



What Is a Project?

Discover how big ideas become amazing results!



LEARN



DISCUSS



CREATE



PRACTICE



REFLECT

BIG IDEAS START HERE!

- ☒ Plan
- ☒ Team
- ☒ Build
- ☒ Solve
- ☒ Make a Difference!



IDEA



PLAN



TEAM



BUILD



SUCCESS! ★



Grade Range

K – 5



Estimated Time

35 – 50 minutes



Key Concept

What is a Project?
Goals and Outcomes



STEM Connection

Engineering Design
Real-World Problem Solving

Teacher Overview

Children manage projects more often than they realize: building a model, creating a poster, planning a party, completing a science challenge, or organizing a class activity. This lesson gives students a simple framework for recognizing a project and understanding why planning matters.

Learning Objectives

- Define a project in age-appropriate language.
- Identify a project goal and the result the team wants to create.
- Recognize that projects have a beginning, a series of steps, and an ending.
- Explain how planning and teamwork can help a project succeed.

Penny's PM Concept

Penny says:
“A project starts with an idea. A plan helps us figure out what we want to accomplish, who can help, and what steps we need to take.”

Key Vocabulary

Word	Kid-Friendly Meaning
Project	Work we plan and complete to create something, solve a problem, or reach a goal.
Goal	What we want to accomplish.
Plan	The steps we decide to take.
Team	People who work together toward the goal.
Task	One piece of work that helps move the project forward.
Result	What the project creates or accomplishes.

Lesson Plan: What Is a Project?

1. Start With Their World - 5 minutes	Ask: "What is something you have planned, built, created, or organized?" Capture examples such as a LEGO build, school presentation, lemonade stand, birthday party, science experiment, or room makeover.
2. Introduce the Project Idea - 7 minutes	Explain that a project has a goal, takes planning and work, and has a beginning and an ending. Compare a project with ongoing activities. Example: creating a class garden is a project; watering it every week after it is established is ongoing work.
3. Project or Not a Project? - 8 minutes	Read examples aloud. Students show thumbs-up for a project and thumbs-sideways for ongoing work. Discuss why. Examples: build a birdhouse; brush your teeth every day; create a class play; feed a pet every morning; design a Mars rover model.
4. Team Challenge - 15 minutes	In small teams, students choose a simple classroom project. They complete the Project Starter worksheet on the next page: What is our idea? What is our goal? Who is on our team? What are three steps? What will "done" look like?
5. Share and Reflect - 5 minutes	Invite teams to share their project goal and one planning decision. Reinforce that good project managers ask questions, listen, organize the work, and help the team move toward the goal.

Discussion Questions

- Why is it helpful to know the goal before you begin?
- What can happen if a team starts building before making a plan?
- Can a plan change during a project? Why might that happen?
- What makes someone a good teammate on a project?

Student Worksheet: My Project Starter

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. OUR PROJECT IDEA

What do we want to create, improve, organize, or solve?

2. OUR GOAL

What do we want to accomplish?

3. OUR TEAM

Who can help us? What can each person contribute?

4. OUR FIRST THREE STEPS

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

5. HOW WILL WE KNOW WE ARE DONE?

Describe what a successful finished project will look like.

Reflection & Quick Assessment

Duke's Team Challenge:

Before you begin your next project, stop and ask: **What is our goal? What is our plan? Who is on our team?**

Exit Ticket

In your own words, what is a project?

Name one project you could complete at school or at home.

Why does a project need a goal?

Circle one: Today I can identify a project: YES / ALMOST / NOT YET

Teacher Check for Understanding

- Student can distinguish a temporary project from ongoing routine work.
- Student can state a clear project goal.
- Student can identify at least one task or step needed to reach the goal.
- Student recognizes that teamwork and planning support project success.

Extension Activities

STEM Extension: Give teams a small building challenge using classroom materials. Require a 3-minute planning period before anyone may touch the materials. Compare how planning influenced the build.

Home Connection: Ask students to identify one project their family has completed or is planning. Have them identify the goal, team, and major steps.

Next Resource: Turning an Idea Into a Goal - helping students turn an interesting idea into a clear, achievable project objective.