



Basic POGIL Classroom Implementation

Every implementation of POGIL is unique. The POGIL pedagogy allows for flexibility so that each instructor may develop an implementation plan that reflects the needs of their students, classroom setting, department and institution.

The instructor of a POGIL classroom creates the learning environment by determining both content learning objectives and process skills objectives; selecting or developing the activity to meet the selected learning and skills objectives; defining the expected behaviors and criteria for successful teams; and establishing the organization (i.e. the goal/reward structure, the team structure, and the time structure) prior to students entering the classroom. At the start of class, the instructor introduces the activity and outlines expectations for the student teams.

While student teams are working, the instructor should circulate throughout the room, listen to conversations within the teams, and look over shoulders at what is being written by the students. This not only keeps students on task, it gives the instructor insight into how the students think about, or possibly misunderstand, the content of the lesson.

The instructor also has an opportunity to monitor team interactions and intervene for growth when necessary. As the instructor circulates, teams may have questions. Typically the instructor will not answer these questions directly, in keeping with an inquiry environment, but will instead guide students to answers by asking questions that will lead them in the correct direction. The instructor may also pre-emptively ask questions of the teams or individuals to check for understanding or to make sure the students are working as a team.

The instructor provides closure to the lesson by asking team members to report answers, summarize the major points, and to explain the strategies, actions and results of the team. The instructor might also ask team members to report on a process skill they may have been charged to observe and reflect on. While it may look to an outside observer like the students are doing most of the work in a POGIL classroom, the instructor is an integral part of the learning environment.



Core Characteristics of a POGIL Classroom:

The following must be present in order for a classroom environment to be considered a POGIL implementation:

- Students work collaboratively, generally in teams of three or four.
- The activities that the students use are POGIL activities, specifically designed for POGIL implementation.
- The students work on the activity during class time with an instructor present.
- The dominant mode in instructor is not lecture-centered; the instructor serves predominantly as a facilitator of student learning.

The following are also common attributes of many POGIL classroom implementations:

- Students have assigned roles within their groups.
- The activity is designed to be the first introduction to the topic or specific content.
- The students are not expected to have worked on any part of the activity prior to class meeting times.

If the instructor finds a team with a wrong or incomplete answer, the instructor might respond in a variety of ways:

- If the team will discover that their answer is incorrect (via answers to later questions), let them proceed. Generally, they will come back and change their incorrect answer.
- Ask one team member to explain the answer in more detail. During the explanation, one or more members will often see their error.
- Tell the manager to send one member to discuss their answer with another team (that has the correct answer) and resolve the difference. Normally the teams agree on the right answer.
- Once all teams have finished a set of questions, have teams present their answers, and have the class discuss and resolve any disagreements.

