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Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies seeks manuscripts for publication in the ***JOURNAL*** that focus on and treat the following areas.

1. Creative ways of teaching social studies at the elementary, secondary and higher education levels.
2. Research articles
3. Explanations of new types of materials and/or equipment that directly relate to social studies teaching, and was developed or implemented by teachers.
4. Explanations of teacher developed projects that help social studies students and teachers work with community groups.
5. Reviews of educational media that have been used with students.
6. Analysis of how social studies, history and other disciplines relate to teaching of social studies.

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5. Include a title page that contains the title of the article, your name, the institution where you work and your mailing address.
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Editor's Note

The Social Studies Journal is an annual publication of the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies. The journal seeks to provide an exchange of ideas among social studies educators. The journal seeks submissions on a variety of themes and this edition is a focus on perspectives on the current state of social studies education and current practices in social studies teaching and learning.

As noted, all manuscripts went through a blind review process. In order to encourage and assist writers, the reviewers make suggestions and notations for revisions that are shared with the author before publication. We make an effort to encourage both experienced and novice writers to share their knowledge and experiences.

Teaching Social Studies and Literacy through Toothpick World

Jessica B. Schocker

Introduction

Today more than ever, elementary educators need to be creative if they want to teach social studies. The educational climate of high stakes testing has dictated more time for literacy and math and less time for concepts such as civic engagement, historical understanding, cultural studies, and other important social studies topics (Paquette & Kaufman, 2008). Therefore, elementary teachers who show a commitment to teaching social studies are presented not only with developing meaningful elementary social studies curriculum, which can be tricky enough on its own, but with squeezing it in to a school day that does not permit much flexibility. It seems logical, therefore, that elementary teachers learn skills for integrating social studies across the curriculum. This paper will outline strategies for integrating social studies and literacy in an interdisciplinary, large-scale project for upper elementary grades revolving around the exhibit, “Toothpick World.” Then, overall suggestions for elementary teachers will be provided for developing social studies projects that foster the development of literacy skills.

What is Toothpick World?

Imagine a world built out of toothpicks, set expertly to scale of 1:164, standing nineteen feet tall and covering an area of more than 700 square feet. It showcases some of the tallest and most dramatic skyscrapers from around the world such as the Burj Dubai and the Empire State Building, and the most famous and sacred Temples from the Grand Mosque in Mecca and the Vatican in Rome to the Little White Wedding Chapel in Las Vegas. The architectural detail is

impeccable. Unbelievably, this world exists in reality, and it was envisioned, designed, and built by one man.

Stan Munro, a self-proclaimed “Toothpick Engineer,” can recall many stories of children profoundly interested in his exhibit, Toothpick World (formerly known as Toothpick City II: Temples and Towers). Their comments range from “Wow, what a complete waste of time!” to “Wow, that is the most amazing thing I’ve ever seen!” Mr. Munro says the most common string of questions he receives is: 1) Did you do this? Yes. 2) All of it? Yes. 3) Just you? Yes. And, 4) Really? Yes. Universally, the common theme is “wow.” That moment of awe is an unusual and powerful gateway for teachers to guide students in constructivist, inquiry based, and interdisciplinary curricula that I originally began to develop to meet national standards in Social Studies, Science, and Math. However, when The Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies themed its 2011 conference around the “natural connection” between Social Studies and Literacy, I realized the powerful opportunities to bring everything together through literacy.

Incorporating Writing

The National Council for the Social Studies ten themes, *Expectations for Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies*, suggest that students begin to make deep connections and learn to be participatory citizens in elementary school (1994). These concepts are well fostered in literacy skills, especially writing. Scholars suggest that students are able to demonstrate both creativity and critical thinking skills in social studies through writing (e.g., Risinger, 1987; Dimmitt & Van Cleaf, 1992; Paquette & Kaufman, 2008). As an introductory activity for the Toothpick World project, students could visit the exhibit (or virtually visit via the outstanding website, www.toothpickcity.com) and in small groups, write a newscast about what they see. This type of writing is both descriptive and creative since it elicits the students’

abilities to summarize and to capture listener interest. It requires that students make connections with historical and cultural buildings. Teachers could dig deep into these connections by encouraging students to study three or four structures and providing more detail such as where they were built, why, by whom, and for what purpose. As follow up, students could be encouraged to develop interview questions to ask Mr. Munro regarding the exhibit after developing their initial newscast. When students are able to ask questions, they demonstrate higher levels of understanding (Blythe, et. al, 1998). Students should be encouraged to work together, to rely on peer editing and feedback strategies, and to practice reading the newscast aloud before presenting their work either in class, via technology such as iMovie, or on a local access television channel.

One of the first interdisciplinary projects I developed to integrate social studies, math and science provides a framework for having students build their own toothpick community. Students work together as a class to assess community needs based on studying their own community, neighboring communities, and communities from afar. In small groups, students are then assigned to build their structure using math and science skills, and then “unveil” their structure as part of a class presentation where they indicate how the building would serve the community and what civic and economic concerns needed be to be addressed before, during, and after its construction. This project is an excellent opportunity to incorporate writing. In any cooperative assignment, teachers should consider group interdependence (Emmer & Gerwels, 2002). One way to achieve this could be to assign different roles to different students based on their strengths, aptitudes, and needs. In the project outlined above, one or two students could be assigned to write a documented account of the process of completing the project. Students would be writing an eye-witness account of the process of selecting, planning, building, and

unveiling of their structure. Further, all group members could be asked to keep journals about the experience. “Dialogue Diaries” were identified as a key strategy for social studies teachers by Dimmit & Van Cleaf (1992). As a strategy for teaching with and about primary sources, students could share their journal entries along the way and at the culmination of the project. Each of the reports and journal collections from all groups could be collected to add to a “community history capsule” and students could learn about how communities often house historical archives of community happenings such as new construction. Adding the literacy component to this project creates depth and dimension that brings the whole project together. Further, it encourages students to think like historians and community agents.

Incorporating Reading

Many social studies projects require students to read and research. This can be particularly difficult at the elementary level where students are still harnessing their reading comprehension skills. One of the lessons I developed for Toothpick World asks that students choose and then research their favorite structure and then prepare a fact sheet to share with the class. In their presentations, they consider the history, construction, and cultural and economic significance of their structure. In order to learn about these areas, students conduct library research and read books and articles pertaining to their selected structure. To thoughtfully integrate literacy, students could be also be encouraged to rely on reading comprehension strategies while conducting their research. Higher levels of reading comprehension result in more efficient research and developed content.

One strategy that could be applied is the “Click and Clunk” strategy where students learn to note when the information they are reading “clicks” and when the information they are reading “clunks,” or does not make sense. Since student might give up or skip ideas they do not

understand while reading, this encourages them to stop and use strategies such as questioning to understand the material (Vaughn & Klingner, 1999). Students could be instructed to read three different sources about their selected structure, and to summarize what they learned from each in their presentation. While reading their sources, they should be encouraged to use “click and clunk” while making summary notes. This allows the teacher to measure reading comprehension as well as social studies and science learning. Further, “click and clunk” can be differentiated based on ability level. Some students can conduct their own research and select their own readings, creating summary sheets for each. Other students who need extra support in reading can be assigned passages and can be given a guide to support their use of the “click and clunk” strategy. For example, at the end of each paragraph, they circle “click” or “clunk.” When the students select “clunk,” the teachers can facilitate the processes of questioning and decoding. As a side note, this strategy can be applied outside of the project, particularly when teaching students to read and interpret primary source documents.

Each year, the National Council for the Social Studies identifies notable trade books for excellence in social studies. Many of these books tell stories from foreign countries. *Rain School*, by James Rumford (2010), tells the story of children in the African country of Chad, who find that they have no school, so they decide to build one. When the rain washes away the school they build, the children learn that the idea of school is more powerful than the actual structure itself. This book has many deep themes for children to ponder such as the significance of community structures, the passion behind building something one cares about, and the enduring theme of cultural values that outlasts physical elements. Reading this book in conjunction with studying Toothpick World would allow for students to understand the idea of symbolism in physical structures, and that the physical structure is a representation of a greater

cultural value. As an added bonus, they would also be able to compare the experience of the children in a book who are building a school with their experiences building their own toothpick structures.

Another notable trade book, *Through Time: London* by Richard Platt and illustrated by Manuela Cappon (2009), takes children on a tour of London from ancient times to the present day, looking at the evolution of the city and its people. This allows for students to look at many of the NCSS strands, most particularly *Culture* and *Time, Continuity, and Change*. One of the most brilliant structures in Toothpick World is the Tower Bridge in London. The detail is mesmerizing and extraordinarily realistic. Choosing to focus on the Tower Bridge, as students read this book, they would be able to learn about the history of the bridge, why it was built, who used it, and what significance it has had over time. In lieu of seeing the bridge in person, the toothpick rendition provides a model that students can relate to, and allows for students look for similarities in what they read in the book. Both *Through Time: London* and *Rain School* are two of many quality children's books that can be used to juxtapose literacy with the study of social studies via Toothpick World. Since the exhibit represents structures from over thirty world countries, many pieces of literature would supplement its study.

Conclusions and Suggestions for Teacher Application

Toothpick World is the only exhibit in existence that displays so many famous buildings in one place, set to the same scale. Therefore it is unique not only in its medium, but in its potential impact for learning. But, whether a school has access to a brilliant exhibit like Toothpick World or not, there are plenty of opportunities to bring together social studies and literacy with tools available in every community. All of the ideas described above can be modified for application in any community-based program of study. Teaching children the

concepts of community, culture, symbolism, and history can be done by taking a closer look at home. The microcosm of Toothpick World has inspired the development of lessons that can be applied to any community, large or small. The idea of building a community provides opportunities for teaching literacy through a number of writing assignments such as descriptive writing (what do you see?), creative writing (who might have loved this place?), and persuasive writing (why is this structure so important?).

Choosing books for classroom reading that focus on communities from around the world opens an opportunity for students to make comparisons to life in other places and provides a context within which to discover important landmarks from around the world. Teachers should challenge their students by supporting the natural connection of literacy and social studies by selecting readings and writing assignments that connect to NCSS thematic strands. Promoting the development of proud, participatory citizens through community-based learning is a perfect gateway for all types of interdisciplinary studies.

Note: Thanks to support from the Wyomissing Foundation and endowment funds at the Pennsylvania State University, Toothpick World will be at the Reading Public Museum in Reading Pennsylvania from June, 2012 – December 2012. For more information about scheduling a trip to the museum or to see more curriculum materials, please contact Dr. Jessica Schocker at jschocker@gmail.com.

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Dual Language Children's Books in the Elementary Classroom:

Social Studies and Literacy Connections

Heather Leaman, Lacey Christman, Alicia Penny, Seiko Yamazaki

Introduction

As schools welcome a growing number of bilingual learners, teachers in K-12th grade classrooms are recognizing the importance of first language maintenance in developing a new language (Wu, 2005; Haynes, 2007) and understanding social studies and language arts.

Researchers acknowledge that use of the home language supports children in the development of literacy skills and may include 1.) speaking a family's predominant language in various settings 2.) involving families in the child's learning and 3.) including dual language literacy at home and at school (Snedden, 2008). Dual language materials (text or audio constructed in two languages) provide the opportunity for families and children to collaborate in learning a new language.

While many dual language children's texts include fiction, folktales and myths which can be easily used in teaching social studies and language arts, other curriculum materials in multiple languages are being developed to support learning in social studies, science and other content areas. Bilingual texts can be used to help maintain children's first languages while they are engaged in study of the school curriculum, in English. When dual language texts and resources correspond with the school curriculum, there is an added benefit to children's learning.

Furthermore, many dual language texts can be used to introduce or launch social studies and literacy learning experiences.

Such resources can be used to reinforce a variety of reading strategies that are expected components of K-6th grade reading or language arts curriculums as well as state and Common

Core standards. For instance, dual language resources can be used in teaching English speakers and bilingual learners to: (a) make meaningful connections between reader and text; (b) extract information from texts; (c) develop phonemic awareness; (d) understand point of view or varying perspectives; and (e) build vocabulary through introduction to authentic languages, print and representations of word languages. More specifically, an essential goal of reading instruction is the ability of the reader to make meaning from the text. In order to make meaning students need to learn how to understand multiple perspectives. Bilingual resources give the reader opportunities to experience different points of view, some of which they may not typically encounter. Furthermore, students are expected to retain information delivered through text and other sources, which can often be a challenging, yet essential aspect of social studies learning. Importantly, vocabulary development is essential in reading comprehension and social studies learning. Dual language books can be used to teach the skills of interpreting vocabulary, and applying concepts or terms in new contexts.

The following paper focuses on a teaching and learning project where a Japanese born university student and an American born pre-service teacher co-taught elementary school children about Japan. In their teaching, they used dual language materials, including folktales to introduce Japanese culture, human and physical geography. The paper describes social studies and language arts-related learning experiences used in: (a) understanding viewpoint or multiple perspectives; (b) developing vocabulary; and (c) identifying evidence to support fact or opinion or to show understanding of text. Each topic will include both theoretical and practical applications.

Viewpoint/Perspectives

In order for students to be successful learners in both social studies and language arts,

they need to be able to understand different perspectives and to identify authors' points of view. In social studies, students need to understand individuals, groups and their unique and interrelated histories, current issues, political systems, geographical regions and human experiences, and be able to consider each from multiple points of view. Children's literature can be used to teach these concepts and skills, however, in order to prevent misconceptions or stereotypes, it is essential that this information is authentic, and accurate (Landt, 2007; Virtue, 2007). Additionally, Huang (2001) states that readers need to immerse themselves in literature in order to make connections to and form opinions about the text. Good readers who make meaning from text are able to take the perspectives of characters and to use that insight to comprehend the literature (p.148).

Dual language texts can be used to teach perspective, while providing an entry point to learning about global cultures. Texts written in two languages expose the reader to the idea that someone who speaks a different language can read the same story they are reading, thereby sharing in a reading and learning experience. Bilingual resources can be used to introduce children to the origins of various languages and cultures, and to language diversity in their school or larger community. This is important in both social studies and language arts experiences.

Researchers have found that current language arts curriculums using basal readers may send students messages of being close-minded to diversity. A study conducted of three different reading instruction strategies shows that some basal programs often denote ethnically diverse characters as negative role models while white male or Caucasian characters are considered positive (Jordan, 2005). As Jordan explains, "At many different levels and through many aspects of these programs, white male ideology is transmitted, reinforcing and socializing the 'other' into the narrow roles associated with the 'other' in our society" (Jordan, 2005, p. 212). Authentic dual language resources tend to present students with settings from different countries and culturally

specific events that they may have never experienced. In this way, carefully selected authentic literature can encourage children to consider their own and the perspectives or experiences of others (Kelley, 2008; Landt, 2007; McNulty, Davies, & Maddoux, 2010). These and other resources can be used when children are studying a specific region of the world, examining its cultural and linguistic characteristics and historical development. In order for students to better understand what it would be like to live in a certain place, teachers can share a folktale from that culture that is written in their native language, or read about a custom or cultural celebration from that region. This strategy can be an effective way to support new English language learners and build classroom community while teaching about viewpoint, perspective and world cultures.

Teaching Example. During a university-school partnership using dual language books to teach about world languages and geography, co-teachers used a Japanese tale, “Empty Cup Mind” from the book, *Wisdom Tales from Around the World*, in order to establish dispositional expectations for children’s first learning experience about Japan. The tale suggests that we must have an open mind to learn about a culture and region of the world that may differ from our own. The teachers read aloud in both Japanese and English the Japanese folktale *Urashima and the Kingdom Beneath the Sea*, a book commonly read to children in Japan. In this way, children could listen to the sound of Japanese and understand the meaning of the story by listening to the same tale, read in English. Following the introduction, co-teachers shared information about Japan’s geography and pop culture, supplemented by images and the life experiences of one of the co-teachers, who was born and raised in Japan. Children learned about the size and population of Japan in comparison to the state of Montana. They had opportunities to practice locating both locations and describing the relative location of each. Children were introduced to familiar products from Japan such as videogames, cartoon characters, or foods that are also commonly eaten by people both Japan and the United States and then had an opportunity to learn

about raw materials, natural resources, trade between countries, and the influence of technology on people in both regions. Listening to the experiences of a Japanese born teacher and discussing the similarities in pop culture and trade allowed students to engage in conversations leading to enhanced perspective-taking and the ability to understand varying points of view.

Vocabulary Expansion

Vocabulary and concept development are related to both language arts and social studies literacy. Dual language books can be effective tools to expand on students' vocabulary. They can be used to teach content specific vocabulary and to enrich students' knowledge of words and their uses in a variety of contexts. Dual language books related to a specific culture usually contain vocabulary and terms that can be defined using context clues. One of the Common Core standards for elementary aged children suggests that students determine a theme or central idea of a text using the information presented. Vocabulary used in dual language books can aid students in establishing the main idea of a text, making inferences about the text, and by using contextual clues to understand new vocabulary terms. Dutro & Ellen, researchers of achievement for English Language Learners, compare vocabulary to bricks and mortar. They describe bricks as the content specific words that students need to know and the mortar as the context clues of the text connecting the definition of the word to the content of the story or text (2011). When students are able to mold the bricks and mortar (vocabulary and context clues) together they can make meaning of the text. Similarly, bilingual resources can be used to aid vocabulary growth for bilingual learners and monolingual learners (Roseingh, 2011; Weisman & Hansen, 2007) integrating social studies and language arts, presenting an opportunity to learn new words specific to social studies through the study of different regions, cultures, and customs.

Vocabulary is essential for students to become successful learners, and dual language texts can be an engaging resource to build new vocabulary.

Teaching Example. Children learned about Japan’s geography and culture and were simultaneously exposed to new vocabulary terms and geographic or cultural concepts, including the following key two ideas: (1) Japan is made up of four main islands: Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu, and Hokkaido; (2) The Japanese New Year, “Gantan” is an important holiday in Japan. On New Year’s Eve, Japanese people go to temple, New Year’s Day, they go to shrine. New Year traditional food, “osechi” commonly includes kelp rolls, black beans, mashed sweet potatoes with chestnuts, dried sardines, herring roe, and fish cakes that are placed inside a lunchbox called a “jubako.” There is a tradition of eating buckwheat noodles on New Year’s Eve for longevity, and presenting children with “otoshidama,” a small envelope containing money. Children receive “otoshidama” from their parents and relatives on New Year’s Day.

Through these learning experiences, children develop understanding of ideas and concepts such as: island, archipelago, country, holiday, year, custom, shrine, temple, Buddhism and Shinto religions, resources, and symbolism. Furthermore, in their study of Japanese New Year, children were introduced to a global perspective on a holiday celebrated in many nations, specifically drawing connections between Japanese and American observances and to their own families’ customs. As described by Montgomery & Christie (2011), global study on New Year’s can be used to “emphasize global understanding, multiple perspectives, and civic responsibility” (p. 14), and can enrich the study of cultural celebrations to incorporate key social studies learning.

Using Evidence

Authentic and accurately illustrated literature and bilingual texts can be used to introduce, practice, or refine the skill of using evidence from text to cite information and support opinion. Both the Pennsylvania and the Common Core standards suggest that students demonstrate mastery of this skill before they enter high school. The Core standards state that students will be able to “cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text explicitly says” (Common Core 8). In the article “Drawing on Text Features for Reading Comprehension and Composing,” Risko, Walker, Bridges & Wilson (2011) stress the importance of using pictures to strengthen reading comprehension (p. 377) and cite the work of Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson (2003) and Maderazo et al. (2010) who reference the use of illustrations to develop text comprehension. This suggests that students can use pictures in bilingual texts to gain information, and make inferences about the story, characters and meaning of words. In practice, if students are having difficulty with any given text, students could begin by citing information from observations of pictures or illustrations. Once the students have become comfortable with citing information while using pictures, they begin to identify important details from the text as evidence.

Teaching Example. While learning about Japan, children were able to experience two authentic and typical Japanese tales to help students understand Japanese culture. The co-teachers guided children to use both the illustrations and text in *Urashima and the Kingdom Beneath the Sea* to summarize the story, make predictions about the outcome of the story, make inferences about the characters, and cite expressions of Japanese culture, architecture, geography, resources, art forms, and history.

Examples of Associated Standards and Concepts for Social Studies and Language Arts:

Viewpoint, Evidence, Vocabulary

Strong connections exist between the use of bilingual texts and the development of social studies and language arts skills and concepts and can be related to state and national standards.

This includes related NCSS themes: Culture, People Places & Environments, Individual Development and Identity, Global Connections, and Civic Ideals and Practices. PA standards in reading and geography can be addressed in elementary classrooms through the use of dual language texts; the following examples of Reading and Geography standards illustrate connections to curriculum and state standards for children's learning.

Geography Standards

- Description and location of places and regions as defined by physical and human features
- Physical characteristics of places and regions
- Human characteristics of places and regions (population, culture, settlement, economic, political activities)

Reading Comprehension Standards

- Interpret the meaning of content-specific words used in text
- Make inferences and draw conclusions based on text.
- Make inferences from text when studying a topic/draw conclusions, citing specific evidence from the text to support answers
- Read, understand, and respond to works of literature
- Identify and interpret the meaning of vocabulary

Conclusion

In this time when social studies has limited teaching time in elementary school classrooms, educators and administrators realize social studies learning may be maintained when integrated with the school language arts curriculum (Parker, 2012; Field, Bauml, & Ledbetter, 2011). In combination with learning about world geography, both human and physical, dual language materials can offer an opportunity to explore cultures (Field, Bauml, & Ledbetter, 2011). Simultaneously, literature can be viewed as a powerful way to help children develop perspectives beyond their own and encourage children in the development of literacy skills. Furthermore, literature can serve as motivational for bilingual learners (McKay, 1982) as well as monolingual speakers. Ultimately, we view dual language materials, when authentic and carefully selected, to be a window to social studies learning, framed by literature experiences and exposure to language and cultural diversity.

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**Considering Literacy:
Responses from a Secondary Social Studies Methods Course**

Jennifer Cutsforth

Abstract

This study examined what pre-service teachers enrolled in one secondary social studies methods course say about the role of literacy in the teaching of social studies. Drawing on multiple approaches to literacy, this study considered how nine pre-service teachers reflected on reading in a social studies classroom. Participants described literacy instruction as significant in social studies education because of the opportunity to develop critical reading skills, particularly through the reading of primary documents. This study seeks to build on research in teacher education that examines intersections between literacy and social studies education.

Introduction

Research and practice-based literature in literacy education prompts multiple definitions and conceptualizations of literacy. Roe, Stoodt-Hill, and Burns (2007), for example, define literacy as “the ability to comprehend and produce written language and the willingness to do so in order to operate effectively in a particular social context” (p. 5). Disciplinary literacy refers to the understanding of textual meaning as represented in particular content areas (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012a). Critical literacy infers skills of examining text for multiple perspectives and meaning (Reidel & Draper, 2011).

In Pennsylvania, academic standards exist for reading, writing, speaking, and listening (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012b), providing explanations of expected student outcomes regarding literacy. The PSSA (Pennsylvania System of School Assessment) regularly

assesses how students meet standards of reading and writing from grades 3-11 (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012c). In addition, the state of Pennsylvania recently developed the Pennsylvania Comprehensive Literacy Plan: keystones to Opportunity (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012a), a document that references multiple standard sets for literacy, as well as five guiding principles and six essential elements for literacy instruction. In this document, the state of Pennsylvania describes the vision of its literacy plan, explaining that “all students in Pennsylvania from birth through Grade 12 will become well-educated citizens with a command of literacy that prepares them for the challenges of the 21st century and enables them to achieve their personal and professional goals” (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012a, p. 2). The state of Pennsylvania has also adopted the Common Core Standards in English Language Arts (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012b; National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010), which specify standards for reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language, as well as standards for literacy in disciplines such as history and science.

Because of the importance of literacy instruction in K-12 schools, it is important to prepare future teachers to address literacy in the classroom. The purpose of this study is to consider what pre-service teachers enrolled in one secondary social studies methods course say about the role of literacy, particularly reading, in the teaching of their subject area. This analysis begins with an exploration of key concepts present in conversations about literacy and social studies education. A brief review of the methods used to collect data follows, continued with a review of the findings, as pre-service teachers discussed the importance of critical reading and analysis, reading primary sources, and the integration of reading and writing strategies in social studies instruction. Finally, the author concludes with a discussion of implications for the intersection of literacy and social studies education.

Literacy and Social Studies Education

Much work advocates the role of literacy in social studies education (Beck & McKeown, 2002; Gallavan & Kottler, 2002; Massey & Heafner, 2004; Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012a; Reidel & Draper, 2011; Wineburg, 2005). In the state of Pennsylvania, the Comprehensive Literacy Plan calls for specific attention to disciplinary literacy, a characterization of literacy that pushes beyond reading and writing strategies, but rather conceptualizes literacy as a means “of understanding the discipline itself” (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012a, p. 99). The Comprehensive Literacy Plan envisions multiple modes of literacy instruction in social studies education, including reading and writing. In addition, the state of Pennsylvania’s Comprehensive Literacy Plan, as well as the Common Core Standards in English Language Arts that focus on literacy in history (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010), emphasize the role of historical thinking, particularly in the reading of primary and secondary sources. Historical thinking, argues Wineburg (2005), is a type of literacy, a way of critically thinking about text that involves examining sources from a disciplinary perspective. Teaching toward historical thinking represents one means of addressing literacy in the social studies classroom.

The National Council for the Social Studies vision statement on powerful teaching and learning in social studies identifies disciplinary literacy, analysis of multiple texts, and reading and writing as important skills and tasks to be integrated in the social studies education classroom (NCSS, 2010). Researchers and teacher educators have suggested strategies that may be applied to the integration of literacy instruction and K-12 social studies education. These include generating student-centered discussion through varied connections to reading (Gallavan & Kottler, 2002), using multiple strategies to scaffold comprehension before, during, and after reading (Massey & Heafner, 2004), and examining the meaning of texts through questioning and

discussion (Beck & McKeown, 2002). In addition, Reidel and Draper (2011) describe critical literacy as reading texts not only for comprehension, but also from a critical lens, examining textual bias and perspective as integral to meaning. Critical literacy approaches may also ask preservice teachers and students to grapple with issues related to power and “marginalized voices” (Reidel & Draper, 2011, p. 125). Similar to historical thinking, critical literacy represents a fundamental skill in a democratic society, as citizens require the skills of literacy to make informed judgments about texts and media (Reidel & Draper, 2011).

In a study conducted in a middle level social studies methods course (Reidel & Draper, 2011), pre-service teachers were introduced to multiple response activities for assigned readings during the semester. Not only did the activities introduce the pre-service teachers to strategies that they might use in their future teaching, but specifically, pre-service teachers were introduced to strategies that might promote critical literacy, including active engagement with text, analysis of meaning, and connections across texts to self and communities (Reidel & Draper, 2011). In some cases, however, and due to multiple factors, middle school and secondary content-area teachers may not commit to literacy instruction in the classroom. Literacy instruction may be viewed as secondary to content (Massey & Heafner, 2004; Reidel & Draper, 2011). Massey and Heafner (2004) note that social studies teachers may lack the preparation required to teach disciplinary literacy. Additional teacher preparation in areas of critical and disciplinary literacy may need to be addressed in social studies teacher education programs (Massey & Heafner, 2004; Reidel & Draper, 2011; Wineburg, 2005). Reidel and Draper (2011) contend that additional examination of literacy instruction in both social studies education and social studies teacher education is necessary.

Method

Findings are drawn from one secondary social studies methods course that was part of a larger multi-site collective case study. This one-semester methods course, a course that took place at a large university located in the northeastern United States, met for fourteen sessions, enrolling 27 pre-service teachers, including both undergraduate and graduate students. The researcher had no prior connection or affiliation with the university, teacher education program, methods course instructor, or methods course students. Topics featured in the course included sessions on unit and lesson planning, methods of social studies instruction, and assessment. The course also included two sessions focusing on literacy instruction in social studies education.

Pre-service teachers who participated in this study completed three questionnaires and had the opportunity to volunteer for further participation, which included three semi-structured interviews completed over the course of the semester, asking pre-service teachers about their developing understandings about teaching social studies (Conklin, 2009; Kennedy, Ball, & McDiarmid, 1993). Nine pre-service teachers participated in the interview process. While the pre-service teachers were not asked specifically about literacy, many pre-service teachers referred to literacy, including both reading and writing, as important to their future teaching. Data collection was followed by traditional methods of qualitative data analysis. The questionnaires and interview transcripts were read and reread for themes as they related to literacy, particularly reading in the content area (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The researcher then identified emergent themes and specific responses concerning pre-service teachers' understandings about intersections between literacy, particularly reading, and social studies education.

Considering Literacy and Social Studies Education

Conversations with pre-service teachers revealed three themes connected to literacy and social studies education that were particularly important to future teachers. These themes were: 1) the importance of critical reading skills, 2) learning outcomes associated with reading primary documents, and 3) the perceived practical value of learning specific literacy strategies.

Three of the nine pre-service teachers brought attention to critical reading skills, particularly as they connected to future applications of such skills. According to these pre-service teachers, the development of critical reading skills, generally described here as skills characterized by comprehension of meaning and analysis of perspective, serves an important function in social studies education. One of the three pre-service teachers seemed to contend that the central purpose of using texts in social studies classes is to develop critical reading skills, more so than the goal of acquiring content. A second pre-service teacher explained his ideas:

I just think analyzing something that you read and understanding context, understanding where is this person coming from, I think that's very important . . . critical thinking skills, I think, are a part of being an active and informed citizen. I think it's important, especially given the way politics and media and all those sorts of things are in our country, it's important to be able to read something and say, okay, well, where is this person coming from.

Here, this pre-service teacher connects critical thinking skills, particularly those associated with reading, to the goal of preparing democratic citizens (Reidel & Draper, 2011).

Four of the nine pre-service teachers interviewed in this study emphasized the importance of reading primary documents. Their emphasis on the value of reading primary documents for connections across contexts and for multiple perspectives begins to characterize components of

historical thinking and disciplinary literacy (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012a; Wineburg, 2005). One pre-service teacher brought particular attention to the challenging nature of reading primary documents, but noted their authenticity as an appealing characteristic. A second pre-service teacher described how primary documents brought history “to life.” In addition, a third pre-service teacher focused on the role that primary documents could play in facilitating critical thinking, saying:

Just thinking about the importance of primary documents and the importance of students making their own thinking about it. . . . It goes along with students learning and then thinking about it critically. And I mean, learning about the concept and then reading the primary document, making their own decision rather than me just saying ‘this is the way it was.’

While the pre-service teachers noted connections between critical thinking and primary document analysis, they particularly emphasized the value of making authentic connections between self and historical contexts.

As described earlier, the secondary social studies methods course observed here included two sessions focusing on literacy, one on reading and a second on writing in social studies classrooms. Two pre-service teachers spoke to the practical value of learning specific literacy strategies. Both pre-service teachers described the importance of scaffolding when integrating reading and writing into the social studies classroom, drawing upon specific strategies to support scaffolding. One pre-service teacher used the example of focusing on key vocabulary and supporting comprehension by asking students to rephrase difficult text located in documents such as the Constitution. She noted the importance of “building bridges” to content through the use of reading strategies.

These pre-service teachers suggested their consideration of connections between literacy and social studies education. Their ideas connect with goals described earlier, including the facilitation of critical literacy and disciplinary literacy, as well as the integration of specific literacy strategies into instruction in social studies classrooms.

Conclusion

During the researcher's conversations with pre-service teachers, several seemed already aware of aspects of disciplinary literacy. Pre-service teachers' burgeoning consideration of the value of examining primary and secondary sources for bias and perspective, as well as situating sources within particular contexts, reflects concepts of historical thinking and disciplinary literacy (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012a; Massey & Heafner, 2004; Wineburg, 2005). In this particular secondary social studies methods course, pre-service teachers experienced one session that focused on the use of primary sources in social studies classrooms, so their participation in that session may have impacted their developing understandings about historical thinking and the analysis of primary sources. Wineburg (2005) notes that a significant goal of social studies education concerns developing students' skills of reading and writing.

Despite pre-service teachers' consideration of a form of disciplinary literacy, and while a few pre-service teachers noted the importance of specific literacy strategies to support reading comprehension, these pre-service teachers did not appear to recognize connections between disciplinary literacy and literacy strategies for comprehension, particularly the ways that literacy strategies for comprehension might support disciplinary literacy and the reading of primary documents. In addition, when two pre-service teachers discussed the importance of scaffolding, they focused on comprehension of text, but neglected to connect comprehension to analysis as part of the scaffolding process.

As literacy continues to be a key goal in K-12 education, and as disciplinary literacy, in particular, receives additional emphasis in Pennsylvania's Comprehensive Literacy Plan (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2012a), the integration of literacy and social studies education remains a consideration that teacher educators might address in more depth (Reidel & Draper, 2011). Research in teacher education demonstrates that well-designed and substantive programs can impact pre-service teachers' developing understandings about teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). This study attempted to demonstrate that, at least in one case, pre-service teachers are conversing about ideas and goals related to literacy in social studies classrooms. Attention to conceptualizations and strategies of literacy in social studies teacher education and social studies methods courses may encourage continued conversations about these issues among future teachers.

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Connecting Teacher Education to the Elementary Classroom: Integrating Literacy and Social Studies within a Field Trip

Linda Plevyak and Todd Williford

Abstract

This article highlights a collaborative project that emphasized making connections between an elementary social studies methods course and a third grade classroom. Pre-service teachers participated in social studies and literacy lessons that made connections between classroom learning and a real-life experience embedded in a field trip to a grocery store. The third graders, in conjunction with the pre-service teachers, created a grocery list from a recipe, developed vocabulary and questioning skills to enhance communication, made connections between specific knowledge, skills and job responsibilities within a grocery store, and analyzed and compared different food items to promote healthy food choices.

Taking Pre-service Social Studies Methods into the Elementary Classroom

An important component of a pre-service elementary teachers social studies methods course is bridging the gap between what is taught at the university and the implementation process in an actual classroom (Leming, Ellington & Schug, 2006; Meuwissen, 2005). This article highlights a project that had pre-service teachers work with third grade students to emphasize social studies, literacy and experiencing a field trip. As one of the goals of elementary social studies education is awareness of and participation in the community, the lesson was partly taught in the classroom as well as in the local business area (Kisiel, 2006). The project

began because of a collaborative effort between a university instructor, Dr. Plevyak and an elementary classroom teacher Mr. Williford. The following goals were established for the pre-service teachers:

- 1) To have the pre-service teachers participate in integrated social studies and literacy lessons that help to make connections between classroom learning and every day life experiences.
- 2) To have the pre-service teachers reflect on how ideas from the social studies methods course are being implemented in the lesson and how connections are made across curricular areas.
- 3) To have the pre-service teachers see the impact a field trip can have on student understanding of content and use of higher order thinking.

Value of Field Trips

Making connections between their classroom learning, every-day life experiences outside of the classroom and helping pre-service teachers value field trips was a crucial part of this class exercise (Melber, 2007). To promote an appreciation for how valuable field trips can be in the learning process, it was important for the pre-service teachers to participate in a field trip so they could see elementary students learning through direct experience (Nespor, 2000).

In the elementary social studies curriculum, community helpers are emphasized to increase children's knowledge of the world of work, use of tools, diversity of jobs, how businesses and organizations are structured and how people support each other (NCSS, 2010). Field trips that provide contact with adult models can build upon a child's concept of the real

world (Noel, 2007). Children who go on a field trip share a common, unifying experience that can be used to extend the field trip into the classroom by role-playing, problem-solving and sharing ideas (Griffin and Symington, 1997). Whether a field trip is used as an introduction to an instructional program, part of the body of a unit of instruction, or as a culminating activity, it is one of the most vibrant teaching-learning experiences educators can use.

Integrating Content Areas

There is a continuum to integrating curriculum from the conventional approach of teaching subjects separately to providing an integrative learning approach that is interdisciplinary and promotes a holistic way of thinking (Virtue, Wilson and Ingram, 2009). This project was in the middle of the continuum as it focused on integrating two content areas: language arts and social studies with a real-world connection through the field trip. Integrating literacy and children's literature with social studies is a natural way of gaining a broader perspective of the world (Brophy and Alleman, 2007).

Mr. Williford's third grade class was focusing on grocery stores during this project and had read the following books: Klein, A. (2008). *Max goes to the grocery store*. Minneapolis, MN: Picture Window Books, Schaefer, L. (2000). *Supermarket*. Chicago, IL: Heinemann and Schwartz, (2009). *Our corner grocery store*. Toronto, Canada: Tundra Books.

A short synopsis of each book is described here:

- 1) *Max goes to the grocery store*-While watching a movie, Max and a friend decide to go to the grocery store and find the ingredients for the perfect snack.
- 2) *Our corner grocery store*-Anna Maria works in her grandparent's grocery store meeting neighbors and learning how the store plays a part in the community.

- 3) *Supermarket*-This book highlights who works in a supermarket, including the store manager, bakery manager, butcher, grocery clerk, cashier, and others.

To draw connections to the books and focus the students on the field trip the following objectives were identified for the before, during and after field trip activities:

- 1) Students will create a grocery list and follow a recipe (i.e. follow directions, compare prices and brands and budget costs).
- 2) Students will develop vocabulary and questioning skills to enhance communication (i.e. interview the grocery store workers).
- 3) Students will make connections between specific knowledge and skills and job responsibilities within the grocery store.
- 4) Students will analyze and compare different food items (i.e. make healthy food choices).

Pre-Activities to the Field Trip

During this project the pre-service teachers visited Mr. Williford's class and interacted with the third graders two times before and one time after the field trip for approximately 40 minutes per visit. The elementary school was approximately five miles from the university so the pre-service teachers carpooled to the site. The pre-service teachers were given the names of specific students they were going to work with so that when they met the students they already knew their names. Each of the pre-service teachers was paired with one of the third graders, so there was almost a one-to-one ratio of pre-service teachers to students.

The pre-service teachers visited Mr. Williford's third grade classroom a few days after the books were read to discuss what the students remembered from the literature, make note of any misconceptions they had about the subject matter (grocery stores, healthy choices, workers, recipes, etc.) and to implement the pre-activities for the field trip (Wilson, 2011). This work was in a effort to help students make connections between their reading and the forthcoming experiences. As Noel (2007) states, "Teachers can support a deeper level of learning from a field trip by implementing preparatory lessons that result in further development or "construction" of knowledge in the content area of the field trip as well as assist students in organizing new and existing content" (p. 43).

Prior to discussing the pre-field trip activities, the pre-service teachers helped the students create a journal that they would use throughout the project. Dr. Plevyak and Mr. Williford modeled instruction during the pre-field trip activities for the pre-service teachers. Each of the following activities was completed whole group with the pre-service teachers as they were working with the students.

The focus of the first pre-field trip activity was to have the third graders create a grocery list from a recipe. The objectives for this activity were for students to focus on following directions and staying within a particular budget when shopping for the ingredients. The students were given a specific amount of money to spend (\$15.00) and they had to buy items for the recipe while remaining in their budget. This activity emphasized comparing costs and quality of food items. The students chose a banana cookie recipe: 3 ripe bananas, 2 cups rolled oats, 1 cup dates, pitted and chopped, 1/3 cup vegetable oil and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. The idea was to keep the measurement aspects of the recipe fairly simple as well as to prepare a healthy food

choice. In addition, the pre-service teachers brought grocery store advertisements and discussed saving money through buying sale items with the students.

Another pre-field trip activity included discussing the types of jobs at a grocery store and specific workers job responsibilities. The goal of this activity was for the students communicate through clear, spoken language (asking interview questions) and listening skills (writing down what the interviewee was saying).

The third graders brainstormed the following list of workers (figure 1):

- Cashier, dry goods stocker, manager, deli and bread workers and fruits and vegetables stocker.

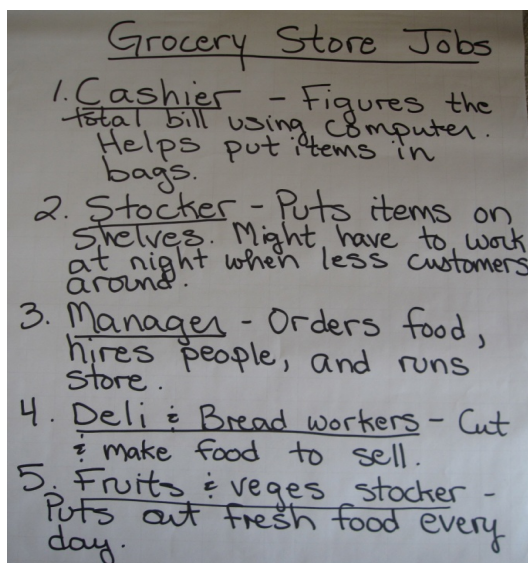


Figure One: List of Grocery Store Workers

The students and pre-service teachers worked together to develop a list of questions to ask the various workers about the kinds of skills needed to do their jobs (i.e. learning computer

programs, understanding food expiration dates, running various equipment, etc.). While writing their questions and deciding what they wanted to ask the workers, the students were reminded to use vocabulary words from their language arts story as a way to link their social studies and literacy curriculum. As part of the field trip they interviewed different workers at the grocery store (Griffin and Symington, 1997).

The last pre-field trip activity related to making healthy food choices. The students were given a specific meal (breakfast, lunch or dinner) and they had to create a meal that included four items with at least three of the items being considered a healthy choice. Students and pre-service teachers used the website: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/> to compare various foods. They brainstormed meal items and then analyzed the fats, carbohydrates, calories, sugars and sodium of each items (baked vs. fried fish or cereals with different amounts of sugar, fats, calories, etc.).

Experiencing the Field Trip

Typically children visit a grocery store with their families to buy food. During this field trip to a grocery store, the children were there to look and experience things they might not otherwise see or do if they were with their parents for the primary purpose of shopping (Nespor, 2000). The field trip activities emphasized economic decision-making, making healthy food choices and the knowledge and skills needed to acquire a job (NCSS, 2010). There was also an emphasis placed on making healthy food choices. Prior to the field trip, the grocery store owner was contacted and he enthusiastically agreed to have the students and pre-service teachers come to the store.

During the first visit to Mr. Williford's classroom, the pre-service teachers and students were paired together. While on the actual field trip these partnerships were maintained through

the visit. The partnered pre-service teachers and students were also broken into three groups so smaller groups could be in different parts of the store at the same time. The three groups of students and pre-service teachers rotated every 25 minutes between three activities: 1.) banana cookie shopping, 2.) list making, and 3.) interviewing grocery workers and creating a healthy meal. Each pre-service teacher was responsible for bringing a clipboard, digital camera and items needed for each activity (e.g. recipe, meal information, etc. for his/her assigned elementary student). The third graders brought their journals on the field trip to record information. There was an approximate ratio of 1:1 of students (28) to pre-service teachers (30).

The first task focused on following a shopping list based on the banana cookie recipe and staying within the specific budget of \$15. The students were responsible for finding the specified items, comparing brands (i.e. grocery store brand vs. a name brand), cost and size of item (enough of the item to make at least one batch of the cookies). The students and pre-service teachers also looked through the store advertisements to compare sale items. We brought a set of calculators, which helped with adding up the costs.

The second task was to talk with and ask questions of the various workers at the store. Students interviewed the produce manager and deli operator. Some of the questions for the produce manager included:

- How long can you keep the fruits and vegetables before they have to be thrown out?
- What is the most popular fruit/vegetable? What is the least popular fruit/vegetable?
- What skills do you need to have for your job?
- What do you need to know for your job?

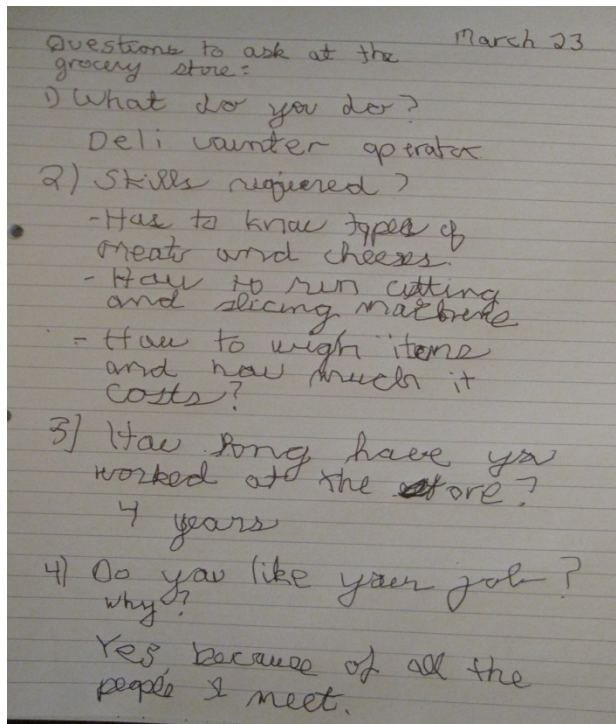


Figure two: Interview with the deli operator.

The third task emphasized creating a healthy meal. During a pre-field trip activity the students brainstormed meal items from the website: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>. They created a meal that included a total of four items with three being considered a healthy choice. The students and pre-service teachers brought this information with them to the grocery store. While there, they spent time finding the items, looking at the various brands, comparing prices and ultimately deciding on what to include in their meal. They didn't purchase any items but took digital pictures of them to use during the poster development post-activity

The students themselves didn't need to bring any money though they were all given an apple as a gift from the store manager. Including the bus ride to and from the school, the field trip took two and a half hours. The field trip occurred in the morning so students were back at their school by lunchtime.

Post-Activities

The post-activities were set up in a similar way to the on-site field trip activities with the students in groups of three. The groups rotated through each activity every 25-30 minutes. The pre-service teachers were in charge of teaching the post-field trip activities. The first activity focused on the students taking the ingredients bought at the store and making the banana cookies. The pre-service teachers emphasized how to correctly measure the ingredients using measuring cups and a teaspoon. The nutritional aspects of the cookies were also discussed: one cookie equaled 56 calories, 2.4g of fat, and 8.4g of carbohydrates.

The second activity had the students taking their interviews and organizing the responses into three categories including relation to the type of skills needed for each job, time each person worked at the store, and the job description. A chart was created with each of the jobs described with columns for skills needed and job responsibilities. The students and pre-service teachers spent time discussing the types of activities each worker had to perform and the skills needed for their respective jobs. At the end of the discussion, the students voted on which job they would most like to have.

The last post-field trip activity related to making healthy food choices. The students used the pictures they had taken of the meal items at the grocery store to create a poster. Students put the posters in the hallway and had the other third grade class vote as to which meal they thought was the healthiest as well as which one they would prefer eating.

Other activities were also done as part of this project, although the pre-service teachers were unable to implement them because of time issues. These included simulating a grocery store (with students rotating jobs), creating grocery lists for a day of meals, writing fictional

stories about grocery stores or making food. To emphasize math skills, the students could also figure in sales tax on various food products or create coupons to be used for various purposes in the classroom.

Evaluation of the Field Trip

Once the post-activities were completed, Mr. Williford participated in a discussion with the pre-service teachers and Dr. Plevyak about the elementary student learning goals and whether they were met. Evidence from the activities was shared and discussed. In small groups the pre-service teachers analyzed student journals using the scoring rubric (Figure 3) to better understand what the students learned from this project.

Overall, the project was considered a success with approximately 85% of the students achieving the lesson objectives. For those students who didn't achieve all of the objectives, Mr. Williford stated that he would emphasize vocabulary, comprehension and analysis skills in an upcoming literacy sequence that also includes social studies concepts.

The pre-service teachers felt there was a high rate of achievement. The pre-service teachers' felt that the field trip experience was well worth the class time required to conduct the pre- and post-activities as well as the field trip itself. Many of the pre-service teachers felt overwhelmed at first with the complexity of organization and preparation for the field trip though realized that working with other teachers made it more manageable. Based on the pre-service teachers' written reflections, many were amazed at the excitement students exhibited as they anticipated the day of the field trip as well as what they learned and remembered from the experience during the post-field trip session. Pre-service teachers saw first-hand that a field trip can provide the motivation for students to write (develop a grocery list, interview questions),

read (language arts stories about food, jobs and grocery stores), analyze (compare product brands and prices) and communicate (interview workers at the grocery store), all important connections for pre-service teachers to make as they develop and create curriculum.

<u>Level 1</u>	<u>Level 2</u>	<u>Level 3</u>	<u>Level 4</u>
Unacceptable performance	Approaching acceptable performance	Acceptable performance	Exceeds acceptable performance
Incomplete list or inaccurate information.	Some items or measurements missing. May include some inaccurate information.	Mostly complete grocery list, one item or measurement missing.	Developed a complete grocery list for the recipe that included all ingredients and measurements.
Unable to compare or made inaccurate comparisons between food brands, prices and budget.	Made some comparisons between food brands, prices and budget.	Made accurate comparisons between food brands, prices and budget.	Made insightful comparisons between food brands, prices and budget.
No new vocabulary words, was off task a great deal during the interview and relied heavily on the pre-service teacher for support.	Used a couple of new vocabulary words, was off task a bit during the interview and had to ask for support from pre-service teacher.	Used some new vocabulary words, listened fairly carefully to interviewee, and communicated with grocery store workers.	Used new vocabulary words, listened carefully to interviewee, and skillfully communicated with grocery store workers.
Unable to make connections between grocery store workers knowledge and skills and job responsibilities within the grocery store.	Made some connections between grocery store workers knowledge and skills and job responsibilities within the grocery store.	Made accurate connections between grocery store workers knowledge and skills and job responsibilities within the grocery store.	Insightful connections made between grocery store workers knowledge and skills and job responsibilities within the grocery store.
Incomplete or missing items from meal. Numerous mistakes in nutrition amounts.	Created a somewhat healthy, well-balanced meal. A few mistakes in nutrition amounts.	Created a fairly healthy, well-balanced meal. One or two mistakes in nutrition amounts.	Created a healthy, well-balanced meal. Accurately tallied nutrition amounts.

(Figure 3)

Conclusions

Based on our discussions and reflections on this experience, we believe the pre-service teachers will take away from this experience a greater sense of appreciation of the work involved with a field trip as well as a very positive attitude toward how field trips can promote quality learning, retention of knowledge, and use of higher order thinking skills. Because they were directly involved with the project, the pre-service teachers now have a clearer sense of how to develop a field trip and the need for quality pre- and post activities. They understand that to create a learning experience that promotes higher order thinking, they have to consider the quality of the content being emphasized as well as the necessary skills the students will have to learn to accomplish the project goals. Even though this type of project is time-consuming and requires quite a bit of organization, it is well worth the effort to see how much both the elementary students and pre-service teachers gain in learning and understanding.

Lesson Connections to Pennsylvania Social Studies State Standards

Standard	Connection to Project
6.2.3.D: Define price and how prices vary for products.	Shopping list and budget
6.4.3.A: Identify local examples of specialization and division of labor . 6.5.3.A: Explain why people work. 6.5.3.B: Identify different occupations.	Interviewing grocery store workers
10.2.3.D: Identify the steps in a decision-making process.	Creating a healthy meal

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A Hands-On Approach to Civic Literacy

Marc Brasof

Civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions, or civic literacy, are not innate. All of us must learn to become Americans making civic learning an important component of the education system. Are schools facilitating civic learning that is molding better citizens? Both the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the National Center for Learning and Citizenship argue that civic learning encompasses civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions (Homana, Barber, & Torney-Purta, 2005). To be civically literate, one needs to have knowledge of the foundations that built American democracy such as democratic processes utilized by individuals and groups, and intellectual skills and dispositions that enable citizens to understand and confront issues in society. The Civic Mission of Schools' recent evaluation of civic learning in schools, *Guardians of Democracy*, highlighted troubling statistics on the state of civic literacy measured via National Assessment of Education Progress exam and Annenberg Public Policy Center surveys. Some of their findings concluded that: only one-third of Americans could name all three branches of government and fewer than one in five high school seniors were able to explain how citizen participation benefits democracy. Providing more context to the need to improve civic education, this report contemplate links between the state of civic learning in schools and its efficacy to improve adult civic participation such as increasing accountability of elected officials and improving public discourse. (p. 6)

The *Guardians of Democracy* report argues that the current combination of assessments and standards is not producing civically literate adults, and can be remedied with six proven approaches schools can adopt which are: instruction in government, history, law, and democracy; class discussion of current local, national, and international issues and events; community service

and service learning linked to curriculum and class instruction; extracurricular opportunities to get involved in the school and community; participation in school governance; and simulations of democratic processes and procedures. For educators in charge of curriculum and instruction, a key point made in the report is that a single course on American government, which is the norm in most American high schools, “usually spends little time on how people can—and why they should—participate as citizens” and research indicates that “effective civic learning must start with high-quality, engaging classroom instruction” (p. 27). The Civic Mission’s holistic approach to civic learning challenges educators to re-envision the purpose and content of their program of studies in ways that can engage students and enable them to graduate civically literate. Constitution High School has done just that.

Constitution High School, a small history and civic-themed public school created an engaging program of studies supported by a school-wide mission dedicated to molding the next generation of active and informed citizens introduced through a course called The U.S. Constitution. The traditional American government course was rewritten, using simulated democratic processes and reflective analytical essays as the preferred pedagogical approaches, and placed in the freshman program of studies so students can be introduced to the school’s and country’s civic culture through a study of the federal constitution. We have found that students develop the civic literacy necessary to become engaged in conversations about school and community issues (Brasof, 2009, 2011) and become partners in finding solutions (Fielding, 2001; Levin, 2000; Mitra 2006).

Civic learning in the classroom starts with a clear vision

Effective schools begin with a clear vision often articulated in a mission statement. In my experiences observing and researching school change, mission statements are often lofty and

difficult to translate into clear classroom practices; and, including language that directly addresses civic competencies into a school's mission statement is an important first step for administrators according to *Guardian of Democracy* (p. 41). CHS' mission statement and tenets build curriculum, instruction, and assessment around molding its students into engaging citizens. CHS mission states that,

By engaging students with an appreciation for history and an understanding of the democratic principles embodied in the United States Constitution, this college preparatory high school will develop the next generation of engaged citizens and civic leaders in government, public policy and law. (CHS Student Handbook, 2006)

In collaboration with the school's founding partner, National Constitution Center, three tenets were developed to provide a pedagogical framework for teaching and learning throughout the school's program of studies that will help meet its mission and guide the development of a thematic program of studies. They are: knowledge of history, active citizenship, and democratic deliberation (See Figure 1).

At the center of this Venn diagram is the effective citizen. CHS and NCC purport that effective citizens need a strong background in history through content acquisition, inquiry, research, and presentation, can partake in productive dialogue across the political, social, cultural and economic spectrum, and engage in individual and community initiatives that enhance the lives of themselves and others. The United States' Constitution becomes a centerpiece of study because it embodies all three tenets and provides a curricular anchor for multiple courses and school programming.

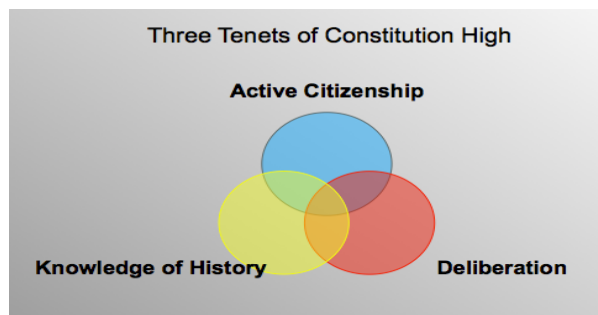


Figure 1

Re-envisioning the American Government and Civics Course

Although traditional government and civics course and assessments are intended to build civic literacy through the study of civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions, they tend to emphasize knowledge and leave little room for the development of civic skills and dispositions. Applying CHS' three tenets, the founding social studies teachers were able to revisit the goals of the traditional civics course and repackaging content so that students could become civically literate by not only studying history and civic processes, but also actively engage in controversial deliberations through simulated experiences that integrate civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions throughout instead of developing a capstone project approach common in many civic courses. The first unit of study centers on the role of government in society. The second unit identifies how the U.S. Constitution establishes a basic blueprint for government, how democratic processes operate, and if they are effective in resolving conflicts. The final study then has students learn and practice how the U.S. Constitution is used to address a broad spectrum of controversial issues.

First Unit: Society and Government: A Philosophical Perspective

The National Council for Social Studies argues that civic ideals and practices have

“developed over centuries, and are found in societies through the world...important documents...have served as milestones in the development of these ideals....basic freedoms and rights, and the institutions and practices that support shared democratic principles, are foundation of a democratic republic.” (2010, p. 157) Individuals developing their identity within a democratic system must be aware of the “social processes that influence identity formation, and of the ethical and other principles underlying individual action.” (p. 137) Placing these understandings at the forefront further defines CHS’ three tenets and frames the first unit of The U.S. Constitution course. Students dive into the relationship between their beliefs about human nature and governmental authority and the resulting implications in creating social contracts, thus creating a bridge between identity and historical concepts still relevant in modern societies.

Is government necessary? What is the nature of humans? Should there be limits to the way people can behave? Can students be trusted to govern? Students consider these questions as they participate in simulations that illuminate both cooperative and destructive individual and group behaviors triggering deliberations around the nature-nurture debate. To provide context to their experiences using a [resource](#) developed by the National Constitution Center, students explore enlightenment and pre-enlightenment concepts and writings that influenced the founding fathers when they developed our country’s constitution. Students also select and read one novel from a list, such as *Chocolate Wars* or *Lord of the Flies*, and Socratic dialogues, such as *Apology* and *Crito*, that highlight ethical dilemmas around community standards that usurp individual freedoms and vice versa. After discussion of the of the necessity of government and the extent of its influence and power these pieces of literature and primary sources present, students apply this frame to their own experiences with power and authority inside and outside school.

In this same unit students consider the appropriateness of student voice in reforming

school's practices established in CHS' constitution and look at laws and court cases from their school's history. In its inaugural year, CHS developed a unique school governance model that would enable its students to build civic literacy by experiencing civics first-hand. The first two founding classes and faculty formed a constitution, mirrored in many ways like the U.S. Constitution, establishing an executive, legislative, and judicial branch each with its own powers and checks. Faculty, administration, and students share power through democratic processes. While this innovative model has addressed a wide range of issues related to academics, organizational structures, and student behaviors facing their school (Brasof 2009, 2010), simulating real democratic processes enables students to gain personal insight into the form, function, and purpose of a representative democracy. By looking at the role individuals in a democracy have in maintaining freedoms while simultaneously ensuring the standards of community are met and then placing those dilemmas within the context of the school experience, students are exposed to a more relevant social contract, one that they can see directly impacts their daily lives. The unit concludes by students writing an essay that answers the unit's essential questions using class simulations, readings, prior experiences, and class discussions to support their claims.

Second Unit: The Blueprint of the Constitution and Governing

With the acquisition of civic literacy as the goal, students revisit their essays from the first unit but this time look closer into how the constitution establishes a blueprint for governing and evaluate its effectiveness for resolving conflicts within society. Spiraling curriculum revisits ideas and builds upon them until the student has grasped them fully (Bruner, 1960). Students are once again asked if there should be/are limits in which government can behave and then consider the role and effectiveness of the Constitution during times of conflict and compromise. NCSS

Power, Authority, and Governance curricular strand calls for such a study and suggests that, learners can become more effective problem-solvers and decision-makers when they address the persistent issues and social problems encountered in political life....examined through the study of the dynamic relationships between individuals rights and responsibilities, the needs of social groups, and concepts of a just society. (2010, p. 143)

Like the first unit, students will explore primary sources but this time spend a significant time working directly with the U.S. Constitution and then engage in a one-week simulation developed by the National Constitution Center and constitutional scholars, called the iDeal Society, that facilitates an investigation into the proper scope and limits of power and authority. By continuously using primary sources, simulations, and similar essential questions to frame each unit of study, students and teacher are able to track growth in civic literacy.

Using pieces from *History Alive! The United States* “Chapter 8: Creating the Constitution,” students learn how to read the U.S. Constitution by first looking at how the document is conceptually organized. An objective quiz is administered shortly afterwards to hold students accountable for this basic foundation knowledge that is then applied later in the unit. After review, students watch and analyze the Supreme Court case of *Youngstown v. Sawyer* using [*Key Constitution Concepts*](#) (Annenberg Foundation Trust at Sunnylands, 2011) as a supplemental resource, which deals directly with war powers and how they are separated between the three branches, and the ways in which citizens can address grievances they have with government. This historical example allows students to traverse difficult ethical, legal, social, and political questions around the scope and limitations of governmental power during when involved in international conflict.

The culminating experience is a hypothetical war powers simulation situated in the near future in which a new government initiative called the iDeal Society attempts to implant an iChip into all citizens' brains giving individuals the ability to communicate with computers. A radical human rights group emerges arguing that the initiative is not only an attack on the very nature of human biology but that government is coercing its citizens to get the chip, reminiscent of the security-freedom-privacy debates from the *Youngstown* case and first unit of study. The government limits First Amendment rights and tries to prosecute these individuals. In response, the radical group attacks public and private buildings involved with building and disseminating the iChip. The President of the United States then declares war on anti-tech terrorism that triggers the start of the simulation. After students discuss if they would want the iChip (usually the class is divided on this issue), each student is then assigned to be a member of either one of the branches of government or a citizen group. Each group is tasked to use their constitutional powers to address the hypothetical situation and is able to hold press conferences announcing their intentions or recent actions. The press conferences held by individuals and groups become moments in which the "country" can focus on specific actions usually triggering a response from other groups. Common activities and responses involve students making political speeches and protests, negotiating new legislation, and arguing citizens' and government officials' scope of power in front of the Justices of the Supreme Court.

This simulation allows students to explore how the constitution facilitates the negotiation of conflict and compromise and how, in the words of James Madison in Federalist Paper #51, "ambition must be made to counteract ambition." This simulation also illustrates that only active citizens can have their concerns addressed. And when multiple factions come together, the facts can come out and compromise can be reached. Students conclude this experience by writing

another essay addressing this unit's essential questions using both units' experiences and acquired content to build arguments and evidential support. Ultimately, students revisit their first essays' arguments that outlined students' philosophical beliefs about humans and the role of government in a democratic society by considering if the U.S. Constitution and citizens' use of its democratic processes was effective in facilitating resolution. Comments in many students' essays such as "when the constitution is used and citizens are active, change can happen" and "it was difficult to figure out which issue needed addressing more, the security of our nation or individual liberties" suggests that this simulation helped students understand that deliberation and action by all members of society is the basis of America's social contract and that finding solutions to difficult problems is not simple although possible. It was also interesting to observe that students, whom at first were first either disengaged in the political processes or disenfranchised due to passivity during the simulation, wrote how their needs were unmet and only after they become involved did they learn that their voice could actually influence others.

Final Unit: The Constitution: Safeguarding Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness

After constructing and testing their philosophical beliefs centered around the principles and form of the U.S. Constitution, students in this final unit discuss controversial and pressing issues in American democracy that were brought to the Supreme Court but still remain unresolved.

NCSS Individuals, Groups, and Institutions curricular strand postulates that,

Institutions such as families, and civic, educational, governmental, and religious organizations exert great influence in daily life...Organizations embody the core social values of the individual and groups who comprise them. It is important that student know how institutions are formed, maintained, and changed and understand how they influence individuals, groups, and other institutions. (2010, p. 139)

By asking once again if government is able to address issues in society through dialogue and democratic processes, but this time looking more specifically at Supreme Court cases, students have an opportunity to study American government as an institution that is constantly negotiating the meaning of the scope and limitations of its power through constitutional processes while individuals and groups are simultaneously asserting their rights.

In this unit students are taught how to analyze court cases using the [IRAC method](#) and then select a controversial or pressing constitutional issue for presentation, such as juvenile death penalty, school violence, equity through affirmative action, eminent domain, students' freedom of expression on-line, and gay marriage to name a few. [*We the Students: Supreme Court Cases For and About Students*](#) becomes an accessible and engaging text for this aspect of the study because it highlights Supreme Court cases students have been involved with, situates the issue within its legal and historical context, and selects important excerpts from written opinions that highlight legal, ethical, and practical perspectives raised in the case. In small groups, students form the constitutional question for their issue, research how the issue has developed historically, identify key legal language that needs defining as a result of the issue, and read delivered opinions from at least one landmark court case that attempted to address it. For the class presentation, one student must argue one side of the question and a second student the other. Another student acts as moderator framing the deliberations by discussing the context of the issue and facilitates questions between the two presenters and audience after they [deliver persuasive speeches](#). Because students experience the philosophical contradictions inherent in balancing individual freedom with community standards of behavior and safety and attempt to find practical solutions when governing in

the earlier units, conducting meaningful classroom discussion around controversial issues through Supreme Court cases as the final performance results in gross generalizations or simplistic arguments being challenged during student-led class discussions enabling the development of a disposition towards respecting opposing viewpoints as a strength in a pluralistic democracy.

Civics Learning and the Social Contract

The foundation to CHS' civic programming is the course described above because it helps to meet the school's civic mission by teaching students that America's social contract is a constant give-and-take between individual rights and community standards of safety that are defined through democratic processes. Civic literacy is then developed through active involvement in this civic discourse, which involves applying knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, being able to research its changes throughout American history, and opposing sides engaging in healthy rigorous deliberations. Constitution High School and National Constitution Center believe that this approach to civic learning in the classroom is the foundations to sustaining and advancing American democracy. Schools interested in adopting civic programming found at CHS will also discover that their course is only an introduction to the school's civic culture and that service-learning is a component of instruction within the school day, extra-curricular activities such as debate, historical society, newspaper, and mock-trial are ever present and enriched through community partnerships, and students and faculty have real decision making power via their innovative school governance model. Accordingly, the school practices all six of the proven practices for increasing civic literacy.

Not every school might be open to the cultural change necessary to include student

voice in school reform, but literature on how to replicate or adopt CHS school government model will be made available for free by the National Constitution Center and [activities](#) for students and educators to evaluate if the principles of the U.S. Constitution are present in their schools are already available. Regardless if a school adopts CHS governance model or other aspects of their civic programming, this civics course can be implemented in place of the more traditional American Government course and address many of the same learning standards without any additional cost besides professional development time dedicated to planning.

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The Constitution Happened Here Project

Mr. Michael Simzak

The Constitution Happened Here program is a unique project developed in partnership between the National Constitution Center and its partner high school, Constitution High School, in Philadelphia. The National Constitution Center is the first and only nonprofit, nonpartisan institution devoted to the most powerful vision of freedom ever expressed: the U.S. Constitution. Located on Independence Mall in Historic Philadelphia, the birthplace of American freedom, the Center illuminates constitutional ideals and inspires active citizenship through a state-of-the-art museum experience, including hundreds of interactive exhibits, films and rare artifacts; must-see feature exhibitions; the internationally acclaimed, 360-degree theatrical production *Freedom Rising*; and the iconic Signers' Hall, where visitors can sign the Constitution alongside 42 life-size, bronze statues of the Founding Fathers. As America's forum for constitutional dialogue, the Center engages diverse, distinguished leaders of government, public policy, journalism and scholarship in timely public discussions and debates. The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, the national hub for constitutional education, which offers cutting-edge civic learning resources both onsite and online.

Constitution High School is Philadelphia's only public school focused on law, democracy and history. Opened in 2006, CHS was born of a groundbreaking partnership between the National Constitution Center, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, Ballard Spahr LLP., and the School District of Philadelphia, supported by the Annenberg Foundation. The school draws students from across the city using a lottery admission. A block from

Philadelphia's Independence Mall, the school capitalizes upon the unparalleled historical resources of the city to deliver a program that emphasizes the study of social sciences through the American experience. The National Constitution Center has maintained a strong partnership with Constitution High School since the first freshman class entered its doors. CHS faculty, working in hand with the Center's staff, aim to engage students in learning about democracy through a three-pronged approach: civic knowledge, democratic deliberation and public action. CHS serves as a laboratory for new civic learning programs and curricula designed by the Center's Education Department.

One such program is *The Constitution Happened Here* program, which is currently in its third year of execution at Constitution High School. The mission of the program is to provide students with the opportunity to research and document people places, institutions and events with local historical significance that may not be as well known to people who are unfamiliar with the local area while studying public history. *The Constitution Happened Here* aims to improve students' literacy, writing, and research skills by engaging them in community based public history projects under the supervision of the Constitution High faculty and the National Constitution Center staff. The program incorporates multimedia components, field trips, and expert lectures into the classroom curricula to create a holistic learning experience with benefits that extend well beyond the classroom. At the conclusion of the course, the students are required to write a short summary of the significance of their topic in the format of a Pennsylvania Historical Marker Commission Marker, develop and record a 1-2 minute audio-visual slide show, and submit an annotated bibliography detailing their research and sources of information.

The Constitution Happened Here project was piloted in Marc Brasof's freshman African American history course, on Friday's during the spring semester of 2010. The students studied

public history, visited institutions including the National Archives and the Philadelphia African American Museum, and took a walking tour of Philadelphia. During the class, the students researched lesser known stories of Philadelphia history with a focus on African American history. Working in small groups, the students chose a topic to research and completed a topic selection paper. The students then studied historic markers and developed their own based on their research to present their topic in a fun, but concise way consistent with the methods of public history. The students also learned about audio tours and wrote audio scripts for a short piece on their topics. Upon completion of the script, the tours were recorded at Drexel University. Throughout the course, students developed research and writing skills, as well as gained a deeper understanding of Philadelphia history and how to present history to the public. The topics the students researched included: Anthony Benezet, The Uptown Theater, Richard Allen, Chrystal Bird Fauset, James Forton, Elizebeth Taylor Greenfield, Leon Bass, and Octavius V. Cato.

The Constitution Happened Here was taught as an extant course during the fall semester of 2010. The course was taught in conjunction with an elective taught at Cheney University and met on Fridays and when the university was not in session. The course was composed of mostly seniors and juniors. The course followed the same syllabus as the pilot class with some minor adjustments. The students studied public history and received lectures from the National Constitution Center staff on the development of historical exhibits and visited several local historical sites and museums to examine other examples of public history. The students worked in small groups to choose a specific topic and write a concept paper which formed the basis for their historical marker and audio tour. In order to complete their historical marker, the students were asked to study the PHMC historical makers, choose a specific location where the marker

would be placed based on historical relevance, and draft the text of the historical marker. Just as with the previous class, the students studied a variety of audio tours and wrote an audio script about their topics which were, again, recorded. Throughout the course, students developed research and writing skills, as well as gained a deeper understanding of Philadelphia history and how to present history to the public. The topics for this class included Chris Dundee, Barkley Hendrix, LaVaughn Robinson, Toni Basil, Louis Khan, Phyllis Hyman, and the Nicholas Brothers.

In the summer of 2011 the National Constitution Center received a grant from the Lincoln Financial Foundation which allowed us to expand *The Constitution Happened Here* program and develop a model for the course. As a result, we were able to hire three high-school interns from Constitution High to field test the course work and develop model projects. Over the course of 6 weeks, the three high school interns spent a combined 194 hours in a condensed version of the 15 week *The Constitution Happened Here* module which were developed as part of the expansion. They field tested and evaluated potential lessons, assignments, and field trips and completed the entire research and production process for an original *The Constitution Happened Here* project on the *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin*. The three interns produced a short researched historical marker-type introduction to the Bulletin, a 2 minute 30 second audio-visual piece on *The Bulletin*, and an annotated bibliography that detailed their research. Through the process the students displayed improvements in writing skills, a newly gained understanding of producing and editing short documentaries, and a greater understanding of how to use local archives, and improved primary and secondary research skills.

This academic year, *The Constitution Happened Here* is being taught as a full course for the first time. Aisha Mahdi has incorporated the material into her Philadelphia History elective

course for the Spring Semester 2012. She is utilizing a an expanded course outline for *The Constitution Happened Here* class which included the development of a suggested fifteen unit syllabus, lesson plans, assignments, readings, and PowerPoint presentations to be used in the class. In addition to the classroom curriculum which will focus on Philadelphia history since the 17th century, the students will study public history in order to learn the best practices of telling the history they uncover. Through the partnership with the National Constitution Center, the class will be able to take a variety of field trips to local historical sites and receive expert training in drafting historical markers, developing audio slide shows, and performing archival research, and researching and implementing public history. During the course, students will discuss themes that include organized crime in Philadelphia, religion, arts and culture, and industrialization. For their final project, the students will draft an historic marker, complete an audio slide show, and document their research with an annotated bibliography.

In the future, the student generated projects will be incorporated into a website which will document and display the historical markers and the audio visual slide shows while incorporating the bibliographical information to lend authority to the projects. The top historical markers will also be submitted to the PHMC for consideration as potential historical marker sites. The website will also contain teacher resources for incorporating *The Constitution Happened Here* curriculum into classrooms beyond Constitution High so that the materials and methods can be utilized by any middle or high school class regardless of location.

Around the World with Marian Anderson: The Power and Magic of Multicultural Storytelling

Sydelle Pearl

Abstract

The author presents a multicultural storytelling model for grades K-2 (adaptable for grades 3-5), incorporating the life and travels of famous African American singer Marian Anderson. Developed in schools with large African American populations, the model utilizes multicultural children's literature, map exploration, singing, creative dramatics, writing, and art activities.

Introduction

Eight years ago, I was preparing to tell stories from around the world in a storytelling residency to grades K-2 at an elementary school in inner-city Boston. I would truly *tell* these stories, incorporating songs and movements—I was not just reading them aloud. Instead of seeing pictures on book pages, the children would see pictures in their imaginations.

I started by visiting a first-grade class to learn more about the students. “Is there anything you would like me to know?” I asked the teacher. Without a moment's hesitation, she said, “The children need stories about African Americans.” From that moment on my goal was to learn about an African American who had traveled around the world pursuing a passion I could readily explain to young children. Then I would tell multicultural stories, pointing on a map to countries where the stories came from, as I linked them to that person's travels in my quest to be relevant to the nearly 100% African American student population.

At first, I chose Mae Jemison, the famous living African American former astronaut. But as I researched, I realized that I could not explain her life as an astronaut because I did not comprehend it and so I decided to abandon Jemison as my subject. I realized that I needed to find someone whose life I could easily discuss with young children. In a Harvard Square bookstore, I came upon Russell Freedman's *The Voice that Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights*. Since I enjoy singing and knew how much young children responded to songs, I chose Marian Anderson as my subject. As a contralto who sang in many languages travelling throughout the world, Anderson is mostly known for her moving spirituals. On April 9th, 1939, after previously being barred from singing in Constitution Hall because of her race, she sang in front of the Lincoln Memorial for 75,000 people.

In 40-45 minute sessions over 12 weeks, I visited with about 20-24 children in each class from kindergarten through second grade. I brought along my large, colorful, world map and next to each country where a folktale came from, I marked our travels with an image. Upon each subsequent visit, when the map was unfurled, the children would excitedly search for a new image. At first, these images were pictures clearly connected to each story. As I fine-tuned this residency in different schools, the images I placed on the map became more abstract because I wanted the children to use their imaginations. Whenever possible, I also placed photos of Marian Anderson on the map, next to countries where she traveled. If children expressed interest in a particular country because of a familial connection or otherwise, I also noted this and tried to fit the country, an anecdote about Marian's travels there, as well as a corresponding folktale into one of our sessions.

The structure for each class involved singing and creative movement as students stood alongside of their desks. For example, I made up a song called “Seven Continents”. We jumped forward, backward, or side to side whenever we sang the name of a continent.

“Seven continents, Seven continents in the world. Seven continents in the world. They are: North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Antarctica, Africa, Australia.” Then they sat on the rug, usually in a corner of the classroom, as they listened to the story I was to tell that day. After the story, they went to their desks to draw an image related to the story or stayed on the rug and acted it out while I narrated. I often followed up the story experience with multicultural library books related to the story’s content that I then left with the classroom teachers to share with the children. Whenever I could, I brought in library books in the languages of the countries where the stories came from.

I was liberal in my decision to tell stories from Africa, because of the relevancy to the children, though Marian’s travels to the continent were minimal. I was guided by my own love for a particular tale, the possibilities to incorporate movement and songs into my retelling, my gut instinct of how well I felt the story would be received by children and the ways I might extend the story through a writing, drawing, or creative dramatics activity.

As a result of that first grade teacher’s words, I designed a storytelling model that I implemented in two Boston public schools and a Pittsburgh public school. This article is based upon my cumulative experiences in these schools. I also shared my insights in many teacher workshops, at the 2011 International Reading Association Convention, and the 2011 PCSS Conference in Pittsburgh.

Here are the highlights of my journey with the children.

North America--United States--Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:

Our travels began in Philadelphia, where Anderson was born on February 27th, 1897. Prior to my first visit to the school, I attached a Marian Anderson postage stamp to my map, indicating the northeastern United States. I told Anderson's life story, touching on her world travels, and at the end of my telling, I shared illustrations and photographs from books about Anderson. Brian Selznick's two-page illustration in *When Marian Sang* by Pam Muñoz Ryan of a diverse crowd listening to Anderson sing in front of the Lincoln Memorial always brought a hush over the children. *Sweet Land of Liberty* by Deborah Hopkinson offers a deeper look at the historical roots of Anderson's Lincoln Memorial concert. I also showed photographs from Russell Freedman's *Voice That Challenged a Nation: Marian Anderson and the Struggle for Equal Rights*, as well as from Alan Keiler's *Marian Anderson: A Singer's Journey*, of Marian, her parents, her sisters, her home in Philadelphia, her husband, and her dog. I introduced the terms "biography" and "autobiography" when I held up Anderson's *My Lord, What a Morning*. We wondered if Marian may have heard folktales from various countries as she traveled around the world, singing in different languages. Finally, we sang "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands," Marian's favorite song. I left behind Kadir Nelson's *He's Got the Whole World in His Hands*.

Southern United States:

I began by telling an African American story since my whole residency was to be built around a celebration of African American identity. We sang and clapped to "Juba This and Juba That," the African-American chant in Virginia Tashjian's *Juba This and Juba That: Stories to Tell, Songs to Sing, Rhymes to Chant, Riddles to Guess, and More!* I shared an adaptation of an African American folktale, "The Very Small Tabby Cat," retold by Margaret Mayo in her book

Tortoise's Flying Lesson: Animal Stories. In the tale, Little Cat interviews other animals to find out what they eat, hoping that she can grow big like them. When their food doesn't help her grow any bigger, Little Cat asks Owl for advice. Owl explains that if Little Cat uses her brain to decide to climb up high, then she can be so tall that she can look down on all of the other animals. Another version of this story can be found in Julius Lester's *The Knee-High Man and Other African American Folktales*.

Europe—Germany:

Pam Munoz Ryan's *When Marian Sang* includes Brian Selznick's image of Marian Anderson traveling to Germany by boat and as we looked at the Selznick's illustration, we pretended to travel along with her. We sang "*And the ship sailed over the waves, over the waves...*" The children found Germany on the map and noticed a new symbol, this time of a smile, suggesting a boat. I shared photos of Marian Anderson in Berlin and then retold the Grimm fairytale "The Fisherman and His Wife", incorporating songs, movements, and the words "Guten Tag" –"Good Day" in German. After my retelling, students acted out the story as I narrated it. In addition to the fisherman, his wife, and the magical fish, we added more characters: the waves and the wind. I asked the children to draw what the fisherman pulled up with his magical handkerchief when he couldn't find a fishing rod in his boat. We also sang "Going Over the Sea," which can be found in *Sing It! Say It! Stamp It! Sway It: Songs, Chants and Activities for Young Children*, Volume 2, by Peter and Ellen Allard. I left behind Lois Ehlert's *Fish Eyes: A Book You Can Count On*. I also left Stacey Schuett's *Somewhere in the World Right Now* to help present a sense of time differences around the world.

Greece:

After we located Greece on the map next to the “0” shape, I explained that Marian Anderson did not travel there but I thought that she must have heard the story I was about to tell because it was so well known. I launched into “King Midas and the Golden Touch”, using Nathaniel Hawthorne’s version as the basis for my retelling. I paused to ask what foods were on the breakfast table in the Royal Dining Room and wrote their responses on chart paper taped to the wall behind me. At the end of the story, I had the king give away most of the gold from his Treasury Room to the people in the kingdom who needed it. The children listened so intently to this story that I felt I had to revisit it with them on a deeper level.

The following week, I taped a sign that said “Welcome to the Castle” to the door of the classroom and asked a volunteer to bring it to me. We read the sign together and I explained that we were going to pretend we were in the castle. I would pretend to be the king and the children would be the people who lived in the kingdom. I would give my gold away to the all of the people who needed it but first everyone would tell me how they would use the gold. I placed my pretend crown upon my head and wrote down their ideas on chart paper as one by one, the children stood before me and solemnly told me how they wished to use the gold. I incorporated all of the comments of the children into a booklet that also included their illustrations and my retelling. The booklet was shared with grades K-2 and then remained in the classroom with the children who brought this story to life.

Scandinavia:

I showed the children a photo of Marian Anderson standing next to a snowman in Sweden, from Jeri Ferris’ book *What I Had Was Singing*. The children located the countries of

Scandinavia on the map, next to a new symbol of a shape that suggested a three-legged pot. I related Anderson's experiences in Scandinavia, where she was very popular. Fans with "Marian Fever!" waited hours to buy tickets, sent flowers to her hotel room, and followed numerous articles about her in the newspapers. She even sang for King Christian of Denmark and King Gustav of Sweden. I added songs and movements to my retelling of a Danish tale, "The Wonderful Pot" from Judy Sierra's *Multicultural Folktales*, about a magical pot that travels from the home of a rich man to feed a poor couple. For further storytelling connections, I left behind two titles about magic pots: *The Magic Porridge Pot* by Paul Galdone and *Strega Nona: An Old Tale* by Tomie DePaola.

Russia:

I showed the children photos from Alan Keiler's book of Marian singing in Moscow and a photo of the famous theater director, Konstantin Stanislavsky, who kept his mouth open in astonishment as he listened to her. Those seated in the back of the auditorium hurried to get as close to the stage as possible and sang along with Russian accents as Marian sang her spirituals. They clapped their hands and stamped their feet. We found Russia on the map near the new symbol of a shape that suggested a tree trunk. I retold the story "The Beautiful Birch" incorporating the words for "hello" and "goodbye" in Russian, about a magical birch tree that grants wishes to a man and his wife. The story is found in Mirra Ginsberg's *How Wilka Went to Sea and Other Tales West of the Urals*. I asked them what this story reminded them of. They recalled "The Fisherman and His Wife". I documented their comments highlighting the connections. I then showed a photo of birch trees. We sang, clapped, and turned around to the story-song about a tree called "The Green Grass Grows All Around" from Peter Blood and

Annie Patterson's *Rise Up Singing: The Group Singing Songbook*. I left behind the book *Poetrees* by Doug Florian.

Asia—Japan:

I placed a photo on the map from Howard S. Kaplan's *Marian Anderson* showing two Japanese children dressed in kimonos welcoming Anderson and her pianist, Franz Rupp, to Tokyo. We located Japan and the symbol nearby that suggested a turtle shell, and I shared the words for "hello" and "goodbye" in Japanese. I explained that Anderson was very impressed with the deep listening she felt from her Japanese audiences and enjoyed visiting the imperial palace and singing for the empress. Then I told my version of the Japanese tale, "The Singing Turtle," which is based on a story in *Look Back and See: Twenty Lively Tales for Gentle Tellers* by Margaret Read MacDonald. I asked them create a new song that the turtle could sing. One example: "I have a little shell and I like to play. I tuck in my head, I tuck in my legs, I tuck in my tail and then I go to sleep..." I left behind Jim Arnosky's *All About Turtles*.

Africa—Senegal:

One kindergartener, whose mother was from Senegal, wanted to know if Anderson ever traveled there. Anderson visited Senegal briefly with her pianist, Kosti Vehanen, who recounted the visit in his book *Marian Anderson: A Portrait*. Their ship docked at the port of Dakar to be refueled on the way to South America. Marian and Kosti drove around in a taxi to see the city, ate dinner at a restaurant, and then boarded the ship again. On the map, I placed a photo of Marian singing aboard the ship, from Kosti's book.

Republic of Congo:

Though Marian never traveled there, we found the country on the map, next to the symbol that suggested an open mouth, and I added songs and movements as I retold the story *Crocodile and Hen: a Bakongo Folktale* by Joan Lexau, about a hen who bravely tells a crocodile not to eat her because they are related. Then the children acted it out. A twist on this story is a Liberian version, *Mrs. Chicken and the Hungry Crocodile*, retold by Won-Ldy Paye and Margaret H. Lippert.

South Africa:

Though Marian never traveled there, we found the country on the map, next to the symbol that suggested a tree, and I added songs and movements as I retold the story “The Tree with the Difficult Name” from *Round the World Fairy Tales* by Anabel Williams-Ellis, about Tortoise’s determination to remember the name of a magical tree so that the animals could eat its fruit in a time of famine. Afterward, I asked the children to draw the magical tree and the fruit that came from it. I left behind another version of the story called *The Name of the Tree: A Bantu Folktale* by Celia Barker Lottridge. We sang songs from Africa such as “A Ram, Sam, Sam”, from Morocco, found in *Rise Up Singing* edited by Peter Blood and Annie Patterson and “Che, Che, Coolay,” from Ghana, found in *We All Go Together: Creative Activities For Children to Use with Multicultural Folksongs* by Doug Lipman.

The West Indies—Haiti:

In one second grade class, most of the children had family from Haiti and they wondered if Anderson had ever gone there. We found the country on the map next to the symbol of a well and I related the story of Anderson’s trip to Port Au Prince, where the Haitian president kissed her hand in greeting. Next, I told them “Tipingee,” from Diane Wolkstein’s collection *The Magic*

Orange Tree and Other Haitian Folktales, about how Tipingee's girlfriends gathered at the well to protect her from a man who wanted to take her away. At the end of the story, the class celebrated Tipingee's freedom by spontaneously clapping in their joy for her good fortune! I shared the book *One Well: the Story of Water on Earth* by Rochelle Strauss, pointing out the chart that indicates how much water is used by people around the world. Haiti is almost at the very bottom of the chart.

Coming Home:

Each time I visited, the children couldn't wait to help me unfurl the map and point to the new symbol that pertained to each story. Second graders made cards for me. *"Thank you for letting us hold the map,"* one of them wrote. Others stated: *"I like when you come"*, *"I like when you gave us the turtle book we got to see the snapping turtle"*, *"When you told us the story of the fisherman and his wife, it felt like I was with the man"*, *"I loved when you taught us about Marian Anderson."*

The children listened intently to the stories, acted them out, eagerly drew pictures, repeated language phrases, and joined in with singing and jumping. We made some changes in the classroom such as pushing back the desks to give us more room to move. The children often spoke of Marian Anderson, commenting that the color of her skin was similar to their own.

On my last visit, we reviewed our travels and the stories, using the map with its symbols as our guide. I sang a refrain of a song I had inserted into each story to see if the children could join in with the rest of the words. On chart paper, I wrote their responses when I asked them to tell about different things we did together when I visited. I played a recording of Marian Anderson singing *"He's Got the Whole World In His Hands."* Many children spoke of how

proud they felt listening to her. When I said goodbye, I told them I hoped they would live to be very old like Marian, who died at the age of 96. My wish was that they would find something they loved to do, the way that Marian loved to sing.

I found that telling about Marian Anderson's travels and then sharing multicultural stories created a sense of community and challenged the children with unique problems and questions to provoke them to write, move, act, sing and draw. The stories helped the students to develop a sense of sympathy and empathy; fostered an element of surprise and expectation; infused the classroom with language, rhythm and joy; developed the imagination, deep concentration and listening skills; celebrated ethnic identity; instilled a sense of curiosity about the world and helped us make connections across the curriculum. For example, I incorporated geography and reading as the children looked carefully at the map, located a symbol, and then read the name of a particular country that Marian visited. I engaged them in creative dramatics when they acted out a story and I invited them to clap and sing along with me. All of these examples relate to language arts practices that have, at their core, a social studies context. The National Council for the Social Studies states that "social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity" (www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands). What better way to introduce young children to diverse cultures than through stories?

The power and magic of this storytelling experience, "Around the World with Marian Anderson", was rooted in the connection the children made with Marian Anderson. The children came to feel close to Marian because week after week, I shared so many details of her life with them along with photographs of her family and friends. This model can be adapted to focus on any well-traveled person from any particular ethnic group that may be relevant to students. In

classrooms where students come from diverse backgrounds, a web of story associations can be shaped from this vantage point.

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Project-Based Learning and Self-Regulatory Skills in Social Studies Curricula

Darla Gerlach

This article reflects a study which examined 56 seventh grade students' self-reflections and self-regulatory behavioral development in an American History course project-based experience. Both qualitative (Student Weekly Reflection Form (Gerlach, 2008) quantified and analyzed using NUD*IST N6) and quantitative data (students' pre- and post-test scores on the Bandura Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning Scale (as cited in Pajares and Urdan, 2006) and Goal Orientation Index (Atman, 1986) were collected providing a more comprehensive evaluation of 1) students' perceptions of their self-regulatory behaviors in a project-based learning experience and 2) both the teacher's and students' perceptions of what aspects of a project-based experience were beneficial in facilitating students' self-regulatory behaviors. The overall findings in this study suggest that students had success in using metacognitive processes to self-monitor the development of their self-regulatory skills. The self-monitoring process was a deliberate approach used to teach students to self-identify their weaknesses and strengths in terms of three self-regulatory skills: learning strategy use, goal setting, and time management. These skills are instrumental in students' achieving success by independently completing a project. The outcomes of the study imply that students need scaffolding support in project-based learning in order to facilitate the development of self-regulatory skills. Also, in order for students to identify and develop self-regulatory skills in this project, they first had to experience the opportunity to participate as managers in their own learning.

Utilizing project-based learning in social studies curricula is a "good fit." Social studies is an interdisciplinary subject which incorporates various elements: the humanities, natural

sciences, politics, literacy, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving skills. In this sense, a social studies curriculum which encompasses so many disciplines lends itself to a unique method of teaching. In order for students to gain a sense of “where they are starting from” in this type of curriculum, they first have to identify their level of understanding of community in terms of the classroom learning experience itself. They also have to identify their self-regulatory skill capacity in terms of how well they manage time, how they establish goals for themselves, and what kind of learning strategies they utilize in their school work.

An overall goal of this study is to examine how project-based learning can serve as a framework for creating a well-defined, nurturing environment in which the student feels comfortable to participate within a group of peers. This framework defines project-based learning as a community in which the students engage in learning; it considers learning as a social phenomenon that evolves from participation with others. In order to understand how adolescents effectively achieve self-regulatory behaviors in a project-based learning experience, an examination of how students learn in a social context within their educational setting was undertaken.

In addition, educators need to focus on how facilitating successful student personal learning strategy developments such as self-regulation, will enable the students to develop consistent, appropriate use of academic learning strategies in classroom settings. This creates a critical challenge for middle school students who are in the process of maturational development as they cultivate effective, long-lasting regulatory skills (Blakemore and Frith, 2005). Various studies have concentrated on self-regulation; however, it appears that an exploration of adolescent self-regulatory skill development within a project-based setting has been neglected. The results of this study contribute to an understanding of the link between project-based learning experience

and self-regulatory skill development. Therefore, a question that guides this study is: How can students become managers of their own learning processes in a project-based learning experience in social studies curricula?

An integral part of project-based learning involves the teacher's willingness to grant students new learning opportunities and to empower students to make their own choices. As a middle school teacher for 19 years, I base my instructional framework for projects on my students' learning needs and the necessity of providing for both their cognitive and social engagement in the learning activities that I design for the curriculum. My overall intended goal in the project-based learning experience for this particular study was to empower students to become cognizant of how they developed and employed the effective self-regulatory skills inherent in becoming autonomous learners. A curriculum goal of the project was for students to develop a conceptual understanding of the historical events involved in the French and Indian War and the Revolutionary War and to apply their newfound knowledge in an authentically created product, a historical journal. Through students' chosen fictional or nonfictional character's voices/perspectives in their journals, each student responded to a focus question, "How did the French & Indian War and the Revolutionary War affect individuals?" My role as a facilitator included supporting students in developing realistic expectations for their authentic products as well as how to fashion an educational community in the classroom. Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of community provided a theoretical grounding as I defined the classroom environment I was creating for my students. As learners participate in a community, they become familiar with different individuals' viewpoints and how individuals interpret their participation in a community. Communicating ideas with each other encourages students to deepen their understanding of how they can solve problems through different approaches among

their learning community. Becoming a well-informed citizen in our world today involves analyzing, discussing and synthesizing information with others. Thus, project-based learning in the classroom provides students with various educational experiences and opportunities to succeed in society.

Project-Based Learning as a Facilitator for Developing Self-Regulatory Skills

The objective in a project-based learning situation is to empower students to realize their development of self-regulatory behavior and self-efficacy in the completion of the project. In teacher-directed classrooms, it can be assumed that students traditionally rely on the teacher to extract important information and convey this information to students. The outcome of this process can be students' relying on the teacher's interpretations of content rather than students' developing the skill themselves.

Students' self-regulatory skill development is not a simple, easily defined process. As most students are well acclimated to teacher-directed learning in their classes, they may have to learn how to self-manage their learning and diminish their reliance on the past practices of a spoon-fed, teacher-directed curriculum content. Rather than controlling adolescents' social and academic behavior, I recommend that teachers develop flexibility and tolerance so that students will have the time to 1) gradually develop a conceptual understanding of a project and 2) grasp the development and implementation of self-regulatory skills to facilitate goal accomplishment. Taking time to develop this conceptual understanding is invaluable as it affords students the opportunities to recognize the importance of their own effort in achieving their goals as well as their need to be vigilant in weeding out ineffective learning strategies.

For students to be successful in engaging in the self-reflection of their abilities (i.e. to engage in metacognition), teachers have to provide both the time for students to assume responsibility for the interpretation of their own learning processes and an array of teaching strategies which affords students the opportunity to do so. Typical teachers' agendas may include professional responsibilities such as coverage of curriculum-driven content within the school year. This study demonstrated that students can learn to manage their own learning process through disciplined self-reflection. However, as stated previously, students need time to develop reflective thinking and to learn thoughtfully.

Teachers must realize that project-based learning is "learner-centered." In doing so, students must become autonomous managers of their learning through a project-based experience. To accomplish this, students should have the freedom to make independent decisions as to the development of their short- and long-term goals, to create the framework for their research, to manage their time throughout the project, and to identify effective learning strategies that work well for them. It is hoped that, as they develop curriculum-related skills, that students will soon motivate and organize themselves.

To facilitate students' development of self-regulatory skills particularly in a middle school classroom, teachers need to incorporate three components of project-based learning into the educational experience: 1) teaching strategies, 2) communication, and 3) self-reflection supported by peers. This study also showed that students consistently engaged in self-reflective practice makes possible the transfer for ownership of learning from teacher to students.

Social Cognitive Theory

Through using social cognitive theory as a framework for project-based learning, teachers can encourage students' self-regulatory skill development and create a classroom environment

that facilitates students' achieving self-monitored academic success. A project-based learning experience should be well organized so that students can construct meaning for themselves with the assistance of their peers. The concept of social cognitive theory was inherent in this study as students were involved in an in-depth, long-term project requiring both the self-identification of learning strategies as well as the management of environmental factors. Bandura (1997) states, "Human adaptation and change are rooted in social systems. Therefore, personal agency operates within a broad network of sociostructural influences. In agentic transactions, people are both producers and products of social systems" (p. 6).

Students in this study directly made decisions that affected the outcome of their projects by monitoring and changing their strategies to achieve their desired outcomes. These strategies included the students' responses to the feedback they received as well as how they integrated environmental factors into their goal setting procedures. A close examination of students' responses on the SWRF's (Student Weekly Reflection Forms, Gerlach, 2008), which included 358 forms, along with my observations and student interviews, disclosed how students conceptualized my teaching strategies, connected to the curriculum, and envisioned the formulation of their goals. The students' identification of the progress of their self-regulatory skill development through self-reflection and self-monitoring was not a precise, linear process. For most students, this self-monitoring process was an unfamiliar concept. One student stated, "This is the only class that actually let us write down everything we did." As the project progressed, the weekly time set aside for self-reflection became less of a disciplined, teacher-imposed activity. After students engaged in the SWRF completion several times, the process became automatic; students felt comfortable discussing suggestions for self-improvement with their peers.

The qualitative and quantitative data in this study demonstrated that project-based learning supports self-regulatory behavior development. This pedagogical strategy afforded students many opportunities to weave their personal knowledge of the subject with the historical content that I anticipated students would learn from the curriculum. The data indicate that the more often students use specific goal-oriented behaviors in a project-based learning setting, the more likely they will perceive themselves as being able to do the necessary work. It is significant to note that, when given the opportunity to participate in curricular and assessment decision-making within the class, students created a support system among their peers to formulate strategies as a means to understand content and attain self-imposed goals. This empowerment emerged in a unique student-developed learning strategy: working sessions. Students' responses on their SWRF's suggest that as I gave students freedom in the classroom environment to negotiate meaning with their peers and manage their own learning, their actions supported social cognitive theory that a social environment enhances the students' learning. The Bandura Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning Scale and GOI (Goal Orientation Index) correlation data indicate that the more often students perform nine of the twelve goal-oriented behaviors, identified by the GOI, the stronger their belief will be that they can achieve something, thereby demonstrating self-efficacy. Specifically, there was significant pre-post growth in the Reflecting Subscale of the GOI indicative of students' ability to formulate various strategies, determine and evaluate the application of these strategies, and visualize plans and in the Planning Subscale of the GOI focusing on the students' accomplishments in terms of recognizing problems and developing organizational methods in order to establish goals.

I used social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977, 1997; Zimmerman, 1998) as the basis for understanding students' development of self-regulatory skills in this study's project-based

learning experience. Zimmerman (as cited in Pajares and Urdan, Eds., 2002) explains that as adolescents acquire self-regulatory skills, they developmentally “change their capability to self-regulate both internal processes and external forces proactively” (p. 4). Students in this project received guidance in the development of three specific self-regulatory skills: learning strategy use, time management, and goal setting. As a result, the findings in this study support Zimmerman’s ideas. The student-developed learning strategies that emerged in this project-based learning experience substantiate my observation that, after I implemented scaffolding techniques to encourage the students’ understanding and monitoring of self-regulatory skills, students internalized the cognitive processes to manage various tasks in the project. Based on students’ responses on collected SWRF’s, self-reflective practice proved to be instrumental in students’ realizing success in the use of their learning strategies. Students reflected on both their interpersonal and intrapersonal skills in the project. The importance of this self-reflection is evident in the students’ attempting to understand the cause and effect relationship of applying self-regulatory skills in the project-based learning experience.

In this study, there was an emergence of student-developed ideas for both learning strategies and goal setting procedures as students engaged in their own self-monitoring skills in contrast with teacher-initiated strategies. This outcome is indicative of students’ recognizing and modifying their attempts to manage themselves in the project. The outcome suggests that students moved from relying on the teacher-initiated strategies for developing self-regulatory skills to utilizing their own strategies for self-regulatory skill development. It is important to note that specific curricular activities encourage the transition from a teacher-directed to a student-centered learning environment. I designed these activities to encourage students to 1) utilize higher-order thinking skills to assess risks and 2) to change their strategies, when needed, to

achieve their intended goals. Teacher-implemented strategies consisted of developing and implementing twelve unique, diverse curricular activities in this project so that students had the opportunity to choose which activity or activities helped them understand the curriculum and achieve success in completing their historical journals. These curricular activities included: Guest Speakers (Living Historians); Notetaking; Computer/Internet Usage (utilizing the school's computer lab and computers in my classroom); Historical Videos; Scheduled Visits to the School's Library; Artifacts of the 17th & 18th century (provided by the Living Historians); Classroom Lectures & Discussions; Journal Checkpoints (teacher monitoring students' progress in the project); Demonstrations Related to Artifacts; a Project Calendar (illustration of the class schedule for each day of the eight-week project); Blueprints (a blueprint concept to plan the number of journal pages) and Handouts (packet of collective information on the French & Indian War and the American Revolutionary War). As evidenced by students' responses on their SWRF's, several students did not hesitate to ask questions and communicate their journal ideas to guest speakers. The students' initiation of communication between themselves and the guest speakers indicated that they took an active role in understanding what they needed to do in order to accomplish the goals they created for themselves. Wenger (1998) explains the infrastructure a learning community entails:

1. Activities requiring mutual engagement, both among students and with other people involved challenges and responsibilities that call upon the knowledgeability of students yet encourage them to explore new territories
2. Enough continuity for participants to develop shared practices and a long-term commitment to their enterprise and each other (p. 272).

The positive, purposeful educational opportunities created by the guest speakers' presence in the classroom could be attributed to students' participating actively and socially in the learning community.

In this project-based learning experience, I required students to synthesize information from a number of resources and transfer this information into their journals. Those students who were novices to this synthesizing process often found this process a challenge; they needed to consider the level of complexity of their selected goal-setting strategies. In the traditional school setting, students tend to rely on their teachers for the dissemination and acquisition of information and to set expectations for students' learning processes. Boekaerts and Niemivirta (cited in Boekaerts et al., 2000) note the students' dependency on the teacher to determine and channel the path for the students' goals: "It is accepted, even expected, that teachers should be largely in control of what is being learned, how it is learned, when it is learned, and to what extent" (p. 417). In this project-based learning experience, students prioritized the steps they needed to complete in order to achieve both their proximal and long-term goals. The synthesization process and writing historical journal entries became a paramount factor in concluding their goal-setting plan. This process can also be somewhat of a "balancing act" as students comprehend the responsibility for activating the decision-making skills needed for the completion of their final assessment in the project. Along with this synthesization process, students self-identified notetaking as an area of self-improvement. As students developed an understanding of how to interpret and synthesize information, teacher-initiated scaffolding techniques helped students utilize productive research methods. Students realized their long-term goal of completing their journals through establishing and achieving ongoing proximal goals of information gathering from one or more resources. The self-correcting method for re-

evaluating the success of their learning strategies resulted in their notations regarding switching self-regulatory strategies to complete these proximal goals.

This study adds to existing social cognitive understanding that, in order for students to identify and develop self-regulatory skills and become managers of their self-directed learning, they first have to receive the opportunity to participate in their own learning processes as managers. To accomplish this, I initially had to address the maturational development needs of adolescent students. I encouraged students' engagement in tasks which were academically and intrinsically motivating to them by creating opportunities for students to have a voice in their learning and to participate in decision-making associated with the curricular activities. As students attempted to make a transition from teacher-directed learning to student-driven learning, they needed to overcome their familiarity with previously teacher-structured assignments. Students' poignant interpretation of my teaching strategies emerged during the study, and students suggested to me that I set aside time during class so they could discuss discoveries they encountered in their research and concerns and progress about the project on an as-needed-basis with their peers. Students also suggested that they incorporate their family's histories, occupations and cherished recipes into the journal. This student-developed strategy exemplifies students' ownership in the project, and the project becomes a student-driven endeavor.

Project-Based Learning as an Effective Teaching Strategy

Project-based learning is derived from a teaching/learning model that empowers students to be more creative and more respectful to becoming independent thinkers and problem solvers. This approach to teaching is a change from traditional teaching practices as it provides students with the opportunity to establish self-motivational capabilities, maintain their own learning

process, and set goals for their performance or task/activity completion which eventually leads to a strong sense of self-efficacy.

According to Thomas, Mergendoller, and Michaelson (1999) of the Buck Institute of Learning (BIE), a California research center for project- and problem-based learning, project-based has evolved because of two major developments. Research has shown that learning is a “social activity” that draws on a child’s “culture, community, and past experiences” (Thomas et al., 1999, p. 2). Children construct knowledge not only through feedback but also by utilizing past personal experiences to interpret and understand new information and situations. In addition, the workforce now plays a role in education. While recent cognitive and behavioral psychology research explains how individuals learn, workforce requirements are causing schools to think about effectively improving instruction to better prepare students for the “outside world.” Today, students have to be able to communicate and work cooperatively within a team to solve problems creatively and achieve common goals. In addition, they have to be prepared to understand how to interpret and respect other individuals’ perspectives in a multicultural setting.

Two central elements of project-based learning are a child’s ability to 1) set goals for him/herself and 2) become self-motivated to complete these goals. Middle school students in particular are metacognitively ready to set goals for themselves by independently monitoring and assessing their own learning and preparing themselves for tests by using a variety of study tools (Rafoth, 1999, pp. 19-20). In order to foster students’ independent learning skills, it is critical for the middle school classroom teacher to be cognizant of a child’s potential metacognitive skill capacity and to implement effective teaching strategies that enable a student to succeed academically and socially. These teaching strategies include the teacher’s responsiveness to students' questions. With the implementation of effective instructional strategies and with the

support of a teacher, students can become more motivated and confident to independently achieve academic success (Rafoth, 1999; Katz and Chard, 1989; Kessler, 2000; Dewey, 1938).

In contrast to traditional, routine methods of teaching, it has become apparent that more constructive, long-term beneficial approaches to engage learners are required in education. Covington (1998) stresses that educational reform is necessary in order for students of all levels of academic achievement to develop the motivation to learn and to manage change.

Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martinez-Pons (1992) have demonstrated that self-motivation is a contributing factor for the success of self-regulated learners concerned with setting and attaining goals for themselves. Their study used a sociocognitive model of self-regulated motivation and academic learning to test students' perception of their self-efficacy and the influence of self-efficacy on academic achievement. Teachers recognize self-regulated learners for their "proactive orientation and performance" and their ability to be self-motivated (Zimmerman et al., 1992, p. 664).

Pajares (2006), who examined and explained his findings on self-efficacy in childhood and adolescence, comments: "...unless young people believe that their actions can produce the results they desire, they have little incentive to act or persevere in the face of the difficulties that inevitably ensue" (p. 339).

The learning skills acquired by middle school students prepare them to succeed in the workforce both autonomously and in team settings (Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martinez-Ponz, 1992; Alderman, 1999). As a result of their participation in project-based learning experiences in middle school, students potentially 1) gain insight into identifying and gathering a variety of

resources, 2) work with individuals who have mastered skills, 3) develop a perspective that incorporates team members' ideas, and 4) empower themselves to find solutions to problems.

As students engage in problem-solving skills with project-based learning, they also learn to think about what they are actually doing in their activities. This process of “thinking about thinking” has been identified as “metacognition” (Flavell, Miller, and Miller, 2002, p. 164).

Flavell, Miller and Miller (2002) believe that metacognition is a type of knowledge that is gradually acquired, “domain-specific,” and a “tool of wide application” since it can be utilized for solving many different kinds of problems. Metacognition is particularly important in the field of education where children engage in problem-solving skills and can double-check their process of completing a task and their end-product (Flavell et al., 2002). Flavell et al. (2002) comments that a “good teacher” has many ways to successfully instruct students on how to double-check their cognitive procedures simply by encouraging a student's own active participation in this process (p. 167). It is important for students to follow-through with this process in their journey of education. Flavell et al. (2002) note that in conjunction with problem-solving, children often rely on the “game of thinking” to learn and apply newly acquired information. In essence, they acquire learning behaviors in “how things are supposed to go” and, subsequently build on these methods throughout their educational career especially in problem-solving situations (p. 167).

A Project-Based Model Which Facilitates Self-Regulatory Skills

The sequence of self-regulatory skills that the project-based learning experience can develop are comparable to a logarithmic spiral in nature which is created by the sequential self-organized patterns of the nautilus. Each new growth within the logarithmic spiral is regulated

and organized in a precise pattern. Self-regulatory skills can be developed through a deliberate, self-monitored, and self-reflective process. These skills, built upon experiences, enable the students' maturational development to proceed. The circular nature of maturational growth through project-based learning experiences can be illustrated in the form of the logarithmic spiral found in the nautilus shell (see Figure 1.).

From the onset to the accomplishment of a goal, each phase in a project-based learning experience can be compared to each chamber of the nautilus' growth as the closure of one chamber leads the construction of another. In a similar manner, the construction of another chamber corresponds to the beginning of a new project-based learning experience. According to Titlow (2007), as the nautilus grows and its body moves into its new, living chamber to accommodate its growth, the previous chamber is sealed; however, previous chambers contribute to the nautilus's efforts to stay afloat. I used the concept of the nautilus growth to capture the goal-setting process of the students. Each chamber of the nautilus, a self-sufficient creature, contributes to its buoyancy ability just as each project that students complete contributes to their competence and confidence by providing them with the skills and knowledge to complete future goals. Teachers seeking innovative teaching methods to engage middle school students in autonomous learning might consider the nautilus-inspired Project-Based Learning Model (Figure 1.) that I have created for this study.



Figure 1. Project-Based Learning through a Nautilus Shell Lens

This model potentially affords a systematic means for students to visualize and to practice both self-monitoring and self-reflection of their self-regulatory skill development through project-based learning. The combined practice of visualizing and practicing leads students to become self-managing learners.

The model illustrates the process of self-regulatory skill development in a project-based learning experience using a structure similar to that of the logarithmic spiral of the nautilus shell. Recognizing that the nautilus chambers are organized in a precise pattern with new growth built one after another in a cyclical fashion, students may use the following phases, beginning with the application of students' personal experiences, to accomplish their goals in a project-based learning experience.

- Personal Experiences – students' real life experiences and background
- Prior Knowledge – students' accumulated knowledge of a subject
- Goal Setting Procedures – students' development of a plan to accomplish a task
- Identifying Learning Strategies – students' recognition of the strengths and weaknesses of methods used to acquire knowledge
- Time Management – students' effective use of time for proximal and long-term goals
- Working with Peers for Feedback – students' engagement in collaborative dialogue with peers to receive and use constructive feedback
- Goal Accomplished – students' integration of all above behaviors to accomplish a goal.

In a project-based learning experience that capitalizes on students' maturational growth, students have the potential to develop self-regulatory skills through a deliberate, self-monitored,

and self-reflective process in a cyclical fashion similar to the nautilus' growth. Students develop and perfect their self-regulatory skills from one project-based learning experience after another.

After each student's goal setting/accomplishment cycle, students move on in terms of their depth of personal experience and breadth of prior knowledge. This new depth and breadth occur simultaneously, whether the experience is positive or negative. Regardless of the outcome, maturational growth is always possible.

Conclusion

Project-based learning provides students the opportunities to make personal choices that direct their learning experiences. It is important for teachers to provide students the opportunity to engage in the process of creating a project linked to social studies content that interests them. By designing project-based learning experiences that take into consideration students' diverse backgrounds and allow them to infuse personal histories into their historical interpretations of the curricular content, students have a voice in their curriculum. With the teacher's guidance, students are encouraged to self-discover their creative energies and contributions to their own learning as they participate in the teaching/learning community.

Project-based learning can become a journey in which students are intrinsically encouraged to seek solutions and challenge themselves to respond to tasks with a vision of what needs to be accomplished to achieve personal goals. Project-based learning facilitates self-regulation when students independently recognize the skills they must develop, control and utilize.

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It Happened in Pittsburgh: A Conference Opportunity Puts Theory into Practice

Robert S. Gardner

Judith A. Gardner

Everyone is ignorant, only on different subjects.

Will Rogers

At the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies Conference in the fall of 2011, two professors from a small northeastern Pennsylvania university presented at a session entitled “Interdisciplinary Models for Promoting Literacy in the Middle/ Secondary Social Studies Classroom.” Not only did they hope to share their expertise about teaching social studies but also to learn from experts working day-to-day with students in grades 4-12 in middle and secondary schools how to better prepare their pre-service teachers, especially those pre-service teachers interested in completing course and field work in the university’s new middle level certification program. The presenters know that conferences are excellent opportunities to teach and be taught.

This presentation was designed to provide an overview and discussion of the Social Studies/ English interdisciplinary strategies-which these professors model and teach in their team-taught Middle/Secondary Social Studies course. The session offered participants a model which they could adopt or adapt to prepare teacher candidates to enhance the literary skills of students in their classes. It was our hope that this session, in some small way, would prove useful to middle and high school social studies teachers and administrators,

undergraduate social studies methods instructors who are interested in strategies designed to teach social studies content as well as literacy skills, and pre-service teachers.

Each session participant received a course syllabus which reflected the strategies that were used successfully with teacher candidates as well as appropriate handouts illustrating students' responses to the literacy enhancing strategies designed to aid the teaching candidates and their future students. In addition, a discussion was held in which evidence was provided that these strategies are excellent tools for teacher candidates to help prepare school children in public schools to feel confident about taking required standardized tests, including the Pennsylvania State System of Assessment (PSSA) which is required by law to be administered in all Pennsylvania public schools. This session included description, discussion, and rationale for the use of the several strategies listed below.

Socratic Seminar is a technique where students are assigned a common reading assignment and are encouraged to read, listen, and interpret information carefully which is then shared with others. This seminar approach is different from other book and/or article discussions in that students are required to answer questions posed by the instructor by reading aloud the answer directly from the text. Kellough and Kellough (2008) argue that when teachers conduct Socratic questioning sessions, students learn to identify a problem, answer a series of probing questions, then develop potential solutions. The instructors have used several readings to reach these goals in their methods classes.

For example, the autobiographical book Teacher Man by Frank McCourt helped their students better understand the art of teaching. The instructors posed questions asking students to consider complex ideas and to respond to the questions by reading a passage from the book

which represented the author's perspective. They were then asked to clearly state their own view. Students were also expected to reflect on whether the reading shaped their point of view and if so, how. One example of a question asked by the instructors was "How does the public education system limit the ability of teachers to be exceptional?" Students were able to cite numerous passages from the McCourt book which provided insights to the question, and all of the students stated not only their own thoughts but also examples from their experiences as students to clarify their perspective. The questions evoked critical thought as well as powerful insights about the teaching/learning process.

Storytelling, which is the process of elucidating a theme or idea by sharing a story about that theme or idea, is a technique used to promote empathy which also helps students hone their speaking and listening skills while they share their lived or vicarious experiences with their students. Cultural differences and perspectives as seen through storytelling may be revealed in a non-threatening way that can encourage students to flourish. According to the National Council for the Social Studies (1994), "often the historian was not actually present at the event being described" (p. 89); therefore, the historian must rely on the person who was present to share a history that is personal and worth telling.

When introducing the strategy of storytelling, the instructors each tell a story about something that happened in their public school classroom years ago. Perhaps they share an incident where classroom management was at issue; perhaps they focus on a particularly effective instructional strategy. Afterwards, the members of the class discuss how and what they learned in its historical context. For example, if the instructors discuss what they learned from teaching about World War II from a textbook and not having much success with that technique, they may explain how using another approach, perhaps a more student-centered approach, may

have been more effective for them. After the instructors share, the students then have an opportunity to share a story that reflects some aspect of their experience in a social studies classroom that they can recall. A discussion follows based upon questions such as, Why use storytelling? How is it different from lecturing or reporting? Is it an effective way for you to learn? Are good teachers good storytellers?

Primary Source Documents help students to discover what the stakeholders in any historic epoch knew and felt about the events in which they were involved or which were swirling around them, allowing students to get closer to what really happened so many years ago. Through the use of primary source documents, students develop the sense that, oftentimes, what someone wrote and what someone else said he/she wrote are not necessarily one and the same. “In a project involving a primary source paper, a student takes a short primary document and first examines the origins or the impact of the text” (Chapin, 2007, p.88), then goes beyond the text to explore the social milieu and the audience.

For example, in order to teach a strategy to explain the attitudes of slave owners about their slaves being able to read and write, the instructors chose the first two pages of Chapter VII of Frederick Douglass’s Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave (2002). After reading this short passage, the students discuss the slaveholders’ position on literate slaves. The instructors, then, assign a short paper on the passage in which the students explain why the slaveholders held such views and explain the implications of denying literacy to slaves on the future generations of African Americans in the United States.

Team Teaching is a technique that aids teacher candidates in developing essential collaborative partnerships to not only enhance instruction but also to improve their own teaching

effectiveness. For example, Binkley, Keiser, and Strahan, university professors, reported that, by integrating literacy and social studies, and by supporting each other in their efforts to make these curricular changes, three middle school teachers successfully supported their students' content learning and literacy skills in a study done in an urban school district in the southeastern portion of the United States (2011).

Both instructors have been involved in team teaching during their years as public school teachers. For many years, they team taught a two hour humanities course which combined both English and social studies classes. From this broad experience base, the instructors use ideas about classroom management strategies, unit plans, field trips, and assessments to shed light on how to teach content as well as literacy skills in a team taught, multidisciplinary course. Their students, then, write unit plans which reflect how to teach social studies content and literacy skills in concert with another teacher who is an expert in another discipline. Moreover, team teaching can be effective in the form of a K-12 school teacher and a university professor who both work together to promote teaching and learning at their respective levels of responsibility. According to Gardner and Welch (Winter 2009), team teaching “is a beacon of hope that stands as a testament to what powerful continuous relationships between elementary schools and universities can do to guarantee both skill development and content acquisition in all of the student stakeholders” (p. 20).

Interdisciplinary Teaching provides a way to hone literacy skills: reading, writing, listening, researching, and speaking, by using social studies and literature content to explore a theme or topic. Chapin (2007) observes that an interdisciplinary approach usually pairs social

studies and language arts, but social studies may be paired successfully with other disciplines, such as art or science, too. There is much evidence that students benefit by the pairings.

One of the instructors co-taught a Literature/Science Seminar with a science teacher, the only such course being taught in Pennsylvania public high schools at the time. The co-teachers, Reiber and J.A. Gardner (2000), “developed Seminar from [the] belief that students too often view science as a discrete set of information and skills divorced from other areas of academic endeavor” (p.27). In this interdisciplinary course in order to change their students’ view, the teachers used the major events in the history of science as the timeline for the course, then they selected readings from literature to reflect the major scientific events. For example, when planning a lesson on breaking the genetic code, the instructor used passages from James D. Watson’s book, The Double Helix. One of the group assignments for the course was to write a short play about a significant scientific event then perform it for the class.

Historical Novels offer high interest reading material which can motivate social studies students to learn more about a particular period in history. In Expectations of Excellence (1994), the NCSS recommends that using well-placed historical novels in the curriculum will help students understand the lives of ordinary people living in extraordinary times.

When teaching social studies methods, the instructors recommend that the students select historical novels as readings to be used in their unit plans. Samples of some historical novels which are available in the education department curriculum laboratory are Among the Hidden by Margaret Peterson Haddix, Malu’s Wolf by Rugh Craig, Shylock’s Daughter by Mirjam Pressler, Johnny Tremain by Esther Forbes, and The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane.

Journaling is a technique designed to capture student experiences/ impressions as they occur. Later on, after they have observed and recorded their thoughts, students can reflect on their written observations and compare/contrast their experiences/impressions with other teacher candidates in similar situations. In sharing these reflections, they can learn from each other about how best to manage a classroom, teach a lesson, etc. According to the NCSS (1994), if students keep journals “detailing their experiences” then “share their observations in a seminar discussion,” they will develop literacy skills in the form of writing and presenting and learn appropriate content as well (p. 122).

Emerging teachers can use journaling, a strategy they have learned to use effectively, in their own social studies classrooms. When students keep journals of their learning successes and their perceptions, misgivings, and anxieties about academic work, then share those feelings with their teachers and classmates, all of the educational community stakeholders will benefit by the information that can lead to course improvements, creation of student support groups and tutoring pairs, and assessment and assignment selections as well as enhanced language facility.

All of the above strategies are researched-based ideas, but they must be tested in the crucible of the real world of the 4-12 classroom before they are deemed effective. When attendees at the session shared their insights, expertise, and real-world experiences teaching social studies through discussion and debate, everyone present learned which instructional strategies work, when, with whom, and why. The presenters of the session on interdisciplinary models were very pleased with the large turnout at their session and stayed afterwards to discuss instructional strategies useful in teaching social studies with many of the attendees.

One of the session attendees of the PCSS conference held in Pittsburgh in 2011 was an

assistant middle school principal from the Pittsburgh area who works in a charter school system overseeing several schools. He has agreed to speak at one of the “Issues in Education Forum Series” events sponsored by the presenters. (The philosophy behind the creation of the “Issues in Education Forum Series” is the belief that “Not all learning takes place in the classroom.”) The assistant principal has graciously agreed to speak about the uniqueness of middle school structure, students, curriculum and instruction, and extracurricular opportunities at one of the spring 2012 “Issues in Education Forum Series” events. This administrator’s insights will be welcomed by the presenters who wish to bring to their campus an expert on middle schools, someone who can speak to education majors and minors from a position of work-a-day authority about what it takes to be successful when teaching at the middle level.

The session in Pittsburgh provided an opportunity for the presenters to work with social studies professionals and to share their philosophy that “all learning does not take place in the classroom” and that teachers can develop practices which will encourage their students to be self-learners who are able to apply skills developed within the classroom structure to their experiences in the larger world which becomes their learning laboratory. Learning is like a tree with a strong trunk which, when well-fed, develops a system of branches extending away from the trunk into the larger environment gathering ideas, information, and experiences which increase the strength and diameter of the trunk. The PCSS workshop at Pittsburgh grew another branch reaching into the leadership of a charter school system providing ideas to strengthen that system thus extending the knowledge, energy, and leadership gained. In return the assistant charter school principal will help pre-service teachers increase their knowledge branches when

he provides them with his insights into the teaching/learning process. After all, as Will Rogers once said, “Everyone is ignorant, only in different subjects.” That is why conferences are absolutely essential.

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PCSS for Pre-Service Teachers

Jennifer Licwinko, Jessica Ashworth, Clare Dillard, Jessica B. Schocker

Introduction: *Jessica B. Schocker*

This year, I decided to bring three students to PCSS with me to see what they could glean from the experience of attending a professional conference. Jennifer, Jessica and Clare are seniors who are student teaching in urban elementary schools with at-risk youth. I was pleasantly surprised with the results, as my students amazed me with their passion, rigor for learning, and professional networking. Upon returning to school, they shared their experiences with their classmates and other professors in a well-developed presentation. As a result of this presentation, Jennifer, Jessica and Clare opted to write a paper about why they believe pre-service teachers absolutely *must* attend professional conferences as a part of their academic development. I can testify as their methods professor that the impact the conference had on these students is far more powerful than I could have predicted. They juxtaposed their learning from one session to the next, sought and found resources to bring back to their classrooms, and learned important tools to keep their practice fresh and innovative. Below, these young women will share their experiences in their own words. This story is a must-read for both methods instructors and pre-service teachers, as my students introduce a model for teacher preparation that many of us education professors would not think of until it happens by coincidence. Additionally, in service teachers can learn from their story and be inspired to attend future PCSS conferences by reading how Jennifer, Jessica and Clare have educated their mentor teachers.

Our Story from PCSS: Jennifer Licwinko

As a pre-service teacher, I am in a position to learn as much as I can about the field and create a name for myself in a short amount of time. To do so, it is imperative for pre-service

teachers to immerse themselves into the professional world they will soon become a part of. This includes attending conferences, such as PCSS, where one is able to network in a small setting. In the teaching field, it's all about who you know and what you make of your pre-service opportunities.

At this past year's PCSS conference, Jessica, Clare, and I were given the opportunity to co-present a break-out session with our Social Studies methods professor. The session involved a unique focus on an interdisciplinary unit based on an exhibit titled *Toothpick City II*. The exhibit itself portrayed famous skyscrapers and buildings found around the world created out of toothpicks and Elmer's glue. The unit was based on the 5E Model and Project Based Learning, both of which we knew little about before we began preparing for the presentation. We were provided with a hands-on approach to learning about both models through many discussions of how each model can be utilized in our current classrooms. In addition to learning about rich social studies content, I also learned about myself as a teacher.

Even though we were able to be a part of a presentation at the conference, we feel we have gained so much more than we were able to give. In today's public schools, the importance of social studies education is overlooked. To see the amount of people who put their time and effort into attending conferences, such as this one, is admirable. The focus of the entire conference was on the connection between literacy education and social studies. PCSS gave me the opportunity to see that relationship in so many ways. Strategies to create interdisciplinary learning will only benefit me as a future educator. The main idea of the conference was to teach educators the strategies needed to meet standards, incorporate social studies, and keep students engaged. The presenters and facilitators were able to do this through a series of break-out sessions. Sessions focused on many areas from the use of primary sources to the magic of multicultural storytelling and teaching through picture books. Following the sessions, it was

extremely obvious to me that the connection between social studies and literacy is completely natural.

Attending professional development conferences will leave one with a great repertoire of resources. Those resources are not just the free materials one is able to receive, but they are the networks you are able to create. Networking is key to getting your foot in the door in any school, district, organization, etc. At this conference, we were able to meet and converse with the current president of PCSS, former president of PCSS, current PA Bar Pro Bono Coordinator, and a representative from CICERO (online digital resource for teaching Social Studies, created for teachers by teachers) along with many other representatives and facilitators. I was able to discuss the needs of my current elementary school with representatives from the Pearson Publishing Company, National Geographic, and the National Constitution Center. Upon my return, I was able to provide the principal of my school with a six-month subscription to CICERO to be enjoyed by all of the teachers at my school.

Opportunities such as PCSS, can open many doors for more possibilities. Our experience at the conference led Jessica Ashworth and me to present at the National Council for the Social Studies conference in Washington, DC. On top of being able to attend the conference, we were able to see what both the Carnegie Museum of Natural History and the Soldiers and Sailors Museum had to offer. The entire experience allowed for us to return to our students with a wealth of ideas on how to make social studies fun and important, while still meeting the requirements for language arts and reading.

Based on my experience at PCSS, I have seen tremendous change in my own teaching from selecting texts for read alouds to the structure of my social studies lessons. Knowing how to incorporate social studies into a school's limited time for social studies curriculum was a challenge before attending this conference. Following the conference, my level of confidence

with teaching social studies grew immensely. Elements of social studies can now be found in almost every area of my teaching. The supplies I received from the conference allowed for this to occur. In my student teaching placement, I am now using a social studies curriculum set that was given to me by the Pearson Publishing Company representative. The elements of the school's curriculum are all found within the set. The information and delivery of the material is presented in a meaningful and manageable way that makes teaching social studies fun for both my students and myself. Not only was I educated at the conference, but I was also able to present the information received to my peers along with the two other students who also attended the conference along with me. Educating my peers, my mentor teacher, and the school's administration about the possibilities of social studies education was just one of the many things that I was able to do following the conference. The information I learned, materials I received, and the ideas I was given will continue to drive my teaching of social studies.

All of us were impacted by attending the conference. Jessica Ashworth gathered ideas from the conference and returned to her Kindergartners with the desire to organize a "Culture Celebration." Considering the diversity of her classroom and her school, the idea provided families the opportunity to share and celebrate their own culture, while gaining an appreciation for others. The celebration consists of centers representing important aspects of different cultures. For example, one center provides families with tastes of foods from different cultures. She created this event in the hopes of improving classroom culture and school culture while promoting tolerance. The information she gained from the conference, not only helped her in the creation of this event, but also in continuing her own research. Jessica is also working on her undergraduate thesis for Schreyer Honors College. The topic of the work is a focus on culturally responsive pedagogy with a focus on building a learning community for students that will support their English language acquisition.

For Clare, the experience at PCSS inspired her to seek out more opportunities to stay current and grow as a social studies teacher. This particular conference was an unforgettable learning experience for her as a future teacher. She was introduced to many different resources—both in terms of people and supplies. She not only left the conference with two large bags stuffed with social studies supplies and an entire curriculum set, but also with a deeper appreciation for this subject. From this experience she plans to continue seeking out opportunities to further her knowledge and stay current in my the field by attending conferences, such as PCSS. As a student, social studies was always a subject in which she learned facts and was tested on what she learned. Her own thinking is that students should be taught to develop ideas which they can use to contribute to their society. Through her preservice teaching and social studies methods course, she learned that it's critical to make social studies relevant and meaningful for the students. Incorporating current events, or asking students to share a personal experience is one way to make social studies more than just a subject in which students memorize facts and absorb meaningless information. This theme was highlighted at this year's PCSS. Attending this conference has inspired her to teach her students what it means to be citizens and how they can make a difference in their own society.

From the preservice teacher standpoint, one challenge in attending conferences is the cost of travel, lodging, and admission. But from a personal standpoint, what we gained from the conference and other experiences while in Pittsburgh was worth so much more than the cost of the trip. We will forever be grateful for the people we met, materials we received and the memories we made from attending just one professional development conference; imagine the things we could do attending more conferences.

Teaching Literacy and Social Studies through the Use of Narrative

Margit E. McGuire and Bronwyn Cole

Young students are too often denied access to a robust social studies curriculum for the sake of more literacy and numeracy but at what cost to their future as democratic citizens in an interconnected, globalized economy? How will they meet the challenges of the 21st Century if they are deprived of opportunities to learn about their world in their early years? These early school years are important as this is when values and attitudes are formed about others and social awareness and interpersonal skills are developed (Selman, 2003). Students undoubtedly will be confronted by cultural differences next door or further afield; the economic realities of a globalization; and the necessity of civic engagement for a robust democratic society and a sustainable future. Learning social studies and developing social and civic awareness does not exclude literacy and numeracy; in fact, learning literacy and numeracy in the context of social studies can make such skills more meaningful.

With the recognition of globalization on all fronts, national standards are being reframed to better reflect the knowledge and skills that will be needed for the future. Common Core State Standards with a focus on English language arts and mathematics are necessary but not sufficient for the knowledge and skills young people will need in the future. A more comprehensive set of standards is outlined in a Framework for 21st Century Learning (2004). The framework highlights interdisciplinary themes such as global awareness and civic literacy that are the heart and soul of a robust social studies curriculum. Further, the framework goes on to cite such skills as creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration.

One promising approach for implementing an integrated social studies curriculum is Storypath. Storypath is grounded in a belief that students learn best when they are active participants in their own learning, and places the emphasis on students' own efforts to understand at the center of the educational enterprise. Essentially, Storypath uses narrative and drama to engage students cognitively and affectively in creating meaning from experiences. Storypath uses the narrative genre structure to sequence learning experiences: an imaginative setting that simulates a real time and place, a cast of characters, and a plot inclusive of critical incidents that could occur and which add complication and depth to the story. These critical incidents require students to problem-solve and rehearse roles and behaviors through a drama process that

“...affords the chance for first-hand interactive learning experience. In creating a world within a drama and inviting students to invest directly and actively something of themselves in it, the teacher creates the opportunity for understanding to be perceived which is directly transferable to the real world” (Bowell & Heap, 2001, p. 2).

As the Storypath begins, each student creates a character guided by the teacher. By adopting the role of this character, they have a personal connection to the plot of the story. They are part of the story. They are enacting the story. Learning becomes a lived experience carefully guided by an inquiry process that ensures the students learn important social studies skills and understandings and develop and apply literacy skills in context. How does this come to life in a classroom? A story about a museum sets the stage for this powerful learning experience.

Setting the scene for grounding new knowledge and developing literacy processes

A letter arrived announcing a generous anonymous donor was giving money for the design and building of a local museum that would tell “the state story.” The setting for the story

was established as students were asked to consider the location for the museum—grounding the setting in the particulars of the community—as well as the building design that would create interest and enthusiasm for learning about the state. For teachers who focus on state studies, this creative approach moves students beyond the traditional state studies reports to imagining the design of a museum that teaches both local community members and others about the state’s history, geography, economy and unique attributes. Brainstorming design features that make a museum eye-catching, attractive and easily accessible sets in motion a connection to place—a place that will serve as the setting for the Storypath. Once the class has proposed various designs for the museum, the donor makes a final decision and then asks students to consider the location of the museum. Again students are asked to ground their learning experience in what is familiar—their own community. Important geographic and economic considerations come into play as students think about the location in the community—high traffic, easily accessible and other features that connect their own community to their imagined new state museum. Guided by the teacher through a questioning process, students work together to create a visual representation of the setting thereby tapping into multiple intelligences such as spatial, visual and interpersonal. Students come together to negotiate where buildings are located within the natural environment of the actual setting. The literacy experiences that emerge from this first episode is a natural outgrowth of the experience. In this project, they included the generation of a word bank to describe the setting and a press release to announce the plans for a new state museum. The literacy connection makes sense to students because they have invested in the experience. The writing of a press release is purposeful as not only do students learn about the goals of a press release, they also apply such writing traits as: ideas and content (accuracy, clarity, relevant details); organization (inviting language, thoughtful transitions, and logical and effective

sequencing); and conventions (spelling, grammar, and punctuation). This first episode of the Storypath launches the unit and the setting for the story that follows.

Teaching for meaning means engaging learners

Over the past fifteen years, we have co-taught social studies units with classroom teachers in city schools in low socio-economic, culturally diverse areas, both in Seattle, USA, and Sydney, Australia. In the Fair Go Project (2007), our research questions have focused on student engagement:

- How do we get students to engage in learning and making meaning within the content areas?
- How do we engage students in sustained, substantive conversations to develop meaning and improve their language and literacy development – their reading and writing?

What we have found is that students participating in social studies units constructed around a narrative become engaged in learning in ways not seen with more conventional teaching approaches. Once engaged, a state that we define as a coalition of cognitive (thinking), affective (emotional), and operative (doing) involvement in classroom work, students are more likely to construct meaning and find purpose in their learning. They also show remarkable improvements in their literacy achievements. What evidence do we have that this is occurring in these classrooms and why does it happen?

Developing the characters through which to explore new information

We return to our Museum example. With the setting established, we introduced the role of museum workers by asking such questions as: What do you need to know to work in a

museum? What are the various jobs in a museum? What skills do you need to have? What personality characteristics are important for working in a museum? What special interests or experiences might a person have that would lead one to work in a museum especially one that is focused on our state? As students brainstorm ideas, we create a chart for later reference. We announce that job opportunities are available at our museum and ask who would like to apply and for which job?

Our experience in low-income schools has resulted in some patterns that are important to highlight. Students bring what they know to the experience. We have found that in the discussion of the museum jobs, a “guard” was a common occupation mentioned. Helping students understand the work of a guard and other job roles, and the knowledge and skills required for such roles is fundamentally what a powerful social studies program can offer—opening doors to new possibilities. Broadening students’ horizons to imagine themselves as researchers, curators, architects, set designers, writers, administrators and so forth is educationally sound and important. For how can one aspire to such jobs, if these jobs are unknown or unimagined?

Such discussions led to a number of lessons on how to write a resume, how to prepare for a job interview—how to speak, dress, and put your best foot forward. As students completed resumes for their characters, they began to imagine themselves in such a role, drawing on personal traits and encounters in their constructions of prior employment and life experiences. In the classroom, excitement mounted as the day drew near for the job interviews. Students who were first reluctant to commit themselves discovered that a story is seductive; it is difficult to resist, and even more so if you are a main character.

Developing literacy in the context of social studies

With a full complement of staff, the work of developing exhibits for the museum got underway. Reading and accessing information about the state was carefully scaffolded to ensure that students were successful in these endeavors. Gathering information from a variety of texts allowed us to reinforce reading strategies such as finding the main idea with supporting details, making inferences, connecting what they already knew to new information, scanning texts, and understanding visuals such as maps, graphs, and photographs. Dramatizing a staff meeting of museum workers to refine and practice such skills tapped into students' imagination and engaged them in talking and listening to clarify concepts prior to further reading and writing. Reading and note-taking became purposeful as the students assembled information for their museum brochures; evaluated primary and secondary sources; and distinguished fact from opinion. Along with the production of brochures, students were engaged in creating dioramas or displays about aspects of their state. Researching and writing about a specific state topic developed important literacy skills, but we also wanted students to have a shared understanding about other state topics.

Confronting critical incidents and applying what we know to our daily lives

In real life, museums are confronted with a myriad of challenges such as adequate funding, controversial exhibits, ownership of indigenous artifacts, and accuracy in displays. One of the vital features of our teaching approach is the introduction of an unexpected, critical event—an event that is relevant to the application of understanding. In this scenario, on the eve of the grand opening, museum workers received news that the museum did not adequately represent women. This concern did not focus on one particular exhibit but rather a general

concern for the whole museum. As a result, a protest was being organized to boycott the museum.

To address this concern, a staff meeting was organized and the museum workers were asked to think about how to respond. Herein lies the opportunity to teach about freedom of speech and the practical applications of such rights and responsibilities. No longer is freedom of speech an abstract concept but one that requires deliberation on the part of the museum workers. In addition, literacy skills are in play—depending how the message is delivered: reading/listening for information; identifying fact from opinion; making inferences; and identifying main ideas with supporting details. These skills are meaningfully applied because the museum has a serious problem.

The teacher's role is important as a guide on the side interjecting important questions to deepen students' thinking and challenge ideas to enable them to become the critical thinkers and problem solvers that are so essential to a robust democracy. As students considered the pros and cons of various responses, they were also drawing on relevant current events. They understood the importance of reassessing their museum exhibits; the value in finding allies; identifying their audience; and writing to persuade—all authentic to the storyline. Guided by the teacher, the students decided how to respond and the modes of response. Figuring-it-out engaged students and affirmed their self-efficacy to do so. In our situation, the boycott was avoided. Of course, we know that satisfying real-world resolutions does not always happen but the educational value in developing the knowledge and skills to resolve issues using thoughtful and well-reasoned civic discourse are skills desperately needed in the 21st Century. To bring closure to the Storypath, students planned and participated in the grand opening. They invited their families to celebrate a meaningful and memorable learning experience.

Using narrative to structure content and develop literacy

What we have found over many years of classroom observation and co-teaching is that when narratives are used, students become engaged in learning in ways not seen with more conventional teaching approaches. Consistently, we find the students asking, “Is this real?” “Is this really happening?” or “Are we really going to do this?”

In a Storypath, a narrative is constructed to create a sequence of learning experiences to connect subject matter for a topic and to develop literacy skills in authentic situations. Students participate in the experiences from the viewpoint of a character in the narrative, engaging in role-plays that tread a path between imagination and reality. They construct personal understandings about the subject matter and engage in literacy processes that help them make sense within the context of the story. Employing a narrative to organize learning in this way is educationally useful. The underlying story conveys information and describes events and actions relevant to the topic while engaging students’ imaginations and emotions. As Kieran Egan explains, “The story form is a cultural universal; ... it reflects a basic and powerful form in which we make sense of the world and experience” (Egan, 1988, p.2). Students make sense of new knowledge and skills as they engage with the narrative of the Storypath.

Conclusion

Students experiencing a Storypath co-construct with the teacher, and via the characters, a story that provides a familiar context for developing a wide range of social studies understandings and values and literacy skills. The planned "critical incidents," strategically introduced in a Storypath, challenge students’ previous experiences and knowledge, involve them in literacy processes, and engage them in higher order thinking through problem-solving.

Students make personal connections and use their imaginations to develop meaningful understandings. They develop and use vocabulary and texts. The knowledge and skills they are learning through this approach will serve them well as they meet the challenges of today and as fully participating citizens in the 21st Century.

Figure 1

Storypath Learning Experiences
<p>Creating the Setting</p> <p>Students create the setting by completing a frieze (mural) or other visual representation of the place.</p>
<p>Creating Characters</p> <p>Students create characters for the story whose roles they will play during subsequent episodes.</p>
<p>Building Context</p> <p>Students are involved in activities that stimulate them to think deeply about the topic of study.</p>
<p>Critical Incidents</p> <p>Characters confront problems typical of those faced by people of that time and place.</p>
<p>Concluding Event</p> <p>Students plan and participate in an activity that brings closure to the story.</p>

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