CONTENTS

How to Use This Book v

Part One: The What, Why and How of Project Based Learning 1

What is Project Based Learning (PBL)? 1
Why English Teachers Should Care About PBL 2
How Does PBL Run in the English Classroom 4
Project Outline 5
Need to Know 5
Expert/Rockstar 7
Hook Lessons 7
Project Walls 8
PBL at a Glance 10
Practice Projects 12
Project Based Learning and the General Capabilities 12
A Word About PBL and Assessment 19

Part Two: Sample Projects 21

Year 7

Game 2 Learn 23
#LOVEOZYA 37
Sustainable News 57
Reading Reimagined 67
Acting Up! 79

Year 8

Bodacious Balladeers 87
Awesome Auteurs 101
Life Stories 115
Soule of the Age 125
Steampunk Stories 135

Part Three: Additional Resources 143
Acknowledgements 160
Image Credits 160

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Why Do We Tell Stories? And Other Epic English Projects for Years 7–8 is the second book in the Project Based Learning for the Australian Curriculum series. The first book, also written for English teachers, is called *Are Humans Wild at Heart? And Other Epic English Projects for Years 9–10* (Hawker Brownlow Education, 2016).

This book has been designed to support you as you begin experimenting with Project Based Learning (PBL) in your English classroom. Of course, the methodology of PBL is relevant to areas other than English – it can be used in a range of subjects, with many projects actually integrating more than one subject across the curriculum. Trying out something new in the classroom is always a daunting experience because feedback on success or failure is immediate. But the great thing about PBL is that it is creative for both the teacher and the student, and that means that experimentation, and sometimes failure, is a natural part of the process. Of course, no-one likes to feel like a failure, so we've structured this book into three distinct parts, designed to help you feel supported in your PBL journey.

PART ONE: THE WHAT, WHY AND HOW OF PROJECT BASED LEARNING

The first part of the book provides you with some background information about the nature and purpose of PBL, as well as outlining key strategies to ensure a successful and enjoyable learning experience for you and your students. This section also includes a discussion of how assessment works in PBL, as well as the relationship between PBL and the Australian Curriculum's General Capabilities.

PART TWO: SAMPLE PROJECTS

The second part of the book provides you with a selection of sample projects suitable for students in Years 7 and 8. You will be pleasantly surprised to find that a lot of the activities in this section look familiar – that's because PBL is about taking the best teaching strategies and repurposing them. The difference with PBL is that it empowers students to see a purpose for their learning beyond the classroom and to feel confident that they know where they are headed as they move through the project process.

Each project includes the following:

- ✔ Driving question
- ✔ Project outline
- ✔ Summary of learning experiences
- ✔ Literacy focus
- ✔ Specific mode(s) and text form(s)
- ✔ 21st-century skills
- ✔ Assessment strategies
- ✔ A range of resources to support learning

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For both Years 7 and 8, there are two very detailed projects. We have given you a week-by-week outline of how the projects can be run with your students, as well as providing useful resources to support implementation of your first projects. Once you have implemented a couple of projects, and you begin to feel more confident with PBL, the remaining projects will act as loose guides. These projects are much less detailed, allowing you more scope to adapt and develop them to suit your students' needs and interests.

NOTE: It is essential that you adapt the given projects to make them meet the needs and interests of your students. Central to effective PBL is student ownership of learning and this can only be achieved if they feel that the project is relevant to their experiences and context. What may be considered significant and relevant to students on Sydney's Northern Beaches may have no relevance to students from Broome, Western Australia.

PART THREE: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The third part of the book is full of extra resources to help you design and run your own engaging projects for your English classes.

NOTE: Throughout this book you will see the icons below. These will help you to navigate the projects and easily identify the key content and elements of each project.

DRIVINGQUESTION

DISCOVER

CREATE

SHARE

ASSESSMENT

21ST CENTURY SKILLS

ONLINE RESOURCES

Each reproducible page within *Why Do We Tell Stories? And Other Epic English Projects for Years 7–8* is also available to download in .pdf file format from **go.hbe.com.au**. Simply navigate to the aforementioned website, and enter the code **HB6640** in the search field. After you have selected this book, simply enter your name, email address and the password provided in the imprint page of this book to access the reproducible files.

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YEAR 7

1. GAME 2 LEARN

PROJECT AT A GLANCE:

DRIVING QUESTION: Should video games be used to help us learn in secondary school?

DISCOVER: Students will research the positive uses of video games in the classroom as well as the negative consequences of video games in the classroom. They will discover the language features and structure of persuasive texts.

CREATE: Students will write and film a review of a video game. They will also write a speech that argues for or against the use of video games for learning in secondary school.

SHARE: Students will publish their video game review to YouTube and present their speeches before the school principal. Take it further: Consider making this a cross-curricular project by connecting with a media or multimedia class and have students design and create educational video games. Students might want to design a unit of work that centres on a video game as a model for teachers.

ASSESSMENT: There are two main assessments for this project: the review of a video game and a speech. Students should be assessed formatively on the plan and draft of each. Undertake summative assessment on the final version of both.

21ST-CENTURY SKILLS: creative and critical thinking, presentation skills, ICT, collaboration

LITERACY: grammar – sentence types, clauses; punctuation – semicolons, commas, ellipses, dashes and brackets; and reading – summarising and visualising

TYPE OF TEXT: persuasive

LANGUAGE FEATURES OF TEXTS: written: modality, connectives, emotive and figurative language, construction of an argument; visual: shots, angles, editing, lighting, camera movement, sound effects

POSSIBLE TEXTS: There is a wide range of TED and TEDx talks available via YouTube that will provide students with a good model for their speech. ABC television shows such as *Good Game: Spawn Point*, *At the Movies* and *The Book Club*, which can be found on YouTube, are great examples of live reviews.

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YEAR 7

4. READING REIMAGINED

PROJECT AT A GLANCE:

DRIVING QUESTION: How can technology be harnessed to enhance the reading experiences of teens?

DISCOVER: Students will research current reading rates and habits of Australian teens and the history of the book, as well as current and emerging technologies impacting how we read.

CREATE: Students work in small teams to design an innovation to revolutionise how teens read.

SHARE: In teams, students pitch their design idea in a *Shark Tank* style to a panel of potential "investors".

ASSESSMENT: A written proposal and pitch.

21ST-CENTURY SKILLS: critical thinking, creative thinking, ICT, ethical understanding

LITERACY: *grammar* – first person and collective pronouns, verbs, active voice, adjectives, adverbs, sentence structure; *reading* – summarising, monitoring, making connections; *punctuation* – ellipses, semicolons

TYPE OF TEXT: persuasive (pitch)

LANGUAGE FEATURES OF TEXTS: rhetorical devices – rhetorical questions, anaphora, asyndeton, rule of three, anecdote, analogy

POSSIBLE TEXTS: *Inanimate Alice* (2005), *The Boat* interactive graphic novel by Nam Le and adapted by Matt Huynh, The Museum of Mario, The Grey Tales *http://thegreytales.net/en/.*

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YEAR 8

2. AWESOME AUTEURS

PROJECT AT A GLANCE:

DRIVING QUESTION: How can we pay homage to our favourite auteurs through a three-minute film?

DISCOVER: Students will research the biography and context of a specific auteur, as well as watching and analysing a range of films by the auteur.

CREATE: Students will individually write a feature article about the life and work of the auteur, and in teams they will script, film and edit a three-minute short film.

SHARE: Students will publish their feature articles in a class collection and screen their short film at an evening for family, friends and the general public.

TAKE IT FURTHER: Organise for the film screenings to take place at a local cinema; send links to the videos online to the auteur they studied; invite other local secondary schools to participate in the film festival.

ASSESSMENT: Feature article (individual) and short film (team).

21ST-CENTURY SKILLS: critical thinking, creative thinking, ICT use and collaboration

LITERACY: *grammar* – noun types and noun clauses, passive voice, sentence types; *reading* – summarising, making connections, predicting; *punctuation* – colons, semicolons, parentheses

TYPE OF TEXT: informative (feature article) and imaginative (short film)

LANGUAGE FEATURES OF TEXTS: film – shot types (long, mid, close-up, extreme close-up, establishing shot), angle types (high, low, overhead, eye level, birds-eye, Dutch tilt), camera movement (pan, tilt, tracking, dolly), editing (wipe, fade, cut, jump cut), sound (diegetic, non-diegetic), lighting (high key, low key, backlighting), symbolism, costuming and motif

POSSIBLE AUTEURS: Tim Burton, Alfred Hitchcock, Steven Spielberg, Hayao Miyazaki, Spike Jonze, Sophia Coppola, Nora Ephron, Jodie Foster.

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YEAR 8

5. STEAMPUNK STORIES

PROJECT AT A GLANCE:

DRIVING QUESTION: What does the future hold for humanity?

DISCOVER: Students will research artificial intelligence, automation and dystopia as well as the language forms and features of steampunk fiction. Students will also learn to write short imaginative, persuasive and informative texts.

CREATE: Students will individually compose a short, steampunk-inspired imaginative, persuasive or informative text answering the driving question.

SHARE: The class will publish students' compositions in a zine called *Steampunk Stories.*

Take it further: Have students create their zine for a specific audience such as the residents at a local retirement village or nursing home, a preschool, or a primary school.

ASSESSMENT: Students will be assessed on their short text – the plan, draft and final product.

21ST-CENTURY SKILLS: critical thinking, ethical understanding, research skills, creative thinking

LITERACY: *grammar* – pronouns, verbs, compound words, sentence types, conjunctions, grammatical theme; *reading* – visualising, questioning, making connections; *punctuation* – commas, quotation marks, hyphens, parentheses

TYPE OF TEXT: informative, imaginative and persuasive

LANGUAGE FEATURES OF TEXTS: Dependent on type of text selected by student.

TEXTS: *It's Alive!: Artificial Intelligence from the Logic Piano to Killer Robots* by Toby Walsh (2017); *Machinarium* game *http://machinarium.net/; The Golden Compass* (Dir. Chris Weitz, 2007); *Howl's Moving Castle* (Dir. Hayao Miyazaki, 2004); *Steampunk! An Anthology of Fantastically Rich and Strange Stories* (Kelly Link and Gavin Grant, 2011); *Year Million* – National Geographic (2017)

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PART THREE

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

A range of additional resources has been included to support you as you work through your first projects in English and then beyond as you begin designing your own projects. These additional resources include:

- **The project design grid (p. 144).** This grid will help you decide on the hook lesson, product, audience and guest expert. When you become more confident with PBL, you may also like to give this to your students to design their own projects.
- **Practice projects (pp. 145–146).** Use these outlines for single-lesson micro projects when introducing the structure of PBL to your students.
- **Formative assessment strategies list (p. 147).** This brief list gives you an overview of some of the key formative assessment strategies that we use to help us track student learning throughout projects. Google is your friend with this resource – for each strategy you will find numerous resources online.
- **Blank checklist (p. 148).** We love a checklist! They're great for peer and self-assessment. You or your students can modify this checklist.
- **Blank KWHL table (p. 149).** We use a KWL or KWHL table at the beginning of each project – it's perfect for pre-testing prior knowledge, as well as for generating the important Need to Know questions that will drive students' learning.
- **Blank project calendar (p. 150).** Use this in the early stages of a project to help students visualise their learning trajectory, and to help keep them on track.
- **Project outline proforma (p. 151).** This document is essentially a blank slate for designing your own project. It gives you a sense of the key elements that should be included – the driving question plus the content and learning experiences relevant to each stage of learning (Discover, Create, Share). Space has also been given to indicate formative assessment and due dates where applicable.
- **Project team contract (p. 152).** Have students complete this at the beginning of a project, and refer to it if there are issues with group cohesion, or a student is not working effectively.
- **Project Management Log (p. 153).** This handy sheet helps students with their time management, organisation and collaboration.
- **Project Essentials Checklist (p. 154).** This is for you to use to evaluate the projects you run with your students. Running through this handy list will help you to ensure that your students are participating in PBL, and not just "doing a project". Use this for EVERY project.
- **Rubrics (pp. 155–159).** Throughout the sample projects in this book, we have made reference to the use of assessment rubrics for helping students develop essential 21st-century skills such as collaboration, digital citizenship, and critical and creative thinking. A number of these have been included here to support your students' development of the skills.

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