

THE POWER OF PERFORMANCE PIECES IN ACADEMIC SETTINGS

The Value of Mock Trials in Social Science Courses at
Diverse Grade Levels incorporating Experiential Learning,
all three PBL Methods, and seeing the value of having boys
perform in an Academic Setting!

By: Bruce Maxwell- SHS Senior School Social Studies
Teacher with Connor Munro- (SHS-14'); and Nikolas De
Stefano- (SHS-14')

Grade 11 Law Mock Trials-Verisimilitude Setting

- Criminal and Civil (½ Yr. Elect.- Gr.11 Graduates)
- Theory for first ½ of each class.
- Re-write Cases- close to home
- Legal Precedence
- Legal Teams (2)
- Real Courtroom (Bailiff etc.)
- Community of Judges
- Evidence
- Debrief and Review
- Evaluations
- School Community (all schools should have or think about having a law program). Sometimes two mock trials- more than 16 students in the class- Min=8.
- Mock Trials/ Mock Arbitrations (Final Summative)
- Background Knowledge/ Prep.
- CanLii (can't use real cases)
- Review of similar cases
- Lawyers (+ Lead) + Witnesses
- Police officer brings in accused
- Value of their expertise
- Support-Week Before Actual Trial
- Judges speak to the performances and passion for law. (Lead Judge as well). Diverse Law.
- Rubric (Me)+ Extensive Comments of Performance+ Confid. Peer Evaluation
- Advancement, Alumni Relations, Academic-Electives, Athletic, Better understanding of material- "The one who does the activity is the one who does the learning." Inspire students to be in law, or to know their rights. Protection of the individual! Element of Risk!

Value for Boys-Mock Trial Exercise

- Some may want to be lawyers. Content still valuable even if not. (i.e. Doctors being careful). Experiential Learning- like the real deal.
- Confidence- Presenting (Connor Munro-14' and Nikolas De Stefano-14')
- Legal Teams- Competition
- Teamwork- The best teams do the best!
- Advice from professionals
- Research- CanLii- legal precedence + Application of Law- (sec. of C.C.R.F.)
- Role-Plays- Opening Statements- tell a story!
- Thinking on their Feet- Note-taking- Adjustments
- Evidence Design- Creative
- Feedback during- Lots right after trial- Rubric- Notes about specifics-peer evaluation- written reflection

Testimonials

- Connor Munro (SHS-14')
- Articling Law Student at Blake, Cassels & Graydon in Montreal
- No family background in law so can speak to the academic importance for a law class in high school
- Nikolas De Stefano (SHS- 14')
- Third Yr. Law Student at McGill University Law School and working at the Supreme Court in Ottawa in the Summer of 2019 as a Clerk
- Value of a law class in high school. Legal problems are all around us!

EDU-Speak

- Experiential Learning- Natural through the process- Students take on the roles of lawyers and witnesses working in legal teams. Teacher becomes Facilitator- help both sides to execute for success! I can see the Progress- rarely am I surprised in the trial!
- Inter-disciplinary- Issues in cases relate to other subjects. This can be done with other Social Science classes. Current Event Issues.
- Final Summative- Peer Evaluations, Rubric, Feedback, Role-Modeling etc.
- Community Engagement- Proof Continuation- Nicholas and Connor presenting.
- Cooperat. Learn.+ Constructivist+ Scaffolding+ Instruction
- Boy's Confidence- Can see it change when they do the exercise!
- PBL- CAIS 2051 Strategic Plan + Branching away from late 1970's McMaster Medical School scientific model.

PBL-Three Types-Perfect in Law

- Play-Based Learning (PBL)- Mock Trial, role plays in class- Legal teams act out the crime or situation as they see it. Opening/ Closing Statements/ Evidence (Visual Learning).
- Project-Based Learning (PBL)- The end result! Leading to an end project. Plus evidence items designed and validated, and working in legal teams.
- Problem-Based Learning (PBL)- Law is natural class for this through mock trials. With Witnesses- Direct-Examination, **Cross-Examination (Problem-BL perfect)**, and Re-Direct-Examination. Seb., and I are doing a Problem BL design with my Grade 11 World History class as well.
- Any conflicting topic or new thinking can be PBL'ed.

Teaching Method-PBL

- In small groups (4), design a lesson(s) or project dealing with a PBL method- Play-Based (fun), Project-Based (end result), and Problem-Based Methods.
- Each group should be in the same division, same class, and/or academic subjects to make for better working dynamics.
- Problem-Based Learning- usually has a driving question to start, but then eliminate the question, but focus on the topic. (The hardest PBL).
- Consider Evaluation as well!
- Decide Grade, Course, and Topic. (Social Sciences, but can also be used in other academic disciplines- story of a Math Teacher I once knew).
- Rough Outline- do you have enough time to incorporate all three into a lesson or two. You can use History as a subject if not sure. (Class on Great Depression- PBL- why did it take so long?).
- **Ultimate Challenge-** Teachers doing a PBL as they design a PBL. You are actually doing a PBL through design- do you see it?