

Ten Design Elements of

Authentic Learning

Real-world relevance: Authentic activities match the real-world tasks of professionals in practice.

Ill-defined problem: Authentic activities are relatively undefined and open to multiple interpretations, requiring students to identify for themselves the tasks and subtasks needed to complete the major task.

Sustained investigation: Authentic activities comprise complex tasks to be investigated by students over a sustained period of time, requiring significant investment of time and intellectual resources.

Multiple sources and perspectives: Authentic activities provide the opportunity for students to examine tasks from a variety of theoretical and practical perspectives, using a variety of resources, and requires students to distinguish relevant from irrelevant information.

Collaboration: Success is not achievable by an individual learner working alone. Authentic activities make collaboration integral to the task, both within the course and in the real world.

Reflection (metacognition): Authentic activities enable learners to make choices and reflect on their learning, both individually and as a team or community.

Interdisciplinary perspective: Authentic activities have consequences that extend beyond a particular discipline, encouraging students to adopt diverse roles and think in interdisciplinary terms.

Integrated assessment: Assessment is not merely summative in authentic activities but is woven seamlessly into the major task in a manner that reflects real-world evaluation processes.

Polished products: Conclusions are not merely exercises or substeps in preparation for something else. Authentic activities culminate in the creation of a whole product, valuable in its own right.

Multiple interpretations and outcomes: Rather than yielding a single correct answer obtained by the application of rules and procedures, authentic activities allow for diverse interpretations and competing solutions.

Examples of Authentic Learning

Interviews
Video reports/projects
Oral reports
Case briefs
Photo stories
Peer editing/review
ePortfolios
Data Analysis
Infographics
Debates
Ask the "expert"
Letters to editor/government
Floor plans
Timelines
Surveys
Research data (real data sets)

Document Analysis
"Teacher" for a day, module or concept
Case studies
Podcasts/Vlogs
Product reviews
Article critiques
Concept mapping
Graphing data
Presentations
Design projects
Group Projects
Models/constructing objects
Proposals
Scenarios
Inquiry based Learning

Journaling/reflection
Wikis and other collaborative writing
Group problem solving
Blogs
Lab work
Role playing
Simulations
Field work
Field trips
Research projects
Problem based learning (PBL)
Real world problems (finding solutions)
Editorials
Multi-media creation