When Will We Use This in Real Life?: Problem-Based Learning and Its Use in Effective Information Literacy Instruction

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What we’ll be talking about today:

- Define Problem-Based Learning (PBL)
- Why use PBL?
- Ways to integrate PBL into library instruction
- Some challenges when using PBL in the library classroom
- Our tips for using PBL
Problem-Based Learning Defined:

“PBL is any learning environment in which the problem drives the learning.” –Don Woods, McMaster University
Why use PBL?
PBL Increases Student Engagement

Krain (2010)
- [PBL] was considered highly valuable by students because of:
  - The direct application of theory to practice
  - The degree of immersion
  - They felt invested in the problem

Jones et al. (2013)
- “Students reported higher levels of motivation when they perceived the project as a realistic simulation of the real world”
PBL Increases Learning

- Strobel & Barneveld (2009)
  - “PBL is significantly more effective than traditional instruction...to promote long-term retention of knowledge and skills acquired during the learning experience.”
ACRL Framework for Information Literacy and PBL

Threshold Concept: Searching as Exploration

- Determine the scope of the question or task required to meet one’s needs
- Identify Interested parties that might produce information about a topic and how that information might be accessed
- Demonstrate the importance of matching information needs and search strategies to appropriate search tools
- Recognize that some tools may be searched using both basic and advanced strategies, and understanding the potential of each
Ways to Integrate PBL into Library Instruction
PBL Process

- Facilitator introduces a problem
- Students analyze the problem for information
- An information need is determined
- Facilitator introduces students to various information sources
- Students investigate the information sources and locate relevant information

(Macklin 2001)
Problem is Introduced by Instructor as Part of the Curriculum

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- Students analyze the problem for information
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(Macklin 2001)
NURSING 3220
Evidence Based Practice
Problem is Introduced by Unknowing Instructor

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(Macklin 2001)
MKTG 4360: Marketing Research and Analytics
ENGL 3080: Business Writing

http://www.creativethinghappenermaker.com/2013/08/22/audition-tracking-to-know-your-odds-as-an-actor/

Problem is Introduced by Librarian

- Facilitator introduces a problem
- Students analyze the problem for information
- An information need is determined
- Facilitator introduces students to various information sources
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(Macklin 2001)
NURS 4950: Transition to Professional Nursing
BUSI 7970: MBA Orientation

Credit: NCIRD/OD/HCSO Flu vaccination communications team

https://www.flickr.com/photos/vitialis/137259915/
Problem is Introduced by Student

- Facilitator introduces a problem
- Students analyze the problem for information
- An information need is determined
- Facilitator introduces students to various information sources
- Students investigate the information sources and locate relevant information

(Macklin 2001)
Real World

Challenges

- Being a coach/facilitator instead of a reference librarian
- Students who don’t want take charge of their own learning
- Finding the right problem
- How to assess?
- Harder to use PBL in 50 minute classes
Tips

- Classroom space should be conducive to collaborative work
- Provide feedback to students throughout activity
- Summarize what was learned (either you or students)
- Choose a manageable number of resources (handout to cover what you can’t)
- Transferability should be integrated into resource selection
Questions?
References:


