

# Chino Valley Unified School District

## Jr. High School Course Description

CONTACTS	
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A. COVER PAGE - COURSE ID	
<b>1. Course Title:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Literacy
<b>2. Transcript Title/Abbreviation:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> Century Lit
<b>3. Transcript Course Code/Number:</b>	3129
<b>4. Seeking Honors Distinction:</b>	No
<b>5. Subject Area/Category:</b>	Elective
<b>6. Grade level(s):</b>	8
<b>7. Is this course classified as a Career Technical Education course:</b>	No
<b>8. Date of Board Approval:</b>	April 2, 2015
<b>9. Brief Course Description:</b> 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Literacy is a project-based course that seeks to provide hands-on learning opportunities in which students work collaboratively to identify problems, conduct research, evaluate information, and develop solutions. With teacher guidance, students create their own learning experiences aligned with Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). Project-Based Learning (PBL) projects are complex tasks that engage both critical and creative thinking concepts and strategies to fully explore realistic products or presentations and to seek solutions to real-world problems.	
<b>10. Prerequisites:</b>	None
<b>11. Context for Course:</b> This course will be part of the trimester-long 8 <sup>th</sup> grade elective wheel. The goal is for students to explore the CCSS and NGSS through a PBL elective.	
<b>12. History of Course Development:</b> As we have recently implemented the CCSS curriculum and are currently in the process of adopting the NGSS, this course will serve as a research-backed means for students to receive enrichment lessons which focus on 21st Century learner skills that are common to these new standards.  This course is directly tied to the CCSS for English and math, as well as the NGSS. By implementing the steps listed in the course outline below, teachers are targeting the following standards listed below, as stated in the book PBL for 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Success: teaching critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity.  Common Core State Standards/Tasks for English Language Arts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions.</li> <li>2. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners.</li> <li>3. Use technology, including the internet to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.</li> <li>4. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question).</li> </ol>	

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## Jr. High School Course Description

CCSS of mathematical practice also echo PBL best practices. The math standards set expectations for students to do real-world problem solving, use mathematical modeling, apply statistical analysis, and communicate their understanding. For example, mathematically proficient students can apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace according to the standards of mathematical practice. Such applications naturally have a place within high-quality projects that ask students to use mathematics concepts and procedures in authentic contexts.

NGSS, the new national standards proposed for K-12 science shift the focus of instruction from simply acquiring content knowledge to the practice of science skills. Many of the NGSS align with practices are common to 21st Century PBL. This course would target the NGSS's science and engineering practices section:

1. Asking questions (for science) and defining problems (for engineering),
2. Developing and using models,
3. Planning and carrying out investigations,
4. Analyzing and interpreting data,
5. Using mathematics and computational thinking,
6. Constructing explanations (for science) and designing solutions (for engineering),
7. Engaging in argument from evidence, and
8. Obtaining, evaluating, and communicating information.

Therefore, the goal is to give students an opportunity to practice their 21<sup>st</sup> Century learner skills in a PBL elective course. Similar courses are earning statewide recognition from the California Department of Education and are currently being offered across the country, including The Avalon School in Minnesota, The Aspire Academy in Arizona, and The Gold River Discovery Center in California.

<b>13. Textbooks:</b>	Textbooks from 8 <sup>th</sup> grade core classes (history, math, science, and English). Primary sources selected by the teacher and found by students should also be incorporated as they apply to the projects.
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<b>14. Supplemental Instructional Materials:</b>	Buck Institute of Education PBL Design and Planning Sheets
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### B. COURSE CONTENT

#### **Course Purpose:**

The purpose of this course is to expose 8th grade students who are in the elective wheel to project-based learning experiences that require them to practice their 21st Century learner skills, including: critical thinking, proposing solutions to real-world problems, collaboration, and communication in various forms and medias. These skills are directly aligned with the CCSS (ELA and Math) and the new NGSS.

#### **Course Outline:**

During the course of the 12-week trimester, students will be introduced to and help develop and complete one PBL experience which is directly tied to one or more of their core courses (science, math, history, and English). The course outline follows the PBL steps put forth by the Buck Institute of Education (information available at BIE.org) which are driving question/challenge, need to know, inquiry and innovation, 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills, student voice and choice, feedback and revision, and publicly presented product.

## Chino Valley Unified School District

### Jr. High School Course Description

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#### Project-Based Learning Steps:

1. Students are introduced to the concept of PBL and how is it different from traditional learning.
2. Driving Question/Task – Students are presented with the driving question or task with which they are going to be faced with. The questions should be open-ended, understandable, and intriguing to the student. The question should be developed from current studies in their core classes (science, math, history, and English).
3. Need to Know – Students see the need to gain knowledge, understand concepts, and apply skills in order to answer the driving question and create project products, beginning with an “Entry Event” which generates interest and curiosity.
4. Inquiry and Innovation – Students are engaged in an extended, rigorous process of asking questions about the topic for further clarification, using primary resources to find more information about the topic, and developing answers to background information.
5. 21st Century Competencies – Students build competencies valuable for today’s world, such as problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity/innovation which are explicitly taught and assessed. These skills are practiced through the creation of the final product.
6. Voice and Choice – Students are allowed to make some choices about the products to be created, how they work, and how they use their time, guided by the teacher and depending on age level and PBL experience.
7. Feedback and Revision – The project includes processes for students to give and receive feedback on the quality of their work, leading them to make revisions, or conduct further inquiry.
8. Publicly Presented Product – Students present their work to other people beyond their classmates and teacher.

#### Instructional Methods and/or Strategies:

This course is both student centered and student driven. The teacher should play the role of facilitator and learning partner. The teacher is responsible for using the planning forms and rubrics designed by the Buck Institute of Education to guide instruction and project design. However, students will also be actively participating in the planning and design of the trimester project. The project steps, assignments, and outcomes should be differentiated as needed to meet the needs of each individual learner in the classroom.

The following instructional methods and strategies should be included throughout the course of completing the final project:

1. Project-based assessments,
2. Brainstorming,
3. Group presentations,
4. Class discussions,
5. Abstracting: a thinking skills that involves summarizing and converting real-world events or ideas into models.
6. Active Learning: any approach that engages learners by matching instruction to the learners’ interests, understanding, and developmental level which often includes hands-on and authentic activities, and
7. Depth of Knowledge: an approach to ranking learning by the depth of learning critical thinking required or accomplished.

#### Assessment, Including Methods and/or Tools:

This course includes both performance-based assessments and written assessments that can be individual and collaborative in nature. Students will be graded on formative assessments as outlined by the teacher in the project design – student learning guide planning form created by the Buck Institute of Education as they are working towards the final product which will serve as the summative assessment. The specific formative and summative assessments should be created by the teacher and graded for accuracy, completion, and/or by the rubric.