

Ideas for...

SOCIAL STUDIES

June 2008

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What to do in Social Studies???

Ideas for the
Social Studies
classroom.

PROJECT BASED LEARNING IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Planning for a project must take into account what is possible in your classroom. The scope of a project will be affected by the bell schedule, the time of year, standardized testing, and the other myriad factors that impact your work. Perhaps the first question that usually arises is: do I have time to do this project? To answer that question, it is helpful *not* to think of PBL as taking time away from the regular curriculum. Instead, consider a standards-focused project as a central method of teaching and learning that replaces conventional instruction for a portion of your course. Standards-focused projects teach students the same essential information you might teach them through lecture and discussion. PBL teachers also find that they do considerably less “busy work” activities in the classroom. And, though projects take time to plan, teachers have more time with students once a project is underway.

~excerpt from Project Based Learning Handbook, A Guide to Standards Focused Project Based Learning for Middle and High School Teachers, Buck Institute for Education



<http://flickr.com/photos/deks/711658920/>



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Focus on the
process
over the
product.

Start With the End in Mind

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS ~ STANDARDS ~ OBJECTIVES ~ TOOLS

FANTASY CONGRESS

Where People Play Politics!

At times, a website might spark the idea for a project based learning experience. From the Fantasy Congress site, "...Only at Fantasy Congress can you draft, bench, or trade a Member of Congress. Our site is dedicated to allowing you to share your interest in politics and take it to the next level. By inspiring people to care about government as much as they care about sports, Fantasy Congress hopes to encourage transparency and responsibility while educating the governed".

You may not decide to use this site with your students, but by participating yourself, you may be able to create a similar situation in your classroom and provide your students with a PBL experience as they learn more about

the political process. <http://www.fantasycongress.com>

HISTORY TOURS

"History Tours is a collaborative website that gives teachers access to pre-made Google Earth tours on various topics in American and World history. These tours provide an excellent backdrop for visual learning. They allow students to view people and places of historical importance while the teacher presents essential background knowledge." These tours can be useful as teaching tools and learning experiences for your students. After using a tour, your students would be ready to learn to create a tour of their own. A project based learning experience related to your curriculum content topic could include students mapping the progress of an event over

the state, country or world. Students can embed their own content, such as video files, text, images, hyperlinks, slideshows, etc...

<http://historytours.wikispaces.com/>

TED: IDEAS WORTH SPREADING

Inspired talks by the world's greatest thinkers and doers. Use the talks in your classroom and then introduce blogging as a way to encourage deeper reflections on the part of the students. In addition, students can develop their own big idea and develop a video talk of their own. The issue will be theirs, with the instructor facilitating their learning.

<http://www.ted.com/index.php>
(Edublogs, 21classes, SchoolBlog)



<http://flickr.com/photos/picdrop/10469640/sizes/o/>



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