

Essential Components for LifePractice PBL Planning

The prep		teacher notes
Timeline	How much time can you commit? When will you set hard/soft deadlines?	
Standards	What is the hard academic content you want your students to know? To be able to do? To understand?	
Skills	What are the soft skills and tech skills you want students to know, understand, do?	
Assessment	How will you know that your students learned? What is your plan for gathering evidence?	
Product	What will students turn in to you as final evidence of their learning?	
Materials	What do you need to be ready to provide or have students provide for this project?	
Collaborating teachers	Who will you connect with to help integrate content, skills, etc?	
Collaborating students	How will students be grouped?	
Resources, primary documents, experts	Have you gathered where students will find resources? You might not hand them to your students, but you should know where they are.	
Publishing	Where will the students publish their work?	
Media outlets	Who will you invite into your room for students to share their learning and work?	

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The launch		teacher notes
When?	When will you launch the project?	
Where?	Where will you launch the project?	
Who?	Who will be the actual person to launch the project? You? An invited guest?	
What is the bang, the hook, the story?	What is the story that you will share with the students that makes them want to know more? To jump into the project?	
How do you know it will hook the learner?	Be sure you're thinking of your students, not your own personal interest in the topic.	
Teacher support, not observation	All co-teachers, paras, aides, need to be let in on how the launch will go and how they can support the launch instead of just being a participant.	
The expectations		teacher notes
Quality, cited research	How will students show the quality of their learning to outsiders looking in?	
Collaborative	What are the expectations for students working together?	
*Friendly competition	We're all working together toward the same goal. If the work is competitive, it should be friendly so we all win.	
Soft deadlines	When will this be? How much has to be completed for this presentation?	
Hard deadlines	When will this be? Who will be there?	

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The grouping		teacher notes
Self-select	Will you let students pick their own groups? What are the benefits?	
Teacher-select	Will you pick the students' groups? What are the benefits?	
Combination	Will there be a combination of student-selected, but teacher-adjusted groups? What are the benefits?	
Homo or Heterogeneous	Will the groups be of similar ability? Similar interests? Dissimilar? Why?	
Never led with content	How will you name the work groups to reflect authenticity of the world?	
The work		teacher notes
Flexible, Energetic, Collaborative	How will you keep the students working at a high-quality pace with a strong sense of urgency?	
Questioning, supporting, admiring	How will you set the tone for how the work is conducted?	
The midpoint regroup		teacher notes
Scheduled as needed	This doesn't have to be at the mid-point only. When we see that we're making slow or extremely fast progress, this is a time to meet.	
Whole group	Bring the entire group together to see full progress and group problem-solve any issues.	

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Peer support	How will you encourage peers to help one another to move forward.	
Refocus on the big picture	Why are we doing this project? Are we all moving together toward the end goal?	
Reassess & prioritize the needs and timeline	Help students look at what time is left and prioritize what can be completed in that amount of time and what must be scrapped.	
Positive & reassuring	Your role is to keep the students calm and moving forward during a high-stress moment.	
The assessment		teacher notes
Rubrics, presentations, self-evaluations, checklists, published feedback	Which way(s) are appropriate measures to see what students have accomplished and learned?	
Standards & Skills	How will you measure how well the students learned?	
The closing		teacher notes
Whole group	How will you bring the sense of community back together again?	
Share learning, products, stories	Consider sharing “behind the scenes” stories as well as the official presentations.	
Review growth and learning	How will you help make explicit how far students have come in their learning during this project?	
Celebrate, Laugh, & Admire	This should be a fun time of recognizing growth and accomplishments.	

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Hows/Wows/Bows	What ways will you help students learn to brag on each others' accomplishments and contributions beyond just their friends'.	
Prioritize any leftover work	Who will finish it and by when? We must all get to the finish line.	
The postproject wrap up		teacher notes
Debrief with teachers, students, experts, admin	What went well? What didn't? How can we each adjust and get better?	
Celebrate successes, students, and growth	Don't forget to celebrate your own growth as a professional.	