

Glossary of Terms Used at Big Picture Schools

Advisor

Groups of students are lead by a teacher who is referred to as the advisor. The advisor is the facilitator of each student’s learning plan and LTI. Every advisor is a certified high school teacher. The advisor has primary responsibility for each student’s progress in his or her advisory but also teams with other advisors.



Advisor Narrative

Each quarter, the advisor develops a written document for each student in his or her advisory. This document assesses and reflects on the student’s work and makes recommendations for the following quarter.

Advisory

Each student is part of an advisory group. This is the student’s “home base” at the school. Each advisory is comprised of approximately 12 - 15 students, all at the same grade level. This group stays together with the same advisor for 2-4 years.



Big Picture Learning Goals

The five general learning goals provide a framework for thinking about project depth and student learning. Expectations of Big Picture school graduates are focused around these five main areas: Communication, Empirical Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, Social Reasoning, and Personal Qualities. Each area has detailed reasoning abilities associated with it. The Learning Goals are the guideposts for all real world project work conducted by students.



Exhibition

Big Picture schools schedule exhibitions of work on a quarterly basis. Each exhibition within a school year has requirements based on the student’s grade level and the status of the individual student’s project work. It is through this exhibition of work that the student demonstrates his or her accountability for all facets of the Learning Plan. Exhibitions are presented to a panel of parent(s), student(s), advisor(s), mentor and others who provide specific feedback.

Intern

A student from a Big Picture school who has an LTI in the community.

Journal

The documentation of learning that each student does regularly to record thoughts, feelings, observations and plans around their education.

Learning Plan

Each student has a personal curriculum that is delineated in his or her Learning Plan. This incorporates the student’s interests and passions and connects them, through project work, to the Big Picture Learning Goals. The student and advisor develop the Learning Plan in conjunction with the parent or guardian and, when appropriate, the student’s mentor. The Plan is updated on a regular basis as the student develops skills through varied experiences and project work.

Learning Plan Meeting

This is a meeting of student, advisor, parent and mentor to discuss the Learning Plan. Each party contributes to the student’s individual curriculum. As students progress through their years at a Big Picture school, they become more and more responsible for running these meetings and documenting the outcomes, which are incorporated into the updated Learning Plan.



Learning Plan					
Tom Johnson	Student: Tom Johnson	Grade: 11th	Quarter: Fourth	Date: April 2001	
LTI/Project Work	Learning Goals	Project Work	Assessments	Reflections	Mentor/Advisor
MCT-201					
Senior Thesis Plan					
Three books					
Major Works					

Learning Plan Work

This is the detail of the Learning Plan that the student agrees to carry out. The work is presented at regularly scheduled exhibitions.

Learning Team

This group is made up of the advisor, mentor, parent/guardian and student. The team works together to plan and monitor the student's learning plan.

LTI — Learning Through Internship

Based on the Big Picture philosophy and pedagogy, each student learns through pursuing his or her own interests and passions. The LTI is a major vehicle for that pursuit. By establishing an intern / mentor relationship with an adult in the community who has the same interest or passion and who works in that area, the student has the opportunity to build skills and knowledge that is relevant and real. The student's advisor assists the intern and mentor in developing project work and supports that work through skills development back at school.

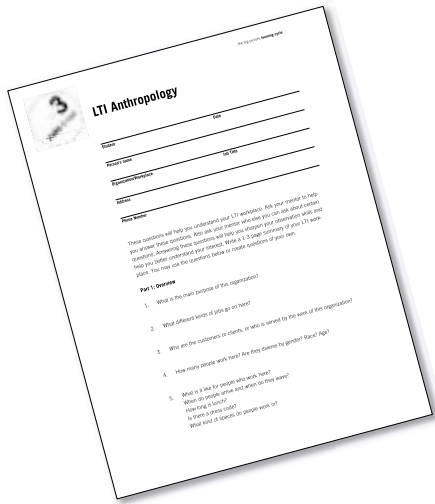
LTI Anthropology

In the first few weeks of a student's LTI experience, he/she conducts an investigation into the site that provides background and understanding of the context of the internship. The anthropology is conducted under the supervision of the mentor around such topics as how the organization is structured, how decisions are made, how people are expected to behave, and how people's work is evaluated.

LTI Project

The authentic project a student does at the LTI site, including the product and associated research, investigation and reflection on the project. This work should be important to the internship site and directly connect to the student's Learning Plan.





Mentor

The adult guide at the workplace who becomes a part of the student's learning team.

Mentor Assessment

At the end of each LTI, mentors are asked to assess the intern's LTI experience and performance. The mentor, advisor and student review the completed form together, which helps the student better understand their work and prepare for his or her next LTI. The forms are included in the mentor guide. Excerpts may be used in the advisor's narrative.

Personalized Education

The Big Picture School philosophy of educating each student one at a time around their interests and passions.

Portfolio

Each student keeps an accumulated documentation of his or her work. It may be organized in a portfolio box, a portfolio binder, and/or digitally. Students may use various methods of organizing their work based on different goals. The method is planned in conjunction with the advisor.

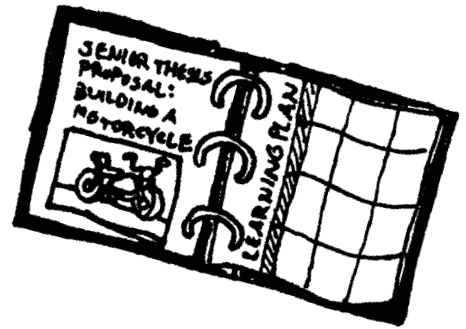
Reflection

The process of contemplating, assessing, evaluating, and planning that is necessary to learn from the past to affect change and growth in the future.



Shadow Days

In the search for the appropriate LTI site and mentor, Big Picture students take part in one or more Shadow Days, which are one-day experiences at a site of interest to the student. The student follows a potential mentor in the regular course of his or her work. Students are guided through a process of Informational Interviews to select their Shadow Day sites. The advisor in collaboration with the host site sets up the Shadow Day.



Student Narrative

Each quarter, the student assesses and reflects on his/her work, the goals that were established and accomplished, and the next stage of work. These written narratives are combined with the advisor's narrative, which is provided for the parents and maintained in the student's records.



Supercalendar

The calendar the student uses to organize his/her plans and activities, to keep track of important dates and deadlines.

