

Learning In and About Your “Place”

What is Place-Based Education?

Place-based education (PBE) differs from conventional text and classroom education in that it promotes students' local community as one of the primary resources for learning. PBE immerses students in **local** heritage, cultures, environments, opportunities, and experiences, using these as a foundation for the study of language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, and other subjects across the curriculum. **PBE emphasizes learning through participation in hands-on projects within the local community.**



Benefits of PBE:

- Boosts student engagement, academic achievement, and sense of personal value as stewards of their local environment and community.
- Strengthens ties between local social and environmental organizations and their constituencies in the schools and community, which helps to improve quality of life and economic vitality.
- Promotes project-based learning in which students make tangible contributions to resolving local environmental issues and conserving local environmental quality.

PBE emphasizes learning that is rooted in what is local—the unique history, environment, culture, economy, literature, and art of a particular place. Students identify with their own “place” or immediate backyard, schoolyard, neighborhood, town, or community. According to this methodology, grade school students often lose what place-based educators call their “sense of place” through traditional education’s focusing too quickly or exclusively on national or global issues. PBE works to allow students to maintain a focus on their immediate surroundings.

***Fit Environment* materials have been assembled to provide local information that will help guide you as you immerse students in their surroundings.** You will find information ranging from the broader scope of Iowa down to details about what is unique to Northeast Iowa and Winneshiek County. Through this type of study, we hope that students make a stronger connection with their surroundings, take more pride in their communities, and realize that they are part of a “place” that is valuable and worth preserving.



Resources: Promise of Place: http://www.promiseofplace.org/what_is_pbe/