

Essential Elements of PBL

Whatever form a project takes, it must have these essential elements to meet our definition of PBL:

- **Significant Content.** At its core, the project is focused on teaching students important knowledge and skills, derived from standards and key concepts at the heart of academic subject areas.
- **21st Century Skills.** Students build skills valuable for today's world, such as critical thinking/problem solving, collaboration, and communication, which are taught and assessed.
- **In-Depth Inquiry.** Students are engaged in a rigorous, extended process of asking questions, using resources, and developing answers.
- **Driving Question.** Project work is focused by an open-ended question that students explore or that captures the task they are completing.
- **Need to Know.** Students see the need to gain knowledge, understand concepts, and apply skills in order to answer the Driving Question and create project products, beginning with an Entry Event that generates interest and curiosity.
- **Voice and Choice.** Students are allowed to make some choices about the products to be created, how they work, and how they use their time, guided by the teacher and depending on age level and PBL experience.
- **Revision and Reflection.** The project includes processes for students to use feedback to consider additions and changes that lead to high-quality products, and think about what and how they are learning.
- **Public Audience.** Students present their work to other people, beyond their classmates and teacher.

