

# *Problem-Based Learning: Experience It Yourself*



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# Characteristics Needed in College Graduates

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High level of communication skills

Ability to define problems, gather and  
evaluate information, develop solutions

Team skills -- ability to work with others

Ability to use all of the above to address  
problems in a complex real-world setting

Quality Assurance in Undergraduate Education (1994)  
Wingspread Conference, ECS, Boulder, CO.



# What Is PBL?

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“The principal idea behind PBL is that the starting point for learning should be a problem, a query, or a puzzle that the learner wishes to solve.”

*Boud, D. (1985) PBL in perspective. In “PBL in Education for the Professions,” D. J. Boud (ed); p. 13.*



# Deflating Grady – Part I

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Read over the e-mail exchange and discuss the ideas it raises about grade inflation

As a group, compose a definition of grade inflation and be prepared to present it.

Be prepared to “report out” in 10-15 minutes



# Deflating Grady – Part II

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Read over the information presented, and be prepared to report out on your answers to either question 1 or question 2.

Be prepared to “report out” in 10 minutes



# Questions are Critical

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*“...once you have learned to ask questions – relevant and appropriate and substantial questions – you have learned how to learn and no one can keep you from learning whatever you want or need to know.”*

Neil Postman & Charles Weingartner  
in *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*, 1969



# Characteristics of Good Learning Issues

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Presented in the form of a question or series of questions.

Focused so that it seeks specific information.

Constructed so that it asks an answerable question.

Pursues information that is relevant to the problem.

Goes beyond superficial knowledge to probe conceptual issues.

Often set in a context that provides direction. Why is the question important?



## Deflating Grady – Part III

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Take a look at the graph from [gradeinflation.com](http://gradeinflation.com):

- According to your group’s definition, is this evidence for grade inflation?
- Make a list of questions (learning issues) you have about these data.

Be prepared to “report out” in 15 min.



# Deflating Grady – Part IV

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Who Cares about grade inflation?

Match the stakeholders with their comment.

Each person in your group select a different stakeholder and wait for instructions.

# What are the Common Features of PBL?

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Learning is initiated by a problem.

Problems are based on complex, real-world situations.

All information needed to solve problem is not given initially.

Students identify, find, and use appropriate resources.

Students work in permanent groups.

Learning is active, integrated, cumulative, and connected.