



ACT Now School Partnerships Webinar Series
Building Curricula and Activities
January 17, 2023

This worksheet was developed to serve as a supplemental resource for the live webinar, “Building Curricula and Activities” hosted by ACT Now. Use this worksheet to review discussions from the live session, or as a template to begin developing your own curriculum and activities.

Recording:

https://metrofamily.zoom.us/rec/share/4X91YojzPb6IGMMqDepjBMaSKp0sL31B7H99y3wHbl3mWanQIHix4cV8oAYD_utD.ZRo6pY6AMSDMIJU9

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Case Study

In our case study, you are an administrator of a small public high school in the greater Chicago area. This school has 300 enrolled students, 94% of which are identified as low income. Additionally, 34% of students are English Language Learners (ELL). You have heard from the department chairs that student literacy is low across the school, that there is a high prevalence of bullying and fights, and that math scores are low. You now have a funding opportunity to open an afterschool program at your school and you imagine that it will be relatively popular among students because many parents work late.

Quality Curriculum Structure

1. Organizing Centers
2. Choose Your Standards
3. Identify Your Outcomes
4. Plan Your Activities

Organizing Centers

An organizing center is the central idea upon which a unit of study is built. It can be a topic, a theme, a concept, an issue, a problem, a process, or a phenomenon. An organizing center is communicated through a unit’s title, essential question, and big idea.

- Based on the case study, what would be one topic you think you would like to address in your afterschool program? What could be a title for a unit that would address that topic (*responses below were populated during the live session through a Mentimeter*)?
 - Violence Prevention—Staying Safe
 - Bullying: Can you be a friend?
 - Social Focus: Staying calm and handling emotions
 - Self Esteem—I am enough
 - Character Counts (SEL)—Can you be a good friend?
 - Emotional Awareness: How am I feeling?
 - Empathy—Putting the “U” in “us”



- College and Career: What's your communication style?
- Career Exploration" What do you want to do in the future?

Choose Your Standards

Using the Academic Standards in your out-of-school time (OST) or afterschool program is a way of guaranteeing a high-quality program, as well as ensuring positive results. The OST space can be thought of as a bonus to your school day—an opportunity to dive a little deeper or explore somewhere you would not necessarily go in the classroom. Ask yourself, “what are the needs of my school and what standards align with those needs?”

- Which Illinois State Social and Emotional Standard(s) would be best aligned with the need articulated in the case study (*responses below were populated during the live session through the Zoom meeting platform chatbox*)?
 - 1A.4a *Analyze how thoughts and emotions affect decision making and responsible behavior*
 - If the curriculum was built around this statement, then I believe many of the fights will stop. Students will also become more engaged and respect each other more.
 - 1C.4b *Apply Strategies to overcome obstacles to goal achievement*
 - 2A.4a *Analyze similarities and differences between one's own and other's perspectives*
 - 3A.4a *Demonstrate personal responsibility in making ethical decisions*
 - 2D.4a *Analyze how listening and talking accurately help in resolving conflict*
 - If the fights and bullying can lessen, it will create more of an engaging/positive environment for students' learning and improvement.

Identify Your Outcomes

Instead of continuously pouring content into your students, try asking yourself what **single** thing you want your students to understand at the end of this and how will you know that they have done that. A common way to think about this is the “SWBAT”: “students will be able to...”. This will identify students' practical understanding of the topic. A further challenge is to add in the phrase, “in order to...” to your SWBAT—“students will be able to XYZ, in order to 123”. This addition reflects students' ability to apply this concept to their own lives.

- What outcomes are you hoping to achieve through your afterschool programming in this case study (try using the SWBAT...IOT model)? (*responses below were populated during the live session through a Mentimeter*).
 - Students will be able to empathize and know the characteristics of a good citizen.
 - Students will develop social relationships with one another to achieve an objective, in order to better understand one another's perspectives.
 - Students will be able to identify their own communication styles.
 - Students will be able to communicate effectively and professionally.
 - Students will be able to respectfully set boundaries and expectations.
 - Students will be able to appreciate themselves in order to understand others and their differences.



- Students will be able to learn how to communicate their feelings in order to properly communicate without becoming angry and use violence as an answer.
- Students will be able to understand others' feelings and emotions to communicate in the right way.
- Students will be able to be more engaged and learn new skills that makes learning fun to them.

Plan Your Activities

In the afterschool space, best practice is to plan using PBL, which stands for Problem or Project Based Learning. With PBL, “the content is baked inside of a long-term project, a real-world problem students need to solve in a creative and authentic way. In the process of solving the problem, students also meet required standards, but this work is integrated into the project, not separate from it.” –Jennifer Gonzalez

PBL Steps:

1. Identify outcomes/assessments
 2. Design the Scenario
 3. Introduce PBL
 4. Research
 5. Product performance
 6. Assessment
- Using the idea of PBL, what activities could you introduce that would lead students towards solving the identified problem on their own (*responses were populated during the live session through the Zoom meeting platform chatbox*)?
 - Problem identification and effective communication
 - “Study skills”—goal setting, note taking, presentations/communication, test strategies
 - Managing conflict activities and scenarios

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