

# Engagement with complex real-world problem or scenarios



Talking About... Learning and Teaching

## University of Birmingham

### About

This resource provides an example of the type of information students may require whilst engaging in the illustrative learning design provided.

### Where Can I Go for More Information?

- **EBL at UoB**  
[www.ebl.bham.ac.uk](http://www.ebl.bham.ac.uk)
- **DiBL Ning**  
<http://diblcop.ning.com>
- **DiBL Resource Pack**  
<http://www.ceimh.bham.ac.uk/newsandevents/DiBLPlannerResourcePack.pdf>
- **EBL Case Studies**  
<http://www.education2.bham.ac.uk/elearning/designer/learning-design/cs.php>

### Introduction

It is important that the task presented to the learner (possibly in the form of a problem, issue or scenario) is structured to be sufficiently open-ended to enable a variety of responses or solutions (ie students should not be seeking to find the 'right' answer!). A task trigger acts as stimulus for learning and can range from

1. Words
2. Pictures (adverts, comics, signs)
3. Books, Journal/Newspaper articles or Radio
4. Poems, words, quotes, stories
5. Videos / Audio

It is ideal if the task trigger can reflect the variety of professional (authentic real-world) situations that the students will face on graduation. This helps address issues of transferrable skills and professional identity development.

### Problems / Types of Outputs

In order to encourage engagement within EBL it is also important (where possible) that the required output echoes that of the professional world. The following are just a few examples to get you started.

- Video (Photo Story, Short Movie)
- Model (Physical or Virtual)
- Presentation (PowerPoint / Adobe Presenter 7, poster)
- Audio (Podcast, Radio item)
- Advert (research bid, job, item)
- Newspaper or Journal article
- Booklet or Brochures (for next years students, professionals, workplace)
- Report (for a fellow professional, organisation)
- Comic Strip

### Three Examples

You are a technology management team advising the Board of Directors on the technology strategy of the firm. You have been asked to produce a report on the following issues:

- The drivers for change in the industry;
- The role of technology in responding to change; and
- The opportunities and challenges of adopting/developing a specific technology.

It should draw recommendations (supported by an appropriate theoretical framework) for the firm about whether or not to invest in a specific technology.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> year MBS, Organisations Management and Technology scenario**

'You work for an export company. You have noticed that even if your colleagues somehow master the French language, they are still making the type of pronunciation mistakes which stop them being fully understood by their French speaking customers who do not speak English. *Your boss has asked you to help them improve their pronunciation.* You have noticed that they particularly mispronounce the following groups of letters: 'qu', 'gn', 'gu'. Give a short presentation to explain the pronunciation of these letters and their phonetic transcriptions. Provide a series of exercises to help your colleagues recognise and work on these letters.'

#### **French 'EBL for EBL' phonetics scenario**

These two examples originate from "EBL in Humanities at Manchester" presentation by Julia McMorrow, published by CEEBL (<http://tiny.cc/dw5jh> accessed 12 June 2010).

## Wendolyn and Alison and the English Tourist Board Bid

This EBL activity has been represented as a mock email and comic strip from a line manager (tutor) to employee (student EBL groups). The activity was adapted from a 3<sup>rd</sup> year EBL activity (in Literary Studies at the University of Manchester) to a 1<sup>st</sup> year EBL activity (in Academic Skills studies for English Language and Literature in Education students at the University of Birmingham). For more information about the original activity please see: Hutchings, W and O'Rourke, K (2006) A Study of Enquiry-Based Learning in Action: an Example from a Literary Studies Third-Year Course, The University of Manchester: <http://www.manchester.ac.uk/ceebl/resources/essays/ceebleessay001.pdf>

**The Problem / Output:** Publishing a booklet and rationale

**The Trigger:** Advertisement, Mock Email, Comic Strip

----Original Message-----

From: Wendolyn.Smithers-Jones@edgbaston.gov.uk  
edgbaston.gov.uk  
Sent: 1st February 2010 12:12  
To: Alison.McGourty@edgbaston.gov.uk  
Subject: **English Tourist Board Contract**

Alison,

The English Tourist Board is initiating a campaign to attract people to the countryside in the wake of the credit crunch. Part of the campaign involves creating an exhibition: *The Eye of the Beholder: Landscape Description: 1700-2000* documenting and demonstrating the responses of writers and visitors to the English countryside through the ages.

This was inspired by its successful "[Locations in literature](#)" initiative. The English Tourist Board is also sponsoring the development of a series of short booklets that will accompany the exhibition containing examples of poetry with explanatory commentary, pictures and notes. **Aimed at the public, it is intended to be scholarly and informed.**

Edgbaston Arts have been invited to apply for the £20,000 contract to compile the booklets. We are required to submit:

- (1) a **one page covering document that contains the rationale** for our selection of passages from the eighteenth century
- (2) a **6 page (max.) sample booklet** containing a minimum of two specimen example(s) with commentary, pictures and notes.

Special attention is required in regards to style, layout and referencing. The deadline for submissions is quite tight. If you could compile a draft submission for my comments by Monday 1st March. This will give me time to comment and suggest any changes before we are required to submit to the English Tourist Board a week later

I know you are still undertaking your **Professional Development programme**. You will find the following topics helpful as you complete the submission: Critical Thinking, Academic Writing, Note taking and Referencing.

Thanks  
Wendolyn

