

6+1 TRAITS WRITER'S WORKSHOP GENRE STUDY

Name of Participants: Catherine Hite, Paul Cole, Dorothy Broderick, Dan Devins

Overview/Purpose: The purpose of this unit is to engage students in the 6+1 Writing Traits Model at the primary level. In doing so, students will learn a common language for talking about and implementing writing strategies between second and third grade. 6+1 Traits Model makes teaching and learning more focused and purposeful. Within this learning experience, students will understand the qualities good writers use and will put into practice the writing traits, incorporating ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, convention and presentation. Students will engage in mini-lessons regarding each of the traits through picture books, teacher modeling, and observing examples of each trait in sample writings and through various other writing techniques.

Length of instructional time: On-going throughout the school year

Grade/age level: Second and third graders.

NYS Learning Standards Addressed:

ELA Standard 1: Students will read, write, listen and speak for information and understanding.

ELA Standard 4: Students will read, write, listen and speak for social interaction.

PCSD Standards

Critical Thinker

Effective Communicator

Lifelong Learner

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Declarative: Upon completion of this learning unit, students will have developed a repertoire of the common language and strategies of the 6+1 Traits writing model

Procedural: Upon completion of this learning unit, students will apply the strategies of 6+1 Traits: ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, convention and presentation in a variety of writing genres. Students will also engage in self-assessment and peer assessment of 6+1 writing traits based on the assessment scoring guide (rubric).

IMPLEMENTING 6+1 TRAITS FOR THE 1st GRADE and CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Name of Participants: Brenda Bezio, Kristie Hulbert, Lori Darst

Overview of purpose: There are numerous purposes for the need for a uniform writing framework. Our intermediate program has unofficially adopted the components of the 6+1 Traits writing framework. Research indicates that children must learn to read before they can write. However, Bissex (1980) found that young children begin writing as or even before they learn to read, because they have a need to communicate ideas.

“What are the advantages to using 6 + 1 Traits?”

- It gives teachers and students a common language to talk about writing.
- It breaks down the complex process of writing into manageable “chunks.”
- It aligns with standards-based instruction: students define quality and know what the expectations are.
- It gives teachers a model for responding to student writing.
- It establishes consistency from year to year and teacher to teacher.
- It provides a solid foundation for revision and editing.
- It encourages writers to become more independent; it empowers them to evaluate and assess their own writing.
- It gives teachers and students valuable feedback about student performance.
- It challenges students to think of writing in new ways.
- It provides opportunities to monitor progress over time.

Length of instructional time for unit: The instructional time for unit will compose of 1 week per month addressing one specific trait. Throughout the course of the year, the remaining traits will also continue to be explored.

Grade/age level of audience: The grade/age level of the audience will include all non-disabled first grade students and students classified with a Learning Disability, Other Health Impaired, Speech Impaired and/or other disabilities not mentioned.

NYS Learning Standard(s)

ELA

- Standard 1: Students will read, write, listen and speak for information and understanding.
- Standard 2: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literacy responses and expression
- Standard 3: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

PCSD Standards

- Lifelong Learner
- Critical Thinker
- Effective Communicator
- Responsible Citizen

Essential Questions:

- Why write?
- How do writers get their ideas?
- What is a “complete” thought?

Content knowledge

-Declarative

- Exploring
- Emerging
- Developing
- Fluent/experienced

(What do you want students to know/understand?)

CLIMB HIGHER

“We do not all have equal talents, but we all deserve an equal opportunity to develop our talents.”

*John F.
Kennedy*

Participants: Kerri Chase, Debra Favro, Nona Garrand, Jason Nisoff, Nancy Strack

Overview:

Climb Higher is a learning unit designed to match instructional tasks with students’ skills and understanding of the subject or topic. Tiered lessons center around a multi-disciplined learning unit based on the Renaissance and Elizabethan England. As students work on different tasks, they will focus on the same essential understanding and skills, but at different levels of complexity, abstraction and open-endedness. Tiered tasks allow teachers to address one of the most important differences in our students- that of student readiness. Tiered learning activities focus on developing concepts related to the Renaissance and its impact on future generations. Learning activities were designed to encompass all core subject areas and include a variety of scaffolding and differentiation strategies.

Grade Level of Audience: Mid and upper-elementary, middle, high school-- Lessons will be written to match grade six curriculum, but offer tremendous flexibility and may easily be adapted to many learners.

Content Standards:

NYS Learning Standard(s) Addressed:

- **ELA Standards:**
 - **Standard 1: Language for Information and Understanding**
 - **Standard 2: Language for Literary Response and Expression**
 - **Standard 3: Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation**
 - **Standard 4: Language for Social Interaction**
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- **MST Standards:**
 - **Standard 2: Information Systems**
 - **Standard 3: Mathematics**
 - **Standard 4: Science**
 - **Standard 6: Interconnectedness: Common Themes**
 - **Standard 7: Interdisciplinary Problem Solving**
- **Social Studies Standards**
 - **Standard 2: World History.**
 - **Standard 3: Geography**
 - **Standard 5: Civics, Citizenship, and Government**

PCSD Standards:

Lifelong Learner
Critical Thinker
Effective Communicator

Essential Questions:

1. Are modern civilizations more civilized than ancient civilizations?
2. What is a renaissance?
3. How has the European Renaissance influenced our lives?
4. How does historical fiction better help us understand the past?

Content knowledge:

Declarative

- Students will understand every learner has strengths.
- Students will understand there are many routes to a learning goal.
- Students will understand optimal learning occurs when material is focused slightly above level of mastery.
- Students will understand their roles as learning partners.
- Students will understand the value of positive interdependence.
- Students will understand when to seek assistance from resources.
- Students will understand the continuum of information technology.
- Students will understand the term ratio and its importance to the Renaissance.
- Students will understand how Newton's Third Law of Motion affects objects in the physical environment.
- Students will understand how scientific discoveries affect history.
- Students will understand how scientific observations affect our understanding of the universe.
- Students will understand how characterization in fiction makes history more meaningful.

Procedural

- Students will be able to identify their strengths.
- Students will be able to use resources to maximize learning.
- Students will be able to acknowledge individual talents.
- Students will be able to set individual and group goals.
- Students will be able to write written responses to an invitation.
- Students will be able to use multiple strategies to solve word problems representing life and art in the Renaissance.
- Students will be able to explain characterization in fiction.
- Students will be able to explain point of view.
- Students will be able to identify major constellations in the night sky.
- Students will be able to use compass directions and seasons to locate constellations.

COMPREHENSIVE SIGHT-READING FOR SINGERS

Name of Participants: Celia Strebendt, William Verity

Background and Overview

The ability to sight-read (sing or play at sight with minimal prior auditory input) is essential to all performing musicians at all levels. The ability to sight-read with accuracy dramatically reduces the time spent in learning either solo or ensemble literature. Without this ability, the musician is reduced to rote learning, which requires an additional person to play the desired tonal material, and requires that the student in question possesses an excellent tonal memory. Tonal memory is not necessarily reliable over time; therefore accuracy of the music to be performed comes into question. Imagine how students would perform on an academic test if they had to rely only on material that was read to them!

All musicians, both instrumentalists and singers, need to know how to sight-read. Instrumentalists need to audiate performance materials in order to assess accuracy. Singers have an additional burden: they do not have the mechanical (tactile) advantage of the instrumentalists in that they cannot depress, for example, a certain number of fingers and be somewhat assured that a certain note will play. In order for singers to accurately sight-read, they must know in advance the tonal relationship between scale degrees and intervals. (note combinations) The use of the “moveable Do” solfège method helps singers to develop these skills so that they can become independent singers.

After reflecting on the implementation of the pilot project from last summer, we feel students showed more consistent sight-reading ability and overall improvement compared to prior years without the sight-reading program. One area that we need to revise, however, is the scope of the knowledge students are expected to acquire by the end of the year.

The focus of this project is to further integrate a comprehensive sight-reading program into the 6 – 12 grade choral ensembles (beyond grades 8 and 9), while reevaluating the specific content knowledge established last summer. The ultimate purpose of this program is to establish an overall Middle School to High School sight reading curriculum.

Length of instructional time for unit:

The overall length of the sight-reading curriculum has a scope of 7 years. The focus for this pilot project will build upon the work from last summer and expand outward. The narrow unit concentration we previously established provided common ground between 8th and 9th grades. We look now to construct a progressive sight-reading curriculum from grades 6 to 8, and seamlessly continue from grades 9 to commencement.

New York State Learning Standards addressed

Intermediate

- Compose simple pieces that reflect a knowledge of melodic and rhythmic elements (1 a)
- Sing and/or play from notation, with good tone, pitch, duration, and loudness (1b)
- Identify and use some of the roles, processes, and actions for performing and composing (1 e)

- Use traditional or nontraditional sound sources in composing and performing simple pieces (2 a)
- Through listening, analyze and evaluate their own and other's performances and compositions (3a)

Commencement- General Education

- Compose simple pieces (1a)
- Sing accurately, expressively, and with good tone quality, pitch, duration, loudness, technique, and diction (1b)
- Use common symbols (notation) to perform music (1c)
- Use traditional, electronic, and nontraditional media for composing and performing music (2a)
- Through listening, analyze and evaluate their own and other's performances and compositions and suggest improvements (3a)

PSCD Learning Standards addressed

- Lifelong Learner
- Critical Thinker
- Responsible Citizen

Understandings

- Students will understand the connection between written notation and the corresponding key signature that defines "Do".
- Students will understand the connection between written notation and the corresponding solfege syllables and letter names that define the pitch of the notes.
- Students will understand the connection between written notation and the PCSD counting method that will define the temporal/spacial arrangement of the notes.

Essential Questions

- How is it possible for a singer to accurately perform a piece of written music with correct pitch and rhythm and with minimum input from another instrument? (starting pitch only given)
- How does the ability to identify musical elements enhance the singer's accurate performance of a written sight-reading exercise?
- How does the ability to accurately perform sight-reading exercises enhance the singer's ability to perform in an ensemble setting?

Related Questions

- How does the "moveable Do" solfege system of pitch recognition aid a singer in accurately singing correct pitches?
- How does the PCSD Music Department rhythmic counting system aid a singer in singing notated rhythms?

Performance Tasks

- Accurately identify key signature of selection to be performed.
- Accurately identify corresponding solfege syllable and note names for selection to be performed.
- Accurately identify rhythmic counting sequence of selection to be performed.
- Perform selection using accurate solfege syllables and observing correct rhythmic patterns.

Content Knowledge

- Students will understand the letter names assigned to pitches in the clef appropriate for their voices.
- Students will understand the order of the solfege syllables ascending and descending. (diatonic scale only)
- Students will understand the tonal relationships between the various solfege syllables.
- Students will understand key signatures and their relationships to “Do”
- Students will understand how to assign the solfege syllables to a given melody.
- Students will understand the PCSD rhythmic counting system and its relationship to accurate performance of notated rhythms.

Procedural

- Students will be able to accurately sing a major scale: ascending and descending, using the proper order of solfege syllables.
- Students will be able to accurately perform given series of solfege syllables.
- Students will be able to accurately identify the letter names of all pitches in a given exercise.
- Students will be able to use key signature to help in the identification of “Do” in a given written exercise.
- Students will be able to accurately assign solfege syllables to the notes in a given written exercise.
- Students will be able to accurately sing the pitches of a given exercise after having notated the solfege syllables underneath the notes.
- Using the PCSD counting system, students will be able to accurately count the rhythm of a given exercise.
- Students will be able to accurately sing with solfege syllables the pitches and rhythms of a given exercise.
 - After having had time to review a previously unseen exercise, students will be able to accurately perform the exercise *without* the benefit of written solfege syllables.

ARCHEOLOGICAL ADVENTURES: Exploring Lake Champlain by Diving into History

Name of Participant(s): Kevin Larkin, LaShauna Quarles, Marjorie Light, and Russell Puschak

Overview of purpose: Students will learn how to analyze data and write technical reports using underwater archeological findings. By learning about artifacts discovered on the bottom of Lake Champlain, students will make hypotheses regarding the events surrounding how these artifacts came to be located on the bottom of Lake Champlain. Students will utilize current technology, such as GPS systems and see a diving demonstration. Local experts who are archeological divers and preservationists will present to the students. A webpage will be designed to assist the students in their research. The students will use Moodle forums for literature circles and blog based on reading the novel Spitfire (by our own Kate Messner). Mrs. Messner will present to the students about how she used underwater archeological findings in the creation of her novel. Students will then use the information from their notes on a Lake Champlain wreck to create a short fictional piece.

-length of instructional time for unit: Three weeks

-grade/age level of audience: Seventh Grade Trailblazer Team, including special education push-in students.

NYS Learning Standards(s) Addressed:

SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS:

Standard 1: History of the United States and New York

Standard 2: World History

Standard 3: Geography

Standard 5: Civics, Citizenship, and Government

ELA STANDARDS:

Standard 1: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

Standard 2: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

Standard 3: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for social interaction.

Standard 4: Students will read, write, listen and speak for social interaction.

MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE and TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS:

Standard 2: Students will access, generate, process, and transfer information using appropriate technologies.

Standard 4: Students will understand and apply scientific concepts, principles, and theories pertaining to the physical setting and living environment and recognize the historical development of ideas in science.

Standard 5: Students will apply technological knowledge and skills to design, construct, use, and evaluate products and systems to satisfy human and environmental needs.

Standard 7: Students will apply the knowledge and thinking skills of mathematics, science, and technology to address real-life problems and make informed decisions.

PCSD STANDARDS

Critical Thinker

Effective Communicator

Responsible Citizen

Lifelong Learner

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- *Why* do we need to research and learn about history?
- How does underwater archeology help us understand our past?
- How does the health of the lake shape our ability to research?
- How does where we live influence how we live?
- How do writers get their ideas?
- How do successful writers hook and hold the listener's attention?

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE: **Declarative**

(What do you want students to know/understand?)

1. Students will study the terminology of underwater archeology.
2. Students will become familiar with artifacts discovered in Lake Champlain.
3. Students will study the history of the Champlain Valley and Lake Champlain.
4. Students will listen to an underwater archeologist's presentation and question him on his findings.
5. Students will understand the type of writing used in a technical report.
6. Students will understand the components of the 6 + 1 writing model for both the technical report and the fictional piece.
7. Students will focus their research by using a website designed by Mr. Puschak to help them explore the history of the lake and underwater archeology.
8. Students will study the way underwater archeologists record data.
9. Students will become familiar with depth charts of Lake Champlain.

10. Students will learn about what is involved in preserving artifacts found in Lake Champlain.
11. Students will learn the different types of invasive species in Lake Champlain.
12. Students will use a graphic organizer to take notes on Mrs. Messner's presentation about her novel Spitfire.

PROCEDURAL: (What do you want students to be able to do?)

1. Students will analyze data from archeological dives in Lake Champlain.
2. Students will focus their technical report using information that they have learned in class, researched in the library and online, and from guest presenters.
3. Students will create a fictional piece based on Lake Champlain artifacts.
4. Students will share, both in writing and orally, the results of their research. Students will identify invasive species and relate the impact (if any) these have on underwater archeology.
5. Students will use GPS systems and Lake Champlain depth charts to plot artifacts in the water.
6. Students will present their work on the class website.
7. Students will participate in literature circles, making connections, reflections, and asking one another questions, via Moodle.
8. Students will apply the knowledge they gained from the presenters to both their technical and fiction pieces.

Foundations of Geometry: Not Just Your Ordinary Plane Geometry

Name of Participant(s): Aimee McLane, Teresa Niles

Overview of purpose: Using the Geometer's Sketchpad, SMARTBoard Interactive Whiteboard and software, RM math Framework Edition content and activities such as Kaleidos and Easiteach math tools, the Airliner Wireless Slate, and the online textbook (Holt Math Course Three Pre-Algebra), we will provide both our regular and special education students with the opportunity to use technological devices already found in the math classroom to master the concepts and vocabulary of plane geometry. The structure of this inclusion class will allow technology to provide multiple opportunities for both differentiated instruction and cooperative groups.

-length of instructional time for unit: 3-4 weeks

-grade/level of audience: middle school mathematics

NYS Learning Standards to be addressed:

MST

-Standard 3: Geometry and Algebra strands

PCSD Standards:

1. Critical thinker- All students will be capable of problem solving, decision making and risk taking enabling them to function in an efficient, productive way in society.
2. Effective Communicator- All students will develop the skills necessary to communicate effectively.
3. Lifelong Learner- All students will develop the skills of self-evaluation and inquiry to engage in the process of lifelong learning.

Understanding:

Students will understand that. . .

- they will master the concepts of plane geometry if they can interpret and then apply the necessary mathematical language
- they must often explore a variety of learning styles to be successful.

Essential Questions:

- What do problem solvers do?
- How does mastery of a language effectively communicate the essence of a concept?
- How might we show the measure of angles formed by or contained in parallel lines cut by a transversal and by intersecting lines?
- How do the properties of transformations of plane figures relate?

Content Knowledge

Declaratory:

Students will know/understand the language of mathematics as it relates to geometry, such as a point, line, plane, angle, ray, segment, etc.

Procedural

Students will be able to . . .

- Apply algebra to determine the measure of angles formed by or contained in parallel lines cut by a transversal and by intersecting lines.
- Identify pairs of vertical angles as congruent.
- Identify pairs of supplementary and complementary angles.
- Calculate the missing angle measurements when given two parallel lines cut by a transversal.
- Calculate the missing angle measurements when given two intersecting lines and an angle.
- Describe and identify transformations in the plane, using proper function notation.
- Draw the image of a figure under rotations of 90 and 180 degrees.
- Draw the image of a figure under a reflection over a given plane.
- Draw the image of a figure under a translation.
- Identify the properties preserved and not preserved under a reflection, rotation, translation and dilation.

GETTING STARTED WITH WRITING IN KINDERGARTEN

Participants: Beth Channell, Laura Buck

Overview of purpose:

The child will know that writing is a way to communicate meaning. The child uses the writing workshop as a time to share the details of his life. He approaches writing using any means possible-drawing, written words, oral commentary etc, to capture that meaning. The child does not regard writing as primarily an opportunity to simply copy or list known words. The purpose of this unit is to implement a group of min-lessons that support emergent writers during the first 6-8 weeks of school.

-length of instructional time for unit: 6-8 weeks (Sept. – mid-Oct.)

-grade/level of audience: Kindergarten and Grade one

NYS Standards

ELA

Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

Students will read, write, listen, and speak for social interaction.

Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

***See attached for specific performance indicators.

Essential Questions

How do we use writing as a form of communication?

How do you develop young writers from conception to communication?

Content Knowledge

Declarative

The students will understand that...

1. they are writers and different kinds of writing are acceptable in kindergarten and first grade.
2. there are many possible topics that they can write about on any given day.
3. visual representation helps focus a topic.

Procedural

The students will be able to...

1. Choose a topic, sketching it, and then write a tiny bit about it.
2. Keep working on the same piece by adding more to their picture, by adding more to their words, or by starting a new piece of writing.
3. find and use tools they need for the writing workshop.
4. decide on a topic, envision it, and then record that meaning on the page with drawings that are representational.

5. continue drawing or writing even if it is not happening exactly the way they had planned.
6. recognize that authors write pictures and words and that they can do the same.
7. separate out the many sounds they hear in words and write down the letters that correspond to those sounds.
8. stretch and write words focusing primarily on hearing the initial sounds.
9. accept their own inventive spellings in order to tell more about their stories.
10. match the sounds they hear in a word with the letter that represents it.
11. see that they can add more to a piece of writing and have a system to separate finished from unfinished work.
12. plan and write a book with several pages.
13. recognize writing possibilities (ie. Letters and lists).
14. see writing possibilities for real world purposes (ie. Every section of the room and part of the day there are reasons to write).
15. students will be able to fix up and revise their writing so it says everything they mean before it is displayed.
16. edit and add color up their writing piece.
17. choose and share their favorite piece of writing.

KIDS' PRESS: DIFFERENTIATED MAGAZINE ACTIVITIES

Name of Participants: Mary Gertsch-Cochran, Jocelyne LaVigne

Overview/Purpose: Kids' Press is a Type I Odyssey component, open to all students, that provides language arts and visual art enrichment. It focuses on the development of communication skills by furnishing a vehicle for publication of student writing and art. The purpose of this pilot is to create a variety of differentiated magazine activities that students can utilize independently throughout the school year. The following genres are addressed: poetry, fiction and non-fiction, interviews, drawings, games and puzzles, surveys, and comics and cartoons.

Length of instructional time: Twice weekly sessions Sept. - May

Grade/age level: The targeted level would be students in grades 2-5

NYS Learning Standards Addressed:

ELA Standard 1: Students will read, write, listen and speak for information and understanding.

ELA Standard 2: Students will read, write listen and speak for literary response and expression.

ELA Standard 3: Students will read, write, listen and speak for social interaction.

Visual Arts Standard 1: Creating, performing and participating in the arts,

PCSD Standards

Critical Thinker

Effective Communicator

Lifelong Learner

Healthy Citizen

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What makes a child's magazine/newspaper engaging?
- What are the components of a popular children's magazine/newspaper?
- How can our school magazine/newspaper develop a larger circulation?

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Declarative: The students will ...

- know the various genres and the differentiated activities they can engage in to produce a magazine or newspaper.
- understand their personal writing and artistic strengths and preferences
- understand that writing and art can be a chosen, creative, expressive activity.

Procedural: The student will be able to:

- successfully write and draw using the Six Traits writing model in various differentiated formats, submitting their work to the quarterly school magazine/newspaper
- take responsibility for their learning by choosing appropriate writing and drawing activities that differentiate their instruction.

SMILING WHILE RAFTING DOWN THE AMAZON

Name of Participant(s): Chris Boulé, Susan Wilson

Overview of purpose: This unit focuses on combining writing programs into our team-taught 80-minute ninth grade English/Global class. It will give our high needs students an opportunity to use creative writing options while focusing on skill building enhancements and infusing Global Studies content into the application of writing selections. The goal is for students to demonstrate their basic knowledge of history, geography, and Latin American culture through writing.

-length of instructional time for unit: 4 weeks

-grade/level of audience: gr. 9 English. Global studies

NYS Learning Standards to be addressed:

ELA Standards:

- Standard 1--Information and Understanding
- Standard 2--Social, historical and cultural
- Standard 3--Critical Analysis and Evaluation
- Standard 4--Social Interaction

Social Studies Standards

- Standard 2: World History/Global

PCSD Standards:

1. Critical thinker- All students will be capable of problem solving, decision making and risk taking enabling them to function in an efficient, productive way in society.
2. Effective Communicator- All students will develop the skills necessary to communicate effectively.
3. Healthy citizen – All students will consistently make healthful choices demonstrating respect for their physical, emotional and social well being.
4. Lifelong Learner- All students will develop the skills of self-evaluation and inquiry to engage in the process of lifelong learning.
5. Responsible Citizen- All students will positively apply understanding of their own diverse cultures in a changing world.
- 6.

Content Knowledge

-Declarative

Students will know or understand:

1. Figurative language and the difference between simile, metaphor, hyperbole and personification
2. Tone and mood and how it affects the reader/adds to the reader's understanding of the intention of the written work

3. The definition of imagery and how to effectively use it within a work
4. Six of the eight Smiley Face Tricks (magic 3, hyphenated modifiers, humor, figurative language, expanded moment and repetition for effect)
5. How to read and interpret a R.A.F.T.
6. All 6 methods of characterization (appearance, what others would say, environment, speech, actions and thoughts/feelings)

-Procedural

Students will be able to:

1. identify figurative language within text or add it to existing text
2. Identify both tone and mood of a piece
3. Constrict a 2-3 paragraph work which reflects a pre-determined tone/mood
4. Write a selection after being presented with a RAFT – creating their piece for the specified audience, in a specified format, developing the content utilizing a determined strong verb
5. Examine a piece of short literature and identify which characterization traits are included
6. Construct a piece of writing that displays proper placement and use at least 4 different smiley face tricks.

Essential Questions:

1. How do we know that we are getting the intended meaning/presentation of text and understanding the author's experience?
2. Can all of our experiences be put into words?
3. How do stories from other places and times connect to "me"? Why bother to read stories that don't connect?
4. What makes writing worth reading?
5. How do writers adjust their discourse to their audience?
6. Do readers learn more from fiction or non-fiction pieces? Explain.
7. How do geography, climate and resources affect the history and development of culture and civilizations?
8. What factors unite and divide people?
9. What motivates conquest?
10. What factors lead to the development of a specific social system?
11. How do humans affect their environment?
12. Is history the story told by the winners?

STEWARDSHIP FOR A SMALL PLANET

-Learning from the Past, Planning for the Future

Names of Participants: Mal Cutaiar, Bryan Gottlob, Kate Messner, Barbara Napper

Overview of Purpose:

The purpose of this project is to challenge students to explore the concept of stewardship of the earth, its environment, and its natural resources from a historical perspective, noting patterns in human activity and the way those patterns have impacted the earth. Students will use this historical perspective to analyze modern environmental and ecological challenges, design and evaluate remediation plans on a local and global level, and use persuasive language in writing and producing digital video presentations to suggest solutions.

Our team selected this high interest theme because of its timeliness, as international leaders grapple with the issue of global climate change and national leaders collaborate on solutions to America's energy crisis. We expect to use an abundance of current scientific articles on these and related topics including threatened species, environmental impacts on human health, emerging pathogens, and adaptation of living things to work with our students on the intense content area reading comprehension skills that are so essential for state assessments in all subject areas. Our piloting of the Harvard-based River City Project last year provided us with rich insight as to its ability to help students with inference-based thinking, real world problem solving, and interpretation of scientific data. As graphing skills and data analysis continue to play a key role in the Grade 7 math curriculum, we also believe that the differentiation of this project in terms of readiness and learning styles will help many more of our students to achieve MST standards.

NYS Learning Standards Addressed:

ELA:

- Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.
- Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.
- Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.
- Students will read, write, listen, and speak for social interaction.

Social Studies:

- Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.
- Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live – local, national, and global – including the distribution of people, places, and environments over the Earth's surface.

MST:

- Students will use mathematical analysis, scientific inquiry, and engineering design, as appropriate, to pose questions, seek answers, and develop solutions.
- Students will access, generate, process, and transfer information using appropriate technologies.
- Students will understand mathematics and become mathematically confident by communicating the reasoning mathematically, by applying mathematics in real-world setting, and by solving problems through the integrated study of number systems, geometry, algebra, data analysis, probability, and trigonometry.
- Students will understand and apply scientific concepts, principles, and theories pertaining to the physical setting and living environment and recognize the historical development of ideas in science.
- Students will understand the relationships and common themes that connect mathematics, science, and technology and apply the themes to these and other areas of learning
- Students will apply the knowledge and thinking skills of mathematics, science, and technology to address real-life problems and make informed decisions.

PCSD Standards Addressed:

- Critical Thinker
- Responsible Citizen
- Effective Communicator
- Lifelong Learner
- Healthy Citizen

Understandings:

- Throughout history, human beings have made use of natural resources and altered their environment to meet their immediate needs.
- Human activity can have positive and negative impacts on the environment.
- The scientific method can be used to evaluate human impacts on the environment over time.

Essential Questions:

- How do human beings use natural resources to meet their needs?
- How can human beings have an impact on the environment?
- How have environmental issues impacted our local community?
- What is sustainability?
- What individual actions can we take to positively impact our environment and remediate environmental problems?

Content Knowledge:

Declarative: Students will know/understand:

- A list of six strategies for active reading comprehension.
- Steps for evaluating Internet sites' points of view and validity.
- Steps for creating a bibliography.
- Rules of netiquette.
- Definitions of the 6+1 Traits of writing.
- The proper format for writing a business letter.
- A list of vocabulary words relating to environmental issues, ecology, and climate change.
- Attitudes of different groups of historical peoples toward ecology, environmental conservation, and the use of natural resources.
- Effects of water quality on wildlife.
- Steps for testing water samples for dissolved oxygen and pH.
- Steps for gathering data.
- Kinds of graphs and appropriate times to utilize each kind of graph.
- Persuasive techniques.
- Steps for using a digital video camera.
- Definitions of fact and opinion.

Procedural: Students will:

- Use appropriate mathematical computations to solve problems.
- Use specialized equipment to test samples for water quality.
- Read and analyze graphs
- Gather data.
- Create several kinds of graphs.
- Compose and send emails.
- Use a digital video camera.
- Write a script for a public service announcement.
- Create a storyboard for a public service announcement.
- Use digital video editing software.
- Share ideas in an online forum.
- Upload links and documents to an online forum.
- Write effective paragraphs with ideas and supporting facts.
- Write effective business letters, using persuasive techniques.
- Write response journals.

BUILDING TECHNOLOGY AND DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION INTO MATH IN ACTION

Name of Participants: Sarah McCarty, Peggy Eaglefeather

Overview/Purpose: Math in Action is a Type 2 Odyssey program for grades 2-5 that meets weekly for 40 minutes. Students involved in this program typically have above grade level ability in mathematics, problem solving, and creativity. Differentiated instruction has been filtered into all Math in Action classes. This proposal would add a technology aspect to each of several previously developed units using DI.

Length of instructional time: Ongoing throughout the year in all Math in Action classes (approx. 10-15 students per grade level)

Grade/age level: Grades 2-5

NYS Learning Standards Addressed:
MST Standard 3 Mathematics
Standard 5 technology

PCSD Standards
Critical Thinker
Effective Communicator
Lifelong Learner

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Declarative: The students will ...

- Participate in a variety of problem-solving activities at tiered levels of complexity
- Develop presentations of solutions and/or data using technological materials
- Use technological support to solve larger problems in place of or in addition to traditional methods.

Procedural: The student will be able to:

- Learn to navigate the internet through a series of links provided by the teacher to find suitable resources (a skill notably absent despite familiarity with computers, especially at younger ages)
- Develop skills to trouble shoot while using computers, including, but not limited to, finding toolbars, changing screen size, opening and closing programs, copying and pasting, creating documents and developing work in Smartboard software.

THE COLD WAR

Name of Participant(s): Kathy Stark, Jennifer McCoy, Neil Bowlen

Overview of purpose: Students will learn how the Cold War changed the United States through an exploration of that era of unrest and fear. They will explore the origins of the Cold War and its impact on both foreign and domestic policies.

-length of instructional time for unit: 10-12 weeks

-grade/level of audience: secondary social studies

NYS Learning Standards to be addressed:

Social Studies Standards

- Standard 1: History of the United States and New York
- Standard 2: World History
- Standard 5: Civics, Citizenship, and Government

PCSD Standards:

1. Critical thinker- All students will be capable of problem solving, decision making and risk taking enabling them to function in an efficient, productive way in society.
2. Effective Communicator- All students will develop the skills necessary to communicate effectively.
3. Healthy citizen – All students will consistently make healthful choices demonstrating respect for their physical, emotional and social well being.
4. Lifelong Learner- All students will develop the skills of self-evaluation and inquiry to engage in the process of lifelong learning.
5. Responsible Citizen- All students will positively apply understanding of their own diverse cultures in a changing world.

Understanding:

1. Students will understand the origins and evolution of Cold War.
2. Student will understand the concept of unease; its ever changing interpretations.
3. Students will understand the impact of other peoples/societies input on the tensions of the Cold War.
4. Students will understand the concept of nationalism

Essential Questions:

1. Why was there no WW III?
2. Was the Cold War an ideology or just a contest for supremacy between two super powers
3. Was the struggle based on politics, economics, or strategic interests?
4. What role did culture play in the Cold War? Does this culture have an impact on us today?
5. What was the impact of the personalities of the Cold War leaders?
6. How did smaller powers manipulate the larger powers?
7. What “weapons” were used to fight the Cold War? (Propaganda, surrogates, economics)
8. How did the Cold War affect the average person?
9. What is the meaning to “Was the Cold War the culmination to an Age of Empire”?

Declaratory Knowledge:

1. State the tensions of the Cold War surfacing in various armed conflicts at different times in the era.
2. Specify the role of the United Nations during this era.
3. Understand the impact of the Cold War on the cultures involved.
4. Reflect on the effects of the potential for nuclear warfare.
5. Recognize the impact of the Cold War on events taking place today.

Procedural Knowledge:

1. Use maps to display an understanding of the origins and evolution of the Cold War.
2. Use time management skills.
3. Organize and display data.
4. Comprehend readings.
5. Interpret documents
6. Organize materials to culminate the final project
7. Utilize technical resources to display information

ZOOMING INTO LOCAL HISTORY

Name of Participants: Mary Fortin, Michelle Gottschall, Anita Squier, Emily Sullivan

Overview/Purpose: This unit is designed demonstrate how history influenced the lives of five unique individuals from Northern New York; and how their accomplishments influenced the development of local and state history. The teaching of local history is a New York State learning standard that is often not covered in the 4th grade classroom largely because there is a lack of specific useable curriculum available for teachers. With the dissolution of the NYSCA Kent Delord House Museum Grant, teachers in PCSD will have a greater responsibility to implement local history lessons. By the end of this project each 4th grade teacher in the PCSD will have access to a binder containing ready to use lessons and materials to teach a 6 lesson unit on local history. Special attention would be given to provide Differentiated Instruction will be worked into the lessons so that all students will be able to understand the content taught.

The lessons will include the analysis of: primary and secondary source documents, photos and portraits, timelines and maps. Student and community member reenactments, as well as walking field trips to local historical sites will further reinforce student understanding.

Length of instructional time: Each lesson will consist of a 45-60 minute session. There will be 6 sessions in this unit. The lessons can be implemented in any sequence and over 1any time frame.

Grade/age level: The targeted level would be 4th grade regular and special education students as well as AIS students. The activities will be tiered to accommodate basic as well as more advanced learners resulting in a broader spectrum of student abilities.

NYS Learning Standards Addressed:

ELA Standard 1: Students will read, write, listen and speak for information and understanding.

ELA Standard 2: Students will read, write listen and speak for literary response and expression.

ELA Standard 1: Students will read, write, listen and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

ELA Standard 1: Students will read, write, listen and speak for social interaction.

Social Studies Standard 1

History of the United States and New York:

Use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.

Social Studies Standard 3

Geography

Use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live—local, national, and global—including the distribution of people, places, and environments over the Earth's surface.

Social Studies Standard 5
Civics, Citizenship, and Government-

Use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the necessity for establishing governments; the governmental system of the U.S. and other nations; the U.S. Constitution; the basic civic values of American constitutional democracy; and the roles, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship, including avenues of participation.

PCSD Standards

Critical Thinker
Effective Communicator
Lifelong Learner
Healthy Citizen

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How are we connected to people from the past?
- What can we learn from studying the past?
- Whom do we believe and why?
- Is history the story told by the “winners”?

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Declarative: The students will ...

- Know how these individuals affected the history of Northern New York
- Understand the use of plants in the treatment of illness
- Understand how individuals shape a community
- Analyze different styles of poetry and examine the “whys” of poetry
- Work through the process of writing poems using 6+1 traits.
- Listen to readings and glean important information from the readings

Procedural: The student will be able to:

- Read, discuss and analyze primary and secondary source documents
- Relate the lives of each individual studied to their life in the present.
- Identify primary and secondary source documents
- Work with peers in a structured cooperative group setting
- Chronologically identify the historic changes and development of our city and region
- Read a timeline
- Locate places on a map
- Utilize a timeline to understand historically significant events of prominent Plattsburgh residents.
- Complete graphic organizers using primary and secondary sources.