

13 Amazing Reasons to use

Project Based Learning when teaching your child

And some strategies to help you on your journey

1

They learn project management

Strategy:

Use a project management type board—even if its one used primarily by adult professionals to help students manage individual or team projects. [Trello](#) is a great example, as is [Redbooth](#).

2

They grow more empathetic

Strategy:

Begin project planning with a focus on a specific audience with a specific and pressing concern.

3

They become explorers

Strategy:

Let students design their own projects. Or require that projects iterate or counter existing cultural trends and patterns or that address compelling social concerns (e.g.technology addiction).

4

They become hackers and rebels

Strategy:

- Design projects that require students to combine both a physical and digital presence and physical and digital ‘behaviors’ and contexts. For example, a social media component combined with a local, community-based outcome.

5

They become systems thinkers

Strategy:

Use concept-mapping before, during, and after the project is completed.

6

They become problem solvers

Strategy:

Use problem-based PBL—that is, projects based around a problem that requires critical thinking to solve.

7

They become unabashedly different

Strategy:

Give ‘points’ or other encouragement mechanics to reward students who deviate in some way that improves the quality of the work. For example, add a ‘free letter grade’ increase for students who take risks or develop ‘non-traditional’ solutions to otherwise ‘traditional’ social problems and concerns.

8

They engage in their learning

Strategy:

Create checkpoints in the project’s life-cycle—or better yet, have students suggest their own checkpoints, then be responsible for that checking in, what kind of feedback that would be useful and from whom, etc.

9

They are ready for the creative economy

Strategy:

Give students the opportunities to use their specific gifts, skills, and backgrounds in completing the project.

10

They engage in iterative thinking

Strategy:

Use model-based learning that allows students to identify and transfer existing ideas into new contexts and applications. For example, allow students to take an idea (Amazon’s platform business model) and apply it to family businesses, recycling programs, or creative efforts like music and art.

11

They think divergently

Strategy:

Make ‘deviation’ a core tenet, then model and reward it.

12

They make deep connections between ideas

Strategy:

Use cross-curricula planning—projects that include multiple content areas. This complicates the planning, but it also makes it more immersive academically. And like #4, concept mapping is a useful way to help students see the relationships between ideas.

13

They learn to take creative risks

Strategy:

Help students brainstorm the opportunities for creative risk-taking at the beginning of a project. Sometimes they’re not even aware of the kinds of risks that can be taken in PBL—from the scale of a project and its audience and purpose, to kinds of collaboration partners brought into the project and their talents and skills.