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**What is IMPACT II?**

IMPACT II is starting its sixth year in Ventura County and is part of a national curriculum-sharing and recognition program for teachers in grades kindergarten—12 in all subject matter areas and specializations.

More than 30 IMPACT II business/school partnerships exist in cities throughout the United States, including New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, as well as in smaller districts, counties, and even entire states. The program now has several thousand selectively chosen teacher members.

The Ventura County IMPACT II program is a partnership between the Ventura County Economic Development Association (VCEDA) and the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Office.

**Important Events - 1998**

- **February**  
  Teachers send Grant application.

- **March**  
  Disseminator Grants awarded.

- **May**  
  Teacher Business Recognition Program.

- **August**  
  Display Grants at Summer Conference.

- **September**  
  Distribution of Impact II catalog of teachers' award winning ideas.

Through IMPACT II teachers can apply for $400 Disseminator individual grants for classroom-tested curriculum ideas which they have developed. Collaborative grants for 2 or more teachers are $600. A committee of teachers, school administrators, and business leaders selects the most ready-to-share ideas for grants. Business leaders award the grants at the spring Teacher Recognition Program.

An IMPACT II catalog published each year, distributes these "cutting edge" ideas countywide. Any interested teacher may attend the fall Curriculum Fair to meet the teacher Disseminators and order teacher materials. These award winning lessons will also be accessible on the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools home page on the Internet.

**Why IMPACT II?**

IMPACT II is cost effective. The County Education Office funds the day-to-day operation of IMPACT II, so your contributions go directly to teachers and classrooms for student projects.

IMPACT II puts cutting edge classroom projects into the mainstream, turning students on to learning.

IMPACT II enables excellent teaching ideas to reach all teachers in the county, and raises community awareness of exemplary classroom practices.

IMPACT II boosts teacher morale by recognizing innovative teaching as well as enhancing teacher professionalism through local/national training and teacher presentations.
Message from the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools

The IMPACT II program made major strides in Ventura County in its fifth year of operation. The teacher and business leaders response to IMPACT II was especially gratifying in 1996-97. Two hundred seventy-seven applications have been received from teachers and one hundred thirty-one deserving grants have been awarded since we began in 1993, thirty-two were awarded in 1997. Our number of business partners has grown from six in our first year to forty in 1997. The addition of the Ventura County Star newspapers as title sponsor provided a major boost in media coverage and coverage of expenses beyond the grants to teachers. Additionally, the fund contributions received and distributed have grown each year. In 1996, the Steering Committee established and awarded the first Ed Lyon Excellence in Education Award to honor the business leaders most influential in enhancing business-education partnerships in Ventura County. This award recognizes the "most useful and replicable" teaching idea submitted by placing the teacher's name on the perpetual trophy. In 1997, the Ed Lyon Excellence in Education award was won by Bonnie Wascher of Mesa School.

The purpose of IMPACT II is to spread excellent teaching through recognition of and distribution of good ideas. Our early indications are that this effort is paying off and the "good teaching ideas" are spreading throughout the County. This catalogue is sent to all schools and libraries in Ventura County and is available electronically through the home page for the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Office on the Internet at www.vcss.k12.ca.us. Please share this document with fellow educators and business leaders. I encourage you to read the descriptions of winning lessons and look for ideas that may enhance your classroom. Feel free to borrow ideas at will and use them in your classroom as often as appropriate. Our only purpose in publishing this document is to assist you in teaching your students.

Throughout the five year period during which IMPACT II has been in existence in Ventura County, every business contribution received has been earmarked for grants to teachers. All overhead costs are borne by the County Superintendent of Schools Office. I continue to invest in IMPACT II because I believe that recognizing and distributing good teaching ideas will help spread quality education throughout Ventura County. Additionally, I believe that a closer connection between business and education will provide mutual benefit. IMPACT II is one of our partner programs with the Ventura County Economic Development Association (VCEDA) guided by the theme, "A Handshake, Not A Handout." This slogan succinctly describes our philosophy that a true partnership should benefit both parties. I believe that IMPACT II fills that bill. Since the inception of IMPACT II, VCEDA has provided continuous support and encouragement to their members to get involved.

IMPACT II could not survive and grow without the continued support and active involvement of business leaders, school administrators, and teachers. I also want to express my appreciation to Phil Palbaum and Kerry Roscoe of the County Superintendent of Schools Office, Department of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment for providing the leadership and "Commitment to Quality Education for All." We are truly blessed, in Ventura County, to have such outstanding leaders. Phil retired, for the second time, in June 1997 and we will miss his active daily involvement. Ventura County owes a great debt of gratitude to Phil Palbaum for starting a growing IMPACT II in this county.

I am confident that Kerry Roscoe will continue to grow and spread IMPACT II throughout Ventura County. The teacher network will grow and increase in influence over the years to come. I am committed to continuing our effort with our business partners to recognize and reward our many exceptional teachers while spreading successful instructional practices throughout Ventura County.

Charles Weis, Ph.D.
Ventura County Superintendent of Schools
June 1997
Acknowledgements

1996-97 IMPACT II Grant Readers

Educators:

Dale Ackerman Retired Las Posas Elementary
Mimi Allman Pleasant Valley Medea Creek Middle
Sandee Ayers Oak Park Hillside Junior High
Ellen Bradshaw Simi Valley Hillside Junior High
Pam Carter Simi Valley Tierra Linda Elementary
Judy Crenshaw Pleasant Valley Vista Elementary
Gary Galvin Rio
Dennis Hatland Simi Valley
Vishna Hemly Moorpark
Sherri Kerman Pleasant Valley
Debbie Maulhardt Oxnard Elementary Frank Intermediate
Enid Miller Simi Valley Red Oak Elementary
Jerry Neidenbach Oxnard UHSD Oxnard High
Jack Oliver Retired Montalvo
Patty Peinado Ventura
Shirley H. Perez Rio
Carol Pinto Pleasant Valley Tierra Linda
Beverly Rueckert Pleasant Valley Tierra Linda
Mary Schultz Simi Valley Santa Susanna
Marta Serna Rio
Carol Williams Ocean View Elementary Ocean View Junior High

PTA Representatives:

Terri Belkin PTA—12th District
Martha Goodsell PTA—12th District
Elda Tonello PTA—12th District
Jean Weber PTA—12th District

Business Representatives:

Bill Cumneen Veda, Inc.
Rudy Gonzalez Southern California Edison
Jeanette Hudson Corlund Electronics
Craig Mason Hansen Trust
Marilyn Newstrom Naval Air Warfare
Ed Romero Point Mugu
Stacy Roscoe Procter & Gamble
John Tarkany Ventura County Star
1997 Impact II Partners

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United Western Enterprises, Inc.

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Boething Treeland Farms
California Wine Club
Engineering Management Concepts
Limoneira
United Core Staff
Yuje Tree

Friend
Rolls Scaffold & Equipment
England, Whitfield, Schroeder & Treadway, LLP

In Kind Services
Fast Frame (Ventura and Thousand Oaks)
Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Office
1997 IMPACT

Welcome business partners, teachers, administrators and guests to the fifth annual Impact II Awards Dinner.

Business Partners played a major role in the success of the awards evening.

Smiles and good feelings make the 1997 Awards Dinner a great place to be!

Our gratitude to retiring Phil Palbaum for founding and fostering Impact II in Ventura County.

Bonnie W. received Lyon Award for Excellence in Education.
AWARDS DINNER

Over 170 people attended the 1997 Impact II awards dinner. Bob and Maureen Carey kept the program moving.

The Ventura County Star generously hosted all the teachers at the awards dinner.

A few samples of the Impact II projects on display.
“How proud we are!”
Ed Lyon
Excellence in Education Award
Presented to the Grant recipient who best reflects the criteria of innovativeness, creativity and adaptability.

"My proudest work has been in the educational community, trying to bring about a partnership between business and education."

In 1996 the Impact II Steering Committee established the Ed Lyon Excellence in Education Award in honor of Ed's decades long commitment to youth and quality education in Ventura County. His involvement in education at all levels and his tireless efforts over the years have set a laudable example for other community business people to follow.

With 30 years experience in the oil business, he is founder and owner of Gaviota Maintenance Service and has served on the boards of numerous petroleum industry associations. Despite his extensive professional involvements, Ed has made a personal commitment to volunteer work for the community. His activities include work as a Fair Junior Livestock Program supporter, a member of the Ventura Boys and Girls Club Board of Directors, a past United Way co-chairman, and president of the St. Bonaventure High School Parent Teacher Guild. A past president of VCEDA and board member for 21 years, he has expanded the VCEDA Education Committee with programs like Ventura County Science Fair, Ventura County Business Week, Teacher-Business Intern Program, classroom-to-business bus tours, Schools-to-Career Conference, and Tech Prep advisory participation. In 1993 Ed was instrumental in bringing the Impact II program to educators in Ventura County. Additionally, he has spearheaded the drive for a four year California State University campus in the County.

So it is with great pride that we dedicate this award to Ed Lyon, a true advocate of Excellence in Education.
IMPACT II

1997
Grant Recipients
A Voyage Through the Sea of Darkness

The Idea and Its Value
A Voyage Through the Sea of Darkness is a make-believe adventure from Spain to the New World. By setting sail on a classroom voyage through history students are drawn into a unit that allows for individual creativity and a chance to be successful in many areas of the curriculum.

Throughout history we focus on people who believed in their dreams and made courageous attempts to change their world. After sharing the books Christopher Columbus by Ann McGovern, Encounter by Jane Yolen, and 1492 by Jean Marzollo and How Many Days to America, students are ready to embark on a voyage of their own to discover new lands, face religious or civil rights persecution, or to have an adventure.

Working in groups of 6 or 8, students construct a passenger for themselves and a ship for their group to sail on. Students learn about passports, visas, and packing for a long sea voyage. By trial and error, students experience the hardships and joys of a journey into the unknown with the mysterious Captain X (the teacher) who communicates with the class with sea-drenched parchments, posing problems from not enough sleeping quarters to dropping the ship's compass overboard. Then the students must frantically try to discover how to make a compass and navigate by the stars. Students must solve the problems, whether they be mathematical, scientific or social. The situations are set to each ship's crew and they are responsible to decide their own solution.

The assessment in the form of a class story created during the unit, individual ship logs, journals, mapping and compass activities as well as oral descriptions given by the students. The ability to work with the crew mates on their ship if they so wished was an added benefit of learning, revising, teaching, and cooperation. Success was attainable for all classroom learners and some innovative and unorthodox ideas were shared and respected. All students could participate or excel in some facet and the outcome reflected their strengths.

In my second grade class, we sailed with four ships for two months, beginning the unit with our study of Columbus and ending with our landing of only two ships at Thanksgiving time. Using our history social science theme "ordinary people who do extraordinary things," we incorporated geography, cardinal directions, weather, oceanography, art, and science easily throughout the voyage.

The benefit of A Voyage Through the Sea of Darkness is that it is a fun, creative, non-threatening way to teach and assess an integrated program based on an exciting adventure on the high seas. With social studies and science backdrops being laid, students revealed their strengths and shared with each other since the unit is student-based. A key revelation was the ability to share, ask for help, critique, and praise each other. The students appreciated the value of each others work and ideas.

State Framework
This unit supports the History/Social Science and Science Framework by incorporating themes regarding discoveries and experiments, social awareness, diversity, unified ideas and providing all learners the opportunity to process concepts and then apply them in a problem solving situation using critical and higher level thinking skills. It is also in line with the equal access for all learners and is easily adapted for bilingual students. It supports the Language Arts and Mathematical frameworks by providing introduction to writing techniques, writing opportunities, literature, and mathematical problem solving into the curriculum.

Students
A Voyage Through the Sea of Darkness is a 2nd through 4th grade unit but could be adapted for any level by increasing the challenge level of the problem situations. My second grade class had tremendous success with the unit.

Facilities/Materials
A Voyage Through the Sea of Darkness is teacher friendly and student based. Teachers choose the topics that they will use as a focus and pose those situations as needed. No other resources are necessary.

Outside Resources
Often ships pull into the Ventura Harbor for tours. We visited the ship, The Nina, a reproduction of Columbus' famed ship. The Ventura Maritime Museum would also be an extension resource. Other excellent resources were the films "American Tail" and "The Magic Voyage".

Grades 2-4
Math/Science
Literature
Social Science
Problem Solving

More Information
Debbie Moore
Camarillo Heights School
35 Catalina Dr.
Camarillo, CA 93010
(805) 482-9838
Donald Hart, Principal
Pleasant Valley Elementary
Business Partner
CalResources LLC
Beowulf, Grendel & Frankenstein Meet in the Workplace

The Idea and Its Value
This integrated unit demonstrates the relevance of literature, requires critical analysis of characters, and utilizes personal application as students study their own personality traits along with the characters in Beowulf and Frankenstein. To prepare for Beowulf and to build community in the classroom, I begin the year with a personality color analysis. Students immersedly enjoy analyzing themselves according to a survey which requires them to select from a list of dominant characteristics that they personally possess. They eventually find themselves categorized according to the personality colors of RED, BLUE, GREEN or a combination. The results of these surveys are filed in their business portfolios.

Beowulf is a Heroic Epic, a story of good versus evil. Students climb inside the characters by performing videotaped skits of scenes from the epic.

To become more familiar with the various themes found in Frankenstein and to expose the students to the five career paths emphasized at our school, students engage in a Research-Opinion Essay with the following options:

RECREATION, HEALTH & HOME:
The destructive "Frankenstein" monster can be unleashed by irresponsibility and abuse of drugs and/or alcohol. Who was "Prometheus" and what did he have to do with the subtitle, "The Modern Prometheus"?

ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT:
Investigate current developments in the field of biologic and genetic engineering and give your opinion. Investigate using animals for research and giving animals human DNA.

ARTS, COMMUNICATION & DESIGN:
Trace the evolution of the Frankenstein myth as it has been changed through drama and mass media.

COMPUTERS, BUSINESS & MARKETING:
Select any of the topics listed and produce a PowerPoint presentation with oral explanation of findings.

HUMAN, GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC RELATIONS:
Research the behavior of children who have been neglected by their parents as Frankenstein was neglected by Victor.

Compare Frankenstein's deprivation of family roots to the African Americans who were "robbed" of their history.

With a focus on business and workplace applications, all students were required to produce a PowerPoint presentation of their topic along with a written report complete with parenthetical author's citations and work cited.

We culminated the unit and linked Beowulf and Frankenstein by analyzing how all of the main characters would get along in the workplace. Students brainstormed in groups to agree on three dominant traits for the characters and themselves.

Before grouping, students then assigned a color to each character explaining why that color was chosen. Group discussions were preparatory for the following individual homework assignment. Write a memo to a "co-worker" explaining the need for demonstrating certain admirable qualities in the workplace. Begin your memo with an introduction covering the reasons for it. Use bullets to outline the characteristics expected among group members which will promote congenial relationships. Include short explanations as to why these are important and how others are affected. Conclude with a call for exhibiting these characteristics at all times in the workplace.

State Framework
These activities support the State Framework of core literature for grade twelve along with infusing the SCANS competencies and school-to-work emphasis in the curriculum. Students further develop research skills, critical thinking skills, discover different personality styles, and to express personal opinions on controversial issues, exploring their linkage with various career paths.

Students
Thirty senior students, members of the Business Academy, participated in this unit. The class is an integrated group of College Prep and General level students ranging from those with limited English skills to high academic competency. The unit could be adapted to any Language Arts program seeking to apply the literature to real-world learning.

Outside Resources
Outside resources have included contributions from community business representatives who have been articles desired in the workplace.
Squid for Kids

The Idea and Its Value
The purpose of this integrated mini science unit is to study animal form and function as they relate to classification through art, language, culinary and scientific experiences.

The unit begins with an introduction to classification. Students classify a variety of items such as writing utensils, shoes, and themselves according to differing criteria. Students use a traditional classification system to diagram and color code how structures and functions are organized within the animal kingdom.

Next, in cooperative groups, students are challenged to create an ocean animal with structures necessary for life: respiration, digestion, protection, and locomotion. Groups present their creations to the class, identifying:

- niche in the marine food web,
- structures,
- functions, and
- classification to the phylum level based on the above.

With this solid introduction to classification, students are prepared to classify a squid through a dissection. First students use diagrams of squid to color code and study the cephalopod’s structures, so they understand what they will be seeing. After teacher modeling, students perform a dissection of the squid, locating the mantle, gills, jaws, pen, and ink sac. The arms and tentacles are counted, the patterns of the discs and the significance of the ventral and dorsal coloration are described. These structures are then related to the functions they perform and to the squid’s classification as a cephalopod. Students especially enjoy using the squid’s pen and ink to write their names. Finally, adventurous students also clean, fry, and eat the squid to complete the food web.

A final assessment project is assigned in which each student is asked to compare and contrast their created animal to the squid by structure and function. Assessment also includes classification to the phylum level construction of an appropriate food web, and description of the squid’s adaptations.

This unit provides opportunities for students to use higher level thinking skills by providing practice in observing, comparing, ordering, classifying, inferring, relating and applying new knowledge to new situations. Positive student attitudes and behaviors are encouraged by a thorough preparation for the dissection, demonstrating a clear purpose for the activity, and by utilizing cooperative learning group principles.

State Framework
This unit utilizes Science Framework recommendations to “emphasize the continuity and connectedness of living systems, their components, needs, and histories.” Classification is presented through the in-depth investigation of one animal. By identifying these unique characteristics, we discover the evolutionary pattern which is the basis for classification, and continue on to study evolution. Classification is then seen in the context of evolution.

Students
Squids for Kids is appropriate for a variety of modalities and learning styles, and was enthusiastically embraced by all our 300 seventh grade regular and special education students including bilingual, deaf and hard of hearing, GATE, and resource. This unit is suggested for grades six through twelve.

Facilities/Materials
The unit can be undertaken in any classroom with good ventilation! Equipment includes: paper towels, scissors, fresh whole squid, handouts, colored pens or pencils, frying pan. The Lab Handout and Teacher’s guide, coloring pages, and assessment forms are available.

This mini-unit was based on a single activity, a squid investigation presented at the South Coast Science Project.

Outside Resources
Field trips could be conducted to any fishing fleet and/or the Channel Islands National Park. Guest speakers in the fields of marine fishery or biology, footage of swimming squid, posters of the marine food chain, and the video “Seasons of the Sea” provide excellent extensions.

Grades 6-12
Science

More Information
Allison Maires
Tanya Zimmer
Cabrillo Middle School
1426 E. Santa Clara St.
Ventura, CA 93001
(805) 641-5155

Kris Bergstrom,
Principal, Ventura
Unified School District

Business Partner
San Buenaventura
Chamber of Commerce
The Idea and Its Value

I found a practical way to integrate American History into my Jr. High School Language Arts Classes through the 80 minutes I give daily for S.S.R.

Giving students a lot of choice doesn’t mean that we teachers can’t direct their choices. At the beginning of each trimester I made a booklist of 20-30 top-notch historical books and asked my students to pick their S.S.R. reader from it. These books were at varied levels of difficulty and were generally historical fiction novels, but I did include some poetry, nonfiction, and big books. The three lists are titled: “Colonial America,” “The Civil War Era,” and “Western Expansion.”

I gave a grade for silent reading at the end of each trimester, based on the number of pages a student had read within the trimester. To get full credit for the number of pages in each book the student had to successfully complete three things: 1) have notes taken from the book; 2) create a project to the class; 3) had a long list of projects the students could pick from. Some of the student’s favorite ones were; making a diorama of the setting, making a word search using key vocabulary, making a story museum by bringing in at least 10 artifacts from the story, and making a WANTED poster for the antagonist of the story. I gave the students a worksheet so they could predict how long it would take them to read a book. Then they signed up for their presentations, which we did every Wednesday. As students shared their projects the audience was asked to write down two comments and two questions for the speaker. Through these presentations students were further taught about the historical time period, as well as learning speaking and listening skills.

Students

Several teachers at my site used my S.S.R. program with great success. This year we taught American History to both 7th and 8th graders to make it easier for this type of integration of curriculum, which is one recommendation of the document, “Caught in the Middle.” It is appropriate for all 5th and 8th grades.

Materials

The only materials required are books. I have a small classroom library so to avoid a shortage I encouraged students to go to the public library or purchase their own book. As an incentive I gave those who did so a certificate for 20 S.S.R. pages which went towards their final grade. I have a complete handbook available which includes the book lists, a parent letter, a list of projects, a grading system, and a student worksheet to help predict how long a book will take to read.
Wagons Ho

The Idea and Its Value

Wagons Ho is an interdisciplinary unit that allows students to experience life as a pioneer moving west in the 1860’s. The 4-6 week unit begins with the students hearing the story of the Donner Party as a read-aloud. The students hear the story of emigration. During the week, the students will be familiar with colony families and the need to move west. Over the next week, students create a character (name, age, job, family roles, etc.) using the Storyline model. The characters join 3 or 4 other characters in a wagon west. The Wagons are expected to interact and respond with other members in the wagon to make decisions. The students remain character throughout the journey. Each wagon must communicate with other wagons on the train as well as with the wagon master (teacher). Each character is expected to keep a journal of the journey. In groups, students research a historical or folk figure of the time period or present to the class. Students have the opportunity to research in class using a variety of resources. The groups utilize the CD-ROM, literature, encyclopedias and biographies. Group record information on computers. During the research process the groups rotate jobs according to a collaborative model. The roles include computer data recorder, research and development graphic arts, and quality control. Presenters are encouraged to incorporate a variety of creative forms that may include, tableaux, skits, storyboards, music, and dance. Students are introduced to the mathematics concepts of scale and ratio using Gulliver’s Travels. Opportunities to experience real-life math along the journey also occur activities such as cooking, measuring distance, weights, and data collection. The computer program Oregon Trail is utilized for critical thinking practice. Students read and discuss many versions of popular Tall Tale characters. Emphasis is placed on comparing and contrasting as well as similes and metaphors in descriptive writing. Individuals, students are expected to write a tall tale using the writing process. Their final work is published in “tall” form including the main characters head and feet. A variety of art activities are included in this unit. Each student creates realistic likeness of their own character, each “family” builds a scaled version of their covered wagon, and makes items such as corn husk dolls that would have been carved West by the pioneers. Music and dance are used to enhance and illustrate the aesthetic values of the period. As a culminating ac-

Grades 4 - 8

History/Social Sciences
Mathematics
Language Arts
Visual and Performing Arts

More Information

Suzann Zeigler
Valle Lindo Elementary
777 Allee St.
Camarillo, CA 93010
(805) 482-8861

Joyce Amer, Principal
Pleasant Valley Elementary School District

Business Partner
United Western Enterprises
The Idea and Its Value
You Won't Believe Your Eyes is an integrated, interdisciplinary unit on the science behind optical illusions with a culminating optical illusion museum that includes student-made projects, displays, and a slide show. The optical illusion unit is an interactive, hands-on approach to learning. The students worked together in cooperative groups for twelve sessions during a six-week period. This unit addresses the science of light, the history of optical illusion art, the significance of our sense of sight, and the technology of movie making and three-dimensional imagery. As students learn that things aren't quite the way they seem, they complete their research projects and their original optical illusion art piece to be shared at the optical illusion museum. The idea of the unit You Won't Believe Your Eyes, came from an art lesson on the works of M. C. Escher. The students first researched the inner workings of the eye. They constructed a paper mache model of the eye and put it to the test through scientific experiments that illustrated the complicated way light is used for vision. Students explored the relationship between persistence of vision and illusion of motion by observing motion illusions produced by rotoscopes. They created rotoscopes and produced original animation. The students used the Ames window experiment to discover the relationship between perspective and apparent movement. Students researched optical illusions in television and motion pictures. They "couldn't believe their eyes" when they discovered how special effects in some of their favorite movies were created through optical illusions. After reading the "Book of Opt, an Illusionary Tale," and "Round Trip," and viewing optical illusion videos, the students learned how optical illusions are produced using color, angle, positioning, size, reverse imaging, and distance. The students participated in hands-on science centers that included experiments in three-dimensional drawing using student-made three-dimensional glasses, optical illusion spinning discs, mirrors and reverse imagery, incredible twisting die, and afterimages. Students enjoyed finding optical illusions in artwork. Students learned some of the art techniques they saw at the Getty Museum. They watched a video on an artist making a Trompe L'Oeil painting, saw techniques of this illusionary art, and practiced drawing Trompe L'Oeil. When the students reexamined Escher's work, they used higher level thinking skills by evaluating and synthesizing what they had learned about optical illusions to produce original masterpieces for the optical illusion museum. The students were teacher evaluated on both the written and drawing portion of their masterpieces and also self-evaluated their projects with a grade and narrative to support it. The project was flexible enough for all learners in the class. At the optical illusion museum students showed off what they had learned by narrating an optical illusion slide show that explains the science behind the illusions. For lower elementary, the students learn the basic principles of optical illusions through simple experiments. For upper elementary, students research the eye, explore the science of light and actually create their own optical illusions.

State Framework
Science Framework: Investigating the relationship of what is seen and what is perceived, classifying types of optical illusions, experimenting the causes of optical illusions. Language Arts: Reading literature, narrating, using learned vocabulary, and writing. Math: Exploring the concepts of angles, size, and distance. Art: Researching optical illusions, viewing real artists, practicing optical illusion techniques, and designing and creating art. Technology: Researching technology of film animation and special effects, using the internet.

Students
One hundred gifted and talented students in grades three through six and ninety-five sixth grade students participated.

Facilities/Materials
Materials needed are: books and videos about the eye, optical illusions, movie making and illusionary art. The videos, slides and science experiment supplies were found at the district resource libraries or purchased through science catalogues.

Outside Resources
Building Community in Our Kinder-Garden

The Idea and Its Value

Building Community in Our Kinder-Garden is an ongoing unit where students learn the importance of working as a team. The unit focuses around a garden built in our school yard. The children work collaboratively toward the common goal of caring for their garden from the planting through the harvesting, and of course sharing the fruits of their labor. Through this hands-on curriculum, the children will learn the importance and joys of working as a team and caring for others. I incorporate discussion, literature, science, drama, music, math and writing into this curriculum. The Building Community in Our Kinder-Garden unit is taught all year, September through June. I measure success by how well the students are able to work collaboratively. If successful, the student outcome is a garden that is ready to harvest.

One example of a student activity is reading The Little Red Hen to the class. This is a story about a hen who plants wheat, going through all the processes of gardening and ending with baking bread. She continually asks for help from Dog, Cat and Duck to no avail, and does all the work herself. Following the story, the children list the advantages and disadvantages of working alone. They then have the opportunity to rewrite the story with their peers illustrating the animals working collaboratively.

The children plan the garden as a group, deciding together what should be planted. Then the children plant their gardens in groups of four or five. Once planted, the class lists the necessary jobs, assigns jobs to each group and decides if they want each group to do one job, or to rotate jobs on a weekly basis. During this time, the children decide what to do with the harvest in addition to sharing it as a group. They may choose to share with other classes, our Big Buddies or a group in our community, such as a community feeding center. "Community can be developed through active citizenship by calling on students to become actively involved in service projects." (Segoviano, 1994).

Throughout the unit, the children will be exploring a variety of curriculum areas. Fiction and nonfiction literature involving planting is shared. Math skills are addressed as we chart and graph our garden's growth and, of course, in our culmination as we cook and prepare our harvest. The children explore science through their study of seeds and participate in writing, art and music activities. This unit is open to a variety of opportunities for the children. It challenges their critical, reflective and creative thinking skills. This collaborative unit engages students in problem solving and decision making and provides ownership to encourage positive student attitudes and behavior. The greatest benefit from this unit, Building Community in Our Kinder-Garden, is the students' delight in actively working as a team to develop the spirit of a community that cares for others.

Students

I have used this year round unit with both kindergarten and first grade, however it is open-ended and motivating and can be used with any elementary grade level or possibly even higher. The cooperative group activities allow for building of community and self-esteem. The unit allows for teachers and children to be creative.

State Framework

An integrated unit touches each of the State’s Frameworks. This unit supports the science, math and language arts frameworks by emphasizing integration and hands-on activities. Working cooperatively with a common goal, children build upon the Social Science Foundation becoming interdependent and self-reliant.

Facilities/Materials

A garden is necessary to complete this unit. I was able to have two substantial plots built by obtaining a grant through the Amgen Foundation. Gardens can also be built using parent donations and volunteers. The garden does not necessarily have to be too big as the children work cooperatively. There is an abundance of books and literature on the subject of gardening and it can be incorporated into any science study as well. School and public libraries would be of assistance here.

Outside Resources

Outside resources may include soil, seeds, or donated items such as necessary gardening tools. I have also enlisted the assistance of a parent volunteer who is also a master gardener.

Grades K-3

Language Arts, Math, Science and Performing Arts

More Information

Michele Brown
Poinsettia School
350 N. Victoria Ave.
Ventura, CA 93003
(805) 641-5475

Nancy Bradford,
Principal, Ventura Unified School District

Business Partner

Hansen Trust
Let's Go Shopping at the Poetry Supermarket

Grades 4-12
Language Arts

More Information
Skip Harrington
Las Colinas School
5750 Fieldcrest Dr.
Camarillo, CA 93010
(805) 484-0461

Dr. Robert Donahue,
Principal,
Pleasant Valley Elementary
School District

Business Partner
GTE

The Idea and Its Value
This unit is a culminating activity which gives 8th grade students in Language Arts classes the opportunity to relate the meaning of poetry to their own lives by using the higher-level thinking skills of analysis, interpretation, and evaluation.

The Setting: Students come into the classroom and are greeted with a message on the overhead that says "You have just entered the Poetry Supermarket! Let's go shopping for poems!" They are instructed to take a "shopping list" from a slot at the front of the room. They are then asked to take a pen and their shopping list and walk around the classroom where twenty numbered poems have been posted. The poems cover a wide range of topics and difficulty that address the needs of all learners in the classroom. They are told that, as they read each poem, they are to "grade" them according to their own likes and dislikes. Students are not to grade the poem on how well it is written, but on how it makes them feel. Does it speak to them? Or does it totally baffles them? Students then pick their favorite poem and their least favorite poem. On a nearby table are copies of all the poems. They are asked to take one copy of their favorite and one copy of their least favorite piece. That night they take the poems home and reread them. The next day, they write a paper in which they "dissect" their poems and explain their choices. They write about the messages the poets were trying to convey and the significance (or lack of significance) of the poems to their lives. Each student presents a poetry analysis to a small group. Because every student has read each poem, they all have ideas on what the poet was trying to convey. This sparks all sorts of terrific discussion! It is a wonderful activity! It gives students the opportunity to read some of the world's great poems ("If" by Rudyard Kipling and "Sea Fever" by John Masefield are just two of the twenty) It allows them to pick out poetry to which they can relate. Students love the idea that they get to grade the poems and they take this assignment very seriously. Their behavior is exemplary. The concept was adapted from an idea found on America Online, combined with an exercise used at the National Geographic Institute, and reworked, revised and revamped to meet the needs of middle school students in their study of poetry.

This activity takes two to four days. One day is spent shopping for poems, and another two are used for discussion and writing. Teachers could easily adapt this unit by going "Great Quotation Shopping," "Proverb Shopping," "Idiom Shopping," etc. The unit could be adapted to history, civics, and specialized courses such as the study of Shakespeare's works.

State Framework
English-Language Arts Framework. Students need help to get into and through the work, focus on central issues, interpret symbols, discuss meaning and argue interpretations. An effective English-language arts program introduces students to literature representing many different perspectives, diverse styles and cultures and points of view, classic and contemporary attitudes, and a range of modes from fiction and drama through poetry.

Students
Approximately 65 8th grade students took part this year. Most were twelve to fourteen years old. One class was an honors class, the other a regular "core" class. However, this lesson could be adapted to almost all ages and learning levels.

Materials/Facilities
Teachers will need copies of the poems, construction paper, poetry shopping lists, some tape or a stapler, an overhead projector and transparency, and a pen.

Outside Resources
A video series on poetry and poets is also shown.
Can Africans Unite to Solve Their Problems?

The Idea and Its Value
This "Organization for African Unity Conference" is one of my favorite ways to teach this continent of 54 diverse nations and 800 languages. Students are required to adopt a country and analyze issues from the point of view of their adopted countries. Components include art, research and language arts.

PROCEDURE:
1. Distribute African countries to students. One student/country.
2. Students research their country thoroughly. Statistics should be current and the math should be done so the numbers make "sense." Specific data should include: current GDP per capita (this makes the number real to them), imports, exports, languages (there are over 800 in Africa), government, religious beliefs and practices, bordering nations, health, whether or not they are an oil exporter.
3. Students make "UV" type placards showing their country's name and flag.
4. Agenda: I write several proposals based on current events in Africa, e.g. It is proposed that the spread of malaria from the Congo region be contained by neighboring countries contributing to a medical research and containment fund. Students are given bonus points if they can come up with a proposal that is based on a current event and includes an issue about which their country is concerned.
5. Discussion day. Teacher is facilitator. Seats in a large circle. This is not a debate, but a discussion. Points will be earned by those students who contribute to the discussion with meaningful comments backed by hard data.
6. Time limit on discussions, generally 10-15 minutes/issue. Students vote on the proposal as amended.
7. Sample proposal (student written). I propose that schooling be mandatory because in the sub-Saharan area, the average adult illiteracy rate is 54.39%.
8. The facilitator ensures that representatives speak from their country's point of view, using facts as back up evidence.
9. Actual discussion phase of the activity goes on for 3 consecutive days.
10. Facilitator may take some notes on the board as facts are brought out. Students write a sentence or two at the end of each issue stating the way they voted and why.
11. Teacher does not interfere but helps them to focus their concerns with board notes or posters clustering "Economic Concerns" and "Humanitarian Concerns."

RESEARCH COMPONENT
Students must use all available research materials including encyclopedias, almanac, and Internet. All statistics must be dated.

ART COMPONENT: UN style placard showing country's name and flag.

THREE WRITING COMPONENTS:
1. Students take the information collected about their country and write a proposal on which the entire OAU group will vote.
2. Students briefly write the way they voted on an issue and why they voted that way.
3. Students must write a position paper based on their country's point of view on one of the issues, using one of the standard "persuasion essay" formats.

Students
I have successfully facilitated this conference for three years teaching about 100 students, honors as well as heterogeneous classes.

State Framework
With its relevant statistics, current events and persuasive writing components, this unit touches on three frameworks all of which encourage using the real world.

Materials
Research materials, cardstock for making country placards, a list of proposals that you have come up with in advance based on current events & for a lot of student generated proposals, maps of Africa - use some showing epidemiological & ecological concerns of the region.

Staff
Jane Sweetland has taught middle school world history/humanities classes for 5 years.
Where Does the Water Go When You Flush?

Grades 7-12
Social Science, Language Arts

More Information
Elise Stewart
Monte Vista School
888 N. Lantana
Camarillo, CA 93010
(805) 482-8891

Robert Rizzardi,
Principal, Pleasant Valley Elementary
School District

Jane Sweetland
Las Colinas School
5750 Fieldcrest Dr.
Camarillo, CA 93010
(805) 484-0461

Robert Donahue,
Principal, Pleasant Valley Elementary
School District

Business Partner
AT&T Wireless Services

The Idea and Its Value
This unit connects social studies research to students' daily lives. By making their city the focus of an elaborate "excavation" students understand how ancient civilizations are studied. The final product is a scholarly article accompanied by a map that reveals the infrastructure that defines the students' city.

This project may be done individually, or in groups. Begin by telling the students that they are historians from "somewhere else" and they have uncovered the long lost city of (name the current year). Everything in the city is perfectly preserved, but there is nothing found in working order. All living inhabitants have vanished, and there is no oral history.

Discuss and list on the board the data that will be available. Emphasize that this will be a scholarly work not a creative work of fiction or science fiction. Help students by requiring that the finished assignment be in journalistic style and limited to 2 pages. Their task is to analyze the data they have uncovered in the long lost city. If they can't prove it with primary sources they can't write about it.

After they have brainstormed what data they think might be available from such an archaeological find, distribute the list of 17 points which they should include in their map or report.

1. Location: latitude, longitude, elevation
2. Climate: type, rainfall, temperatures, vegetation
3. Evidence of city planning
4. Infrastructure: water, sewer, power, roads, flood control
5. Government
6. Transportation
7. Major trade routes

8. Economic base: currency, occupations, products
9. Natural resources
10. Ecology
11. Social Services: education, health, fire
12. Technological level
13. Beliefs systems
14. Leisure time activities
15. Customs/norms: birth, coming of age, marriage, old age, death, burials
16. Family life: gender roles, daily activities, groupings, food, clothing
17. Architecture/Art

Together, list where this information might be found. A lesson about what constitutes a fact is crucial. Students may include in their writing only that which is defensible with their research, not personal experience which would lead to misinformation, superficial coverage, and ultimately "bad history." A city should be spent preventing, and specifically teaching students to formulate appropriate questions. Several days may be spent in teaching the writing process after the data has been collected. Help students to cluster related information, teach leads and conclusion.

The second component of this research unit is mapmaking. Students are required to create by hand (no photocopies) a map of the city. It should be in ink and neatly labeled, including the following four elements: 1) main sewer, water source & water lines (Emphasize MAIN 2) zoning 3) MAIN streets 4) MAIN locations cited in the body of the report (parks, churches, schools, restaurants, shopping areas, etc.)

State Framework
The Social Studies framework encourages teaching students research, map, and critical thinking skills that are relevant to their daily lives. The Language Arts framework asks that students be able to collect, analyze and report on data.

Students
This project is designed for grades 7-12. We have successfully completed this project with GATE classes for 6 years.

Facilities/Materials
Students are cautioned that this unit requires NO expense. All materials are available free of charge. City, zoning, and recreational maps may be posted in the classroom.

Staff
This unit has been successfully taught by one teacher to 300 students over the past 6 years. Last year, a second teacher adopted the plan for 54 high achieving students.
Business is Blooming
(Bringing the Basics to Life Through Enterprise)

The Idea and Its Value
Suburban children are exposed to the complexity and importance of agriculture while experiencing the excitement of starting up a garden store. Having students create products for a real audience motivates them to improve their quality of work and increase time on task. This unit has provided an avenue for improving language arts skills the application of basic math skills and concepts the use of scientific processes and artistic expression in an authentic way.

What began as the simple planting of winter crops and a field trip to a local grocer took on new meaning when students got the idea to sell their own crops. Once there was a purpose for growing the crops, students were highly motivated to learn and apply basic skills to the project. As problems were encountered, students developed analytical and collaborative skills to solve them. While participating in the marketplace, students realized the need for research, improved accuracy in data collection, and refined communication skills. As students followed the path of taking their own crops from seed to market in a new respect for the business community and the management of limited resources was developed. Teachers will find that creating and running a viable business will give students a sense of ownership and responsibility. This unit addresses different learning styles, is extremely adaptable, and creates a real life sense of teamwork and leadership among students.

Whether you are gardening in containers outside of your classroom, or involved in a school site garden, this unit can be a success. Just about anything can be grown and marketed. If gardening is not an option, student create craft projects, toys based on physics, greeting cards, or anything your imagination can dream up can become products.

Instructional Objectives
• Higher level thinking skills are applied while gathering information from the agri-business community and using it to evaluate and solve problems.
• Communication skills are fostered as students research and report information, create advertisements, correspond with businesses and write journal entries.
• Scientific processes and concepts are acquired as students conduct various experiments such as soil amendment, irrigation, plant spacing, pest control, decomposition, weather changes, crop damage, and produce storage.
• Basic mathematical skills and concepts are developed as students collect and analyze data, set up a bookkeeping system, and predict outcomes.
• Math, Science, Language Arts and Fine Arts skills as integrated throughout the unit.

State Framework
This unit creates multiple opportunities for communication in both formal and informal situations for a variety of purposes and audiences. Scientific processes are applied to the learning of scientific concepts. Mathematical standards are implemented throughout the unit. We designed the unit to couple the teaching of basic skills with application/problem solving.

Students
The two classes of fourth through sixth grade students included Resource, Title I, ELD, and GATE students. All students participating in this enterprise gained self-confidence, knowledge, and expertise. Through the sale and/or donation of their crops, students viewed themselves as significant members of a community and learned to respect themselves and others. The Mathematics, Language Arts, and Science skills incorporated in this unit can be adapted to the primary grades by simplifying the activities to meet their developmental and curricular needs.

Facilities/Materials
All you need is a student generated product or garden crop. Most supplies needed can be found in the regular classroom such as research materials, journals, chart and graph paper, art supplies and calculators. A laboratory can be set up using household materials and items ordered from science catalogs.

Resources
Some valuable research resources were the Sunset Western Garden Book, Ortho gardening books, The Grower's Classroom and the Guide to Kids' Gardening Books from the NGA. Field trips were arranged to Von's Store, Tierra Rejada Ranch, Pyramid Flowers, and Simi Valley Farmer's Market. PTA arranged for seeds donated from various nurseries. Attending the Hansen Trust Agricultural Summer Seminar gave us valuable information and put us in contact with county growers and teachers involved with school gardens.

Grades 4-6
Math, Science, Language Arts, Art

More Information
Denise Grap
Doni Lopez
Park View Center School
1500 Alexander St.
Simi Valley, CA 93065
(805) 520-6755

Robin Hunter,
Principal, Simi Valley Unified School District

Business Partner
Hansen Trust
One Man’s Trash, Another Man’s Treasure

The Gift is to the Giver: Students Gain Basic Skills Through Service

Grades K-12
Mathematics, Language Arts, Environmental Science

More Information
Denise Grap
Park View Center
School
1500 Alexander St.
Simi Valley, Ca 93065
(805) 520-6755

Dr. Robin Hunter,
Principal, Simi Valley Unified School District

Business Partner
Southern California Edison

The Idea and Its Value

Students bond with the elderly, volunteer to make a difference, and learn a lesson in breaking down social barriers. After visits to our local Senior Center, students discovered that the seniors were in need of funding for their Meals on Wheels and Lifetime programs. The students generated many fund-raising ideas and decided upon this Recycling Unit. This project made students realize the need to acquire basic skills that, until then, they hadn’t been highly motivated to attain.

To kick off the month long contest students arranged a school wide Recycling Field Day. Pairs of students created field games that would instruct players on the difference between recyclable and non recyclable items. The school was invited to rotate through the different game stations. Leadership and communication skills were developed as students managed the day and instructed classes on recycling procedures. Students also created flyers and secured contest prizes from community businesses to motivate classes to bring in recyclables. Students weekly converted trash to pounds and pounds to money, then used the information to determine the leading class. Environmental Science became an underlying issue as students began to see the role recycling plays in managing our limited resources.

Instructional Objectives

- Developing statistical reasoning and computational skills while increasing facility, number sense, and accuracy.
- Developing problem solving strategies as they creatively apply basic skills to real life situations.
- Integrating listening, speaking, reading and writing to develop effective communication skills.
- Acquiring descriptive, expository and persuasive writing skills as they communicate to other students, teachers and the community.
- Developing and applying Fine Arts skills as a means of communication.
- Acquiring management skills such as leadership, organization, collaboration, and delegation.
- Exploring Environmental Science Concepts such as limited resources, land use, and recycling.

State Framework

Mathematical strands contained in this unit are logic and problem solving, statistics and probability, measurement, and number sense. This unit creates formal and informal opportunities for oral and written communication. California State Framework Earth and Biological Science concepts such as cycles, decomposition, limited resources, and recycling are also covered.

Students

Two classes of 5th and 6th graders led 95 classes of K-6 students through this project. The students included Resource, Title I ELD, and GATE.

This project can be adapted on a variety of levels. Mathematically it can be simplified or expanded to accommodate any grade level. Simple counting and graphing of items can be done by primary students, multiplication can be included in the middle elementary grades, while division and decimals are applicable for upper grade students. Language Arts skills can also be modified: everything from simple letter writing and poster making, to writing game procedures and giving prepared speeches to the school are possibilities. The project can encompass the whole school or be limited to one class or grade level.

Facilities/Materials

All you need is a local recycling center and a reason for fund raising. All other supplies can be found in the regular classroom such as folders for record keeping, paper, and art supplies. Calculators are an option, depending upon the math skills you would like to target.

Resources

Some valuable resources are: Battle Biology by Mel Ingman, Science Activities for Children by Cusenaire, The Kids Guide to Service Projects and The Kids Guide to Social Action by Barbara Lewis. Businesses that donated prizes were the Easy Street Ice Skating Arena and the Discovery Zone. The Simi Valley Senior Citizen’s Center provided an outlet for our fund raising efforts.
The Year of the Poem

The Idea and Its Value
The *Year of the Poem* is a compilation of poems written by students in the form of a calendar which they create. The idea originated when I didn't have enough money to buy a gift for a friend. I knew she liked poetry and art and needed a calendar. I began it in November, since most students like to give the calendar to their parents as a holiday gift. The unit not only has instructional value, but also allows an opportunity for students to express themselves creatively and build up their self-esteem.

The four week unit begins with reading, singing, and analyzing poems such as "Harlem Night Song," "Dreams," "Forgotten Language," and "I Hear America Singing." Students examine them for content as well as stylistic devices such as personification, simile, metaphor, and rhyme scheme. I incorporate music in the unit where possible. For example, I play Ellington's "Take the A Train" when we read "Harlem Night Song," and then have the students divide up into groups to sing the various stanzas of the poem. I also encourage the students to bring in their own choice of song lyrics for analysis. They eventually make the connection, "Oh, songs are really poems."

After reading and discussing various poems we begin writing our own. I start them off by imitating other authors until they develop a comfort zone. For instance, after reading "Forgotten Language," I have them list things they used to believe in but no longer do and then use these items to create a poem similar to Shel Silverstein's. I put them into groups to create a poem using the "Magnetic Poetry Kit" which is a box of magnets with poetic words on them.

We create various poems to put in the calendar and in the process are able to integrate other subjects - Science when we create poems on the planets; History when we read Whitman's "I Hear America Singing," and Music (Jazz - Ellington, Folk - Simon and Garfunkel, Classical - Beethoven, and various others). Art is incorporated in all poems from watercolors to using pressed flowers.

The students keep the poems in a folder until we're ready to create the calendar. I usually do a haiku for January, a love poem for February (acrostic with love, free verse, writing "I love you" in different languages), a limerick for March, and an imitative poem of "I Hear America Singing" for July. For November I have the students trace their parents' hands and write a poem on it that has to do with all the things their parents do for them. A variation is for students to trace their own hands, write a poem about their parents' hands title it "The Handshake," and have the last line read something like "As a token of my love and appreciation, I give you my hand."

The following could be used for any month: sonnets, biopoems, concretes poems, magnetic (or "found") poems, color poems, planet poems, acrostic poems, and imitative poems such as "Forgotten Language," "If I Were in Charge of the World," and "Dreams."

When the poems are finished, we paste them onto a piece of white construction paper that is already folded in half with the dates written on or copied from a xerox machine and posted in the middle is stapled or three-hole punched with ribbon. Lastly, the students design a cover of their choice.

The unit promotes the use of higher level thinking skills as students are identifying, defining, and utilizing literary devices. They also are reading, interpreting, and discussing various poems as well as creating poems. These skills are measured through quizzes and evaluation of poems and participation in discussions.

This unit could be tied in with a theme, patriotism, sound and music, mystery and intrigue, nature...

Other subject areas can easily be integrated as well.

State Framework
This unit supports many aspects of the Language Arts Framework: reading, writing, speaking, listening, group discussion, interdisciplinary connections and high level thinking activities. The unit "introduces students to literature representing many perspectives, diverse styles and cultures and points of view, classic and contemporary attitudes, and a range of modes from fiction and drama through poetry."

Students
Students were in the sixth through eighth grade, and at various academic levels from low to high, all successful. A total of 180 students participated in 1995-96.

Materials
24 sheets construction paper per student (19 long folded over for calendar, 12 regular to paste in calendar), markers, crayons, and glue. Optional - glitter, yarn, ribbon.
"Going Once! Going Twice!...SOLD!"

Grades 2-12
Language Arts, Social Science, Mathematics, Performing Arts

More Information
Pat Bachamp
Flory School
240 Flory Ave.
Moorpark, CA 93021
(805) 378-6303

Teresa Williams,
Principal, Moorpark
Unified School District

Business Partner
American Products, Inc.

The Idea and Its Value
Placing a book on the class "auction block" instills a long-lasting enthusiasm for reading. Students first began auctioning their books 15 years ago in my Special Day Class and it was adapted for the regular classroom 7 years ago. Book Auction Week takes place every 6-8 weeks, beginning in late October ending in June. I introduce this program with the announcement that students no longer must do "book reports". Instead of this traditional and usually distasteful task, boys and girls have the opportunity to "sell" their book. Initially, students are given specific supplies with accompanying instructional time provided: a banking envelope (6" x 10" manila), an account register, a numbered bidding card, and $100.00 "cash" (play money). Prior to the first auction, students view a short video of an auction, plus video of former student auctions. Students' names are placed on weekday charts and daily assigned a day on which to present. Proceeding each auction week, students are assigned the day of their presentation and a "fun form" (a written review) to be filled in by the seller. This form gives the teacher significant information about the book to be presented, such as title, author, a summary, etc. It is kept brief, non-threatening, and in an inviting format. On their assigned day, students "sell" their book; any genre of self-selected literature is acceptable and innovative forms of presentation are encouraged: puppets, mime, dialogue, video, skit, recitation, ... The seller can present a visual aid along with the oral presentation. Following the "sell" the auctioneer takes over the proceedings and auctions the book to the highest bidder. A new auctioneer is chosen each day of auction week (only volunteers). A cashier is selected for the week, taking charge of the monetary transactions between seller and buyer and being responsible for subtracting 10% commission for the auctioneer. The entire Book Auction is student-centered and student-directed. The teacher is "off-stage", only entering into the action when needed.

In Social Studies, Book Auctions students are utilizing mathematical ideas in a real-life context, managing tasks that are often over-emphasized and personal, and continually assessing their "numbers" while buying and selling. Students are involved with continuing mental and written calculations, often times devising their own strategies and experiencing the responsibility tied to a "bid".

State Framework
The Book Auction emphasize the guidelines in the English Language Arts Framework, particularly encouraging development of individual response, independent reading, writing as a process, oral communication, participation and listening skills, and opportunities for students to evaluate and monitor their own progress. In the Social Science Framework, Book Auctions center on decision making, participation, critical thinking, and basic study skills. Primary emphasis is placed upon the economic literacies: supply and demand, production of goods and setting economic goals. Book Auctions addresses the Mathematics Framework of real-world, hands-on experiences for all students. The Visual and Performing Arts Framework is engaged in students' artistic experiences in activities that focus on and encourage communication, originality, and self-expression.

Students
For the 1996-97 school year, twenty-eight 5th grade students have participated. This group includes four resource students and five bilingual students.

Materials
Equipment and materials can be derived from basic teacher/classroom supplies. Helpful, but not necessary, are a straw hat, gavel, and account register.

Resources
A video of an auction is valuable.
Heroes

The Idea and Its Value

Students explore the heroic accomplishments of everyday heroes to learn to identify that which makes an individual worthy of emulation. Features of the unit include the following:

- Real life community heroes inspire and challenge students to expand their definitions of heroes and heroism.
- Quality materials are readily available.
- The unit builds upon students' natural interest in the lives of heroes, both real and fabricated.
- The integrated curriculum provides a solid academic experience to participating students by promoting higher level thinking skills.

Participating students exchange ideas with distinguished men and women named community heroes by the Ventura County Cultural Board. This opportunity provides students with a compelling illustration of the impact of heroic individuals upon our daily lives.

Students interact with a wealth of resources: guest speakers, posters, picture books, novels, song, movies, and instructional materials designed for classroom use. The abundance of materials on heroes helps to sustain student interest. Throughout the unit, students focus on the following questions: What is a hero? Who are some of my heroes? What can I learn from real heroes?

This unit provides students with a memorable learning experience through the integration of the curriculums, the promotion of gender equity and multiculturalism and on the emphasis on critical thinking skills.

- In Math, students may compute the per round average number of strokes for a golf hero such as Arnold Palmer or Nancy Lopez.
- In Language Arts, students may choose to write a series of poems about personal heroes, or they may choose to write a pop-up book about a specific hero.
- Across the school, students play a "daily detective" game to generate student interest in the study of heroes. Students are given daily hints about specific heroes. Prizes are awarded to students who correctly identify the hero being described.

The Heroes unit promotes higher level thinking skills by encouraging students to analyze the attributes of their personal role models and critically evaluate their worthiness for emulation. Students progress from listing possible heroes, to generalizing categories which heroes fall into, to classifying heroes into the various categories. Students compare and contrast various heroes to arrive at a selection of one personal hero who becomes the focus of their individual projects.

Heroes is a six to eight week unit. It uses a wide range of instructional approaches and materials. Students participate in whole class discussions, collaborative group activities, as well as individual and group projects. This unit is adaptable to the needs of diverse students and teachers.

The Heroes unit focuses on inspiring students toward the refinement of their own attitudes, values, and goals. At the end of the unit, students should be able to clearly communicate and support their selection of personal heroes, using valid reasons and illustrations.

State Framework

Heroes supports all state frameworks currently in use by promoting critical thinking, multiculturalism, gender equity and values of benefit to society.

Students

About 200 seventh and eighth grade students, both fluent and limited-English proficient, participated in the Heroes unit this year.

Materials

A list of supplementary and core materials is currently available in the unit written by our team of teachers.

Resources

The Ventura County Board on Cultural Diversity provides a list of local community heroes. We invite each individual on the list to speak to our students as part of our Heroes Speakers Series.

Grades 4-8

Language Arts, Mathematics

More Information

Sam Camacho
Dr. Dori Maria
SueEllen Mendez
Lloyd Schoonmaker
Patricia Wooden
Frank Middle School
701 N. Juanita Ave.
Oxnard, CA 93030
(805) 981-1733

Peter Nichols, Principal
Oxnard Elementary
School District

Business Partner
Santa Barbara Bank & Trust

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The Idea and Its Value

This 4 week project explores the many reasons immigrants were "pushed" from their homelands and "pulled" to a young country where each person could make a fortune and become rich with land and money in no time, or so they were told. Students realize the part their families played in making America strong.

After the teacher has taken an informal survey of the students' countries of origin, a discussion begins about why the students' ancestors would want to leave their homelands. The students learn that there were many conditions that prompted people to leave: famine, wars, epidemics and oppressive governments to name a few. Meanwhile, students are asking questions at home about their own heritage and the reasons for immigration. Next the students learn about the "pull" of America: free education, business opportunities, cheap land, plenty of food, and religious freedom. "If Your Name Was Changed at Ellis Island" by Ellen Levine and Immigrant Kids by Russell Freedman are used to stimulate discussion and illustrate the Great Migration of the 1880's. They imagine one of their ancestors leaving the homeland, never to return or see family again.

The class discovers the formidable conditions their ancestors tolerated on the voyage over; crowded steerage quarters, sickness, even death. And if the family arrived in New York Harbor, then faced the inspectors. It was confusing and frightening with many being deported or detained for various reasons.

Lastly, the class sees a video on Ellis Island and a discussion follows dealing with the information given: statistics, personal interviews, etc.

The teacher uses two assessments to evaluate the learning. The student writes a letter to a friend, or becomes an immigrant and writes a letter to a loved one "back home." The letter contains all the information the student has gathered about immigration, the "Push" and "Pulls", the voyage, and the process of legal inspection upon arrival in America, concluding with the new life in America. The second assessment requires independent reading of a novel dealing with the immigration of young people from the 1800's to the late 1900's. These novels can be read independently but the information can be shared and discussed with classmates. Students' learning can be assessed in these ways: (1) a mobile is made to visually illustrate the novel; (2) a diary is written from the main character's point of view; (3) a "bumper sticker" slogan is created embodying the spirit, courage, and strength of the immigrant and the homeland.

Throughout the unit, students become aware of the similarities their cultures share, the commonality of purpose, the obstacles that ALL immigrants faced and CONTINUE to endure. Regardless of reasons why or when people immigrate, their experiences remain the same. This knowledge helps students grasp the issues, their impacts and implications. America's greatness is due to the immigrant's dream, courage and never-ending belief in the land of freedom, with "liberty and justice for all."

State Framework
Give Me Your Tired, Your Poor supports both the 8th grade Social Studies and Language Arts frameworks by requiring and encouraging students to discover personal family history, understanding the history of immigration and its implications in the past, present and future. The project is "equally accessible" to all students.

Students
Approximately 110 eighth grade students including gifted and talented and resource students have completed this project in 1995 and 1996.

Materials
IMMIGRANT HISTORICAL FICTION—over 40 titles, complete list upon request.
VIDEO—Immigration from the History Channel or Remembering Ellis Island by Panorama International Productions, Out of Ireland from PBS

Outside Resources
Contributions from parents such as personal anecdotes and pictures.
Colonial Pre-American Revolution Simulation

The Idea and Its Value
"Give me liberty or give me death!" Those famous words by Patrick Henry are well understood by 5th grade students who learn what it was like to live as a colonist. They start by reading Early Thunder, by Jean Fritz, in language arts and doing research in their social studies book, America Will Be, about what life in a colonial village was like. Using a "Story Line" format the class is divided into three groups, New England, Middle, and Southern colonies. They create a village and its inhabitants on a bulletin board. Real life situations occur that they must decide how to handle during town meetings: problems such as small pox, "liberty gits," Indian attacks, arrest of British soldiers, Quartering Act, Stamp Tax, Tea Tax, Intolerable Acts, etc. Ultimately the students protest King George's rules and declare their independence. All the colonies meet at the Continental Congress and declare their grievances. Writers are chosen to write out their "Declaration of Independence" and it is signed by all with feather pens.

Once independence has been declared, new money is printed to pay for the war efforts. Students design and print the money and open up real homemade colonial products at a market place. They discover what many economic terms mean such as scarcity, cost analysis, market surveys, advertisements, competition, etc. by conducting their own colonial businesses. This part of the unit is designed after Mini Society, an economic student based unit by Marilyn K. Kowalski. The students earn money through predetermined tasks, rent space in the classroom, buy a business license, pay taxes, and run their own business selling products or services to Colonial Patriots. The businesses run for about twelve days, for one half hour, followed by a town meeting to discuss problems that occur. The students keep track of profits and expenses on a daily basis. They dress in colonial costume and make products that could have been made at that time.

State Framework
This project provides "real life experiences" in a historical setting along with a language arts emphasis using a challenging piece of literature. It also incorporates art and math as integral parts of the unit.

Students
Two 5th grade classes have used this project for the past 7 years. This unit could easily be adapted to 4th or 6th grade classes using their social studies emphasis to set up the simulation and market place.

Facilities/Materials

Outside Resources
Field trips to forest lawn Cemetery and the Gene Autry Museum where they see a video on the American Revolution, a mural depicting historical events and artifacts. Parent volunteers for making quilts and cornhusk dolls are helpful. Videos on the Colonial time period and the American Revolution help students gain information.

Grades 4-6
Social Science, Language Arts, Art, Mathematics

More Information
Teresa McIntyre
University School
2801 Atlas Ave.
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
(805) 492-3567

Everett Eaton, Principal
Conejo Valley Unified School District

Business Partner
Corlind Electronics
The Idea and Its Value

This quarter-long unit looks at the tolerance historically and as it fits into our present-day lives.

At the core of the unit is The Diary of a Young Girl, by Anne Frank. Students study intolerance and persecution of the Jewish population in Europe, other sectors of life that were sent to concentration camps, the rise of Hitler and the Nazi party, the political climate in the United States from World War I until the end of World War II, Japanese internment camps, the Civil Rights movement, and prejudice in our time, all culminating with a visit to the Simon Wiesenthal Center Museum of Tolerance. The purpose of the unit is for students to feel empathy with victims of intolerance, and for them to make a lifelong commitment to promote tolerance of all people.

Higher-level thinking skills are promoted throughout this unit. One activity that all students participate in is choosing a profile of an actual child who lived in Hitler’s Europe, reading about what eventually happened to this child, and creating journal entries that this child might have made based on life experiences similar to those of Anne Frank. Writing journal entries played a tremendous role in helping students empathize with the plight of the Jews in 1930’s and 1940’s Europe.

Students are asked to create their own story, made into a small book, that would teach younger children about how to be tolerant, then to take a walking field trip to an elementary school in our district to share these books with the younger students. Many students who are reluctant to share with their peers truly enjoyed creating books for younger students, and felt confident in their roles as teachers, sharing their knowledge.

The impetus for this unit first came from the observation that middle school students often show intolerance for their peers through words and actions. Central to the development of this unit was the need for all students to learn and retain information which would be valuable to their lives, and for the subject matter taught to be of a cross-curricular nature. Anne Frank seemed an excellent medium for teaching tolerance because she was just the age of our students when she wrote her famous diary. World War II was relatively recent, and the theme of tolerance is timeless and universal.

The unit on tolerance is designed to be taught for one quarter (9 to 10 weeks) and is best taught during quarter two of a four-quarter year. The second quarter ends in January and, since the unit involves a study of the Civil Rights movement, the United States, it flows naturally into the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Black History Month. It is also a time to incorporate any discussion of Chanukah with the Jewish theme of the Holocaust.

Success is best measured by student interest, enthusiasm, and retention of the materials present in a unit. Tests and quizzes, both objective and subjective, were used to measure student understanding and retention. Students were assigned to write journal entries, letters to individuals involved in some aspect of World War II, poetry, and newspapers, and were asked to read novels and short stories related to the unit. All students were involved in research projects. The final project for the quarter was a group-generated newspaper with a specific publication date and city that allowed students to use there varied talents while showing their knowledge of a specific time during the Holocaust.

State Framework

All levels of students to explore the subject in a vertical, rather than a horizontal, manner. The unit incorporates two subject areas, language arts and history, following cross-curricular guidelines as stated by the California State Frameworks.

Students

About 200 students studied this unit during the past year, including ISP, GATE and second language students. The unit is designed in a criterion-referenced format so that all students are challenged to reach their maximum potential.

Materials/Resources

Resources included other teachers, the Simon Wiesenthal Center and its publications, the Internet, books, videos, audio footage of stories and music, art from the Holocaust, and newspaper accounts.
The Magic School Bus Visits Ancient Egypt

The Idea and Its Value
The Magic School Bus Visits Ancient Egypt is a sixth grade interdisciplinary unit that is a creative, hands-on unit study of Ancient Egypt that allows students to discover the scientific process of mummification while incorporating social studies, mathematics, and language arts through the study of history, building of pyramids, and making a class book.

Science - Students learn about hypothesis as they predict which form of mummification would work better, dry salt or brine solution. Students then research the process of mummification and the historical significance of the Egyptian myths. Students adopt the ancient methods by making canopic jars and mummifying their own chicken piece, in addition to assisting a class-wide mummification of a whole chicken. Students apply their knowledge as they learn about hypothesis, procedure, result and conclusion as they work through the scientific process. Students then evaluate which process of mummification is most effective and why.

Language Arts - Students create a large class book based on the Magic School Bus shows as they synthesize the information gathered. They create an adventure of traveling back in time, touring a pyramid, and finding a mummy. They incorporate the facts from their research in addition to the stories and characters from Egyptian mythology. Many art opportunities are also available. A sarcophagus can be made for the mummy, canopic jars designed from plaster of Paris and painted, the class book illustrated with art from Egypt, pyramids built to demonstrate the different sections of the funerary temple, or mobiles made demonstrating the symbol and significance of Egyptian gods and goddesses.

Mathematics - In addition, students apply their mathematical knowledge of area, perimeter, volume, and measurement, as they design scaled drawings of a pyramid and build using such materials of sugar cubes, wood, or cardboard. Students are asked to find the area and perimeter of each step of the pyramid and the total area. Students submit drawings, pyramids, and mathematical computations.

Social Science - The history of this country is incorporated through as students research and apply information they have learned. Students also learn about ancient agriculture as they study the effect of the Nile River upon the daily lives of the ancient Egyptians.

Our students were very diligent in preparing their mummies, researching the process, and preparing the final write-ups. Our class mummy was buried for two years and then dug up when the students were in eighth grade. Our students returned for a demonstration by a local doctor who came to the classroom and used a cast saw to cut through the casing. Students were enthusiastic about what they discovered and had retained much of the information they had learned in sixth grade. We feel that this hands-on adaptation of learning, in combination with the different academic areas, provided great success among all students who participated. Students enjoyed the work and research because there was a visual outcome that represented what they had learned.

State Framework
This month-long unit provides students creative ways to learn about Ancient Egypt which is part of the sixth grade State Social Science Framework. In addition, this project supports the other frameworks as it incorporates interdisciplinary learning, higher order thinking skills and is mathematically rich.

Students
In our two classes consisting of 50 sixth graders in a four period, two teacher block for the four core subjects, all were successful. Students found that each had different strengths and were able to incorporate them for a successful project. When complete, it went as a class/team project to our district science fair and won top honors for both the scientific process and creativity. Our students were able to articulate what they had done and what they had learned.

Materials
The Magic School Bus books as a model, test board and art material, for hook, whole chicken as sold in grocery store, individual pieces for students, salt, gauze, herbs and olive oil.

Staff
Lisa Darling and Cheryl Phillips have been team teaching together for four years at Isbell Middle School in Santa Paula. They try to incorporate most of their teaching of math, language arts, science and social studies into the ancient civilization curriculum.
“Dear Picasso—Querido Picasso”

Grades 9-12

Language Arts, Spanish, Art, History

More Information

Aline Yee Grossman
Ventura High School
2155 E. Main St.
Ventura, CA 93001
(805) 641-5116

Hank Robertson,
Principal
Ventura Unified School District

Business Partner
Toyota of Ventura

The Idea and Its Value
Dear Picasso—Querido Picasso is a unit designed to motivate students in Spanish studies through integrating art, writing, and studying Picasso’s life. In addition to teaching Spanish skills, I also feel that the inherent culture is of great importance. The Latino culture is so diverse and rich in language, art and tradition. Selecting Picasso to develop a unit was a relevant idea because his influences are well-known today.

The unit took a month to complete and called for a variety of activities to accommodate all types of learners: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. Students traveled through, and beyond, the unit applying all of Bloom’s taxonomy from comprehension to application and analysis.

We started with vocabulary and geography, then viewed a video that encompassed all the stages of Picasso’s life. Students learned that this great genius had a very complex life and addressed his pressures and fears through his artwork. For many students, the styles of cubism and distorted imagery were new and opened up personal awareness of modern art. Students learned that he was greatly influenced by bull-fighting, his friends, and even ballet. His travels took him to Rome, France and New York. They learned about his famous “colored” periods.

My students then did artwork exploring Picasso’s various art styles and we created our own art gallery in class. Although our only medium was crayon and paper, they did see that art is created on life’s fabric, not just canvas. Before they drew, I had them come up with a theme for their artwork. Examples included such perceptive ideas as “Me, Inside-out,” “Distorted Views” and “Confused Love.”

Culminating the unit was a letter that all students wrote to Picasso in Spanish. They expressed opinions, asked questions, and talked to him like an old friend. I saw that students understood that Picasso was not only a genius, but a sum total of various human experiences both tragic and uplifting.

Students

This unit offered such a rich opportunity for writing, artwork, and self-discovery. The artwork provided a time for introspection and creation. Comments in their letters told me that they had learned about life. One wrote, “Cuando tengo diez y ocho anos, quiero ir a España a ver tus pinturas.” When I’m 18, I want to go to Spain to see your paintings.” Students enjoyed a valuable learning experience and felt empathy for his confusion, fear of loss, and need to create. I saw how in their free time, students would draw or write letters to friends. This unit gave them the opportunity to do this in a way that helped them grow as thinking individuals.

State Framework

This unit supports the Language Arts Framework in providing meaningful and relevant activities. Integration of reading, writing, and art was a natural process of learning. As Lucy McCormick Collins writes in The Art of Teaching Writing, “If our teaching is to be an art, we must draw from all we know, feel, and believe in order to create something beautiful.”

Facilities/Resources

I believe that materials can be simple if used well: a video on Picasso, books on his biography, and crayons and paper. Our art gallery was our wall in class, and I used construction paper to frame students’ artwork.

Outside Resources

Ideally these would include a field trip to an art museum to reinforce studies, or a speaker with a slide show. The art teacher on any campus would also be a great resource.

Staff

Aline Grossman has taught in Ventura for seven years, four years in a bilingual 5th grade classroom and currently as a high school Spanish teacher. In 1994, she was selected Ventura Unified and Ventura County Teacher of the Year. She went on to become one of the five State Teachers of the Year.
Soil Isn’t Just Dirt!

The Idea and Its Value
With the diminishing farmland in our county, children need to be exposed to the different types of soil and understand its importance in food production. This unit is designed for grades K-3 but could be adapted for upper grades as well. The goals of this unit include:

1) To teach children that plants can grow only in certain types of soil.
2) To lead children to the conclusion that farmers can only grow crops in certain types of soil.
3) Farmland is a finite resource that needs to be protected similar to an endangered species.
4) Many farms are threatened today because people are building houses and stores on our fertile soil.
5) We need to protect our soil since it gives us food!

When my great grandfather arrived to this county in the 1850’s, it was the plentiful fields of wild mustard that caught his eye. He figured the soil had to be fertile to produce so much of the bright yellow flower and so he began a farming legacy that continues to this day. The Oxnard Plain is one of the most fertile farming regions in the world due to its soil. Children will gain a deeper understanding of this natural resource.

This unit usually begins in May when we purchase planter mix for our school garden and lasts until May. By logging the growth of our seedlings with photographs and charting their growth, children are made aware of the differences of good and bad soil. When the soil is still moist from the winter rain, we begin by collecting many samples of soil from our playground and then venture further to our own backyards. With hand lenses we poke and probe using toothpicks, cotton swabs, and tweezers. We use all of our senses except taste. The purpose of this experiment is to challenge students to use their observation, communication and problem solving skills to explore a living resource and understand its place in the ecosystem.

Next, we continue by adding water and explore the mud that we created. Using the activity, Soil Sort, from Grow-Lab, Activities for Growing Minds, children search for items found in dirt and write on a chart “What is soil made of?” Mud snakes are then made to see how well different soils can drain. Children then predict which soil will be able to allow seeds to sprout the quickest. Using dry beans, children plant individual seeds in clear plastic cups with various types of soil. As each day passes, children watch which cup of soil allows for the seed to sprout. Equal amounts of water are used for all types of soil including humus, clay, silt, sand and gravel.

We end this unit with a visit to my family’s farm in Camarillo where we experience a commercial farm. My students are allowed to harvest vegetables and we take back to school a bucket of the rich, fertile soil for observation. I also point out the nearby de-

Development and remind them that building on the soil is a serious issue. Children are asked to draw pictures and write about their farm experiences.

After drawing our pictures of the farm, we discuss ways we think the soil can be saved from future development. Next, in small groups they draw an area map depicting where they think houses and stores should be built and where the farms should be. It’s a great way to have them visualize their community.

State Framework
State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Delaine Eastin, has emphasized that school gardens are necessary if children are to realize where their food supply originates. This unit teaches children the value of our fertile soil and how it relates to our food supply.

Resources
The Amazing Dirt Book, Paulette Bourgeois, Addison/ Wesley, 1990
Adventures with a Hand Lens, Richard Headstrom, Dover Books, 1976
Green Thumb, Lauren Child, Chicago Review Press, 1995
Hug the Earth, Songs of farm wilderness and love The Banana Slug Band

Outside Resources
Local farms to visit by arrangement with farm owners:
- McGrath Family Farms, Camarillo - mixed vegetables, pumpkins
- Faulkner Farms, Santa Paula - pumpkins, Christmas trees
- Underwood Ranches, Somis - mixed vegetables
- Tierra Rejada Ranch, Thousand Oaks - mixed vegetables, pumpkins

Staff
Roz McGrath has taught 1st grade and kindergarten for over 10 years with a Master’s in Early Childhood Education. She is co-owner of a family farm in Camarillo and has given field trips to hundreds of Ventura County children.
CNN: "Start a Party" - Making History Come Alive

Grades 6-8
Social Science, English, Language Arts, Technology

More Information
Jeanne Davis
Dennis Hattland
Vista Fundamental School
2175 Wisteria St.
Simi Valley, CA 93065
(805) 520-6750

Barbara Marino, Principal
Simi Valley Unified

Business Partner
Simi Valley Chamber of Commerce

The Idea and Its Value
My sixth grade students entered a contest offered by CNN News wherein they started a political party, developed a party platform and acquired all of the technical skills required to create a professional level presidential campaign video. This project took five weeks to complete. Students learned about the campaign process during the 1996 political year and created the following: a candidate slogan, a party symbol, a button, a bumper sticker, a party platform and the production of a 60 second campaign video.

One of the parents of a student in my class is a professional videographer and video production planner. With the assistance of this parent, myself and another teacher, the students received instruction in all technical aspects of campaign video development. Each student was given responsibilities equal to those required for production of a real commercial. They were given hands on access to a professional video camera, a dual system sound recorder, basic lighting equipment and technical record books. The students produced the video on the school campus and at three off-site locations including the Ronald Reagan Library.

Students were instructed in political party formation, development of slogans, party platforms and assisted in development of the video script. After several hours of instruction, the class chose a cast of actors to represent their party. The remainder of the class was divided among the various technical crews. This project encouraged students of all ability levels to participate and become involved.

The project generated multiple outcomes: (1) students learned about the issues facing our country; (2) how to cooperatively and technically produce a professional level campaign video; (3) the importance of timing, diligence and responsibility; and (4) experience the feeling of accomplishment for a job well done.

Students
Teachers of sixth through eighth can successfully adapt this unit for their history, civics or political science class. The projects and instruction in this unit provides equal access for all students. A variety of learning styles are incorporated into the lessons. Students work individually, within cooperative groups and in heterogeneous groups. Individual accountability, as well as cooperative interdependency, is incorporated into a variety of projects and assignment.

Students experience a feeling of accomplishment, involvement and positive self-esteem.

State Framework
CNN: Start A Party is an integrated unit which incorporates History/Social Studies Framework with technology and the writing process. This unit brought relevancy and participation in elections at the national, state and local levels for students. Students were involved in creating their own party platform and worked to promote their candidate and her views on social and economic issues. This encouraged the development of civic and democratic values which is a major part of citizenship.

This unit also supported the State Technology Task Force Report, Connect, Compute and Compete whereby students used video to organize and prioritize problem solving tasks and used the Internet and E-mail to access and gather information.

Facilities/Materials
Some of the materials for this unit came from CNN. Equipment need to complete this project included a video camera, VCR playback, additional materials: computer workstations with Internet access. Copies of all materials and student video are available upon request.

Outside Resources
Parents were an integral part of this project. Parents drove, joined in video crew participation, contributed props, painted backgrounds and made signs.

Staff
Jeanne Davis has taught Deaf and Hearing and regular education classes for 30 years in the SVUSD.
Dennis Hattland is a county Telementor and mentor teacher for SVUSD.
We All Smile in the Same Language

The Idea and Its Value
We All SMILE in the Same Language engages all of our students on a common level to discuss, explore, and share how tolerance and intolerance affect a person's life. Students learn that we can all be tolerant in our differences by this thematic unit taught by the teachers in all areas of curriculum.

Creative thinking skills are evolved in a variety of ways. In Language Arts students will construct a Holocaust biographical quilt, a scrapbook of student-generated letters on the topic of tolerance, write poetry and journal entries of reflection. In Social Studies students write Codes of Laws to insure tolerance and equality, have debates, draw time lines and maps showing detention camps, flags, and countries involved in the Holocaust. In Physical Education, the students create cooperative and competitive games writing out codes of sportsmanship that guarantee everyone's right to participate without criticism, teasing or ridicule. They create a list of killer statements, i.e. "That's a stupid idea." While studying the science of human growth and development, diseases, and germs, the students creatively debate and discuss the impact of the scientific development of an artificial gene that makes the recipient free of hate, prejudice, and violence. Other controversial scientific issues like vaccines, transplants, genetic engineering, legalization of marijuana for medication will be addressed. In the survey classes students draw or write symbols and slogans for teenagers to promote peace. Students explore persecution of artists, and censorship of art forms. Using paint, stitchery, ceramics, and graphic illustrations, students produce a variety applications of tolerance. Likewise, tolerance is taught in math. Drawing graphs and using statistic students research topics of genocide, casualties of war, census, foreign currencies and exchange. They calculate the cost of tagging in Oxnard or other cities and propose a budget of how the money could be used to help young people. They create recipes for teenagers to follow about ortho, racism, stereotypes, or prejudices.

This thematic interdisciplinary unit is taught for the full two month period. During the last two months of the year all teachers submit their finest products to be combined in a seventy-five-page student-generated and produced book on tolerance. The last month of school the students and teachers will have a personal copy of this book for additional instruction, discussion and application. The goal of this unit is to help all students define, understand and transfer their knowledge of tolerance into their personal lives.

State Framework
This unit supports many elements of the Framework of high level thinking skills, hands on activities, group, and meaningful child-centered work. Students develop their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills as they study cultural differences and similarities in practical, personal ways. Historical empathy is encouraged while students relate the past to the present. The integrated approach of tolerance in all curriculum allows for creativity while meeting the standards of the state.

Students
Students from all academic levels can participate. By pairing more limited students with strong students, all are able to have some success. This unit allows for so much creativity by both teacher and students that mainstreamed resource student to CATE finds success. The assessment of the project is to publish a student book of original work to demonstrate authentic, real-world applications in personal meaningful ways. The desired outcomes are that students will become tolerant to people, ideas, or circumstances that are diverse to theirs, likewise to become intolerant to the many areas or aspects that are harmful or counter-productive to their lives.

Facilities/Material
Teachers are supplied with a district-compiled binder of curriculum and instruction on the topic of tolerance. Each discipline of study is given many teaching suggestions allowing creativity. Materials include a variety of books, use of the Internet, videos, music, art posters and craft supplies, as well as written biographies. Posters were displayed in each room with guiding questions to give the unit a focus.

Outside Resources
A field trip to the Museum of Tolerance enriched the students' learning. Other resources available to teachers include guest speakers or visits to the local libraries.

Staff
Implementation of the unit includes all Track A teachers at Frank Intermediate School.

Grades 7-8

More Information
Jan Pine
LeeAnne Adams
Robert Egbert
Janie French
Natalie McCallick
Grace Soliz
Sonitra White
Frank Intermediate School
701 N. Juanita Ave.
Oxnard, CA 93030
(805) 981-1733

Peter W. Nichols,
Principal
Oxnard Elementary

Business Partner
American Commercial Bank
"We're More Alike Than You May Think"
A Disabilities Awareness Unit

Grades K-12

Social Studies, Language Arts, Health, Science, and P.E.

More Information

Kathy Elliott
San Cayetano School
514 Mountain View St.
Fillmore, CA 93015
(805)524-6040

Stephen Colvard,
Principal
Fillmore Unified School District

Business Partner
Procter & Gamble

The Idea and Its Value
Through various activities and interaction, students will learn to develop an awareness and understanding of people with disabilities and will learn to appreciate their capabilities and similarities.

I believe that the primary purpose and value of this unit is to help our students learn to be more understanding and tolerant of those with special needs and to help them realize that we all have talents and share many things in common.

I measure my students' outcomes and the success of this program generally through teacher observation of students engaged in the various activities: how willing and open they are to participate, their attitude towards things we discuss, through responses in their journals, and through a pre- and post-attitude survey I give all the students.

I divide the unit into 3 basic/general areas: Hearing impaired, Visually impaired, and those with Physical Disabilities. When I introduce each topic, we generally study it for about one week, tying in various activities to make it more meaningful. I begin by reading one or two stories that deal with that particular disability. Then I share information about it, i.e.: possible causes, what parts of the body are affected by this disability, and students write these facts down in a book with illustrations to go with it. At the end of this unit all students receive their own personal Disabilities Awareness Book complete with their worksheets and illustrations, their own Braille card, sign language chart, and a certificate of program completion. As each disability is taught, students also are engaged physically by learning certain skills. For example, they are taught to finger spell phrases and to learn the alphabet in sign language. I incorporated this daily into simple signs to have students line up or sit down. We also sign the Pledge of Allegiance in the morning and sign Happy Birthday. Students are also taught the Braille alphabet and they use real Braille alphabet cards that they "feel" and then they try to "read" them. Students also go on a blind trust walk with a partner. My culminating week I set up a Disabilities Obstacle Course using wheelchairs, walkers, forearm & regular crutches, scooterboard, and canes.

Facilities/Materials
I have a list of appropriate literature books that I have in my classroom that deal with various disabilities, and a list of some videos that can be ordered through Ventura County Audio-Visual. I have a prosthesis of a leg that can be displayed, books in Braille, a miniature wheelchair that a doll sits in, and a small stuffed guide dog with harness and white cane for a doll.

Students
There are many ways to make this a very natural and acceptable part of the daily curriculum and activities for all students. I specifically set aside a 4-5 week period to focus on this. This unit is basically taught in a regular classroom setting. Each year approximately 30 second grade English only and TEP students of all levels participate in this program.

Outside Resources
Over the years I have had various guest speakers with disabilities come talk to my class. I have also had trainers from Guide Dogs of America come talk to the students.

Staff
Ms. Elliott has taught 3rd grade at San Cayetano School for 12 years, a bilingual self-contained 2nd grade class, team-taught in a bilingual class, and taught a 2-3 combination class.
School Gardens on the Internet

The Idea and Its Value
In this unit students learned to use on-line computer telecommunication to exchange information about school gardening with other schools all over the country and the world, and to compile and organize the information for comparative analysis.

Last year, 30 of our students in grades 4 through 6 participated in an Internet unit developed by National Geographic involving water. Groups of 3 or 4 students connected with "net pal" groups from other schools country and worldwide, to exchange statistical information concerning watersheds, water sources, agricultural and domestic use of water, and population demographics. The students also exchanged water testing results with other schools and correlated those results with the other information gathered in their surveys. Our gardening unit similarly utilizes the National Gardening Association's on-line network to exchange information with other schools regarding latitude, elevation, daily temperature and weather conditions, average rainfall, soil types, types of crops being grown in each garden, crop yields, insects common to the region, and methods of controlling pest damage. Students might also exchange information regarding population, rural versus urban location, and the economic base of their communities.

This information was compiled by each group of students utilizing comparative graphs. The students analyzed their findings, relating geographical and climatic factors to crop types, yields, and pest controls. This unit not only develops skills in data gathering and analysis, but also provides a means for children to reach across geographical barriers to communicate with other children and to exchange information about a subject of mutual interest. For those students and teachers with little or no experience in computer telecommunication, this unit provides the opportunity to develop comfort and skill in using this research and communication tool. The unit also encourages students and teachers to share ideas and collaboration on projects, experiments, and investigations.

Last year's telecommunication unit was taught over a period of two months. The garden unit consumed a longer time period in order to encompass the entire growing season during the majority of the school year. Of course, growing seasons will vary greatly between Southern California and states such as Minnesota and Maine, and these differences were a chief component of our study.

State Framework
The unit emphasizes the valuable processes of observation, communication, comparative analysis, ordering, and categorization. These processes are interwoven into the unit along with recommended strands of science themes on energy, patterns of change, scale and structure, stability, and system's interaction.

Students
This year our unit was taught to two classrooms, or 60 students in grades 5 and 6. Data was gathered from our own garden in a "hands-on" manner. This enables students with widely differing skill levels, as well as those with special needs and learning disabilities to participate in the project. Information obtained from participants at other school sites is read orally to the entire class, thus including all the students, regardless of learning skills, in the process of information sharing.

Facilities/Materials
This unit is designed for the telecommunication exchange of educational garden information thus requiring a school garden, a computer with a modem, and Internet provider service. Other supporting materials include rain gauges, outdoor thermometers, geological survey maps, view boxes, outdoor microscopes, soil testing kits, Internet guides, and gardening handbooks and journals. The unit generated a final report of our research as well as a list of outside resources and schools involved in this project, for dissemination to any interested schools.

Outside Resources
We utilized the National Gardening Association's on-line network site to access other schools involved in this project. We also made field trips to gardens at nearby schools participating in the project, to botanical gardens, and to local farms.
If It Can’t Be Grown, It Has to Be Mined

Grades 4-12

Science, Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, Physical Ed, Art

More Information:

Bonnie Wascher
Mesa School
3901 Mesa School Rd.
Somis, CA 93066
(805) 485-1411

Aldo Calcagno, Principal
Mesa Union School Dist.

Business Partner

American Petroleum Institute

The Idea and Its Value

If It Can’t be Grown, It Has To Be Mined, is an indepth study of rocks and minerals reaching all areas of the curriculum through group exploration, concept development and application.

Central to most textbooks is the old familiar table of mineral characteristics. Students fill in a matrix of an arbitrary list of mineral names and formulas they’ve never heard of. No wonder kids “turn-off” to science! By moving the discussion of mineral use to the center of these lessons we can address the question of relevance important to any science curriculum. Sufficient time is given to exploration and discovery giving students control over their learning experience. Students pay particular attention to the properties of specific minerals that have meaning and relevance to them. For instance the hardness and streak color of graphite make it ideal for use in pencils. Graphite’s well-known reaction in acid is the reason it’s the main ingredient in some antacid tablets. The luster of mica and the glitter in frosted eye shadows and the sparkle in kids toothpaste. Classroom activities include examining household items from the computer to kitty litter. Students research manufacturing processes and investigate sources for building stone used for concrete. And, through the use of research skills and experience in math investigations, they also learn about economics and politics in their science class.

This unit is planned for a six week time period. The lessons encompass math, physical education, and science periods daily while spelling, vocabulary, reading and writing skills have been easily integrated into the Language Arts curriculum.

Math investigations are done by student groups in the area of percentage, multiplication, division, sorting and graphing, estimation, fractions, geometry, and probability. These lessons such as cookie mining (where student groups attempt to make a profit) are all based on the rock and mineral theme. So, too, are the physical education games and activities. Students will participate in such games as mining lingo, mining concentration, and definition hockey as students run races, dribble or kick balls, and/or shoot baskets. Art lessons are incorporated such as mineral mosaics, pet rocks, and jewelry.

Science lessons daily include group investigations and group sharing, a teacher directed activity, hands-on science experiments, computer internet lessons, field trips, and visiting speakers.

Students will divide into six groups: Electrical Appliances and the Computer, Around the House, Aluminum and Steel, Gemstones, Cosmetics and Drugs, and Roads and Building Stones. Students will research items in their group and record their findings in the form of a poster or posters. They must choose five common minerals in their research and explore the properties of each before using test kits. From student discovered properties we consciously group them in one of seven properties used to identify minerals. Students then conduct the following four tests: streak test, luster test, hardness test, and the acid test while observing color and cleavage. They must spend a few minutes each day sharing what they have discovered.

The teacher is responsible for a short teacher-directed lesson daily. These lessons will include the teaching of the rock cycle and the three main classifications of rocks with the aid of the laser disc science program, Windows on Science. Also lessons will include earthquakes, volcanoes, geysers, caves, glaciers, mining careers and the mining process. A large collection of books and videos such as Gemstones of America, and Common Ground will be used for these lessons from which spelling, vocabulary, reading and writing lessons are generated.

Hands-on science experiments will be incorporated into the unit 2-3 times a week. Twenty sets of rocks and minerals are available for group testing and students will be doing various experiments such as Class in a Hash, Rock in a Cap, Rocky Road, Simply Salt, Growing Crystal Gardens, Mine To My Home, There It Goes, Building a Volcano, Folding, Faulting and Mountain Building, and Mine and Reclamation Plan.

Students will have two hours each week to search the Internet in our computer lab. Each student has chosen a state for a year-long study in social studies and can now investigate that state’s rock and mineral resources. They will draw a map of their state showing mineral deposits they have discovered. They will establish dialogue with another adult or student from a mining location in their state and get answers to
questions such as, "What is the history of the mine?" or, "What are the changes to the environment your town because of the mine?" or, "Does your mine have a reclamation plan?" Students publish internet findings on the school’s home page.

Various speakers will visit the classroom throughout the unit. These will include a representative from Southern Pacific Milling Co., a jeweler, a rock and mineral collector, a geologist, and a miner. A field trip to the Ventura Gem and Mineral Society proves most exciting! Here members share their enthusiasm for rock and fossil collecting as they show the most fascinating "finds" with students. Our students bring their specimens of unidentified rock, and members attempt to help students discover properties for identification. There is a beautiful display of rocks and minerals from every state. Students also attend a rock hounding expedition with members and take home a "find" for their own collection.

The sixth or final week is devoted to planning and presenting our Rocks and Minerals information to others in our school. Each group will write a short five minute play telling their story of how their lives are changed by the rocks and minerals of their study group.

At the conclusion of the unit, students are able to identify several minerals and can appreciate the necessity and the problems of operating a mine. They have an idea of our nation's rock and minerals deposits and realize the importance of rocks and minerals in their daily life. As they look to their future needs they will realize, if it Can't Be Grown, It Has To Be Mined!

Students
Students from all academic levels can participate. By pairing more limited students with strong students, all were able to be successful. This is truly a cooperative learning project.

State Framework
This unit supports all areas of the State Framework and engages student activity in the learning process.

Facilities/materials
An extensive bibliography has been developed. Numerous rock and mineral specimens are necessary as well as rock and mineral kits for each group of four. The Ventura Gem and Mineral Society has many display cases for lending. You will find that the students themselves will bring in lovely specimens. Many supplies for activities and experiments need to be provided, although none are costly. The two mentioned videos are especially valuable.

Outside Resources
Attendance at the '95 Rocks and Minerals Education Conference in Sacramento was helpful in developing activities and philosophy.

1997 Ed Lyon Excellence in Education Award Winner
The Idea and Its Value

Toys of all kinds magically come to life, generated from the imaginations of our first-grade students and onto the walls of our classrooms with the creation of a toy store. Utilizing the Storyline method approach to learning, children participate in an innovative cross-curricular method of topical study. Using the concept of toys, the children tap into their prior knowledge and explore a specific time, setting, characters and series of events in real-world situations and circumstances.

Combined, our two classes comprise a wide diversity of primary languages, prior experiences and ability levels. Using the strengths of all children we transform our classroom into an authentic toy store. The teacher acts as a guide for the learning process, allowing the children to create a frenzy in their classroom that represents a toy store in which to sell their three-dimensional toys. After the store is created, the students collaborate to create life-sized store employees and customers, as well as uniforms, store catalog and coupons, store logo, advertisements and biographies of key personnel. Specific situations or ‘incidents,’ such as a fire in the store or the departure of an employee, occur throughout the Storyline so as to elicit critical thinking and problem solving from the classes.

The key motivation is to enable the children to actively participate in their learning, allowing for their experience to be meaningful, based upon prior knowledge and appropriate for their age and interests. The children receive pride and satisfaction in their work and demonstrate a strong ownership of their toys, the store, its employees, customers and all of the activities in which they participate because of one thing — the process begins with their ideas and the work is a result of their own efforts.

State Framework

The Toy Store is a multi-modal process which fits into all aspects of the first-grade curriculum. All levels of abilities and language acquisitions are successful because the program allows the child to learn via modeling from other children as well as the teacher.

Evaluation and Extension: Success is measured by the result of the classroom toys and frenzy of the store. The depth of student understanding, ownership and ability differentiation is assessed by viewing work such as the children’s biographies and store commercial and catalog. The success of the program is measured by the depth of ownership and pride registered on the faces of the students when they talk about their stores; how they respond when another phase of the unit unfolds, how they reflect upon its success once the store comes down from the wall. In the end, all learners work on the project to the best of their ability and respond positively to the creation of the store. Various stories can be read relating to toys, research that can be done into the history of toys, like teddy bears, guest speakers to talk about antique toys, poetry that can be extended relating to the toy store. We incorporate the exploration of money, using prices of toys, catalog writing and making coupons, as well as writing plays about what happens when toys come to life in class. Using the toy store, teachers can integrate the curriculum and create a successful learning experience for all children.

Students

Last year 60 first grade students participated. Since our Storyline training, our experience implementing this three-month unit provides us with more extension ideas and integration possibilities for the students. Key questioning is directed in the child’s primary language. They work with many different groups of children throughout the exploration, allowing for many varied dynamics to form and opportunities for success are built into the activities. Students are able to share ideas with their cooperative groups, as well as with other members of their classroom. Additionally, the two classrooms integrate in order to provide both English-speaking and Limited English Proficient learners a chance to share, comment and provide feedback on the various stages of their toy store. Once such example is the “walk about” or tour each class takes of the other in order to view their progress on the store and its toys. The child with special needs is able to receive new ideas in realistic concepts, the high-achieving learner is able to refine logical thinking.
Building a Business Bridge into the Next Millennium

The Idea and Its Value

The business bridge to the future is built by a yearlong economic unit in which students ultimately run their own businesses. Students encounter real business problems that will prepare them for economic problems they will face in their future. This unit incorporates a system of classroom management while enriching the existing curriculum by integrating the economic unit into math and social science. The two main components of our unit include 1) students as classroom officers and 2) students running their own businesses.

During the first month of school students earn "Wildwood Bucks" (class currency), discuss potential businesses, do a market survey, and discuss advertisement strategies. The students receive a monthly salary of $50 in "Wildwood Bucks". Students also receive currency for signed forms or letters, holding class offices, specific homework, and good behavior. Students can also acquire income by opening their own businesses, with or without a partner, and operating it on the two business days that we hold each month. Businesses can provide services or entertainment, and sell homemade crafts or food items. Students can be employed by fellow students’ businesses.

Students can purchase goods and services during business days or by using their income at an auction, and must pay for certain goods and services within the classroom (i.e. purchasing special paper or pencils, or using the bathroom during class time). Students may be fined for late work, excessive talking, tardiness, or dishonesty or disrespectfulness. All students keep an accounting record of their income, expenses, and the balance.

At "Back To School Night" the teachers meet with parents to discuss the educational plan to help their children build a business bridge to the future. We also discuss the parents’ role in their student’s business days. To open a business, students must purchase a business license and display it during business hours. Students discuss business problems that are then resolved in a democratic manner.

Students are directly involved in the management of the economic unit through elected officers.

We have found over the last 5 years of using this program that this economic unit bridges the needs of students of all levels. It gives students the opportunity to show their abilities without being hindered by language limitations or learning difficulties. All have the opportunity to develop and use their own personal strengths which will launch them into the business world of the twenty-first century.

Students are assessed on their participation in operating or assisting a business and on their contributions to problem solving during debriefing. Throughout the year we also assess their ability to keep a “balanced” account record of their “Wildwood Bucks” in their “City Bank” account.

State Framework

Math: Hands-on, real world approach to problem solving and number concepts
Social Science: Economics and understanding the democratic process
School Environment: classroom management using positive reinforcement

Students

Our classes have included: ESL, learning disabled, regular education, and GATE students. In the 1995-96 school year, 70 fourth graders participated in this unit. The class included 3 RSP students, 4 GATE students, 6 ADD students, and 11 low performing students. This unit has also been used at third and fifth grades successfully during past years.

Facilities/Materials

for those who are interested, we will supply a copy of: the bank record sheet, the money, the morning meeting script, the secretary’s note taking form and a sample parent letter.

Staff

Kathleen has taught grades 3-8 in four states during the past 10 years.

Karen has taught grades 1-5 for the past 10 years.

Grades 3-6

Math, Social Studies, Environment

More Information

Kathleen Turner
Wildwood Elementary
620 W. Velarde
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
(805) 493-1975

Linda Spellman
Principal,
Conejo Valley Unified
School District

Business Partners

Boething Treeland Farms
Grether Farming
CAD/CAM Consulting Services
Grades K-1

Science, Health, Cooking, Language Arts/Literature, Social Science, Music, Math, Art

More information:

Sharon Hatada
Jean Stahl
Terra Linda Elementary School
1201 Woodcreek Rd, Camarillo, CA. 93010
(805) 445-8800

Dianne Quinby-Anders, Principal
Pleasant Valley School District

Business Partner:

VCEDA
Camarillo Community Bank

The Idea and Its Value

After attending the Agriculture In the Classroom (AITC) Conference in Sacramento, we were enthused to use the knowledge we received in workshop sessions to create a month-long Food Pyramidtheme that would integrate into our existing curriculum. Our Social Science Science: Food Pyramid unit became the "into" for our Food Pyramid stand. In the book, the community's cooperative effort resulted in a balanced meal reflecting the six food groups. This led our students to begin to analyze their food consumption and its relationship to their daily nutritional needs. After reading The Edible Pyramid, the children created their own Food Pyramid on the wall using pictures brought from home.

Our local Vons welcomed six kindergarten classes at various times to a "behind-the-scenes" tour of the bakery, deli, produce, meat and dairy sections, loading docks and trucks and walk-in freezers.

Students accompanied their parents to the local market where they searched for examples of tops, bottoms and middle of the produce section. They recorded their findings with pictures/words in a developmentally appropriate way. Parents assisted children in preparing and planting Life Lab Science Boxes.

As a math activity, the children sorted large plastic fruits and vegetables within hula hoops, devising numerous categories such as, color, size, shapes, and even whether they liked to eat them or not. Picture food cards were also sorted and categorized. Fruits and vegetables were weighed, compared and contrasted using balance scales. A variety of cooking activities included making pumpkin pudding, pumpkin pancakes and fruit juice leathers. Students blockprinted patterns using fruits and vegetables integrating math and art. They painted their own alphabet book which integrated art and phonics. A hands-on science activity included predicting which fruits would sink or float and then recording the results. A parent-made "touchy-feely" box allowed the students to identify a variety of foods using only the sense of touch. Using pictures cut from magazines, students created a balanced meal on a paper plate. A class book was written featuring white paint blots and their own imaginative visions were captured in dictation.

Student donations and harvested vegetables from our Life Lab were made into soup by the children. They ate their creation and shared the extra soup with those less fortunate in our community. Music was incorporated throughout the unit with favorite songs such as, "I Am A Pizza," "On Top of Spaghetti," "Dirt Made My Lunch" and "Apples and Bananas." Real life connections were evident as we observed students bringing a wider variety and healthier foods during recess snack time.

The book, Potluck, introduced a variety of ethnic foods. To reinforce community building, parents were invited to a class potluck and were encouraged to feature their culture.

State Framework

The Health framework is currently being updated in our district and reflects the current Food Pyramid. The abundance of materials and resources we acquired at the AITC Conference inspired us to create this unit. The Language Arts Framework is supported through the opportunities to read, write and sing and the Mathematics Framework through hands-on activities. While respecting the rights of others and taking responsibility for their own actions children learned how to work in a group appropriately, reflecting the philosophy of the Skills for Growing (Culver) program.

Students

Over sixty kindergartners including full inclusion and bilingual, were participants in this developmentally appropriate unit. All learning modalities are incorporated throughout the unit.

Facilities/Materials

Books such as Lois Ehlert's Making Vegetable Soup and Eating the Alphabet, Top and Bottoms by Janet Stevens, Potluck by Anne Shelton, It Looked Like Spilt Milk by Charles Sw transportation and Food Pyramid by Lorene Leedy are some of the many available. We use Banana Slug Band's "Dirt Made My Lunch," Charlotte Diamond's "I Am A Pizza," "On Top of Spaghetti" and Don Gower's "Apples and Bananas." We used Life Lab or a garden area for planting, plastic foods/picture food cards, magazines, catalogs and food contributions from families.

Outside Resources

AITC Conference held in the fall, local food market and farm field trips, American Egg Board and Dairy Council of California.
Multicultural Magic

The Idea and Its Value

Multicultural Magic is designed as a unit to teach students about the cultures of their classmates and other people who came to the United States from other countries. The basic concept is to teach students how to become more tolerant and teach in a way that lets students work together to learn and solve problems.

This multicultural unit was designed for use as a school-wide project. Each teacher chose a country for the class to investigate, study, prepare, and present at a booth during the culmination of the whole student body on a designated Multicultural Day. Each class prepared projects, murals, posters, pictures, a food sample, and a souvenir from the country they studied to share with the student body. In preparation for Multicultural Day, the students prepared themselves as ambassadors of that particular country ready to greet, stamp passports, give food samples, and pass out souvenirs to the tourists who visited their country. Each tourist made a suitcase to carry the collected souvenirs and carried an official passport, especially designed with spaces for the Border Guards to stamp the country seal at the time of arrival. During the closing ceremony, each class presented a quilt square, made by the students to represent the country they studied, and pinned it on a clothes line. After all squares were presented, the whole school joined in singing an American song. Later the squares were sewn together and the quilt was hung in the cafeteria.

This type of multicultural education emphasizes “human relations” in all its forms. It emphasizes pluralism and cultural equality in American society as a whole. This project promotes positive self-esteem and results in positive behavior within our school and community. Cooperative learning approaches and shared decision-making skills prepare students to become effective citizens. Students demonstrate what they know during the presentations at their booth during Multicultural Day.

State Framework

The California English Language Arts Framework supports all efforts to enhance communication for students. One of the goals of the History/Social Science Framework is to develop a multicultural perspective that respects the dignity and worth of all people.

Facilities/Materials

The students investigated their countries through books from the school library and the public library. Several field trips were taken to local restaurants to find out about the foods from particular countries. Assorted brochures were donated by local travel agencies. Supplies from the warehouse, music tapes, camcorder and blank VCR tapes were used to record the experiences of the unit.

Outside Resources

Local businesses, parents, and staff provided the stamps, food items, and display items used at each booth for the Multicultural Day exhibit.

Staff

Mrs. Koch has been teaching English Language Development in the Simi Valley Unified School District for seven years. She is a Master Teacher with a Masters Degree in Curriculum and Instruction. Prior to SVUSD, she taught ESL and Title I Math in CUUSD, pre-school in Westlake Village, and a self-contained fourth grade for six years in St. Louis, Missouri.

Grades K-6
Language Arts
History/Social Science
Art/Music

More Information

Susan Koch
Berylwood Elementary
2300 Heywood Street
Simi Valley, CA 93065
(805)520-6705

Ronda Oster, Principal
Simi Valley Unified

Business Partner
Ventura County Star
Stamping in Style

Primary Grade Levels
Mathematics
History-Social Science
English/Language Arts

More Information
Judy Crenshaw
Tierra Linda School
1201 Woodcreek
Camarillo, CA 93010
(805)445-8800

Dianne Quinby-Anders
Principal
Pleasant Valley School District

Business Partner
Camarillo Rotary Club

The Idea and Its Value
Beginning operation the week before Valentine’s Day, the Valentine Post Office provides an exciting way to practice reading classmates’ names as well as using math skills. Students find counting stamps and counting money a fun and easy way to practice one-to-one correspondence. After purchasing stamps, students apply the stamps to their Valentines or letters they have written and “mail” them to their classmates in life-like mailboxes. Reading classmates’ names reinforces reading skills, matching names to correct boxes, and also writing as a part of a balanced literacy program. This unit provides a vehicle for students to make connections to their own world as they role play and discover the services in their communities — those that their families need in order to live together in our world.

This unit develops a beginning awareness of how many of our community services operate. Students go through the processes of creating and actively participating in the operation of a post office and a bank. After brainstorming what is known about the post office, students decide how to create one in the classroom. With the realization that stamps must be purchased, students also quickly decide that a bank will be needed in order to be able to write checks and receive cash. Much related literature concerning the post office as well as community services is read to students to extend their thinking, knowledge and ideas.

Students learn banking procedures as they discuss check-writing, bank jobs and making change. Writing skills are encouraged by writing the date and name on teacher-made checks. Math writing skills are developed by writing “10 cents” on the checks. Students then take their checks to the “Banker” who counts out ten pennies (practicing math skills and one to one correspondence) and then stamps the check with the date and deposits it in the banking drawer (math sequencing skills).

The customer then goes to the Post Office to purchase ten stamps. Again money is counted by the customer to the Post Office clerk who then counts out ten stamps (collected from magazine advertisements) to the customer. Customers put stamps on ten of their valentines and then go to the “stamping” station where they hand cancel each envelope by using a stamp pad. The Post Office is created by making “mailboxes” of half-gallon milk cartons complete with each student’s name and class number address. Students then use reading skills to match names and addresses on their envelopes to the individual mailboxes. The process of writing checks, buying stamps, and mailing valentines is repeated until each student has had a chance to mail all their valentines.

Students have an opportunity to work cooperatively, solve problems, and experience the roles of others in the community. The enthusiasm for this project extends for several weeks as students continue to explore the Post Office and practice writing to other class members. Dramatic play continues at the Bank and all stores created.

State Framework
Stamping in Style supports the recommendations of the Mathematics Framework as all students participate fully and take responsibility for their learning, have access to manipulatives and materials from the workplace. The English/Language Arts Framework is supported by integrating pre-reading and reading skills and strategies, as well as writing, listening and speaking. Finally, it supports the History-Social Science Framework and the goals of economic literacy, democratic understanding, civic values, skills attainment, and social participation.

Students
Stamping in Style has been successfully enjoyed by students in kindergarten classes for the past six years. The activities in this integrated unit are developmentally appropriate and meet the needs of all learners.

Facilities/Materials
Materials needed to create mailboxes could include milk cartons, cereal boxes, paper and markers. Teacher-created checks provide for real-life check-writing. A cash register and computer help extend real skills development from the workplace.

Outside Resources
Field trips to the Bank and Post Office. Parents and community contacts are included as speakers.

Staff
Judy Crenshaw has taught kindergarten through second grade for ten years. She is a Mentor Teacher focusing on “Creating a Balanced Literacy Program” and has been a presenter at district, county, regional and state conferences.
The Idea and Its Value
Summer, Spring, Winter, Fall is the "seasonal way" to allow students to express creativity and gain validation while implementing the writing process in the curriculum. This unit has four parts and is accomplished four times during the school year. To begin each unit, as a class we brainstorm the seasonal word. These words and thoughts lead to discussions. The brainstorming includes the holidays, sports, weather conditions, and sensory feelings that surround the season. Many students have never seen frosted windows for example.

For modeling, as a class we write an acrostic for the season. Each student then creates a "page" for the season. All students have had prior practice in creating poetry, acrostics and writing paragraph quick writes. Implementing cooperative learning groups, the students' peers edit their entries. All edited works are then ready to be published. The final drafts are written on appropriately colored 5x7 inch or seasonally shaded paper.

Using a contrasting colored construction paper, a seasonal quilt is produced by placing student entries on the background paper. The quilts are either made during a class period or after school. These quilts are then laminated and become a classroom bulletin board. I have found that laminating the quilts is important because of "hands-on" reading that is done in the class.

During "Read the Room" time or in between class periods, students eagerly read the quilts. These quilts help provide the print rich room environment that is needed.

When the season has ended, simply cut the quilt into rectangles of individual entries, bind them together, and have a seasonal class book. This book is then ready for use of Readers' Workshop, Authors' Night, and examples for the next year.

These quilts and quilt books are easily adaptable and can be incorporated into other units of study. I use book club quilts to sell the novels that will be read in class.

Summer, Spring, Winter, Fall is not a time consuming project. I spend about twenty minutes a day for a week to get all of the parts together. The beauty of the unit is that students' work is validated all year.

State Framework
This unit matches the writing process of the State's frameworks. Each student is responsible to take each unit through the process. Students are required to listen, share, write, and edit. Because the students have the additional element of cooperative grouping, everyone must be a part of the final product.

Students
Every student can and does participate in each unit. Students who may be less likely to risk are always able to write something that makes sense and follows direction. Many students enjoy having input as to where they will have their creation on the quilt. Each student has the opportunity to learn from other works and compare entries. The quilts and then, of course, the books become better as the seasons progress. Quite simply, the students enjoy this project.

Facilities/Materials
Materials come from standard classroom supplies and paper that I purchase that is colored. If I choose to do so, often I can find a sale on 5x7 inch colored paper. The other material would be a laminator. This will make the quilt last; however, it also makes cutting the quilt into book sized papers easy.

Grades 4-8
Language Arts
For More Information
Bobbie Hansen
Frank Intermediate School
703 N. Juanita Ave.
Oxnard, CA 93030
(805) 981-1733

Pete Nichols, Principal
Oxnard Elementary
School District

Business Partners
A-1 Guarantee Roofing, Inc.
England, Whitfield,
Schroeder &
Treadway, L.L.P.