies and Science. While all standards are important, these two provide a context for learning that ELA and math can easily support. Social Studies and Science standards are often written thematically which makes it easy for teachers to think about “big ideas” for which all learning can connect to when they are planning. While learning is all around us, Social Studies and Science provide a great deal of relevance to real-world topics, which is the bedrock to designing authentic projects. When students understand the purpose of their learning they are more likely to be engaged, which is a critical element to learning that is missing right now. We must move beyond “the basics” of math and ELA and reframe the context for which students are learning in this new environment, and I think prioritizing science and social studies through PBL can help us do that. This doesn’t mean that ELA and math aren’t important because we all know students are likely behind where we would want them to be at this time, after missing critical classroom time last Spring; however, leave teaching those skills for time together in the classroom and let PBL guide the context for learning and practicing those skills, at home.

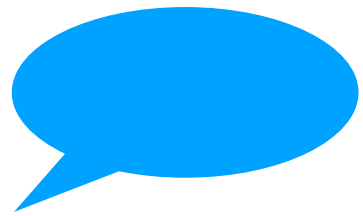
Ideas for Science and Social studies as a context for virtual, hybrid learning (PBL):

Science	Social Studies
Recycling	Local history
The Outdoors, Nature	Geography, mapping
weather	Local news, issues, laws
animals	Community
Sports	Change agents
Engineering, Design (architencture, playgrounds, etc.)	Economy

When planning PBL we always start with a Driving Question-an open-ended question that guides all of the learning, a question students can grow with throughout the process, and a question that they can strive to answer and showcase their response through a final product. The process of PBL, driven by a DQ encourages students to grapple, wonder, collaborate and think outside the box. By developing rich DQs to guide student learning we can open up the opportunities for students to continue to develop 21s century skills. Look to your Driving Standards to help you contextualize your DQ. All of these same rules apply to PBL-lite!

For more on driving questions watch this video where Jenny describes more about how to craft a Driving Question.

What is a driving question, grounded in your standards that you can develop to engage your students?



GET CLEAR: OBJECTIVES, TASKS, SUCCESS CRITERIA

Students will need clarity now more than ever before. When designing projects it is always important to plan with the end in mind. By getting clear on our “end game”, we are able to think through what students will need to be able to know and do, and more importantly what our moves will be to get them there. In virtual or hybrid learning it is imperative that we ‘translate’ and communicate those steps for students to be able to implement independently, from home.

If students are learning or working on their project independently at home you will want to be sure to do the following three things for *every* assignment/task:

1. Post the DQ and stage of the project *

2. Define your objectives (“SWBAT”) for each task/lesson and translate teaching objectives to success criteria: "I can…”, “I will be able to…”

3. Provide resources for support in multiple modalities to aid with differentiation **

*PBL Pro note: You may even include an arrow to your project timeline as a graphic to help students that reads “you are here”.

** To learn more about differentiation in PBL visit HERE. Sneak peak: Another PBL Pro note: “See three before me” is a great phrase, especially for virtual learning. Consider providing students with three ways to access the information. To further develop their agency, require that students try to answer their own question in three different ways before reaching out for help.

#realtalk: As teachers, we know that we have to provide instructions three ways, three different times in the classroom. You can double that in a virtual classroom! Because e-learning requires so much independence and agency from learners, they need to be especially clear on the task at hand.

By including these 3 components in the learning you design, you are teeing yourself up for best practices of assessment, as well! Your objectives should be tied to however you will ultimately be assessing student knowledge and skills; and writing these as success criteria also sets students up to easily reflect on their learning

More on assessment in PBL here (but way more ahead!):

- Assessment for early elementary
- The feedback loop in distance learning
- Assessment in asynchronous learning
- Planning Assessment for PBL ON YOUR FEET GUIDE
- Sharing the Assessment load in virtual learning
- Be sure to check out the appendix where you can see a model student reflection as self-assessment with clear success criteria embedded into a project!

Take a quick process pause to help you identify student success criteria. What will students be able to know and/or do to show they have mastered the necessary content? You can even try writing it in student-facing language (“I can…”).

CREATE A HUB: RESOURCE CURATION

As teachers we know how important organization is, however in virtual and hybrid learning it is imperative that all project resources are in a location that is easily accessible to parents and students. While many schools use fancy platforms for virtual learning, I want to make the case that less is more for a project hub. A simple Google Document with the flow of the project and hyperlinked resources within each step works magic!

Here is what you want to include in a project hub:

1. DQ, Final Product, Exhibition
2. Links to entry document, calendar, assessment tools
3. Steps of the project
4. Project resources within each step

Click here to see a sample project hub. And visit here to learn more about how to incorporate your hub into launching a project.

PREPARE TO LAUNCH

In virtual learning the question we must constantly grapple with is “what can be done asynchronously and what HAS to be done synchronously?”. Similarly, in hybrid learning the constant question on our minds will be “what do I do in class vs what do I assign at home”. When designing PBL for a virtual environment it’s important to do a LIVE launch together; In that same vein, for hybrid models it will be important to plan for the launch to happen at school. And here is why:

- The launch sets the stage, contextualizes learning
- The launch will help continue to build a community of learners
- The launch establishes important systems and structures for the learning ahead

How to Launch

We are all guilty of it-the project launch is sometimes the last thing to plan after you have spent countless hours getting your project ready to go. Well, now that we are shifting to online learning the Launch couldn't be more important…or more exciting! Here are some ideas for ways to launch your project virtually:

- The Question Formulation Technique can live on! You can present students with a "focus" such as a video link, send students on virtual field work with Google Earth, or have a recorded webinar with an expert. Then have students jot down their questions, sort and prioritize in a Google Doc. Wrap up the launch with a submitted reflection for "next steps"
- Need something more simple? How about a PowerPoint or Google Slides filled with images related to the subject of your project. Students can then respond to a simple prompt using Visible or Artful Thinking Routines.

And don't forget!:

- A project overview (or one-pager) is even more critical in virtual learning because students will really need to have ownership over their learning. Beyond just providing them with an overview (or quick video for younger students) you should ask them to engage with the overview in some way-either a quick "exit ticket" or journal entry or even a voice recording of 3 things they will be doing and learning about in this project ahead.
- Document those Need to Knows (NTKs) and come back to them often! Google Docs can be a really easy way for students to record, share and easily move their Need to Knows to Knows. This is really important in virtual learning spaces because it is a way to track thinking and keep students engaged in their learning and growth.

Here are a few ideas for conducting a project launch together in the classroom, with a follow-up at home:

Launch plans	Class time	Home time
Simulation, Lab	Debrief experience	Reflection-collect Knows and Need to knows and next steps in a google doc
Media share (watch video, view photos, listen to song)	Use artful or visible thinking routines to share out and collect as "model of excellence" to reference later	Develop questions following Question Formulation Technique process to help land on a research question
Guest speaker	Model, conduct interview	Reflect on what was learned and develop questions for learning in project. Send a thank you note to guest speaker and include 3 things you learned!

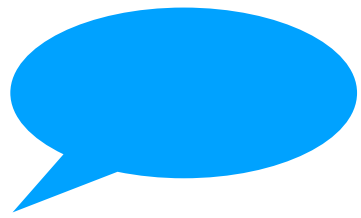
- If you are in a virtual setting be sure to visit this article to learn more about my synchronous sandwich because it applies to a project launch, as well!
- Need more ideas? Be sure to visit the appendix where you can see several ideas for a model launch in a PBL- lite virtual project!
- Are you getting excited about planning?! Visit the appendix for the PBL-lite planning form or make a copy of this Google Doc template.

ASYNCHRONOUS AND SYNCHRONOUS LEARNING CONSIDERATIONS

While real-time class time is often most familiar and preferred, it won't be possible to deliver all instruction in our "brick and mortar" classroom in a hybrid setting, and everything just seems to go slower in a virtual setting! Rather than thinking about learning as something that always has to happen together in a classroom or even "together" online, virtual learning provides us with a wonderful opportunity to rethink personalized learning through asynchronous teaching (translation for my friends who are new to virtual learning: asynchronous just means the learning doesn't happen all at the same time). So here are some best practices to consider as you create these learning experiences for your students at home:

Create a Dynamic Agenda

Just like in a classroom, we want to think about creating engaging learning experiences for students. In a virtual setting that means presenting the content to students in a variety of ways. No child (or adult for that matter) wants to sit and read instructions and lessons on a screen all day. As you design your daily lessons, think about mixing up material by **using videos**– you can record yourself giving instruction or directions rather than typing these out (although it's usually a good idea to provide Sparknotes of your videos for your visual learners). You can also provide videos from reliable sources such as BrainPop or Mystery Doug to teach new content rather than simply recording a video of yourself providing a lesson. If you do need to show students something through a tutorial, you can use Screencast to record videos of your screen. Here is an example of how video can be used in a daily agenda to keep information and learning dynamic:



What are 3 diverse ways you can provide information? OR what are three different ways students can learn the same information?

Daily Dynamic Agenda

- Intro video message from teacher with typed lesson agenda
- Reading (Newsela) or video from reliable source for background knowledge (BrainPop or Mystery Doug)
- Reflection or comprehension question (typed or Flipgrid video)
- Screencast video of teacher providing instruction
- Practice time for student -submit to teacher for feedback

Make It Interactive

Although a student is working independently in what can easily feel like a silo, their learning experience can remain interactive. It's important in online learning that students constantly engage with the content and continue thinking critically as they work. When I design learning modules, I build in "**think time**" for learners to reflect and jot down ideas (**Pro tip: Visible Thinking Routines** are awesome for this). I also create prompts and tasks for them to apply content presented as the module moves along. Providing several "**Do Nows**" can help ensure that learning is progressing throughout the module, similar to layers of learning or scaffolding that you would normally build into your classroom. If a student waits until the end of watching a series of videos or reading texts to complete a task, the chances of their "spacing out" is pretty good.

Other Ideas for keeping students mentally engaged:

- Doodle Brain Notes
- Use Flipgrid or a Padlet for students to contribute text, video, or pictures
- More on Visible Thinking Routines and e-learning
- Choice boards can be a great way to differentiate and also keep learning interactive with some "voice and choice". Learn more here.
- LOTS more ideas in this Google Doc

What is one thing from the resources provided above that you are excited to try, to make learning more interactive for your students?

Plan daily instruction and scaffolding

Similar to your classroom setting, I like to use the workshop method for virtual learning. Here is what that looks like in a sample daily agenda:

Opening task	Video or typed instructions, prompt for "warm-up" and revisit NTKs
Daily mini-lesson	Asynchronous recording of me speaking about a new concept/skill, links to explore, and an assignment to practice the specific skill.
Project work time	Synchronous class time, or "Office Hours" (calendar sign up for a specific time) for me to pop in the virtual room to check in with students on their learning and project work, review benchmark assignments and reteach if needed.
Small group instruction	Assigned times for students to attend a virtual workshop with me to either further scaffold a project skill or provide a challenge option to push students further in their learning.
Closing reflection	Journal or exit ticket reflection of daily learning and revisit NTKs and next steps.

In a hybrid setting you have even more flexibility than what is outlined in this graphic for a fully virtual setting. This means that you can pick and chose from these 5 phases listed above, what makes the most sense to run in your actual classroom. You may also want to check out this Virtual station rotation digital template , as well!

And be sure to learn about the synchronous sandwich as an ULTRA-PBL-Lite way to think about planning your daily lessons. You can make a copy of the planning template in Google Docs by clicking here.

Facilitating Collaboration

Collaboration can be tricky for in-person learning, let alone virtual spaces, but during times of distancing a teachers' ability to maintain a learning community with human connection is really important. One of my favorite ways to facilitate and scaffold collaboration skills are through protocols. You can see ALL my favorite discussion protocols for virtual learning on this blog post. You can also read a list of ideas for virtual learning activities to promote student collaboration HERE.

Here are a few more tips and tools to help with student collaboration:

Group work tips

Tip 1: Establish norms and expectations together
Tip 2: Keep it simple-keep the task simple and keep collaborative work times to shorter, specified time allotments as you transition.
Tip 3: Use breakout rooms that you can monitor -I love breakout rooms in many video conferencing platforms because it's a great way to group participants but also allows you to pop in on them!
Tip 4: Use familiar tools that can be monitored -are we seeing a theme with "monitored"?! By now almost everybody is familiar with all things Google-Docs is a great way to interact with comments within a group.

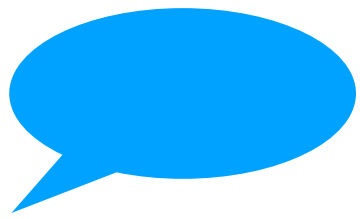
Here are other tools that allow for collaboration to continue from the school setting to home setting:

Flipgrid
Padlet
Trello
Peardeck

Align tech tools to 21st century skills

Virtual learning requires us to leverage technology like never before, but we must be careful that technology is being used intentionally as a tool to build student skills, rather than the tools driving instruction. **Once you consider what 21st century skills students will need in order to engage in the meaningful tasks you have designed, next consider which tools may help them to develop or showcase those skills.** Here are some examples:

Skill	Virtual tools
Collaboration	• Google Docs, Slides as collaborative tools • Zoom breakout rooms for groups • **Online protocols** for discussion • **Trello** for group management
Oral Communication	• Flipgrid to record oral presentations • Zoom to record interviews with experts or end-users • Youtube or Screencast to record student speech or demonstration
Written Communication	• Wordpress for published blogs • Google docs with comment feature for feedback • **Piktochart** infographics to synthesize research
Creativity	• **Note.ly Stickies** for brainstorming • **Gamestorming** protocols for synchronous work time • **Canva** templates and digital design



What 21st century skills listed above feel really important to you? How will you scaffold those this year?

ASSESSMENT: THE VIRTUAL FEEDBACK LOOP

Every teacher will tell you that assessment is one of the most challenging components of PBL; and in virtual learning that is especially true. However, committing to upholding best practices of formative assessment is critical to ensuring that PBL-lite remain rigorous. Here are some tips to help:

Provide midway feedback

During these times of distance learning, teaching is hard; and closing **the feedback loop** is especially difficult right now. Every teacher knows the power of an "over the shoulder glance" when it comes to checking for understanding. But how do we do this in a virtual classroom? We can't simply depend on adaptive technology programs to let our students know if they are actually mastering content; this feedback is not descriptive enough to allow for assessment for learning but rather assessment of learning. So what can this look like in our new reality of teaching and learning?

Establish systems

As tech tools continue to be thrown your way, proceed with caution and try to be mindful of entry points to these apps and platforms as tools to help you teach. What I mean by this is to try to first consider what systems you want in place to help you deliver content and engage with students in a meaningful way; then find the technology that best supports that process- not the other way around. Here are a few systems that support **Blended Learning**, which is a helpful approach to teaching during distance learning.

- **Asynchronous Learning Modules**-these are self-paced "workshops" that include content offered in a variety of formats (PPT slides, videos, reading, etc.)
- **Live workshops**-these are very similar to the lectures or mini-workshops you likely ran in your classroom, only they are in front of your screen rather than in your classroom. You can even record these workshops in case students need to reference them again later or in the event they can't attend at the time you offer it.
- **Office hours**-you likely remember these from college. These are simply blocks of time that you are available to support students who need extra help. Although these are optional, you can strongly encourage specific students to attend them.
- **Group break outs**- you can assign students to meet as groups during specific times to either work on a collaborative task or to provide one another feedback on their work. These should be short meetings (15-30 min) and a teacher should be present to ensure that students are on task.

- **Feedback Friday-** this is a day dedicated to checking in with each student and providing *descriptive feedback* on their work and learning.

Establish structures

A weekly schedule can be useful to guide the process for collecting resources for students, but also helpful for parents and students to see "at a glance" what they should be completing during the week, and what supports are available to help them. Below is a weekly schedule structured to support teaching a science concept, from **this project** that I designed for parents or teachers to run at home.

	Mon	**Tues**	**Weds**	**Thurs**	**Fri**
Science Week 3: Content	"Intro to the Magnus Effect"	"The Reverse Magnus Effect"	"Applying the Magnus Effect"	"Explaining the Magnus Effect" Teacher Office Hours	Feedback Friday
Learning Opportunities	Asynchronous Learning module [reading, video]	Small group workshops, Teacher Office Hours	Live Synchronous workshop	Group breakout rooms (peer feedback)	
Pacing:	Complete assignment 3A	Complete assignment 3B	Complete assignment 3C (self revision)	Complete assignment 3D	Individual reflection

Share the load

Teachers don't have to **carry this load alone**- we can think about how to share the load with students and experts. In a perfect world we would be able to sit next to every student and "catch them" before they go too far down the wrong path in their learning. However, most teachers in the current set up aren't able to do that; So here are a few ways that students can get feedback independent of the teacher:

- **Self checklist**-This is a great "safety net" for students to be sure they have what they need in a given assignment.
- **Peer feedback**-Students can use Flipgrid, Google Doc comments, or group break out rooms to do this. Pro tip: **Scaffold this process for students** the first time they do it and be sure to provide students with sentence frames.
- **Seek out feedback**-Require students to request feedback from three individuals (this could be parents, older siblings, family friends, etc.)
- **Ask an expert**- Provide students with an email template to ask an expert for their feedback on their work.

Close the loop

In the sample science schedule posted above you will notice that I have “Feedback Friday” built into the week. Not only is this a time for the teachers to “catch up” on assessment and feedback, but it’s also a time for students to self reflect on their learning which, as we know, is an important part of assessment *for* learning, rather than *of* learning. These reflections are beyond **daily reflections**, and are more in-depth opportunities for students to think about themselves as a learner.

As we continue to navigate these unprecedented times, topics like assessment and feedback will likely flesh themselves out a bit more. Until then establishing systems and structures will help chart a path toward teaching and learning that likely feels a bit more familiar to you and your students. We know that feedback is a best practice of teaching and learning, but it is especially important in virtual learning. Without the ability to peek over a student’s shoulder and see how they are doing with material you recently presented, a student can very quickly go down the wrong path, or worse yet, fall behind. As you plan your week ahead, think about building in **check-points** to ensure students are mastering new content you have presented in your modules. These check-points can be online **quizzes** in Schoology or Quizlet to check for comprehension, **performance-based assignments** in Flipgrid, or a Zoom or Google Hangout to **talk** through content and check for understanding. See below for an example of building in check-ins to your asynchronous learning agenda.

Weekly Blended Learning Model

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Complete Learning Module 1 Submit assignment 1 Book Club Assignment	Review feedback from teacher and revise assignment Passion Project Work If emailed, attend small group meeting to review content	Complete Learning Module 2 Submit assignment 2 and complete Flipgrid task Teacher video check-ins (last names A-L)	Review feedback from teacher and revise assignment If emailed, complete small group learning module Teacher video check-ins (last names M-Z)	Complete Learning Module 3 Submit assignment 3 and complete quiz Passion Project work

Explicitly teach and assess the skills

It’s easy to become hyper-focused on the standards and content-based skills of a particular discipline, especially when we feel as though we are operating in a silo in the virtual world; however, a more expansive perspective of teaching that focuses on developing 21st century skills will only enhance student learning in a given content area. In order to fully develop these skills they must be explicitly taught- what I mean by this is that they must be **scaffolded and assessed with the same commitment as standards-based content**. In practice this means:

- Teacher- created **blended-learning workshops** to model and practice 21st century skills in a given context, prior to asking students to embody those skills. **A Fish Bowl protocol** can easily be adapted to virtual learning by either pre-recording a video of a small group of students for others to watch, or running the protocol live in smaller Zoom breakout rooms.
- **Students analyzing models** of 21st century skills and applying observations to student work. This can easily be done as an **asynchronous** learning module using **Visible Thinking Routines.**
- **Students reflecting frequently** on 21st century skills through student work and metacognition. This can happen as a submitted journal entry or a more robust success criteria

reflection using a 21st century skills rubric, such as these from **New Tech Network**. To see a sample project fully built out with both content and 21st century skills click **here.**

- **Teacher feedback** on individual student growth and progress of 21st century skills in a given project or unit each week, so that the student has the opportunity to apply the feedback and continue to develop those skills.

Remember you have to explicitly teach students how to give quality feedback! Here are steps for running a virtual, in-depth critique.

PBL up close: How to Run a virtual critique

1. Establish a virtual classroom **climate** for critique by co-creating norms for giving and receiving feedback. Post and revisit these norms frequently.
2. Show students the **value** of giving specific feedback by asking them to watch this video as preparation in advance of your virtual class time.
3. **Analyze high quality models** of final products, with the help of Visible or Artful Thinking Routines. Students can collectively identify for example "what defines a successful Public Service Announcement?" or "what is an effective marketing campaign?". Student responses can be captured in a Google Doc, either synchronously or asynchronously. Later in the project process the teacher can ask the class to return to this list created to provide peer feedback or to self reflect.
4. **Model** for students how to give quality feedback. You can pre-record this as a video or you can do this live for students using a "virtual fishbowl" modified protocol.
5. Provide **sentence frames** for students to reference when they provide feedback. In my On your Feet Guide: "Planning and Assessing PBL" publishing this August, I provide sentence frames for Positive Feedback and Push Feedback-be sure to check it out! Other favorite sentence frames include warm and cool feedback in the form of a t-chart, 2 Wonders and a Wish, and the sandwich feedback explained here.
6. Lean on **technology** to help collect and document student feedback. Flipgrid, Peardeck and Padlet are great tools for this-along with others listed here.
7. Be sure to ask students to **do something with the feedbac**k they received (ie., revise a draft of their work). This officially closes the feedback loop and helps build student agency!

What are 3 main things you want to remember about assessment in PBL-lite?

PLANNING AND FACILITATING FIELD WORK

Field work provides the most exciting opportunity for hybrid learning within PBL. Field work is when students engage in work “in the field” to push deeper in thier learning. In PBL this is very carefully noted as a much different experience than a field trip in that students are actively building knowledge and are provided the opportunity to apply their learning form the experience to project work. Field work can include any of the following:

- A trip to conduct observations
- Capturing footage (pictures, tallies, videos, etc.)
- An interview, focus groups (end users, experts, etc.)
- A guest speaker visit
- Feedback collection on project work (end users, experts, etc.)

Are you in a situation that doesn’t allow you to ask students to engage in these types of activities or perhaps they don’t have access to these types of resources? Well here are some virtual alternatives for field work:

- Live webcams
- Zoom meetings or Facetime calls
- Google earth trip
- Google Doc feedback on project work

Prior to COVID-19 field work was viewed as too complicated by most teachers because of the logistics involved in taking students off campus. However, now with students out of the classroom throughout the week, this is the perfect chance for them to engage in meaningful learning on their own.

Here are some ideas for field work that supports project learning:

Project context	Field work
Designing a dream home	Bike ride to collect photos of houses for a vision board
Building/Developing a dream home	Price research at Home Depot for materials
Writing, producing and publishing a book	Zoom call with a published author
Writing draft of a book	Google doc feedback from 3 peers/family members with structured questions for feedback

Best practices for field work include:

- Ask students to take “field notes” to capture their thinking and learning (see below for an example)
- Have students debrief the field work experience with the group so that others can learn from their experiences
- Ask students to reflect on what they learned while it’s fresh!
- Build in application of learning from the field work to the actual project

A hybrid schedule with field work in a given week could look like this:

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri
School	Reading/Writing Workshop	Project Launch	Reading/Writing Workshop	Project Work	Reading/Writing Workshop
	Math	Science Lab /SS	Assessment, reflection	Science Lab/SS	Feedback
Home	Skill reinforcement , self paced modules (to be continued throughout the week at home)	Project research	Project research	Project ideation, small group virtual meet	Field work as project research continued- prepare to debrief Monday

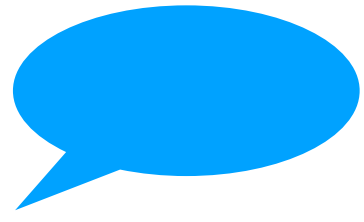
VIRTUAL EXHIBITION

Sharing student work and learning with an authentic audience is a best practice of PBL and one that we don't have to give up on during these challenging times of virtual and hybrid learning. In fact, the world is more engaged on their devices and present in their community now than ever before-so the opportunities are truly endless for ways that students can get their work in front of people. Below are some ideas and vehicles for students to share their learning beyond the classroom or parents at home. Remember, a best practice of PBL planning is to plan with the end in mind, so be sure to think about who students will share their final products with, in the early stages of project planning.

Project work	Audience	Format
Published book by kids for kids	Young readers	Create an e-book to share via Blurb
Published book by kids for kids	All readers	Virtual author event- webinar to include authors sharing a piece of their writing with a virtual book signing
Public Service Announcement	Specific demographic	Link on a Padlet and market across social media
Print Campaign	Community	Print and post in neighborhood locations
Social Media Campaign	Parents of school community	School account takeover
Opinion writing	General readers	Op-ed piece to local news source

Closing Thoughts

Even for a seasoned educator, teaching all of the sudden feels new…and scary… and overwhelming! My hope is that by providing this new framework for PBL-lite, it will feel like a framing for how you can approach your craft, during a time when so much of our day seems to lack the structures that many of us thrived on in the classroom. Together, we will continue to learn and grow! Stay connected~ find me on social media @crafted_jennyp!



Closing Reflection:

What feels like a paradigm shift for you?

How might you turn lemons into lemonade given any of the tips, tools or ideas presented in this book?

APPENDIX:

MODEL PBL-LITE PROJECT

Project Title: Who is: A story that must be told

Grades: Upper Elementary
Content Area: ELA (narrative reading/writing, research, production of writing, speaking and listening), SS extension options, 21st century skills: agency, written communication

Duration: 2 weeks

Overview	*Brief description of the project, including what you will explore and what you will create.* This project will explore the process and production of writing a “Who Is” book about an important figure with an untold story. Students will engage in research, reflection, revision and exhibition. At the conclusion of this virtual project students will create a published book in the format of a “Who Is” story that will be shared and celebrated in a virtual author event. Product: Students will complete 5 Benchmarks, or phases, of this project to move through the entire production and publishing process. At the conclusion of the projects student will have created a published book to share with an audience in a virtual Author event.

Launch and DQ	*Engaging activity and essential question. This launch should be synchronous, meaning the teacher should host a class on Zoom or Google Meets using your plan and resources.* DQ: How might we, as young authors, tell the story of an important figure from our community? Or How might we celebrate the story of an important figure in our community? EQ: What is a “Who is” story? EQ: How do you tell someone's story? EQ: What is the process for publishing a book? Launch: • Students will play a game of Virtual headbands/21 questions/2 truths and a lie with people from the â€œWho isâ€ series • Ask students What do these people all have in common? Share that the people from the game are all individuals from the Who Is book series. Ask if students are familiar with this series and show them some excerpts and features from the books. • Share the project DQ, graphic of book production process,Â final product and ask NTKs--->Â record in a google Doc or Padlet. *option: watch TED talk “the danger of a single story”- *why is it important to tell untold stories?*
ResearchÂ	*Texts, videos, investigations, etc. These activities should be asynchronous. Series of lessons with branching using next steps and conditional questions.* Students will move through the following steps to prepare to research the person they plan to write their story about: 1. Analyze models of Who is series using a Visible Thinking RoutineÂ 2. Brainstorm topics for story (revisit DQ), feedback. 3. Students will have a wide variety of research options including:* interviewing, Newsela articles (if available), reading grade-level biographical or informational text, viewing approved Documentaries, conducting internet research. At the conclusion of the research phase students will complete the graphic organizer provided. *how to conduct interviews resources here

Reflect	*Student reflections. These activities should show up multiple times throughout the course.* 1. Reflect on the writing process- what has it been like to move through each step/phase of the writing process? What has been exciting? What has been challenging? What has been beneficial? 2. Reflect on feedback you received about your writing- what was helpful? What changes will you apply to your writing to make it better? 3. Revisit Knows/Need To Knows- what have you learned about the writing process?Â What do you still need to know in order to publish your final product and share it at our author event?
Create	*Build, make, write, do, etc. Asynchronous activities although groups may need to work synchronously. Students should be able to use online tools available for free to do these activities.* To create your published book we will need to move through 5 phases that will help us with the writing process- from brainstorming, to researching, drafting, revising and producing and designing our book. **Benchmark 1:** Research graphic organizer (Google Doc) **Benchmark 2:** Analyze Models + success criteria, Writing draft 1 (Google Doc) **Benchmark 3:** author talk (guest speaker/expert if possible) + Critique/ â€œreviewsâ€, feedback, revisionÂ (tech options: Flipgrid, padlet, google docs, booksnaps), writing draft #2 **Benchmark 4:** Production- cover, formatting for reader experience, platform/app upload (Shutterfly, book creator, Blurb, Lulu, Padlet) **Benchmark 5:** SYL virtual author event!

Critique and feedback	*Feedback from teacher and/or peers and opportunities for revisions. Students should be able to post and receive feedback asynchronously.* Teachers will have several options for students to engage in critique and feedback: 1. Self revision, Peer checklist with success criteria established when analyzing models 2. Virtual critique (outlined HERE for August publish) 3. Google comments from teacherÂ 4. Flipgrid or padlet comments from the class *collect reviews for book jackets! https://docs.google.com/document/d/1pE_VA5JEpp6loraDCthy-fgtnFY6YoZ3GJBYt4dLz3g/edit?userstoinvite=karo%40sdak12.net&ts=5f11bcda&actionButton=1
Share your learning	*Share final product with audience and reflect on learning. This exhibition should be synchronous, meaning the teacher should host on Zoom or Google Meets using your plan and resources.* **SYL Author Event!Â** Students will simulate an author book tour-format: 1. 5 minutes to share â€œthe whyâ€ of their story and read a favorite excerpt from the book. 2. 5 minute Q & A 3. At the conclusion students will add a digital signature and teacher will provide a digital book seal/badge for student to add to published product!

Graphic Organizer for Drafting Story

Name of person:

Introduction:
*Hook

Chapter 1: Early life
Fact 1.
Fact 2.
Fact 3.

Scenario to highlight/tell the story
(include: dialogue, detail, other people involved, setting) :

Chapter 2: Early career
Fact 1.
Fact 2.
Fact 3.

Scenario to highlight:
(include: challenges overcome, awards, dialogue, detail, other people involved, setting) :

Chapter 3: Later life (you may or may not have a chapter 3 depending on age of person)
Fact 1.
Fact 2.
Fact 3.

Scenario to highlight:

Chapter 4: Conclusion

- Where they are now
- How they will be remembered
- predictions for beyond!

Who IS
Self Reflection

	Not yet	Sometimes	AlwaysÂ
I can conduct research to help me write a story.			
I can begin a story with an effective hook			
I can write a story with a sequence of a beginning, middle and end.			
I can apply feedback to my writing to help me improve with each draft.			

I can analyze models to help me improve my own work.			

Peer, Adult, Expert
Feedback/Reviews

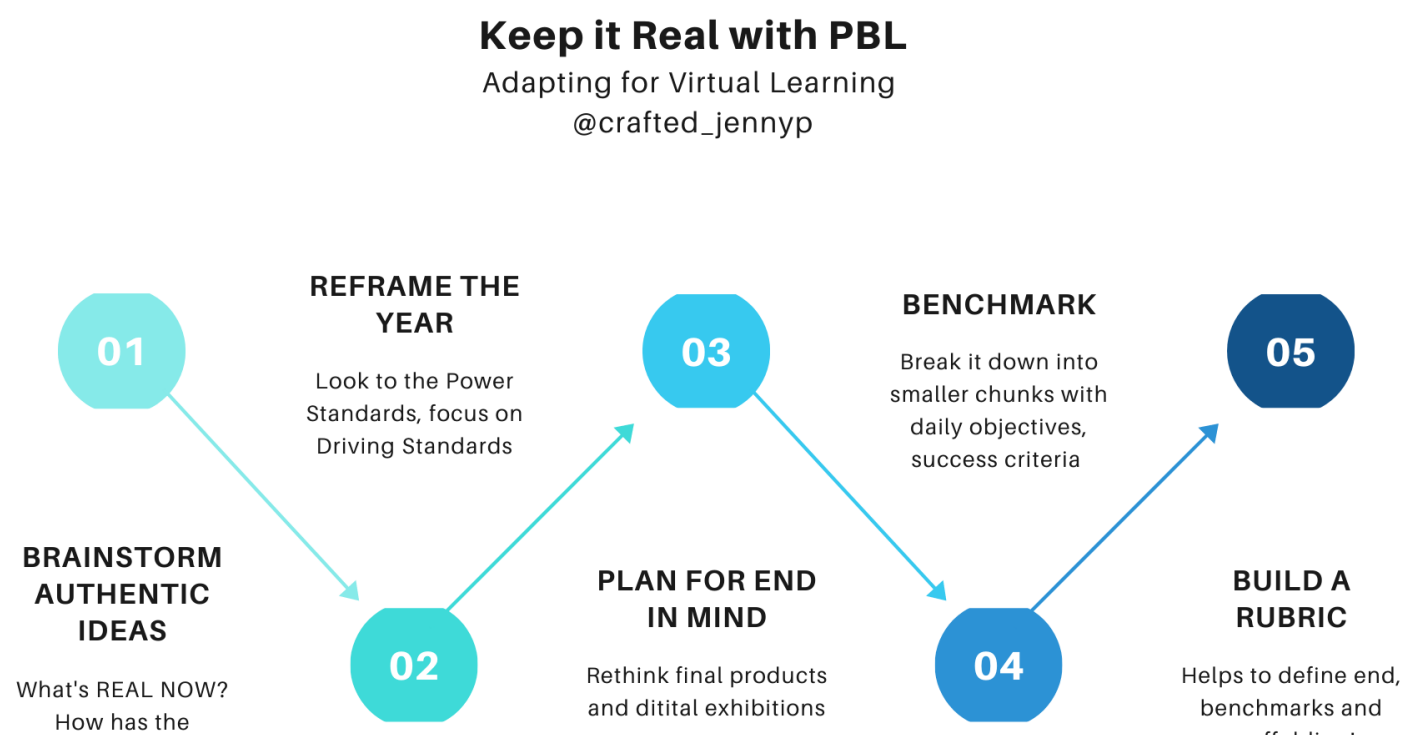
Thank you for giving me kind, specific and helpful feedback. Please read the question below and use the comments feature in Google Docs to give me feedback on my writing.

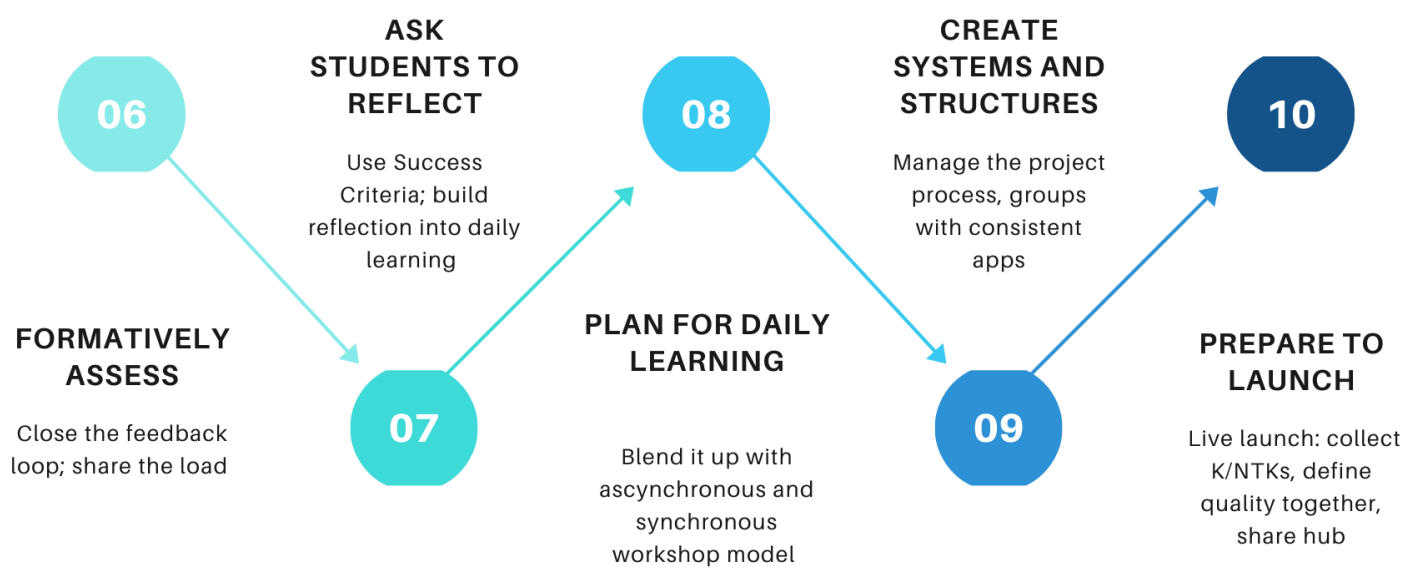
Questions for Feedback
Does my introduction hook you in as the reader?
Does my story have a clear beginning, middle and end?
Does my work have correct grammar, punctuation and capitalization?
Was there anything confusing to you as the reader?
What did you enjoy most about my story?

*You can access this course version for students of this project here .

Additional Virtual Learning Resources

- Curation of virtual learning links
- PBL Field Research and Publications —-> under “virtual learning”
- PBL Blog —> search filter “E-learning”
- E-guide to modifying Keep it Real with PBL for virtual learning (graphics below)





Use the Planning form on the next two page to help you plan a PBL-lite experience for your students.

CraftED's PBL-lite Planning Framework

Hybrid, Virtual Learning

Project Title: Standards: Enduring Understanding: Driving Question: Duration:

Rich Context *What is a real-world issue related to the standards of this project?* *Use your Driving Standards or themes, big ideas from the standards to help!*	
Plan for the EndÂ *What will be the final product students create?* *How will you scaffold learning to get there?* *Be sure to write clear objectives and success criteria!*	
Launch Plans *How will you hook students?* *What important management pieces/ structures do you want to put in place?* *Remember a project hub can help!*	
Learning, Feedback OptionsÂ *What will your virtual lessons look like? What can be asynchronous? What needs to be synchronous?* *How and from whom will students receive feedback along the way?*	

Golden OpportunitiesÂ *Who can students share their work with in the end?* *What experts might you involve in the project?*	

Project Calendar

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Synchronous					
AsynchronousÂ					

	Day 6	Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10
Synchronous					
AsynchronousÂ					

PBL lite No-tech Matrix

	BUILD MY OWN DESIGN WITH LEGOS AND WRITE THE STORY OF IT COMING TO LIFE	BOOK CLUB	WRITE A NARRATIVE BASED ON A PHOTO	CREATE AN AWARENESS OR KINDNESS CAMPAIGN
THINGS I CAN DO ALONE	X		X	X
THNGS I CAN DO WITH FRIENDS, VIRTUALLY		X		X
THINGS I CAN DO WITH AN ADULT AT HOME		X		X
	WRITE AND PUBLISH A BOOK, FOR KIDS BY KIDS	CREATE A #STAYHOME CHALLENGE FOR YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY	RECYCLED OR UPCYCLED ART WITH A MESSAGE	MAKE A RECIPE, MEAL AND PUT ON A COOKING DEMO

#craftedcares

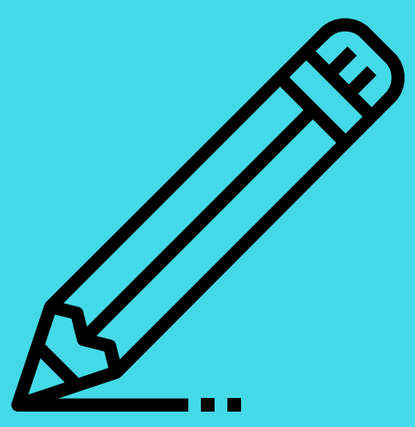
@CRAFTED_JENNYP

About this e-book

This book is filled with practical tips, strategies and planning tools to help teachers with virtual and hybrid learning.

Pieratt provides step-by-step instructions for her NEW PBL-lite framework, which is a manageable modification of PBL for alternative learning settings. From model schedules and planning templates, to sample projects and embedded links...every teachers is sure to feel supported and inspired !

Inside the Book



Pro Tips & Resources

Prompts to reflect

Planning templates