



[Peer observation A Problem Based Learning \(PBL\) Journey with my peer J "All in it together"](#) on [Storybird](#) (please note the Storybird is on the 'pgcap' account under the 'class' – due to problems with making it 'public' you will need to sign in)

Storybird audio transcript:

Please note there was some difficulty in hearing the audio at certain points, hence the additional transcript. Where the audio was unclear transcript has been written from memory of the conversation.

Storybird slide: Cover

Cheryl: Hi, I'm Cheryl and I've decided to give Jason his peer observation feedback via Storybird after seeing this in action at the recent PGCAP session so I'm feeding back to Jason on his PBL session a few weeks ago.

Jason: As you can see on the blog there is Storybird. Cheryl is going to talk me through my feedback using the slides as a guide and we will instruct you when to turn to the next slide as we go along ... so over to you Cheryl.

Cheryl: Thanks Jason ... as you can see from the front cover it's a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Journey with Jason As you see from the front cover here I think it quite nicely illustrates that there's lots of different people working together to solve a problem So we're all on a journey together.

Storybird slide: 1

Cheryl: Ok, when I first entered the session Jason your students started to arrive before you and they were all very excited about having a lesson with you, which was nice. As you know Chrissi was with me as well and Chrissi being Chrissi she questioned some of the students about your previous sessions and they were all really happy that you were doing another session with them as they enjoyed your last session ... something about Homer? Not quite sure but I'm sure that means something to you?

Jason: Well, basically what we was doing is using generic models in occupational therapy to understand human occupation in relation to the person and I gave these students the opportunity to choose from one of three celebrities; Amy Winehouse, Homer Simpson, or Tina Turner. And overwhelmingly most people chose the lovable Homer Simpson to understand human occupation and

its function in context.

Cheryl: I think that's a really good idea as it introduces some fun as well ... and I'm sure Chrissi will show you the video. Ok, so it was nice that the students were excited and waiting instead of the usual.

Storybird slide: 2

Cheryl: Ok, so I thought Jason that you entered the room in a cool fashion. I thought it was difficult to tell whether you were a student or lecturer which is nice I think for a PBL session where the whole idea I think if I'm right is to facilitate learning rather than to actually be the lecturer and the all knowing at the front so it was nice that you came in and you were instantly relaxed with the students and they saw you as an equal and you all sat around the table. I thought it was really good.

Jason: It's interesting that you say that as we talk a lot about the power relations of education and breaking down that position of power as someone who needs to instruct people and post knowledge inside someone's head because it's dynamic process isn't it so I think if you can take that back seat and allow people to create their own learning pathways that's a much stronger approach.

Cheryl: Yes, I think you're right and I think it works, so you were 'cool'.

Storybird slide: 3

Cheryl: Ok, I felt it was nice that when you were waiting for all your students to arrive you started to get the other students who were there comfortable by asking them about themselves ... talking about their interests – what was interesting about them but also what was not interesting about them. I thought that maybe it had gone on a bit too long as once the other students arrived you had to do it again. But, I know why you did that because you wanted your other students to actually be involved in that as well.

Jason: Yea, there's nothing worse than having students sat in silence ... so any conversation is good conversation.

Cheryl: I think it also helped to get them relaxed and in the mood for working together. And it was nice to find out some things about them as well.

Storybird slide: 4

Cheryl: Ok, so I was just noticing then the process of PBL I've heard a lot about it especially because we had the PGCAP session the week before. I was lucky actually as I got to go through the different stages of PBL but I'd never seen it in action with actual students ... it's good to see ... so I was taking note of the procedure so things like the chair and the scribe. I think they decided that quite quickly didn't they. The two most dominant students in the room quite quickly wanted to do that.

Jason: It's interesting because everyone has to take a turn at doing this by the time the year's out and I think at the first two sessions of the term nobody wants to do it but I think after people have seen it in action a few times they're like "I'll get it out of the way". You were just lucky to see it there in action people thinking "my turn now".

Cheryl: It was good that they volunteered to do that and I thought they were both very good at their roles.

Storybird slide: 5

Cheryl: I thought at the beginning ... I don't know how much Have they done This is trigger 1 isn't it? So had they done any PBL previously?

Jason: Yes, they've done previous PBL sessions just on a different module. So they are familiar with PBL style and how it functions but as with everything in PBL they also want to get to the end as soon as possible and sometimes it's easy to omit that process of identifying knowledge gaps and what needs to be done to move on to the next stage. It's very much about allowing people to make their own journey to what they want to do and every now and again saying "but wait a minute what don't you know?"

Cheryl: One thing I did notice, again this may be because I'm not used to PBL, whether this is actually something, which is done in PBL, but there only seemed to be one copy of the trigger and the chair had to read that out. Is that something that is part of the PBL process that there's only one because I noticed at the PGCAP session there was only one so I started to think is that on purpose for some reason that not everyone gets a copy of the trigger?

Jason: It's an individual choice – some lecturers do decide to have one per person. I like it to be one per group because then it facilitates discussion and they keep saying "let's go back to that" and it also involves the scribe in feeding back to people and getting it online to generate online discussion. So, it's just a style to getting people to actually interact but it is a choice and I don't think there is any right or wrong way in this as long as the trigger is new at that point in first contact – it's just an approach.

Cheryl: I can certainly see the reasoning behind it And I thought there must be a reason because Chrissi also did that in the PGCAP where she only stuck the one and we all had to read from that. However, I noticed your students did say "we usually get one each" and perhaps if there's inconsistencies of how the tutors do it across your module then you might need to iron them out because they expect it from one tutor and then they don't get it from another so it would be better if you're consistent at least in your programme.

Jason: That's really good advice actually, it might be worthwhile going back and having discussions to find out what the best style is between everyone rather than being a bit of a maverick and coming in and doing my own choice with that. That's really useful to feedback into the discussion.

Storybird slide: 6

Cheryl: Yea, one thing I noticed interestingly that everyone was round a table almost like a meeting you know like in a workplace, and I just thought it was great transferable skills and I think that's a lot of what PBL is about isn't it ... preparing people for what they'd actually have to do in practice – discussing problems with multidisciplinary teams. If I remember from my degree we never did anything like that – it was always lectures or we just did groupwork, but it was always groupwork where we always went off and did our own thing but this was very round the table, inputting, everybody's point of view is valid and it was really great to see that environment and also you know you seemed like you were letting them get on with it.

Jason: Yes, I had to do it just to take a back seat. It's all about development of skills and I think you've hit the nail right on the head there in saying it's about developing your skills in the profession because you have to discuss with doctors, nurses, therapists and your opinion matters because you have got that specialist knowledge as much as theirs. It's about creating a contentious that it's the best for the patient. So, yea I'm glad that came through Cheryl I really am.

Cheryl: Yes, and I've seen what happens from personal experience of my own because I do a lot with the care of my Nan and when she's been in hospital and they've had multidisciplinary meetings about

her and the nurses are there, the social care, the occupational therapists and the doctors are there and so on – so it's something that definitely does happen isn't it in practice.

Jason: It's one of the most essential skills of practice – having the confidence to speak up because if you're not getting your professional opinion across then that's going to be a weaker care package for your Nana or for the patient or for whichever client you're working with so you need these skills to be a professional practitioner. So, I'm glad that came across Cheryl.

Storybird slide: 7

Cheryl: Ok I noticed there were PBL high flyers in there – so I was trying to see if everybody was engaging around the table because it is very easy when you get a couple of dominant students for others to sit back. There was a little bit of that in terms of the same ones speaking all of the time, so there were the PBL high flyers but also ...

Storybird slide: 8

Cheryl: The PBL low lie(ers) – so they were in there but what I did notice actually was that you nurtured them all, and that was really good. At one stage there was quite a quiet one sat next to you actually and she kept I noticed saying things to you but not saying things to the group. And you at one stage said "say it to everybody" and then she did and so you know you nurtured quietly and was taking note of that and again it's something else – it's your job as facilitator making sure everybody gets to talk.

Jason: Fantastic, that's good to know. Just like everyone is learning on the PGCAP, everyone is on their own education pathway and developing their skills to access education and they all have their own access point – all an individual process. It's really important that when people do give you those signs that they want to participate to allow that, because the high-flyers will always at the start be overbearing to the low lie(ers) but that doesn't mean that next year or the year after they won't have these skills and it's a good opportunity to develop these skills now.

Storybird slide: 9

Cheryl: So, there you are nurturing.

Storybird slide: 10

Cheryl: Yea, I think I've already mentioned that I think you were great in keeping quiet ... actually and that's a skill in itself because I know it's quite hard isn't it when you want to say something to actually save that because you actually want to help them ... to get them on the right track. So, I think it's good that you managed to stay quiet. You know when we joked earlier ... oh with PBL you don't have to do anything ... but actually I think it's a real skill not to say anything. So, it was good – you managed to keep them on the straight and narrow ... you're a real pro.

Storybird slide: 11

Cheryl: So, it was good. I started to see as they were getting more into it the students started to share things and I actually observed a few of the quieter ones as well. People started to share stuff on the table. I noticed that one girl she shared a mind map of something. People started to bring in their own experiences.

Storybird slide: 12

Cheryl: Again, sometimes there were confusing concepts, and when I say trigger difficulties I mean that they were as we said before trying to rush ahead rather than stick to identifying what they do know, what they don't know, talking about the issues, etc ... they kept wanting to rush on didn't they. And I could see that you were like wanting to hold them back, and eventually. They kept asking you, and you kept shrugging your shoulders. I could see that you wanted to help them but you didn't but in the end you did give them some guidance, which I think, they actually needed. It was the right time. So, they had some trigger difficulties and they were seeking more guidance from you.

Storybird slide: 13

Cheryl: So, again you gave them some guidance ... you started them singing again. You started them on the right lines.

Storybird slide: 14

Cheryl: And then off they were flying again.

Storybird slide: 15

Cheryl: Oh yes, I just wanted to say there may have been a feeling of someone watching. And this was relating to particular one person who right at the beginning she was very uncomfortable with Chrissi's camera in the class and she actually asked Chrissi not to film her and so Chrissi didn't. I think just with the camera being there made her quite nervous. And she was very very quiet throughout the whole session until Chrissi left and then she started talking suddenly. And so it was absolutely clear that she was anxious about that but I don't think there is anything we could do about that ... it was just the situation.

Jason: I think I am very grateful to my students for allowing me to be observed because this is their education and they've really benefited me by allowing me to develop my style and standards so I am very grateful and there's going to be a big box of chocolates for them to say thank you.

Cheryl: But that just made me think that maybe some of the quieter ones maybe they wouldn't have been as quiet if I hadn't have been there. So, you can never see a whole real picture I thought because they won't be themselves perhaps. Especially the ones that were facing me as they could see me watching. I know how I feel myself when I'm watching ... especially when I was at Rosie's observation and I was actually watching her give feedback to her students ... it must have been very off putting. You had your back to me so it was ok. But I think if your students hadn't have been facing me that they may have been more willing to talk.

Jason: It's been noted that my students have been so good so with every session so far I've been observed and my final trigger on feedback is on a session where I am not being observed so it will be nice to give them that opportunity to be themselves.

Storybird slide: 16

Cheryl: Ok, I think I mentioned to you directly after the session ... one thing I noticed was that as they moved to the end and they were deciding how they would present what they discussed and so on, they were all moving to do their own thing and I wondered at that point - was that PBL? Was that what they were supposed to do or were they supposed to do it more in a group?

Jason: I'm very much a liberal PBL facilitator in that if they want to find their own process, as long as they are going to engage in the content and come up with a very very interesting end product I'm happy for them to find their own pathway in doing that. I'm there to facilitate. I'm there to guide them

if they get a little bit lost along the way and bring them back. It's all about the journey. If they want to engage in discussion and debate and that changes the process I'm absolutely fine with that ... so it's all a process.

Storybird slide: 17

Cheryl: I think we're at the end. Next time off they all went, happy, smiling and ready for trigger 2 next time. It was a really good session, they all enjoyed it. And actually seeing your PBL session and seeing Chrissi's PBL stuff on the PGCAP I'm actually thinking of adopting a PBL approach myself.

Jason: Fantastic, you'll really enjoy it, you really will. It's an exciting process, it really is.

Cheryl: So, I'm going to do a lot more reading around it and do a lot more reflections in my portfolio in preparation for adopting PBL, so thank you.

Jason: You've given me so much to think about Cheryl. I've really thought about what you said about standardising how we approach this throughout all the tutors because I need to make sure I'm singing from the same song sheet as everyone else just so there's continuity. But it's also really nice to hear positive feedback and to see that I can think my students are engaging but it's very easy when you're caught in the situation to not see the bigger picture so having you there it's been a real pleasure, so thank you.

Cheryl: Thank you Jason.