

Setting up the PBIS Classroom

Project-Based Inquiry Science classrooms look a lot different than a traditional science class where the teacher lectures and students run labs. A culture of collaboration and rigorous science talk develops in *PBIS* classes. The students engage as and feel like student scientists. Many things look a lot different in these classrooms than in other science classrooms. There are several things to think about in setting up your classroom for teaching *PBIS*.

Group Work

Students will be working in small groups, and they will need to have their desks arranged so that they can easily work together. Having them work around tables works well, or putting their desks together into a table is fine. It is critically important that students be able to hear each other across the workspace and that they be able to jointly look at charts and lay out materials on their work tables.

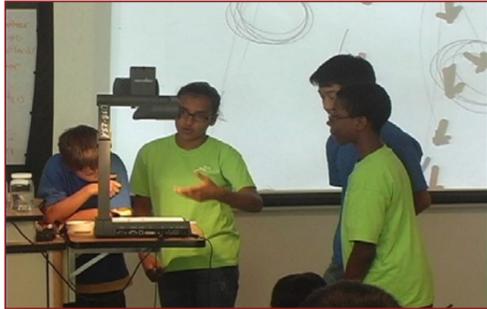


Posters

Posters play a big role in *PBIS*, and you will need to choose space for displaying posters. At a minimum, you will need wall space for posting posters during *Investigation Expos* and *Plan Briefings*. During some of these *Communicates*, students put posters on the wall for everyone to examine, and then the class discusses the similarities and differences across groups' results. If you have a lot of wall space, using wall space to leave posters set up around the room is a real advantage, especially when investigations have been distributed across groups. With posters from *Investigation Expos* on the walls, students will have immediate access to the full set of data that has been collected, and they can easily refer to that data as evidence as they move forward in a *Learning Set*. If you do not have adequate wall space, you will need to consider how you can store some of the posters during the course of a unit. A cardboard mailing tube could be one way to store posters.

Presentations

Presentation plays a big role in *Project-Based Inquiry Science* classrooms. During presentations, a small group of students will hold their poster and perhaps a physical artifact they have built, show it to the class, and discuss it. You should decide where students will stand when they make presentations. You can have space at the front of the classroom where they bring their posters and artifacts for everyone to see. You may want students to stand at their workspaces and address the class. Sometimes, when the physical artifacts they are constructing are small, you will want the rest of the class to gather around the worktable of the group that is presenting. Think about the options you can make available and how you might manage the class at times when you want them to gather around a single worktable. You need to be sure that all students can see what is presented.



The Project Board

The *Project Board* is an important piece of equipment used in each unit. You will need a separate *Project Board* for each of your classes, and in early parts of each Unit, it will be important to show only the *Project Board* for the class you are teaching. There are different ways that you can manage the *Project Board* in your classroom. You can use the laminated *Project Board* poster that is available with the kit materials, or you may wish to use an overhead project, a projection of a computer screen, or perhaps a whiteboard. The video *Managing the Project Board in the Classroom* discusses some of these options.

Equipment

Because *PBIS* is a hands-on program, there is a substantial amount of equipment required for the year and for each unit. Throughout the year, students will need easy access to markers, scissors, rulers, poster paper, and other sundries. The materials lists for each unit lists the materials that you will need that are not supplied with the kit materials. There are also specific equipment and supplies needed for each unit. It's About Time provides itemized kit materials and also has convenient kit material storage available. The video *PBIS Kit Equipment* describes the options in greater detail.

Physical Artifacts

In many of the units, groups are creating physical artifacts that they need to store between classes. In *Vehicles in Motion*, for example, they are building small vehicles that they are refining and using throughout the unit. In *Diving In*, they are constructing parachutes. In *Good Friends*, they create posters to hang in the hallways. In *Ever-Changing Earth*, they will have sets of transparencies that they add to and edit over time. And so on. Think about where in the classroom you might store the artifacts students are constructing, as you will need this space for many of the units.



Student Notebooks

In all of the units, students are keeping a variety of records of what they are doing. They collect data, they each record the *Project Board* on their own personal *Project Board* page, they create explanations on a standard *Create an Explanation* page, and so on. Some of these are personal pages; some are group pages. It will be important that students not lose these pages and that they have all the pages they have recorded in a unit available in class to refer to during the remainder of the unit. How will you manage this? At a minimum, it will be important to have a place to store the group pages. Your students might be good at keeping journals, and perhaps you do not have to worry about them losing their personal pages. But most teachers have developed ways they want students to keep track of their pages. For example you may wish students to use a particular kind of binder. Other teachers have their students glue pages into a science journal. Some teachers have found it useful to have space in the classroom for students to keep their binders or journals so they do not get lost. When students do this, they take home only the pages that they need for that night's homework.

