

Foundations of Project-Based Learning: Session 5 Guide

Purpose

This document serves as a guide for Session 5 of the Foundations of Project-Based Learning series. Included is an overview of the session, strategies to model, and activities to consider (note that this session is primarily participant-driven and there are no new topics to cover). Facilitators should refer to the [Foundations of Project-Based Learning Edmodo group](#) for resources. [Session slides can also be found here.](#)

Session 5

The fifth and final session is for participants to share and present their unit plan and materials. This serves as the culminating event for the series. Consider a key question for Session 5 related to culminating events and products (e.g., What can a culminating event look like?). It is worth noting to participants that, though culminating events are the topic for this session, the processes by which they will share units and provide feedback are more accurately a critique and revision phase for PjBL. The units' target audiences are the participants' students. The "true" culminating event occurs when the product is delivered to the target audience. Nevertheless, sharing work and receiving feedback is critical in the PjBL cycle. Many past participants cited this process as the most helpful in fully understanding PjBL and its elements.

What to Model

Learner Centered Language: Continue to always model learner centered language throughout activities and discussions. As participants give and receive feedback, facilitators should model productive [project-based teacher language in their feedback and redirection](#). Productive feedback is essential in any learning context. Consider how your participants would need to speak to their students in a learner-centered and direct manner. Explore these resources as you prepare for the first session:

- [Power of our Words Educational Leadership article](#): This is a short article by Paula Denton on concepts discussed in her book, *The Power of our Words*.
- [Reinforcing, Reminding, and Redirecting language](#): This is an overview (also adapted from Denton's book) of RC language that can be helpful for both academics and behavior. Consider how it might fit for your Entry Event and how you build the culture of Project-Based Learning.
- [What Having a Growth Mindset Actually Means](#): An HBR article by Carol Dweck on some GM misconceptions. This, and growth-oriented language in general, might help as you consider ways to validate students and build the culture of Project-Based Learning.

Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information please contact:
Kyle Anderson, Student Pathways Division, at kyle.anderson@vermont.gov

Activities and Guidelines to Consider

Though this session is primarily participant-driven, offering some guidelines and structure to the presentations models efficient Project-Based Teaching. Consider offering some relevant questions as a feedback guide. These questions do not necessarily need to align with design elements or materials included in the presentation. They can be focused on general concepts that were regularly brought up by participants throughout the series. Some examples include:

- How can students relate to this project?
- How will they be able to engage in the work creatively?
- Is it asset-based? How does it focus on student strengths?
- Are there design elements that support student self-motivation throughout the unit?
- How can they be supported in developing a sense of purpose?

Similarly, consider offering or, with participants, collaboratively developing some presentation protocol. An example includes:

1. **Determine a presentation order (2 minutes)**

Decide the order and stick to it.

2. **Presenter shares unit (10 minutes)**

The audience should take notes keeping the questions on slide 6 in mind.

3. **Question and Answer (5 minutes)**

The audience asks questions and receive answers, continuing to use slide 6 as a guide for notes.

4. **Repeat steps 2-3 for the next presenters.**

Closing

Closing for each session should focus on clarifying questions from participants, reflection, and next steps. Session 5 is no exception. Have the group share some commonalities across unit plans (e.g., What elements seemed to be a primary focus for people?). The next steps will be revising the unit based on peer feedback and then implementing it in practice. If possible, consider coordinating a Peer Learning Community (PLC) for teachers who are implementing their units. This can be an opportunity for continued revision of the plan and development as Project-Based Teachers.