



Comics in Project-Based Learning: A Qualitative Study on Enhancing Student Creativity in Fiqh Learning at SMPN 02 Purbalingga

Fatimah Azzahra Karimah*

Prof. KH Saifuddin Zuhri State Islamic University of Purwokerto
214110402339@mhs.uinsaizu.ac.id

Muh. Hanif

Prof. KH Saifuddin Zuhri State Islamic University of Purwokerto
Muh.hanif@uinsaizu.ac.id

*Correspondence: 214110402339@mhs.uinsaizu.ac.id

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Abstract

Creativity is a crucial aspect of 21st-century education that encourages students to think innovatively, solve problems, and produce valuable work. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of comics integrated into the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model in enhancing students' creativity in Fiqh subjects. Different with conventional approaches, the use of comics in PjBL integrates Islamic values with creative artistic expression, addressing the need for innovative and contextual Fiqh learning strategies. This study was conducted in class VII G of SMPN 02 Purbalingga and focused on the element of worship, specifically the topic of prostration. Employing a qualitative research approach, data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The theoretical foundation of this study is based on John Dewey's learning-by-doing theory. The findings indicate that the implementation of PjBL through comic media was carried out systematically in accordance with the syntax of project-based learning, which consists of three main stages: the Inspiration Stage (formulating essential questions and exploring ideas related to the prostration material), the Creation Stage (designing and developing comics), and the Dedication Stage (presentation and reflection). This study argues that comics in PjBL are effective in providing opportunities for students to internalize Islamic values through authentic experiences, collaboration, and creative artistic expression, thereby significantly enhancing the creativity of seventh-grade students. Therefore, this study recommends the use of comics in PjBL as a core strategy in Fiqh learning.

Keywords: Project-Based Learning, Comics, Student Creativity, Fiqh Learning

Kreativitas merupakan aspek penting pendidikan abad ke-21 yang mendorong siswa untuk berpikir inovatif, memecahkan masalah, dan menghasilkan karya yang berharga. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menguji efektivitas komik yang diintegrasikan ke dalam model Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek (PjBL) dalam meningkatkan kreativitas siswa dalam mata pelajaran Fiqih. Berbeda dengan pendekatan konvensional, penggunaan komik dalam PjBL mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai Islam dengan ekspresi artistik kreatif, menjawab kebutuhan akan strategi pembelajaran Fiqih yang inovatif dan kontekstual. Studi ini dilakukan di kelas VII G SMPN 02 Purbalingga dan berfokus pada unsur ibadah, khususnya topik sujud. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data mengikuti model Miles dan Huberman, yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Landasan teoritis studi ini didasarkan pada teori belajar sambil melakukan (learning-by-doing) John Dewey. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa implementasi PjBL melalui media komik dilakukan secara sistematis sesuai dengan sintaks pembelajaran berbasis proyek, yang terdiri dari tiga tahap utama: Tahap Inspirasi (merumuskan pertanyaan penting dan mengeksplorasi ide-ide terkait materi sujud), Tahap Kreasi (merancang dan mengembangkan komik), dan Tahap Dedikasi (presentasi dan refleksi). Studi ini berpendapat bahwa komik dalam PjBL efektif dalam memberikan kesempatan kepada siswa untuk menginternalisasi nilai-nilai Islam melalui pengalaman otentik, kolaborasi, dan ekspresi artistik kreatif, sehingga secara signifikan meningkatkan kreativitas siswa kelas tujuh. Oleh karena itu, studi ini merekomendasikan penggunaan komik dalam PjBL sebagai strategi inti dalam pembelajaran Fiqih.

Kata kunci: Pembelajaran Berbasis Proyek, Komik, Kreativitas Siswa, Pembelajaran Fiqih

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education has the main objective of forming individuals who have noble morals, integrity, and a strong understanding of religion (Sitompul et al., 2022). In achieving this fundamental goal, Islamic Religious Education must be designed in a structured manner and use an effective learning model, which is able to encourage active involvement and internalization of Islamic values that are relevant to everyday life (Syafrin et al., 2023). Islamic Religious Education includes fostering harmonious relationships between humans and Allah SWT and with other creatures (*ḥablun minallāh wa ḥablun minannās*) (Zubaidillah & Nuruddaroini, 2019). Islamic Religious Education in schools and madrasas covers several main subjects, namely the Qur'an and Hadith, Aqidah and Morals, Fiqh, and the History of Islamic Culture (Jailani et al., 2021).

One of the subjects in Islamic Religious Education is Fiqh. Fiqh covers the procedures and practices of human deeds. The provisions in Fiqh are not absolute, as they are the result of *ijtihād* and the thoughts of *mujtahid* scholars (Shofa, 2023). The study of *fiqh* covers several aspects, namely *ubūdiyyah* which is related to worship, *ahwāl syakhṣiyyah* which regulates family life, *mu'āmalah* which is related to community life, and *siyāsah* which is related to state affairs. The subject of Fiqh is part of Islamic Religious Education that focuses on learning the *fiqh* of worship, especially understanding and mastering the procedures for implementing the pillars of Islam. The discussion includes the provisions and practices of *taharah*, prayer, fasting, zakat, and the pilgrimage, as well as provisions regarding food and drink, circumcision, sacrifice, and procedures for buying and selling and borrowing (Gafrawi & Mardianto, 2023).

Currently, the world of education has entered the 21st century, an era that requires students to master various essential skills, particularly the 4C skills: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication (Jamal et al., 2023). Creativity, in particular, is crucial because it plays a significant role in fostering innovative thinking and finding new solutions, making it key to competing amidst the rapid development of science and technology. Therefore, fiqh learning must be adapted to these demands, focusing not only on cognitive and spiritual aspects but also on developing students creative thinking skills.

However, in practice, fiqh instruction in many schools is still dominated by material delivery that focuses solely on memorization, leading to a learning process that tends to stimulate only the left brain. This condition makes fiqh learning feel rigid and less engaging for students they (Mansir & Purnomo, 2020). This approach has proven ineffective in increasing active student participation and hinders the development of creativity, critical thinking skills, and communication skills. This lack of strategy variation also contributes to low interest and motivation in learning. This situation is exacerbated by global data demonstrating the need for innovation. The 2015 Global Creativity Index survey ranked Indonesia 115th out of 139 countries, in line with the TIMSS study of the same year, which ranked Indonesia 69th out of 76 countries (Astuti et al., 2022). This data demonstrates the urgent need to develop more innovative, creative, and interactive learning approaches in Indonesia (Neliwati et al., 2023). Furthermore, research from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) shows that the level of creativity of students in Indonesia is still relatively low, as reflected in Indonesia's low ranking in the creative skills assessment (Marten, 2024).

To address these challenges, Project Based Learning (PjBL) has been identified as a relevant learning model, as it inherently focuses on student engagement in problem-solving through a series of project activities that result in specific products (Dewi Anggelia et al., 2022). Several previous studies have examined the application of PjBL in the context of fiqh learning and its impact on various student learning outcomes, such as research by Rizki (2024) which focuses on social attitudes and Dewi Anggelia (2022) which focuses on creativity in general.

The development of the Islamic Religious Education curriculum in schools and madrasas is an important and urgent effort in the context of the current Indonesian education system (Sunita et al., 2025). In this context, the implementation of Islamic Religious Education learning through *the Project Based Learning model* with the final product in the form of comic artwork is in line with the development of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes the freedom of creative thinking and student independence in the learning process (Muzakki et al., 2023).

The novelty of this research lies in the use of comics as the final result of the implementation of *Project Based Learning* in Fiqh learning, combined with the school context with class division based on students' interests and talents, as implemented in SMP Negeri 02 Purbalingga. The use of Islamic-themed educational comic media allows students to internalize religious values through a creative and reflective thinking process that is more interesting and relevant to their artistic talents, which is an innovative form of PjBL in Islamic Religious Education learning. This model is expected to be an integrative model that specifically bridges Islamic values with the development of students' artistic/creative potential. Based on this description, this study aims to examine in depth the use of comics in the implementation of Project Based Learning in Fiqh learning and analyze empirically how the application of this model can increase the creativity of grade VII students at SMPN 2 Purbalingga, thereby providing a significant

contribution to the innovation of contextual Fiqh learning strategies that are oriented towards character development and creativity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is field research, which is research conducted through direct observation of phenomena in the field (Syafrin et al., 2023). This research is a qualitative research method. Qualitative research is an inquiry strategy that focuses on understanding the meaning, concepts, characteristics, symptoms, symbols, and descriptions of a phenomenon. This approach is natural and holistic, using various data collection methods, prioritizing the quality of findings, and presenting research results narratively (Sidiq et al., 2019). Qualitative research aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects comprehensively through descriptive explanations in the form of words and language, in a natural context, with the aim of exploring the meanings that emerge from the social environment (Agustina, 2020). The data collection techniques for this research are non-participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The research location is at SMPN 02 Purbalingga, in class VII G, by directly observing the learning process of Islamic Religious Education.

The research was conducted in the odd semester of the 2024/2025 academic year, namely during October to November. The research subjects included Islamic Religious Education teachers of class VII G and students of class VII G. The object of this research was Islamic Religious Education learning with the application of the Project Based Learning model in class VII G of SMPN 02 Purbalingga. The research focused on one teaching material in the chapter on Islamic jurisprudence of worship, namely the application of prostration worship, so that the study carried out was more in-depth and focused. Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model, which includes: (1) data reduction, namely the process of organizing and summarizing data to suit the problem formulation; (2) data presentation, in the form of compiling data in the form of descriptive narratives, tables, or images; and (3) drawing conclusions, namely giving meaning to the overall research findings as the final result of the analysis (Sugiyono, 2015).

RESULT

The data for this study were collected through observation, interview, and documentation techniques conducted at SMPN 02 Purbalingga, with class VII G as the main focus of the study. All data collected came from the researcher's involvement in directly observing the implementation of Fiqh learning that utilizes educational comics as the final product of learning activities. SMPN 02 Purbalingga has a unique class group that is divided into. This group division consists of dance classes (classes F and G), fine arts (classes E and D), music (class H), and crafts (classes A–C). In this study, class VII G, namely the dance class, was studied. Seeing how the application of comic fine arts is applied in the dance class, this is in accordance with the independent curriculum that applies the principle of growth mindset (S. Sugiarto et al., 2022).

The Fiqh material studied in the implementation of Project Based Learning focuses on the Fiqh of Worship regarding the types of prostration, with a comic creation project themed "foreign prostration, tilawah prostration, and gratitude prostration". In this activity, students are tasked with producing a comic featuring characters and a storyline they designed themselves. Through these characters and scenes, students depict various

situations related to the practice of prostration as a form of applying Islamic teachings in everyday life.

The type of comic produced in this project is a comic strip. This comic format was chosen based on its effectiveness in conveying the message and ease of creation for students. The tools and materials for this project include A5 drawing paper, stationery such as colored pencils, rulers, pencils, erasers, and colored markers.

Fiqh worship learning using the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) model is implemented by following the standard syntax of project-based learning. According to the framework developed by the George Lucas Educational Foundation, the syntax of PjBL consists of six main stages: (1) determining the fundamental question (start with the essential question), (2) designing a project plan (design a plan for the project), (3) creating a schedule, (4) monitoring students and project progress, (5) assessing the outcomes, and (6) evaluating the learning experience (Nugraha et al., 2023).



Figure 1 First Stage Learning

The steps for implementing Project Based Learning at SMPN 02 Purbalingga class VII G in learning Fiqh Ibadah in an effort to increase student creativity are as follows:

1. Start With The Essential Question

In the initial stage, the teacher presented new material on various types of worship applied in daily life, namely the prostration of forgetfulness, tilawah prostration, and prostration of gratitude. The learning process began with essential questions that functioned to encourage students to engage in activities and think critically. The teacher then explained that the learning in this meeting used a Project-Based Learning approach, where students would work on a project in the form of creating an educational comic as the final product of learning the material.

2. Design a Plan for the Project

At this stage, the comic strip project planning was carried out. Students began analyzing the material in more depth, then brainstormed ideas for developing the comic strip and its storyline. Group formation was also carried out at this stage, with eight groups being formed, to accommodate the number of students in class VII G, which consists of 30 female students. Through group discussions, students developed story ideas related to the practice of prostration.

The teacher instructed that the comics they created should contain characters, a storyline, and situations that reflect Islamic teachings in everyday life. Furthermore, the teacher gave students the freedom to choose a theme, as long as it was relevant to the learning material and did not contain elements of SARA (ethnicity, religion, race, and intergroup relations). In this meeting, each group was required to determine a story

idea or theme, as in the next meeting, students would begin drawing the comic sketches.

3. Create a Schedule

The teacher and students developed and agreed on a project implementation schedule, starting from idea discussion, sketching, narrative development, and comic completion. This schedule was designed to allow students to work in a focused, structured, and disciplined manner. Furthermore, the project schedule ensured that the implementation of Fiqh learning through comic creation remained aligned with the Islamic Religious Education syllabus timeline for grade VII G at SMPN 02 Purbalingga.

4. Monitoring Students and Project Progress (Monitoring)

In this stage, students enter the project design phase by creating initial sketches of the comic strip. This activity includes creating a page outline, dividing the story panels, and arranging the visual flow according to the ideas and themes established in the previous meeting. This stage aims to visualize the story plan before moving on to the detailed drawing and writing of the narrative.

Each group worked collaboratively to complete the comic strip. Group members took turns filling in story panels, drawing characters, and creating a coherent and coherent plot. This collaboration reflected a clear division of tasks, making the work process more focused and efficient.

At this stage, the teacher acts as a facilitator who provides guidance, direction, and assistance when students experience difficulties, both in drawing illustrations and composing a storyline.



Figure 2 Project Creation Process

5. Assess the Outcome

This stage is implemented through two activities: project completion and presentation of the results. In the first session, students are given approximately 30 minutes to finalize the comic, which includes coloring, line accentuation, and adding narrative balloons to prepare it for display. Once all work is complete, the activity continues with a presentation session.

Each group presented their comic strip, explaining the storyline, character traits, and the Islamic values they intended to convey, particularly regarding the subject of prostration. The teacher also emphasized that the project must be completed on the same day to ensure effective presentation and evaluation.



Figure 3 Project Completion



Figure 4 Presentation of Results

6. Evaluate The Experience

In this closing stage, the teacher and students reflected on the learning process through the comic-making project. After presenting the work, the teacher expressed appreciation and evaluated the quality of the comic and the students' understanding. Overall, the teacher assessed the work as good and reflected the students' creativity.

The teacher then explored learning reflection by asking students about their experiences during the project. Responses varied, ranging from feelings of enjoyment and increased understanding of the material to challenges requiring precision and collaboration. The reflections showed that the project helped students understand the prostration material more effectively, while also enhancing creativity and responsibility in group work. The activity concluded with a closing greeting.

DISCUSSION

The implementation of Fiqh Ibadah learning in class VII G SMPN 02 Purbalingga was carried out by implementing the *Project Based Learning model*, with the final product of learning in the form of educational comics. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, Project Based Learning is a learning model that places projects as the main focus in the learning process and positions students as active subjects in learning activities (Afifah et al., 2020). Through this model, students are given the freedom to design their learning activities independently, work collaboratively during the project work process, and produce a final product in the form of work presented to the audience (Lutfiyani et al., 2024).

With that, Learning Fiqh Ibadah in class VII G SMPN 02 Purbalingga is able to directly activate students in the learning process. This is in line with the theory John Dewey's progressive education emphasizes the principle of learning by doing, That is, knowledge obtained through direct experience enables students to remember learning more strongly, build deeper understanding, and foster curiosity (Nugraha et al., 2023). This makes learning more meaningful if students directly involved in contextual learning experiences and relevant to real life. This is evident when students making comic products with the theme of prostration as a form of implementation Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) material in everyday life. Furthermore, this direct learning provides space for students to innovate and work creatively in Islamic Religious Education learning through the creation of Islamic-themed comic products.

Independent Learning Policy launched by the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia aims to align the National Education System with the mandate of the Law, by providing freedom for schools, teachers, and students to innovate and

develop creative and independent learning processes (Mardiah & Mutiani, 2022). In line with this policy, the application of comics in *Project-Based Learning* is an effective learning strategy for fostering student creativity and independence in Islamic Religious Education. Through Islamic-themed comic-making projects, students not only develop creative and innovative thinking skills but also learn to collaborate, solve problems, and internalize Islamic values more deeply.

Meanwhile, according to Dwiki, comics are a form of narrative art that combines elements of images and text to convey a story or message visually. In line with this opinion, Will Eisner in his book *Comics and Sequential Art*, quoted by Dwiki, explains that comics are "sequential art," namely a series of images arranged systematically to build an interconnected storyline. Through this presentation, readers can understand the narrative content not only from the text, but also from the visual representations displayed in each panel (Prayoga, 2021). Meanwhile, according to McCloud, comics are a series of images presented sequentially with a specific purpose, namely to convey information while evoking an aesthetic response in the reader. The text and storyline in comics are systematically designed and demonstrate an integration between visual elements in the form of images and verbal elements in the form of words. In this case, images have a central role in conveying messages or information, while increasing aesthetic appeal for readers (Nur Mazidah Nafala, 2022).

Besides serving as a medium for entertainment, comics are also widely used as an effective educational and communication tool due to their ability to capture interest and facilitate the understanding of complex concepts. Through a combination of visual and textual elements, comics are able to present information in an engaging manner while simultaneously supporting the learning process, making it easier to understand (Nur Mazidah Nafala, 2022). The historical journey of comics as a visual communication medium demonstrates its connection to the cultural dynamics that develop in society. In this context, comics serve as a means of conveying complex messages in a way that is easily understood and accessible to a wide range of audiences (Eka Kusuma & Setyoko, 2023).

Learning through comic book creation aligns with the multimodal literacy approach. Multimodal literacy refers to an individual's ability to understand and utilize various communication modes, such as text, images, sound, video, and other elements integrated within a learning context (Kardika et al., 2023). Through the application of the Project-Based Learning model assisted by comics, students not only gain an understanding of religious teachings in the cognitive domain but also internalize them through authentic learning experiences. This process makes understanding Islamic values more meaningful and relevant to the context of students' lives (Mailok, Ubaidullah, and Ahmad 2020). With their visual power, comics have become a relevant medium in the modern era, not only as a means of conveying stories but also as a learning medium that supports the development of students' creativity and imagination. Therefore, comics have significant potential as an effective learning tool in the world of education.

Project-Based Learning consists of three main stages: inspiration, creation, and dedication (Barus et al., 2022). In this study, the implementation of Fiqh Ibadah learning through comic creation followed these three stages. This process gradually encouraged students to explore ideas, produce products, and present their work responsibly.

1. Inspiration Stage

The inspiration stage is evident when students begin to search for and develop project ideas in groups. They explore by searching for references online and

analyzing events or realities in their surroundings to ensure the ideas they generate are relevant to everyday life. The idea-finding process is conducted through group discussions, allowing each member to contribute and agree on the story theme that will be incorporated into the comic strip.

2. Creative Stage

At this stage, after students have determined the theme and idea for the comic, they begin creating initial sketches. This process begins with drawing the basic character shapes, then developing the character details to make them appear lifelike and fit the planned storyline. Next, students compose the narrative in the form of dialogue or supporting text to clarify the storyline. Once the sketches are complete, the images are clarified and colored to make the comic visuals more engaging and communicative. This stage requires precision, creativity, and collaboration among group members to ensure the work aligns with the project's objectives.

3. Dedication Stage

This session was evident in the research when students presented their comic creations to the class. At this stage, each group explained the creation process, from idea planning, task assignments, sketching, coloring, and developing a storyline based on the Fiqh Ibadah learning material.

In addition, students also explained the obstacles they faced during the project, such as time constraints, differences of opinion within the group, and limited drawing skills. Through this presentation activity, students not only showcased their work but also learned valuable lessons from the process, such as the importance of cooperation, responsibility, creativity, and problem-solving skills. The impact of the project learning was seen in the students' increased confidence in presenting their work and their deeper understanding of the Islamic jurisprudence of worship material through real-life learning experiences.



Figure 5 One Example of the Work

Based on the previous description, the implementation of Project-Based Learning through the stages of inspiration, creation, and dedication has been proven to increase student creativity in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh) learning. This finding aligns with Guilford's creativity theory, which states that creativity in an educational context involves two primary thinking skills: divergent and convergent thinking.

Divergent thinking refers to the ability to generate new, original, and diverse ideas (E. Sugiarto, 2019). This ability is evident when students develop ideas for comic strip projects, such as determining the storyline, choosing an appropriate theme, and designing the concept of the comic to be created.

Meanwhile, convergent thinking is the ability to analyze information and develop appropriate solutions to solve a problem (E. Sugiarto, 2019). This ability is evident when students integrate Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh), specifically regarding the types of prostration, into a comic strip project. Students examine the material, select relevant information, and then arrange it into a logical, educational storyline that aligns with the learning objectives. This process not only helps them understand the material more deeply but also trains their analytical skills in applying the concepts of Islamic jurisprudence to a real-life work.

According to Munandar explains that creativity has four main indicators: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Fluency refers to the ability to generate a large number of relevant ideas. Flexibility is the ability to view a problem from multiple perspectives and offer alternative solutions. Originality relates to the ability to generate unique and uncommon ideas and elaboration is the ability to develop ideas in detail, making them more concrete and tangible (Ika & Zakiah, 2019).

In the context of qualitative research, indicators can be formulated based on Munandar's theory of creativity. The following table shows indicators that can be used:

Table 1 Creativity Indicators

Creativity Aspects	Qualitative Indicators	Example Field Findings
Fluency	Students are able to generate many ideas in the process of making Islamic Religious Education comics.	It was evident that students were able to fluently generate ideas and develop them into a coherent and easy-to-understand comic storyline. Each group was able to systematically construct a story sequence, from character introduction to the emergence of conflict.
Flexibility (Flexibility)	Students are able to use various approaches in describing religious moral messages.	This is evident in the students' ability to present diverse ideas and perspectives. This diversity is evident in their choice of sub-themes, such as prostration of forgetfulness, prostration of gratitude, and prostration of tilawah, which they relate to everyday life situations.
Authenticity (Originality)	Students' comic works show unique and non-copycat ideas.	This is evident in the originality of the ideas expressed in the storyline, dialogue, and character designs. Each group presents a unique story concept and does not copy any other work.
Elaboration (Elaboration)	Students add details to stories and pictures.	This is evident in the students' efforts to enrich the details of each work. Elaboration is evident through the neat arrangement of comic panels, the use of

		clear and communicative text balloons, character expressions that convey emotion, the selection of appropriate scene settings, and attractive coloring that strengthens the visuals of the story.
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Source: Results of Observations of Student Work

Indicators demonstrate that student creativity can be fostered and even enhanced through the application of the Project Based Learning model with comics as the medium. Creativity is evident at every stage of learning, from project planning and idea development to comic creation and presentation. Through this series of activities, students not only gain a deeper understanding of the Fiqh of Worship material but are also encouraged to think originally and flexibly, developing ideas comprehensively. Thus, learning fiqh with the final result of comics in project based learning has been proven to provide ample space for students to express their creative potential.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results presented, it can be concluded that Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh) learning in the 21st century needs to keep up with the times by demanding mastery of the 4C skills (Critical Thinking, Creativity, Communication, and Collaboration). The application of comics in Project Based Learning is one appropriate approach to meet these demands. Through a series of processes ranging from planning, idea development, comic creation, to presentation, students' creativity has been proven to increase according to creativity indicators, namely fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Thus, the results of comic works in project based learning not only strengthen students understanding of the Islamic Jurisprudence material, but are also effective in developing creative thinking skills that are relevant to the needs of 21st-century learning.

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