



Project Based Learning (PBL) and Service-Learning

Service-learning is PBL with social responsibility.

Service-Learning is a student-directed teaching and learning strategy that empowers students to make a difference addressing real-world issues related to academic content.

Students build skills, experience and character while developing their roles as justice-oriented citizens. Connections to curriculum are infused into the service-learning stages of investigation, preparation, action, reflection, demonstration, and evaluation (IPARDE). See [<http://www.generationon.org/educators/lessons-resources/iparde>] for more information on the stages of service-learning. Students work collaboratively, make choices related to their skills and interests, interact with diverse people in the community, and document their learning and impact.



Project Based Learning is a hands-on, student-directed learning strategy that challenges students to solve a problem and demonstrate their solution in a performance to an outside audience.

Students collaborate in an in-depth investigation that involves trial and error, communication, data collection, and critical thinking. The stages of the PBL process include receiving a challenge, investigating possible solutions, consulting experts, conducting research, trial and error/problem-solving, determining criteria for success, presenting a demonstration, and reflection.

Service-learning and PBL complement each other well. Both strategies...

- Challenge students to explore real-world issues.
- Involve research.
- Engage students with community partners and experts.
- Incorporate reflection throughout the process.
- Put the responsibility of proposing solutions in the hands of the students.
- Culminate with a public demonstration.
- Are student directed.
- Give guided practice in 21st Century skills of collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, and communication.
- Motivate students to do their best.
- Empower student leadership skills.
- Build self-efficacy, the belief one is capable of success.

Learning to Give (LTG) is an online philanthropy education resource that teaches giving and volunteerism, civic engagement, and character through academic service-learning lessons. **The K-12 lessons are aligned with State Academic and Common Core State Standards.** While any LTG lessons can support a PBL project, these two comprehensive middle school units systematically teach the process of PBL:

- **“The Power of Children”** (6-8) [<http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit533/>] The students identify a need in their community and form small groups to layout a service-learning project. They hold a "Service-Learning Expo." The participants vote, and the winning projects are implemented by the class or school.
- **“Farm to Table and Food Security”** (6-8) [<http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit583/>] Students become aware of the complexity of the issue of hunger in the U.S. as they use research, critical thinking, and problem solving to explore, communicate, and draw conclusions about an issue around food production and distribution.

Getting Started with Learning to Give: The 1,700 K-12 lesson plans on Learning to Give complement what you are already teaching, so this isn't an add-on or new curriculum. The page [<http://learningtogive.org/teachers/>] is a good place to start. Read stories of experienced teachers. Educate yourself with brief online tutorials. Find lessons by academic skills or service issues. Look up lessons by calendar events and current events.