

01 Problem-based Learning



EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

Problem-based learning is a method that challenges learners to learn by solving problems presented in the form of case studies and simulations. This method enables learners to be self-directed and to acquire lifelong learning skills.

METHODS / PROBLEM-BASED LEARNING

Problem-based learning produces critical thinkers and problem solvers as learners integrate knowledge and skills from a number of disciplines. It motivates learners to find and use appropriate learning resources. The method is rooted in the experiential learning tradition. Its characteristics include:

- Complex, real world situations that do not have one 'right' answer.
- The Teacher acts as a facilitator.
- It addresses a specific problem while calling for knowledge and skills from several disciplines.
- Tends to be shorter than project-based work, and follows specific, traditionally prescribed steps.
- The outcome is a proposed solution, expressed in writing or in an oral presentation.

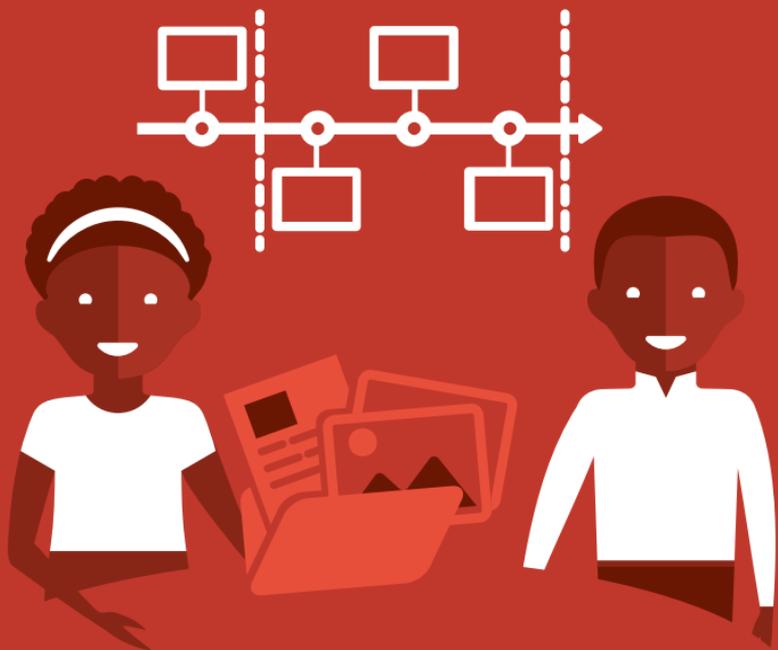
EXECUTION

- 01** | Identify a problem relevant to the curriculum.
- 02** | Assign the problem to one or several learners working in groups.
- 03** | Ensure that learners engage in relevant research activities.
- 04** | Pose critical questions to enable them to analyse ideas and knowledge obtained from various sources.
- 05** | Facilitate the presentation and harmonisation of the findings from the learners.

TIPS

- Start small and emphasize in-depth inquiry.
- There must be a driving question that the learners have to answer.
- Techniques such as brainstorming, group work and simulation are very applicable.
- Remain aware of the difference between problem-based learning and project-based learning.

02 Project-based Learning



EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

Project based learning engages individual or groups of learners in a design-research-implementation process culminating in the public exhibition of a final product (publication, artwork, service, object, etc.).

METHODS / PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

During this process, learners make multiple drafts and try-outs, learn to make choices and how to demonstrate the concepts and skills they have acquired. In agreement with the teacher, learners can choose any kind of project provided it is related to the curriculum and to a real life context.

Learners become motivated and self-directed critical thinkers and problem solvers, able to research and integrate knowledge from various sources and disciplines to acquire lifelong skills.

EXECUTION

- 01** | Set criteria and guide the learners to define their project goal and final product.
- 02** | Guide learners in designing and (back)planning each step of their project.
- 03** | Guide learners in the research and implementation phases.
- 04** | Organise peer-to-peer feedback sessions on planning, progress, problems, solutions, etc.
- 05** | Organise an exhibition where all final products are presented to peers, academic staff, parents, community members, etc.

EXAMPLES

- Make a documentary film to raise awareness of a global health issue .
- Start a book club to help students learn English.
- Create an original piece of art, literature, music etc.
- Explore the impact of sports on the disabled.

TIPS

- **A process journal** (filled at each stage of the project) is a user-friendly tool to guide learners that can also serve as an effective assessment tool both by teachers and learners.
- **A rubric** is a helpful (self)assessment tool to guide learners and teachers' expectations.

03 Learning Stations



EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

Learning stations (also called 'corners' or 'activity centres') are specific areas in a classroom where learners rotate from station to station to complete an educational task using different approaches. A debriefing session follows after to discuss what was learned at the different learning stations.

METHODS / LEARNING STATIONS

EXECUTION

- 01** | Determine the overall learning objective.
- 02** | Define the different approaches and tasks for each station.
- 03** | Explain the different tasks and timing for each learning station.
- 04** | Assign learners in manageable groups and move around the stations to assist the learners.
- 05** | Facilitate participatory debriefing sessions.

EXAMPLES

- Four learning stations for language class: reading station (newspapers, magazines etc.), listening station (tape recorder, boom box, video etc.), writing station (stationery, computer, writing board), speaking station (quiz, role-play).
- Three learning stations for nutrition class: research station (internet, library), exploration station (college garden, community), low-cost experiment station (kitchen or lab).

TIPS

- Noise and unnecessary movements can be very disruptive so give clear instructions.
- Continuously encourage learners to finish the tasks.
- Have a plan for learners who finish early.
- Use various techniques: group work, brainstorming, presentations, demonstration and simulation among others.

04 Learning Contracts



EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

Learning contracts are formal written agreements between teacher and learners, detailing what is to be learned, how it will be learned, and how the learning will be verified.

METHODS / LEARNING CONTRACTS

Learning contracts are valuable component of self-managed learning. They provide effective support for individualised learning and assessment and make learners accountable for their work. They reduce learners' anxiety by making them focus on tasks rather than on grades for specific assignments.

EXECUTION

- 01** | Identify the learning objectives in relation to the curriculum and determine where the learner should be in regard to each competency. Ensure that the objectives describe what learners will learn, not what they will do.
- 02** | Develop a rubric clearly indicating learning objectives, measurable criteria, tasks and levels of achievement required, and grading system.
- 03** | Specify the material and human resources needed, and the methods and strategies (techniques, tools) that will be employed.
- 04** | Specify realistic target dates for follow-up meetings and for completion of the contract.
- 05** | Carry out the contract.

TIPS

- A tutor or a mentor can be assigned to assist the learner during the implementation of the learning contract.
- Learning contracts usually include the learner's name and details, the course name and level, the expected outcomes, the form and outline of submission (project, portfolio, video, or product), the resources and assistance needed and the teacher and learner's signatures.