

Exercises to Navigate Ambiguity

Practicing Problem-Finding and Problem-Solving

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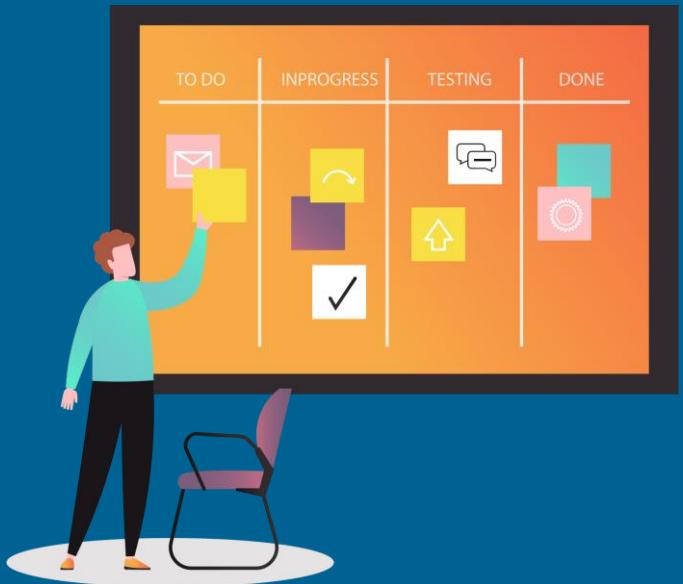




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Introduction

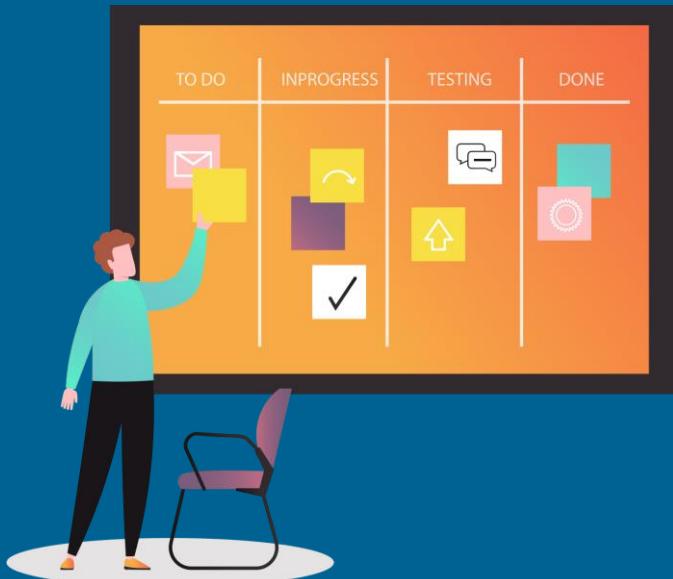


When we are finding ourselves in ambiguous terrain, we need to realize that exploration is the key to overcome ambiguity. Especially in the classroom, in project-based learning scenarios, ambiguous situations can often occur. Throughout the project lifecycle, we need to sharpen our senses to identify obstacles and to overcome obstacles that are impeding our progress. Gaining experience in ambiguous situations requires practicing problem-finding and problem-solving.

For that purpose, the public library of The Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford University has released a collection of materials dedicated to the skill of navigating ambiguity. These materials help teachers and students alike to explore ambiguous situations and reflect upon them.

This unit will present some of the material from the Library of Ambiguity, which can be used as exercises and teaching material for your project-based learning scenarios.

Exercise 1: The Journey Road Map

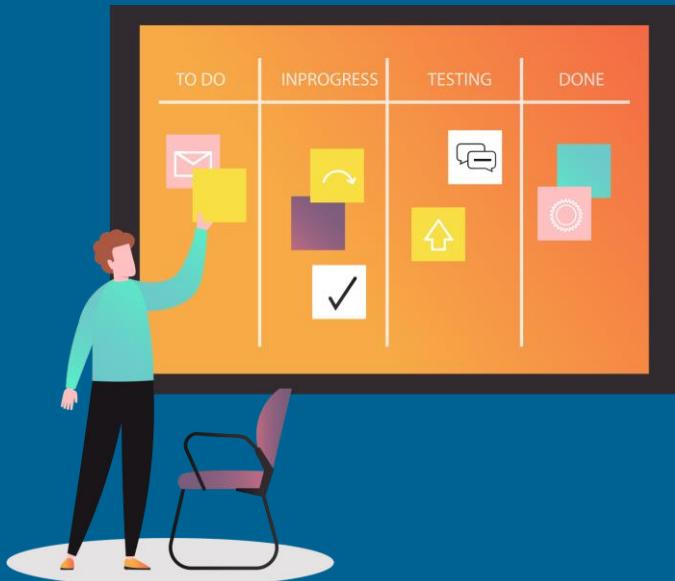


Exploring ambiguity means leaving your comfort zone. Discovering unknown territory is an adventurous activity, but can be quite challenging. Sometimes the feeling of ambiguity can be overwhelming, like being in an ocean of uncertainty. This exercise addresses this very feeling and provides a template for a journey map, that can be used to reflect on your personal experience while making your way through an ambiguous situation, task or project.

You can find the exercise [here](#)!

The template is a downloadable resource on the right hand side of the page.

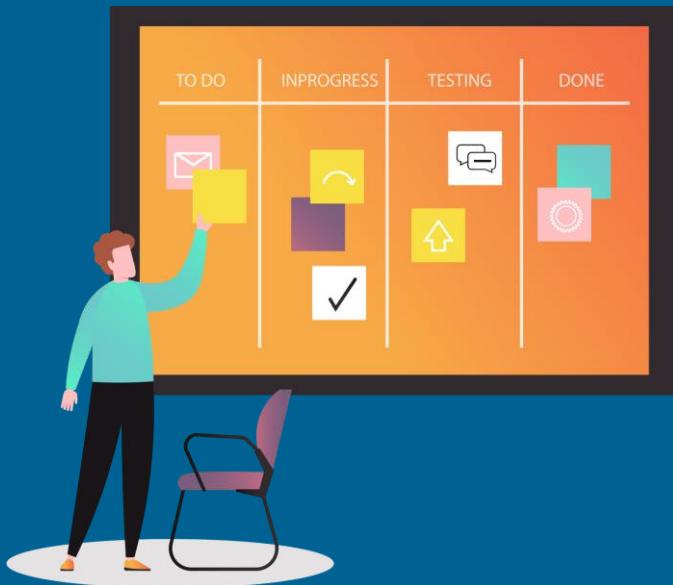
Exercise 2: The Ambiguous Object



This is a fun exercise that can be prepared for a short, in-class activity. Ambiguous situations not only occur in extensive, project-based tasks. We experience in our everyday lives in any given situation where we lack key information. Simulating an ambiguous situation is easy, as this exercise shows. At the center of attention is an ambiguous object whose form or function might stump someone. It is a great team exercise to stoke your students' imagination and interpretation skills.

You can find the exercise [here](#)!

Exercise 3: Learning Zone Reflection



This exercise is all about reflecting on your tolerance of ambiguity (TOA) during your project journey. Through the lens of the Learning Zone Model, students can reflect on their personal journey through a project lifecycle. Students will ask themselves the following questions:

When did I feel like being in my comfort zone?

When did I feel like being in the learning zone?

When did I feel like being in the panic zone?

The Learning Zone Reflection is designed to push students' comfort with ambiguity.

You can find the exercise [here](#)!

The template is a downloadable resource on the right hand side of the page.

Want more exercises?

The [Library of Ambiguity](#) provides a plethora of activities to choose from. If you are interested in more exercises and teacher-friendly material dedicated to embrace ambiguity, check out their website!

