Scott Birns

March 6, 2012

BSC 307

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Web Quest** | **Ill Structured Problem? Complex? Messy? No single correct answer?** | **Problem mirrors real life? Provides context, challenge, and motivation?** | **Students as decision makers with roles and responsibilities?** | **Teacher as a cognitive guide/coach?** | **PBL?** |
| **Rain Forest** | Yes, many different solutions to this problem. Pretty much the sky’s the limit towards this activity. | Yes, there are real life situations in this activity. | Yes, students are able to make their own decisions. Can decide what skills they will need to survive in the R.F. | I don’t think the role of the teacher as a cognitive guide/coach is demonstrated in this activity. | I think this is a PBL activity. |
| **Radically Reduced Radiolarians** | There was no single correct answer. Students can choose from many things to determine why the population is decreasing. | I feel like there is a real life problem in this activity. It also stresses how this task is an international importance so that would give students motivation to solve the problem. | Yes, students get assigned each a different role. With this role they have different responsibilities that must complete for the project to be successful. | Again I didn’t see the role that the teacher was playing in this activity. Maybe the teacher is congress but her role doesn’t come until the end and I don’t see the role of congress as a cognitive guide/coach. | I think this is a PBL activity. |
| **Solve It With Logic** | Pretty much students would follow the same thing and get the same answer. I don’t really think this activity is that complex. | Yes this activity mirrors a real life scenario. It does provide a challenge to find out who killed the two people. | Students have a role as a detective and their responsibility is to discover who the murder is. | I didn’t really see the teacher as being a cognitive teacher/guide in this activity. Pretty much students are left to figure out problem on their own. | I don’t think this is a PBL activity. |
| **Don’t Drink the Water** | I think this activity is really messy. Students can go in many routes to discover the pathogen. At the end of the project there is only one correct pathogen though. | This activity does mirror a real life situation. Problems with water have happened a lot and it would be very relevant towards the students. | In this activity students do have a role and responsibility. There job is to find out what is the pathogen in the water by doing various tasks and research. | Again I don’t really see the role of the teacher as a cognitive guide/coach. I really feel like the teacher could have some role that could help the students out with this activity. Maybe this role could be the head environmental researcher. | Yes I think this is a PBL activity. |

After looking at these four activities I believe only three of them are problem based learning. I do believe that each one of these activities do have nice real life examples. They all could be related to a topic that a teacher is teaching in the classroom. In each activity the student has a certain role and responsibilities that they must achieve to figure out the solution to the problem. I didn’t like how the murder activity only had one correct solution. I also didn’t like how the water activity also had one correct pathogen. I did like how the student could have different ways to discovery this pathogen though and that is why I consider it a PBL. In each of these activities I didn’t feel like the teacher had a role as a cognitive teacher/guide. I thought in each one a role could be given to a teacher so that they could be that cognitive guide for their students. Overall I thought that the “Solve it With Logic” activity was the only non PBL activity. I just feel like the students just have to follow a logically flow of steps to discover the murder. I believe the other activities are PBL though.

For Reference:

Problem Based Learning (PBL) is an instructional strategy where students take an active role as problem-solvers confronted with an ill-structured problem which mirrors real-world problems. Problem Based Learning is becoming recognized as a highly effective instructional tool in the world of science education.

Web quests are controlled virtual explorations in which the teacher provides all that is needed for the students to succeed at a given task. The students must explore the given resources to solve the problem they have been given.