



PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

The Robertson Center at Success Academy

Success Academy's project-based learning units inspire students to become experts in a fascinating subject. Through real-world experiences and immersive lessons and activities, learners develop literacy skills and become strong and curious thinkers.

Scan QR code with your phone's camera to access this content online.



OVERVIEW

The Robertson Center at Success Academy is where educational thinkers and changemakers come together to advance learning for all children. Through programming and content, they aim to amplify what's working in Success Academy's K–12 schools, share lessons learned about creating strong education communities, and create space to learn with external peers. Project-based learning (PBL) is a critical component of Success Academy's elementary school literacy curriculum and supports the development of reading, writing, and verbal communication. Through projects, scholars engage with learning in ways that connect academic skills and knowledge to the real world.

Success Academy's PBL units are designed for scholars to immerse themselves in one topic from a cross-disciplinary perspective. During PBL lessons, scholars read rigorous shared texts, conduct their own research, and explore topics in their local community. At the end of each project, scholars present their creations and learnings to friends and families.

The Robertson Center has published 10 of Success Academy's PBL units, and more than 30 elementary schools are currently implementing these lessons as part of their literacy curriculum. The Robertson Center currently offers services around direct implementation as well as professional development webinars to support leaders and teachers.



What Makes This Model Innovative?



Rigorous Learning

Project-based learning challenges scholars by setting rigorous learning objectives. Scholars read complex texts and answer essential questions as they gain content knowledge and make progress on their projects.



Relevance

Project-based learning offers exposure to real-world topics and problems. Scholars go on relevant field studies to experience and learn about the world and their community.



Active Self-Direction

Project-based learning encourages self-direction and ownership. Scholars guide their learning and engage in self-reflection on their progress.

DESIGN

Goals

Project-based learning at Success Academy has clear intended outcomes for scholar learning.

Curiosity and Exploration

Scholars develop curiosity about the world and how it works and actively seek out knowledge.

Academic Knowledge & Skills

Scholars demonstrate proficiency in reading and content-specific knowledge and develop inquiry skills.

Self-Regulation Habits & Skills

Scholars master habits such as time management, self-monitoring, and self-reflection.

Experience

Across all PBL units, lessons are grounded in guiding questions that offer developmentally appropriate challenges and opportunities for inquiry and self-direction. Scholars engage in a variety of relevant activities to support their projects.

Lesson Launch

Scholars begin their lesson with a whole-class launch where the teacher engages the class in the day's work through a guiding question. An engaging launch can happen in many ways, but all share a few qualities. Launches should:

- Pique scholars' curiosity and keep their attention.
- Leverage prior knowledge or engage their personal experiences.
- Relate back to or foreshadow the lesson's purpose through a guiding question.

Launches are often quick—about five to seven minutes—and build on the content from the previous day, which helps scholars situate the day's learning. Through launches, scholars become interested in how lessons, guiding questions, and other class activities build on one another over the course of the unit. Making these connections is an essential component of mastering necessary content and skills.

For example, in the kindergarten "Farm to Table" unit, scholars spend 10 minutes exploring what can be found on a farm (or not!) by sorting images into a T-chart. In the third-grade "Iroquois and Lenape" unit, scholars are given a map and are told that the Iroquois and Lenape were the first people to inhabit the NYC region. With this new knowledge, they turn and talk to their partners to discuss what they already know. [📄 "Farm to Table"](#) [🖥️ "Iroquois and Lenape"](#)

Read to Learn

Scholars gain content knowledge by engaging in independent reading time, read-alouds, and whole-class discussions around a series of shared texts—something every scholar reads at the same time.

Each PBL unit recommends texts for students to explore in order to gain the background or contextual knowledge necessary to work through the unit's projects. Teachers decide which texts to highlight and how scholars will engage with them depending on the skills and needs of each scholar. The most common modes of engaging with shared texts are:

- **Read-Alouds:** Scholars lead a read-aloud of specific portions of a shared text, pausing to answer questions, expand their thinking, and make connections.
 - **Independent Reading:** Scholars spend time reading and annotating the shared text on their own.
 - **Small Groups:** Scholars are divided into groups with heterogeneous skills where they share read-aloud time and are guided by discussion questions.
 - **Targeted Teaching:** The teacher pushes into independent reading time to support scholars 1:1 as needed. This is often preplanned, and the teacher supports with scaffolded comprehension questions.
-

For example, in the second-grade "Birds" unit, scholars engage with illustrative texts that bring learning to life. In this unit, scholars explore fiction and nonfiction texts to learn about how birds fly, their habits and skills, birdwatching as a hobby, and more. [📄 "Birds" Unit](#)

Writing and Journaling

Scholars spend time practicing their writing by responding to guiding questions or journaling. In order for scholars to engage with knowledge independently, project-based learning lessons promote writing every day. This activity supports scholars to process information and synthesize understandings on their own. It can also serve as a way to evaluate scholars' reading comprehension and reasoning skills.

Scholars often respond to creative or personal prompts that extend their thinking or encourage them to transfer knowledge across experiences. Reflecting on content personally through journaling reflections helps keep the content sticky and relevant. Responding to targeted questions helps teachers check scholars for accuracy and understanding of critical content knowledge.

The two common writing formats that complement each project are:

- **Free-form Journaling:** Scholars spend time reflecting on the day's activities. They often write about their experiences with connections, ideas, or challenges related to the content or the project.
- **Written Responses:** Scholars spend dedicated time responding to a content-specific question posed by the teacher (usually the day's guiding question). This exercise acts as an individual check-for-understanding around content and writing skills.

For example, in the third-grade "Immigration" unit, scholars keep journals for their research and writing. Throughout this unit, scholars hone their writing and comprehension skills by creating a class glossary of the most important immigration terms. This unit culminates in each scholar researching, writing, and publishing their own "expert book" on a topic related to immigration of their choosing. [📄 "Immigration" Unit](#) [📄 Expert Book Assignment Overview](#)

Project Work Time

Scholars complete a series of projects during a single PBL unit, often spending multiple lessons working on the tasks that move one project forward. Every project builds on previous knowledge and skills and encourages scholars to get creative while grounded in facts and content-specific information. These projects often engage various modes of learning, including building and/or making, writing, and crafting. The goal of these is to provide learners with different ways of demonstrating their learning while honing their creativity.

Whether working in groups or independently, scholars engage in a few different activities to complete each of their projects:

- Scholars **spend time planning** their project work time. This can look like setting up daily to-dos, dividing up tasks among group members, or even evaluating their progress toward their final goal. Teachers can offer examples and provide daily support or check-ins.
- Scholars work together or independently to **conduct research on the project**, depending on the expected outcome. Research can range from reviewing information online to looking closely at learnings within shared texts or interviewing community members.
- Scholars **spend time creating and polishing their work** in order to showcase them to their friends and family during the PBL Museum or Showcase. This can look like building a suspension bridge to explore what building a real bridge might entail (in grade 3) to touching different types of flour and jotting observations to learn about the ingredients that make up different breads (in kindergarten).

For example, in the first-grade "Arctic" unit, scholars engage in projects and experiments that allow them to apply what they've learned. Activities include experiments to better understand why animals hibernate, building igloos to better understand adaptation and shelter in the Arctic, and working as a class to create a visual representation of their findings. [📄 "Arctic" Unit](#) [📄 Hibernation Experiment Overview](#) [📄 Building an Inuit Igloo Overview](#) [📄 ABC Arctic Book Overview](#)

Field Studies

Scholars take their learning beyond the classroom and explore local and regional places related to their projects' content. Each PBL unit contains three to five field study learning experiences that can range in time from 45 minutes to half-day trips.

These field study experiences bring learning to life. Field studies help scholars relate their learnings to the real world while exploring the contexts of local landmarks and important places around their neighborhoods or places nearby.

Explore some sample field studies: [📄 Kindergarten, Unit 7: Beyond the Baking](#) [📄 Grade 2, Unit 3 Field Studies: Brooklyn Bridge](#) [📄 Grade 4, Unit 3 Field Studies: The American Revolution](#)

PBL Museum and Showcases

Scholars share their PBL experiences by hosting a joyful celebration of their learnings.

The culminating exhibition showcases scholars' project work and all that they've learned about their topics. Scholars should spend time preparing to present to museum visitors. Teachers should work with students to ensure that work is accurate, neat, and detailed.

On the day of the museum, families and community members are invited to view scholars' academic work, guests are guided by their scholars on a tour of the projects so everyone can share their excitement and learn from their expertise about the topic.

Supporting Structures

Implementing Success Academy's PBL units will require changes to a few supporting structures.

Success Academy's PBL curriculum is grounded in rigorous learning objectives and requires a scholar-centered approach to learning.



CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT

Curiosity and inquiry are at the heart of the learning objectives for each PBL unit. Scholars' content knowledge and skills are grounded in challenging yet achievable learning objectives. Scholars engage with complex guiding questions that help scaffold their discovery and understanding of the content. By making choices about their projects, asking questions, and sharing ideas with peers and adults, scholars develop self-direction skills and habits.

[Study Journals/Writing Suggestions](#) [Thinking Chart Template](#) [Sample Vocabulary List](#)

Successful project-based learning requires fostering productive adult mindsets around scholar-led learning.



ADULT ROLES, HIRING, & LEARNING

Teachers must hold a growth-mindset approach to teaching and learning and believe that all scholars are capable and deserving of success. Scholars should own their learning, especially during PBL lessons and activities.

To accomplish this, teachers should know how to provide feedback, how to ask open-ended questions, and how to productively redirect scholars toward accurate learning. The Robertson Center offers materials for teachers to successfully prepare and deliver daily lessons and checks for understanding. These units offer lesson plans that promote scholar engagement and self-direction as well as tips and tricks to implement these PBL units successfully.



PBL lessons work best in longer learning blocks.

Scholars learn the thrill of becoming experts in a subject when they have extended time to immerse themselves in a fascinating topic from a

SCHEDULE & USE OF TIME

cross-disciplinary perspective—including through field studies and art projects—in science, reading, writing, and math.



FAMILY & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Community members are essential partners for making field studies a reality. Similarly, communicating with families about academic showcases early can ensure that scholars feel more supported.

The purpose of field studies is for scholars to engage with relevant places in their community. These experiences can support gaining social and cultural capital and offer opportunities to make unique and joyous learning experiences. Community members, local business owners, and community organizers can be incredibly supportive contributors to your scholars' education.



BUDGET & OPERATIONS

Before the school year begins, schools must allocate funding for field studies and make a plan to order or acquire materials for projects.

PBL does not have to be costly, and many materials and resources can be readily available or found for free. Reach out to community partners for support; decide on cost-effective, local field studies ahead of time; and, make sure every project can be executed with available funding before planning.

Additionally, materials management requires collaboration across school operations, content leads, and teachers. It is important to be able to work closely with your leaders, grade team, and/or teaching partner to plan a routine for ordering, using, and setting up materials for each project, as well as organizing the PBL Museum and showcases.

IMPLEMENTATION

Supports Offered

[The Robertson Center](#) offers the following support to help you implement their PBL approach.

Open-Source PBL Curriculum

Free



The Robertson Center website offers a variety of K–4 literacy-focused PBL units that are cross-disciplinary. Within these units, you'll find:

- Unit purpose and learning outcomes
 - Essential and guiding questions
 - A list of engaging and challenging texts
 - Day-by-day lesson sequence with suggested timing
 - Exemplar projects
-

- Helpful links and resources

[Learn More](#)

Virtual Community of Practice Sessions and Webinars

Free



The Robertson Center provides opportunities for educators to come together and discuss learning. The Robertson Center shares:

- Best practices and lessons learned from educators
- Real-time feedback on lesson plans
- Helpful targeted teaching approaches
- Support around adult mindsets and scholar engagement
- Live workshops and webinars
- And more!

[Sign Up](#)

Direct Implementation & Supports

Free



The Robertson Center partners directly with schools to share Success Academy's best practices and learnings. This offering includes:

- Resources and implementation tools
- Professional development sessions
- Observations and feedback
- Coaching for teachers and leaders
- And more!

[Reach Out](#)

Reach

49

Schools

20,000

Scholars

100%

College
Matriculation Rate

Impact

Scholars become more engaged and confident learners through project-based learning at Success Academy.

- Students tend to become self-assured, confident learners and apply those skills to other subjects and areas of their lives.

- Classrooms are more engaging and exciting as PBL work continues to go up on the wall.
- New ideas and topics introduced during PBL tend to serve as springboards for scholars' future exploration and learning.

All trends are reported directly by the Robertson Center at Success Academy.

Contact

Rachel Marino

Program Specialist

robertsoncenter@successacademies.org

RESOURCES

<p>SUCCESS ACADEMY EDUCATION INSTITUTE</p> <p>Kindergarten Unit 2: PBL From Farm to Table</p> <p>Unit Purpose</p> <p>Think back to your most positive experience as a student—a time that was meaningful to you. Why did this leave a lasting impression? How did your teacher make this experience possible? What learning was embedded in this experience?</p> <p>Talk with your colleagues about your experiences and memories. It's likely you'll find some consistent themes: working with peers, independence, choice, engagement, content-specific learning, and applying learning in a real-world context. Project-based learning offers all of this and more!</p> <p>Watch this video from PBLWorks to see project-based learning in action. The teacher is knowledgeable and passionate about the topic. The children are making choices about what they do and how they do it, they're asking questions, reflecting, and interacting with peers and adults by discussing their ideas and feedback.</p> <p>Project Based Learning (PBL) is a critical aspect of Success Academy's (SA) school design. Our scholars learn the thrill of becoming experts in a subject when they have extended time to immerse themselves in a fascinating topic from a cross-disciplinary perspective—including through field studies, art projects, and classes in science, reading, writing, and/or math. The culmination of PBL studies are museum presentations scholars can share with others; this allows scholars to demonstrate the learning and engagement they have achieved.</p> <p>In this unit, you will fuel scholars' curiosity about where food comes from. Scholars will discover that almost all the food we eat originates from a farm of some kind and that workers in all parts of the process help food along its path from the farm to our tables.</p> <p><u>"Farm to Table" Unit</u></p> <p>This is a kindergarten unit that focuses on projects around agricultural processes and types of produce.</p>	<p>Component 1 - of 4 Download Component</p> <p>Project-Based Learning: Iroquois and Lenape</p> <p>Purpose: Why This Unit?</p> <p>Project-based learning is a critical aspect of SA's school design.</p> <p>We believe that students learn best when they are engaged in a topic from a cross-disciplinary perspective over an extended period of time. We also believe that students are more engaged when involved in creative exhibitions.</p> <p>Scholars have experienced project-based learning before, engaging in deep study of one topic through field studies, projects, and creation of a museum.</p> <p><u>"Iroquois and Lenape" Unit</u></p> <p>This is a grade 3 unit that focuses on projects that explore the lifestyle of Native peoples of the New York area.</p>	<p>SUCCESS ACADEMY EDUCATION INSTITUTE</p> <p>Grade 2 Unit 7: PBL Birds</p> <p>Unit Purpose</p> <p>Think back to your most positive experience as a student—a time that was meaningful to you. Why did this leave a lasting impression? How did your teacher make this experience possible? What learning was embedded in this experience?</p> <p>Talk with your colleagues about your experiences and memories. It's likely you'll find some consistent themes: working with peers, independence, choice, engagement, content-specific learning, and applying learning in a real-world context. Project-based learning offers all of this and more!</p> <p>Watch this video from PBLWorks to see project-based learning in action. The teacher is knowledgeable and passionate about the topic. The children are making choices about what they do and how they do it, they're asking questions, reflecting, and interacting with peers and adults by discussing their ideas and feedback.</p> <p>Project Based Learning (PBL) is a critical aspect of Success Academy's (SA) school design. Our scholars learn the thrill of becoming experts in a subject when they have extended time to immerse themselves in a fascinating topic from a cross-disciplinary perspective—including through field studies, art projects, and classes in science, reading, writing, and/or math. The culmination of PBL studies are museum presentations scholars can share with others—this allows scholars to demonstrate the learning and engagement they have achieved.</p> <p><u>"Birds" Unit</u></p> <p>This is a grade 2 unit that focuses on projects and field studies around different types of birds.</p>
---	--	--

Grade 3 Unit 8: PBL Immigration and Ellis Islands

Unit Purpose

Think back to your most positive experience as a student – a time that was meaningful to you. Why did this leave a lasting impression? How did your teacher make this experience possible? What learning was embedded in this experience?

Talk with your colleagues about your experiences and memories. It's likely you'll find some consistent themes: working with peers, independence, choice, engagement, content-specific learning, and applying learning in a real-world context. Project-based learning offers all of this and more!

Watch this [video](#) from PBLWorks to see project-based learning in action. The teacher is knowledgeable and passionate about the topic. The children are making choices about what they do and how they do it, they're asking questions, reflecting, and interacting with peers and adults by discussing their ideas and feedback.

Project Based Learning (PBL) is a critical aspect of Success Academy's school design. Our scholars learn the thrill of becoming experts in a subject when they have extended time to immerse themselves in a fascinating topic from a cross-disciplinary perspective – including through field studies, art projects, and classes in science, reading, writing, and/or math. The culmination of PBL studies are museum presentations scholars can share with others; this allows scholars to demonstrate the learning and engagement they have achieved.

"Immigration" Unit

This is a grade 3 unit that focuses on projects and activities around immigration.

Immigration and Ellis Island Expert Book

Over the past few weeks, we have studied immigration, specifically from 1880-1930, when Ellis Island was in use as a federal immigration station. Now, it's your turn to share your knowledge with others.

Directions:

- Over the next two weeks, you will:
 - Choose a topic for your Expert Book. Make sure it is broad so you have plenty of information to share.
 - Example: "From Ellis Island to Orchard Street" is broad, allowing you to share ample information. "The Medical Exam" is very specific and better off being a chapter within your book.
 - Conduct research on your topic by drawing upon sources you used throughout the unit (books, texts, videos, maps, etc.).
 - Organize your Expert Book.
 - Provide an introduction to the topic you chose.
 - Write at least 2 to 3 chapters on subtopics within your topic.
 - Example: If your topic is "Reasons Immigrants Came to America," chapters could focus on the economic, political, and religious reasons for immigration.
 - You must include a table of contents, photographs, and captions in your book.
 - Include at least 2-3 additional text features in your Expert Book. Some examples are:

Expert Book Assignment Overview

This is an overview of an activity from the grade 3 "Immigration" unit where scholars build an expert book on the reasons people migrate.

Grade 1 Unit 7: PBL Arctic

Unit Purpose

Think back to your most positive experience as a student—a time that was meaningful to you. Why did this leave a lasting impression? How did your teacher make this experience possible? What learning was embedded in this experience?

Talk with your colleagues about your experiences and memories. It's likely you'll find some consistent themes: working with peers, independence, choice, engagement, content-specific learning, and applying learning in a real-world context. Project-based learning offers all of this and more!

Watch this [video](#) from PBLWorks to see project-based learning in action. The teacher is knowledgeable and passionate about the topic. The children are making choices about what they do and how they do it, they're asking questions, reflecting, and interacting with peers and adults by discussing their ideas and feedback.

Project Based Learning (PBL) is a critical aspect of Success Academy's (SA) school design. Our scholars learn the thrill of becoming experts in a subject when they have extended time to immerse themselves in a fascinating topic from a cross-disciplinary perspective— including through field studies; art projects; and classes in science, reading, writing, and/or math. The culmination of PBL studies are museum presentations scholars can share with others; this allows scholars to demonstrate the learning and engagement they have achieved.

"Arctic" Unit

This is a grade 1 unit that focuses on projects where scholars explore the Arctic ecosystem.

Hibernation Experiment

Some animals such as brown bears, black bears, and the arctic ground squirrel hibernate during the Arctic's long harsh winter when food is scarce. This means that they find shelter and go into a deep, deep sleep for months at a time. During this time the animal's body is using very little energy because they lay motionless. They are using such little energy that they require no additional food, only the fat stored on their body. Complete the experiment below to see how an animal at rest will use the stored fat at a slower rate than an animal in motion!

You will need:

- 2 small jars (with lids) filled with water—baby food jars work best
- 1 pat of butter in each jar

Steps:

1. Label the jars as "hibernating animal" and "awake animal". Tell the children that we are going to pretend that it is winter. These jars are two arctic animals. One hibernates. The other won't go to sleep.
2. Remind the children that moving around burns up stored fat in our body. It makes us tired and hungry as we burn up the fat. The butter inside the jar represents the stored fat the animals have inside their bodies. This stored fat gives them the energy that they need to live.

Hibernation Experiment Overview

This is an overview of an activity from the grade 1 "Arctic" unit where scholars conduct experiments to learn about hibernation.

Building an Inuit Igloo

The Arctic is one of the coldest environments on Earth. Winters are long with few hours of daylight. Before they lived in modern homes, the Inuit had to adapt to this extreme climate. The Inuit people built sturdy shelters to protect themselves from the harsh winds and bitter cold. The Inuit word for home is "igloo." During the summer, the igloos were made from a wooden frame with animal skins and whale bones. During the winter, however, igloos were made from blocks of ice!

Scholars will work in small groups to create their igloos. If necessary, you could also create one class igloo that all scholars add to over the course of a couple days. If you choose to go the whole class, or two large groups, you can use a hot glue gun in lieu of white glue and have a teacher apply the glue.

You will need:

- Sugar Cubes (one box = one igloo)
- Cardboard
- White Glue (or hot glue if teacher assisted)
- White Paint

Steps:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Pour your sugar cubes into a dish. |
|---|------------------------------------|



Building an Inuit Igloo Overview

This is an overview of an activity from the grade 1 "Arctic" unit where scholars build an Inuit igloo.

Directions for ABC Arctic Book

THIS IS A GROUP PROJECT. EACH CHILD DOES ONE LETTER ONLY

- Students will create a collage / watercolor / watercolor pencil picture for each of the letters of the alphabet that relate to the Arctic
- Students should see examples of other ABC Books

Materials:

- examples of ABC Books
- photos of the Arctic and arctic animals
- chart paper
- marker to write words A-Z down
- white sketch paper

If creating:

- COLLAGE
 - Small pieces of colored construction paper
 - Large piece of construction paper for base
 - Scissors
 - Glue
- WATERCOLORS
 - Pencils to sketch
 - Watercolor palettes
 - Watercolor paper
- WATERCOLOR PENCILS
 - Pencils to sketch
 - Watercolor pencils
 - Watercolor paper approx 8X10

ABC Arctic Book Overview

This is an overview of an activity where scholars create a glossary of related terms across the entire grade 1 "Arctic" unit.

Project Based Learning: Bread— Beyond the Baking

Purpose: Why This Unit?

Project-based learning (PBL) is a critical aspect of SA's school design. We believe that students learn best when they are engaged in a topic from a cross-disciplinary perspective over an extended period of time. We also believe that students are more engaged when involved in creative exhibitions.

Bread is not only delicious but also an almost-universal food found all over the world. Different types of bread are made with varied ingredients and are cooked in radically different ways. Through the study of bread, scholars will learn about cultures around the world!

[Kindergarten, Unit 7: Beyond the Baking](#)

This is a kindergarten unit that includes field studies at bakeries and supermarkets to learn about the process of baking bread.



Suggestions for the Study Journals

The study journal is a small notebook the students will use to collect information about the Westward Expansion. The students can decorate their study journal to show that it is special. For example, cardstock paper or construction paper can be used for the cover and the students can use pencils, pastels, collage, or photographs to add a study-related illustration.

The study journal will contain student notes, student-created maps and drawings, along with materials (e.g., maps), you will give them. Additionally, you may choose to have the students trim some of their worksheets (e.g., trip sheet), to paste into their notebook.

The study journal can also be divided into sections (example below):

Section	Purpose	Pages (front & back)
1. Notes & Reflections	For research notes, reactions to meetings, questions to prepare for meetings, thoughts on a topic	20
2. Maps, Diagrams, Sketches	Maps, diagrams, or sketches that the student has created or the teacher has distributed.	10
3. Nonfiction Writing Information	Notes on nonfiction writing	8
4. Glossary	Important words and their definitions	4

[Study Journals/Writing Suggestions](#)

This is an assignment overview with suggestions on how to organize scholars' writing journals.

Project-Based Learning: Brooklyn Bridge

Purpose: Why This Unit?

Project-based learning is a critical aspect of SA's school design. We believe that students learn best when they are engaged in a topic from a cross-disciplinary perspective over an extended period of time. We also believe that students are more engaged when involved in creative exhibitions.

Scholars experienced project-based learning in Kindergarten and Grade 1. They engaged in deep study of one topic through field studies, projects, and creation of a museum.

[Grade 2, Unit 3 Field Studies: Brooklyn Bridge](#)

This is a grade 2 unit that includes field studies at nearby bridges to learn about the modern use of these structures.



Immigration and Ellis Island Chart

Topic: Immigration and Ellis Island	
What I Know	What I Want to Know

[Thinking Chart Template](#)

This is a template for the grade 3 "Immigration" unit that asks scholars to reflect on what they know and what they want to know.

Project-Based Learning: A Nation is Born

Purpose: Why This Unit?

Project-based learning is a critical aspect of SA's school design. We believe that students learn best when they are engaged in a topic from a cross-disciplinary perspective over an extended period of time. We also believe that students are more engaged when involved in creative exhibitions. Scholars have experienced project-based learning before, engaging in deep study of one topic through field studies, projects, and creation of a museum. In this unit, we study the American Revolution, a remarkable historical event that permanently changed the course of social, political, and economic world history. As reading teachers, you will have an opportunity to expose your students to a wide array of

[Grade 4, Unit 3 Field Studies: The American Revolution](#)

This is a grade 4 unit that includes field studies at local historical sites and locations to learn about the birth of the nation.



Immigration and Ellis Island Class Glossary

As you begin to encounter vocabulary associated with Immigration and Ellis Island, you need to ensure scholars understand these words. Once scholars have definitions, have them create a class glossary of terms that will be posted in the room and available throughout the unit.

Scholars should write words on index cards and then write their definition on a sentence strip. The index card and sentence strip should then be posted in the room. This is an on-going project that should continue as you encounter more vocabulary throughout the weeks of the unit.

Here is a list of some sample words. You should edit this list as necessary.

- Week 1:**
- Immigration
 - Immigrant
 - Emigrant
 - Home country
- Week 2:**
- Homestead Act
 - Famine
 - Politics
 - Liberty
 - Poverty
 - Pogroms
 - Labor
 - Atlantic Slave Trade
 - Religious Persecution
 - Pogroms
 - Slavery
 - Free Country

[Sample Vocabulary List](#)

This is a possible vocabulary list for the grade 3 "Immigration" unit.