

REFRAMING PBL

**SHEA DAVIS
COLUMBUS SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

QUICK RESPONSE

- With a partner, take a few minutes to discuss the following question:
 - What makes a good project?

ADDING PROJECTS

- Factors that impacted my decision to include more Project-Based Learning:
 - Increased emphasis on experiential learning
 - Change from 50 minute to 80 minute block periods
 - Addition of technology to classroom (BYOD)

PROJECT TEST CASE #1

- To create your 5-minute video, you will complete the following steps:
 - Pick a reference from *Cultural Contexts for Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man*
 - Find and read two scholarly sources
 - Explain how this context relates to the book, discussing at least one specific passage in depth
 - Examine the extent to which this cultural context is still relevant today. Are its ideas still significant in the 21st century? Why, or why not?
- What happened?

AN EPIPHANY

	Activity	Inquiry
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Definite, allows pre-planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flexible, general planning
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ready to go• Teacher's responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upon students' request
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Known by teacher• One expected and accepted result	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unknown by teacher, student, or text• Multiple results will be negotiated and discussed
Working Hypothesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well-defined by teacher prior to experiment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arising from students' questions and based on their experiences

- Copyright by Earth Expeditions (through Project Dragonfly and Miami University)

AN EPIPHANY, PART II

	Activity	Inquiry
Teacher's Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In control and unchallenged intellectually• Expert with the right answer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing control• Intellectually challenged• Learning a lot• Experienced co-learner
Students' Feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Following prescribed procedures• Matching personal findings with expected findings• Working on teacher's question	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developing procedures• Interpreting results, as there are no prescribed findings
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Immediate and product-oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long term and process-oriented
Students' Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical skill and low-order cognitive skills• Disregard results that do not match teacher's expectation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observation and higher order cognitive skills• Disregards data for reasonable and scientific reasons

STEPS FOR INQUIRY

“*Dragonfly QUEST Leader’s Guide*” includes five steps:

1. Question and observe
2. Uncover comparative questions
3. Explore predictions
4. Start action plan and gather data
5. Think hard about findings and share discoveries

APPLICATION TO ENGLISH?

- Inquiry in English tended to take the following forms:
 - Research projects (interviews often included)
 - Writing process

PROJECT TEST CASE #2

- To create a presentation on *Invisible Man*, you will complete the following steps:
 - Pick a reference or allusion from the novel and explain its role in the book, discussing at least one specific passage in depth
 - Find two additional sources
 - Discuss any questions this reference raises or answers
 - Share your information in a way that reflects to your topic choice
- What happened?

LESSONS LEARNED

- A few major takeaways after revising the project:
 - Adding more inquiry increased student engagement (in most cases)
 - Eliminating structure produced projects with less rigor and made assessment difficult

PROJECT TEST CASE #3

- Each person will research a topic that was mentioned in our class Google Doc. Your 3-4 minute video will accomplish the following objectives:
 - Present key background information about your reference. This information will come from at least two credible sources.
 - Relate your reference back to the book, referring to at least one specific passage.
 - Explain how this reference contributes to Coates's overall argument.
- What happened?

PROJECT TEST CASE #4

- American Dream Final Project:
 - Guiding questions: Has the American Dream ever been achievable? Is it achievable in contemporary times? It is only achievable for particular groups of people?
 - Instructions: You will be randomly divided into two groups: yes and no. Your group's job is to demonstrate that the achievability of the American Dream aligns with your side. To do so, you will produce four witnesses (two literary, one historical, one contemporary).

STEP #1: NOTICE STUDENT QUESTIONS

- During discussion of a book or unit, what types of questions are students asking? Are there any trends?
- Does this group of students have an area of interest that appears repeatedly in discussion or essays?

STEP #2: CONNECT STUDENT INTEREST TO A SKILL

- Examples:
 - For the video project, I wanted my students to practice researching and to think about multimedia communication
 - For the trial, I wanted my students to work collaboratively and to make connections between class texts and across the curriculum

STEP #3: DECIDE HOW STUDENTS WILL COMMUNICATE FINDINGS

- Complete absence of structure creates confusion
 - Freedom to discover ideas is more important than freedom to decide how to communicate findings
 - What other skills do you want students to practice?
 - Length requirement helps students know how in-depth they should go

STEP #4: PICK CHECKPOINTS

- How will students know they are moving in a useful direction?
 - Daily checkpoints?
 - Roles for group members?
- Based on mode of communication, how much time will students need to complete this project?

STEP #5: SAVE TIME FOR REFLECTION

- In a busy school year, this can be the hardest part
 - Important to make connections between project and other parts of the curriculum (and potentially their lives outside of class)
 - Without reflection, students may not understand the purpose of the project or how it contributes to their learning

SMALL GROUP BRAINSTORMING

1. Notice Student Questions
2. Connect Student Interest to Skill
3. Decide How Students Will Communicate Findings
4. Pick Checkpoints
5. Save Time for Reflection

Keep in mind the differences between activity and inquiry!

QUESTIONS?

- My contact information:
sdavis@columbusschoolforgirls.org