

YPI'S PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

YPI engages students to gain skills and understanding through an extended inquiry process, which is structured around complex, authentic questions and carefully designed outcomes and tasks. YPI scaffolds student learning to engage in critical experiential learning that has a real-world impact. YPI uses Project-Based Learning pedagogy with a Social & Emotional Learning approach, and targets the development of 21st Century Skills.

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

Through YPI, students participate in Project-Based Learning (PBL), a student-led approach to education focused on the investigation of real-world problems. PBL encompasses several other pedagogies that also apply to YPI, including inquiry-based learning, experiential learning, expeditionary learning, community-based learning, and problem-based learning.

There are five keys to rigorous PBL:

1. Real-world connection

Each PBL unit begins with an authentic problem or driving question to initiate learning. Through YPI, students examine their local community and identify social issues they want to tackle through their work. Students venture outside their classroom to organizations dealing with these social issues, interviewing experts and gaining real-life experience.

The \$5,000 grant at stake for organizations chosen by students at YPI is critical: this is real money going to real organizations with the potential for real impact.

2. The project is core to learning

At YPI, we recommend that educators begin to plan their YPI unit by looking at the curriculum they are required to cover in their course. Working backwards from these outcomes, and from the final presentation students are required to deliver, educators tailor their YPI project to support student success. The project is not an “add-on” or busy work for students, but as the mechanism through which the learning happens.

3. Structured collaboration

Students participate in YPI in groups, and this work is structured through suggested activities, and supported through tools to manage time and tasks. Teachers should check in with groups on a regular basis, and make sure that every member of the group is pulling their weight and has a role.

4. PBL is student-driven

Students must be able to demonstrate voice and choice in PBL, and this is what YPI is really all about. In PBL, the teacher's role is as a facilitator, asking questions, providing guidance but never

answers. In YPI, students have the agency to choose the social issue on which to focus, and students choose their organizations to research, visit, and present to their peers.

Additionally, a critical component of our program model is that the panel of judges who ultimately select the winner of a school's YPI grant is comprised of a majority of students. At YPI, we trust students as key decision-makers in their community.

5. Multi-faceted assessment

Because PBL is not a one-off assignment, and can engage students for a long period of time, teachers should assess acquisition of skills and knowledge along the way that scaffold student learning. YPI provides several opportunities to do this with suggested assignments for each of the 7 main curricular parts. Peer assessment is incorporated into the class presentation component of the project.

Final assessments in PBL are based on a final product or performance that celebrates student learning, and engages an audience beyond the class. YPI Finals are a great example of this. We recommend inviting as wide an audience as possible to attend every school's YPI Final, at which student groups compete with one another for a \$5,000 grant for their charity. Parents, community members, and other students outside of the participating grade should have the opportunity to learn about social issues and community organizations, and to see the hard work put in by students.

For more information on PBL, visit www.edutopia.org and the [Buck Institute for Education](#).

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL LEARNING

YPI embodies several of the components of Social & Emotional Learning, an approach to education that values the development of character.

1. Self-awareness

Through YPI, students explore their personal values, and use these values as a jumping off point to identify social issues of importance to them personally, and social service charities for whom they want to advocate.

2. Social awareness

After the foundation of looking inward to identify personal values is established, students are required to explore their communities, and the impact of particular social issues on their communities. They must develop a compelling presentation demonstrating the understanding of a social issue and the impact of an organization on marginalized groups in their community, which requires them to understand the human side of a social issue, or at least be exposed to it through real-life examples; and learn about the experiences of others who, in many cases, are different from themselves. This contributes to the development of empathy.

3. Relationship skills

Every student participating in YPI completes the majority of the program as part of a team. Teams typically consist of 3-5 people, and there are many opportunities for students to build their relationship skills within this framework.

In addition to the teamwork component of YPI, students have the opportunity to develop a relationship with a volunteer/staff member at their chosen charity, leading up to, during, and after their required site visit.

4. Responsible decision making

YPI believes that young people are capable of making responsible and informed decisions. We trust students to identify the most pressing social issues in their communities, and to ultimately decide where funding needs to be directed. The program prepares students to make important real-life decisions.

For more information on social and emotional learning, visit www.edutopia.org.

21ST CENTURY LEARNING

YPI supports the development of 21st Century competencies, which are generally accepted in Canada and beyond as skills required for students to succeed after graduation in today’s social and economic, and environmental landscape. These competencies are targeted across provinces through course curriculum. YPI provides opportunities for students to develop these competencies as well as opportunities for educators to assess them clearly. The table below, adapted from [C21: Canadians for 21st Century Learning and Innovation](#) outlines each 21st century competency and its alignment with YPI.

21 ST CENTURY COMPETENCIES			
21 ST CENTURY COMPETENCY	TARGETED OUTCOMES	RATIONALE	ALIGNMENT WITH YPI
Creativity, Innovation and Entrepreneurship	<p><i>Creativity:</i> The ability to apply creative thought processes to create something of value.</p> <p><i>Innovation and Entrepreneurship:</i> The capacity to create and apply new knowledge in innovative and entrepreneurial ways to create new products or solve complex problems.</p> <p><i>The capacity to invent new problem solving heuristics when all standard protocols have failed (Dede)</i></p>	Today's economic, social, environmental and financial challenges are increasingly complex and require creative, innovative and entrepreneurial thinking to solve problems and keep pace of the ongoing and escalating demand for new and innovative solutions and products. For success in school, work and life, people must be able to use creativity in order to adapt, generate new ideas, theories, products and knowledge.	Students are encouraged to be as creative as possible when putting together their pitch presentations for the \$5,000 YPI grant. At most schools, there are more than 100 students taking part in the competition, and students are required to think of ways their presentation will stand out if they are interested in securing a grant for their organization.
Critical Thinking	A deep understanding of and capacity to apply the elements and processes	The knowledge and digital era is demanding people	Students are required to apply critical thinking skills when faced with the

	<p>associated with critical thinking and problem solving.</p> <p>The ability to acquire, process, interpret, rationalize and critically analyze large volumes of often conflicting information to the point of making an informed decision and taking action in a timely fashion.</p>	<p>with higher order thinking skills; the ability to think logically and to solve ill-defined problems by identifying and describing the problem, critically analyzing the information available or creating the knowledge required, framing and testing various hypotheses, formulating creative solutions, and taking action.</p>	<p>complex challenges of the social issues in their communities covered through YPI. Students analyze the causes of these issues, and select an organization addressing an issues utilizing an approach that aligns with their values. After conducting deep research into the organization, students must then present the information in a compelling way to their peers.</p>
Collaboration	<p>The ability to interact positively and respectfully with others in creating new ideas and developing products.</p> <p>The ability to lead or work in a team and to relate to other people in varying contexts, including capacity to resolve and manage conflict.</p> <p>The capacity for sensitivity to the issues and processes associated with collaborating across cultures.</p> <p>The ability to collaborate across networks, using various information and communication technologies.</p>	<p>Importance of interpersonal capabilities is higher and the skills involved more sophisticated than in the industrial era. Social media has created a dominant impact on the collaboration dynamic which occurs outside schools.</p>	<p>Students work in teams of 3-5 for their YPI project, and must collaborate effectively with one another to complete the project. Students are encouraged to select their groups based on personal values they explore early in the curriculum, or a shared interest in a social issue. There are many opportunities for distributing different elements of work in the YPI project based on personal strengths and interests, and collaboration happens in person and virtually through the project.</p>
Communication	<p>High level literacy skills, including strength in a person's mother tongue with multilingual capacity a definite asset.</p> <p>The ability to use technology to develop 21st Century competencies in the context of core subjects.</p> <p>The capacity to communicate using a variety of media and technologies. The ability to access, analyze, integrate and manage large volumes of information.</p> <p>The capacity to effectively use social media to communicate and resolve</p>	<p>Communication is more complex and sophisticated and work is often occurring with peers located halfway around the world.</p> <p>Learning science reinforces constructivist models of building understanding and making meaning which are built on human interactions.</p>	<p>Through YPI, students must communicate effectively in a variety of situations: internal communication among student groups; communication with a representative from an organization over phone/email and in-person for an informational interview; communication to an audience and judging panel during final YPI presentations.</p>

	<p>challenges. The ability to critically interpret and evaluate ideas presented through a variety of media and technologies. Highly developed cooperative interpersonal capabilities.</p>		
Character	<p>Learners will develop 21st Century <i>Life Skills</i>, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life-long learner • Leadership, responsibility and accountability • Self-directed, adaptable and resilient • Tolerant, ethical and fair • Personal productivity • Interpersonal (people) skills • Mental and physical well being • Proficiency in managing personal relationships. 	<p>The knowledge economy and social environment is highly complex, fast paced, multi-cultural and stressful in nature, demanding people with highly developed interpersonal traits and strength of character.</p> <p>Collaborating to learn requires social emotional learning skills including self-awareness, social awareness, selfregulation, relationship skills</p>	<p>YPI nurtures many of these life skills through the real-life experience that is core to the program in which students go outside of their school to learn about the work of an organization addressing a social issue. The project is student-directed by nature, and students have the opportunity to develop and demonstrate, for example, their leadership skills, people skills, and productivity. Our evaluations have proven an increase in empathy (or tolerant, ethical, fair beliefs and behaviours) among participating students.</p>
Culture and Ethical Citizenship	<p>The capacity to comprehend Canada's political, social, economic and financial systems in a global context.</p> <p>The ability to appreciate cultural and societal diversity at the local, national and global levels.</p> <p>The ability to critically analyze the past and present and apply those understandings in planning for the future.</p> <p>The capacity to understand key ideas and concepts related to democracy, social justice and human rights.</p> <p>Disposition and skills necessary for effective civic engagement.</p> <p>The ability to understand the dynamic interactions of Earth's systems, the dependence of our social and economic systems on these natural systems, our</p>	<p>Canadians place value on the history and culture which shapes our country and its people.</p> <p>Aboriginal communities in particular wish to see their culture reflected in Canadian education policy, programs and services. The increasingly global nature of the economic social, environmental and financial sectors means crosscultural interactions, creating both opportunities and challenges that require unique competencies and skill sets.</p> <p>Canadians must be global citizens, with a clear identity of their own history and culture along with sensitivity and respect for diverse identities and cultures as impacted upon our sustainability.</p>	<p>YPI primes students with the knowledge and skills required for effective civic engagement. Students analyse existing social supports and identify ways in which they can personally contribute to making their community a better place.</p>

	<p>fundamental connection to all living things, and the impact of humans upon the environment.</p> <p>The capacity to consider the impact of societal and environmental trends and issues.</p>		
<p>Computer and Digital Technologies</p>	<p>The capacity to use computers and digital resources to access information and create knowledge, solutions, products and services.</p> <p>The capacity to use social media for learning.</p>	<p>The 21st Century is a technology and media driven environment and digital literacy is an essential competency for both learners and teachers.</p>	<p>Online research into social issues and community organizations is required for YPI, and students are also encouraged to use digital tools to create their final presentations (videos, slide shows, digital art, etc.)</p>

For more information on 21st century competencies, visit: www.c21canada.org and www.p21.org.