Defined Academy

STRATEGY GUIDE
Mini-Workshops

PURPOSE

Mini-workshops are a versatile way to provide choice to your students in project-based learning. They allow students to learn a bite size amount of content and apply it. There are numerous ways to set these up. You might want to use this template for building your mini-workshop task sheets.

STEPS

1. Use a quality tool such as a rubric or checklist to select topics around which to build these workshops.
2. Identify a specific learning target for each mini-workshop. For example, in a persuasive writing project about energy conservation, you might target the following skills:
    - Write an opening paragraph that catches the audience's attention.
    - Use figurative language to better capture the reader's heart.
    - Integrate research to make a stronger point.
    - Empathize with the audience to better address their interests.
3. Each mini-workshop should have a short-lesson and then opportunities to practice what students learned with a small group of classmates.
4. Once the mini-workshops have been created, ask your students to reflect against a quality tool such as a rubric or checklist. They should identify their strengths and areas for growth.
5. Provide the mini-workshop choices and allow students to opt into one of the sessions.
6. As the students are working in their small groups, you will check in with the groups to monitor their progress and provide support. You might also consider using this time to pull a separate group of students who might all benefit from small group instruction with you.
7. After the mini-workshops, ask one participant from each group to provide a one sentence summary of what they learned. Facilitate a discussion in which students may ask clarifying questions and share takeaways.
8. Follow the mini-workshop with a reflective prompt such as "What/Now What?": "What did I learn? Now how will I apply it to my project?"

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