

Executive Summary

The project that we created was designed to help future educators make group work more meaningful. Sometimes students question the importance of the concepts they are taught or the relevance of the projects they are assigned. To combat this, project-based learning (PBL) can be implemented. This approach to teaching is student-centered and focuses on a real-world question or problem. As a result, [PBL allows](#) students to choose how they will demonstrate their knowledge in a way that is interesting to them. More [benefits](#) to PBL are that students gain a sense of purpose, have a deeper understanding of the content, practice 21st century competencies, and are more engaged in real life problems.

To communicate these benefits and demonstrate what PBL might look like in a classroom, our group took the problem of the lack of clean water in Africa and had students collaborate on some form of a solution. Our example of a solution was advocacy, in which the students would become well informed on the issue and advocate to raise money through a program such as [The Water Project](#). However, in a real classroom the students could collectively decide on a solution and the information being researched be altered for the subject being taught. For example, in a biology classroom the students might focus on the specific diseases that unclean water causes and how raising money for clean water would alleviate some of those illnesses.

To involve the future educators in the simulation, we had them put themselves in someone from Africa's shoes as they imagined if they could only use [five gallons](#) of water a day. Students had the opportunity to practice empathy, [one of Forbes 13 underrated skills](#), while completing this activity. Next, we split the audience into random groups to research a different aspect of water and collaborate with first their groups and then with the whole audience. By doing this, not only did everyone learn something from each other and work on the skills of communication and collaboration, but the audience also got to see how this platform could be altered to fit any content area depending on the questions you ask your students. After simulating what this PBL lesson, we had the future educators in the audience come up with ways they could incorporate this PBL lesson into their own curriculum.