



LESSONS IN THIS SERIES

Overview of Project Based Learning

Getting Started

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Teamwork Tips

Managing the PBL Experience

Wrapping Up

BALANCING THE ASSESSMENT

OVERALL VALUE OF THE PBL

If you're a high school teacher, you will need to decide what value the PBL will have in the calculation of the end of semester course mark. There are a couple of ways you can do this. The end goal is to value the PBL experience appropriately.

1. To calculate **percentage by curriculum outcomes**, take the number of outcomes in your PBL and divide it by the number of outcomes in the course.

For example, if there are 15 outcomes in your curriculum and you are including assessment for 3 of them in your PBL, your PBL should be worth 20% of the final course mark.

Note: not all outcomes are created equally. The outcomes you have chosen should be the *so what* of the curriculum and may have more value than the others. If that is the case, use your professional judgement to adjust the overall value of the PBL accordingly.

2. To calculate **percentage by time allocated**, take the number of weeks scheduled for the PBL and divide it by the number of weeks in the semester.

For example, if the PBL will take 3 weeks to complete and there are 18 weeks in the semester, your PBL should be worth 17% of the final course mark. Again, you may need to use your professional judgement to adjust the percentage.

OUTCOME ASSESSMENT

No matter which pedagogical method you choose, mastery of curricular outcomes must be assessed. PBL is no different. Assessment of the student's skill and/or knowledge for each learning outcome is usually an **individual** assessment and can be as traditional as a test or essay.

Choose formative and summative assessment activities that will enable the student to show you what they have learned and make sure the assessment is aligned to the outcome. Provide choice where possible within the activity and provide a rubric.

PRESENTATION ASSESSMENT

The final presentation in PBL is a **team** assessment; all team members get the same mark for their collaborative effort on the presentation. A rubric will greatly help teams to understand what they will be assessed on so that they can focus their efforts accordingly.

COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT

The assessment of collaboration during PBL is an assessment of each **individual** by themselves, their teammates, and their teacher. Each team member completes a brief, numerical assessment for each member of the team, including themselves, on honouring commitments, quality of work, and being a good team player.

If you chose another of the NB Global Competencies to focus upon, use a few of the *I can* statements for self-assessment purposes. The self-assessment could be in the form of a journal entry or a simple numerical rating like the collaboration example template provided which serves as a rubric.

A QUICK WORD ON RUBRICS

Rubrics should be written in student-friendly language. Clearly describe what work is expected for each criteria and what work exceeds the expectation instead of putting effort into describing what will get a failing mark.

Keep the numerical ratings for each criterion as low as possible to make it easier for you to assess. Rating criterion on a scale of 0 to 5 is much faster than on a scale of 0 to 25, for example. How ever do you decide between a 17 and an 18?!

Take a look at the rubric examples provided on the right.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Good PBL experiences have an assessment plan that is balanced between:

- team effort and individual effort,
- final product and research process, and
- knowing and doing.

For example, consider this formative assessment plan for Tourism 110 PBL called, *Wish You Were Here*. The driving question was, *How can we promote tourism in our community?* Students individually researched tourist attractions and events in their community, and recorded their findings in a learning journal. They conducted interviews to find how what tourist attractions and experiences were popular for different age groups and designed a travel brochure accordingly. In teams, they produced a short promotional video based upon individual team member's research.

WORK PRODUCTS	VALUE	TYPE
JOURNAL	10	Individual/Process/Knowing
QUIZZES	15	Individual/Process/Knowing
INTERVIEWS AND REPORT	15	Individual/Process/Knowing and Doing
TRAVEL BROCHURE	15	Individual/Process/Doing
VIDEO	25	Team/Final Product/Doing
TEAM ASSESSMENT	20	Team/Final Product/Doing
TOTAL	100	

RESOURCES

Collaboration Assessment: [Example](#)

NB Global Competencies

[Collaboration](#)

[Communication](#)

[Critical Thinking and Problem-solving](#)

[Innovation, Creativity and](#)

[Entrepreneurship](#)

[Self-awareness and Self-](#)
[management](#)

[Sustainability and Global Citizenship](#)

Video Rubric: [Example](#)

Research Assignment Rubric: [Example](#)

Presentation Rubric: [Example](#)

LYNN AND CHUCK'S EXCELLENT (PBL) ADVENTURE

Lynn and Chuck next start planning the assessment. The first order of business is to figure out what value the PBL will have for the semester for each course. They both decide to do the calculation by time spent on the PBL. They divide the 2 weeks of the PLB by the 18 weeks of the semester and come up with 0.111; the PBL will be worth 11% of the final mark for the semester. So far, so good.

Next, they look at how to divide up the summative assessment within the PBL so that they have a balance between:

- team effort and individual effort,
- final product and research process, and
- knowing and doing.

For a summative assessment plan, they decide upon:

WORK PRODUCTS	VALUE	TYPE
Journal Entries	15	Individual/Process/Knowing
Career Exploration and Conference	25	Individual/Process/Knowing and Doing
Interview Report	15	Individual/Process/Knowing and Doing
Presentation	25	Team/Final Product/Doing
Team Assessment	20	Team/Final Product/Doing
TOTAL	100	

Finally, they discuss expectations for each work product and divide up the task of writing rubrics.

Here's what they came up with:

- [Journal Rubric](#)
- [Career Exploration and Conference Rubric](#)
- [Interview Report Rubric](#)
- [Presentation Rubric](#)

Time to pack the briefcase!

To be continued...