Introduction

The target audience of my after school club was my 8th grade general science students looking for science enrichment, but my current audience also includes 7th grade general science students pursuing the same enrichment. These students are 7th and 8th graders who are good students, academically, and are not challenged enough in their daily science classes. They attend this club for an extra challenge and to further their learning through extension laboratories. We are meeting as a team to become effective communicators, problem solvers, and innovative and imaginative designers in science.

My Project

My project is a means of giving students the opportunity to build their leadership skills through an after school science extension or club. Instead of the students traveling home after school, they are staying to further their knowledge in the sciences while also taking charge of their learning by choosing the laboratory activities, for example. Additionally, the older students have taken charge of experiments for the two younger students, explaining the science concepts which explains how the experiments work.

Voice and Choice Within PBL

- **Challenging Problem or Question**
  - Students needed additional challenge within their science classes, so they joined a club where they would receive the extra enrichment.

- **Sustained Inquiry**
  - Students are given experiments with different inquiry elements and scaffolded questions.

- **Authenticity**
  - The laboratory activities are activities designed to demonstrate phenomena that occur around Earth on a daily basis.

- **Student Voice and Choice**
  - The students were able to choose which laboratory activities they wanted to complete and they put in their input as to when they would like to complete them.

Results and Conclusion

My work within the classroom uses the Problem Based Learning cycle found within Getting Started With Project Based Learning written by Larmer. Based on Draeg and Wilson’s article in Education Week, “the power of choice demonstrates your caring for your students by giving them a learner’s permit to drive their own learning.” My time with this group of students has been more and more energetic as our time has progressed. Compared to the beginning of the club, my students have entered our club happier and more energetic. Because they have their own control of their education, my students have been more invested in their learning and have a greater desire to attend the club.

In the future, I plan to take what I have learned from my science club and transfer it into my classroom in order to inspire my students and get them invested in their own education.

References

- Getting Started With Project Based Learning, Larner 2018
- How to Give Students ore Control Over Their Learning, Draeger & Wilson 2016