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CULTURES IN OUR COMMUNITY
A SOCIAL STUDIES UNIT

A Project
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master in Education
Master Teacher

By
Anna Louise Buglino

May 2010

ABSTRACT

CULTURES IN OUR COMMUNITY

A SOCIAL STUDIES UNIT

By

Anna Louise Buglino

May 2010

The purpose of this project was to create a yearlong unit for social studies that any teacher could pick up and implement into their classroom. It was designed using second grade standards, but can be modified for use in other grade levels. The units are integrated into all subject areas with the goal of teaching students about the community in which they live. It also was designed to create in the classroom an understanding of cultures different from their own. This will create a deeper understanding and awareness of diverse populations and their differences. The instruction of social studies education in the United States was also explored in this project. It looks at the history of social studies education starting in 1916 and moves to the present day. It then discusses the value of teaching social studies today, which is primarily citizenship development. Finally, it goes through the methods that have been seen to be most effective in meeting this goal.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1916 a report was written by the National Education Association Committee on Social Studies. This report was an influential document in the promotion of a new theory in teaching social studies. The recommended coursework that was suggested in the report is reflected in classrooms today (St. Jarre, 2008). The main idea of this report was that students should not be taught only chronological history that was mostly Eurocentric, but that they should learn history, economics, political science, and civics with the outcome that students would develop the desire to become useful citizens in our society (Lybarger, 1983). These areas of study mostly affected secondary school. The next major contribution to how social studies should be taught was in the 1930s supported by Paul Hanna's expanding communities' model, which was directed to primary school. The model was a set of concentric circles representing the expanding communities of people. Each circle represents a larger community in which the child belongs. As children matured through the grade levels, they are exposed to the ever-widening communities. The idea of the expanding community model is still seen in education (Berson, Cruz, Duplass, & Johnston, 2009). This is the model that will be adapted and used in this project to design a social studies unit targeting cultures in the community. Today, social studies is virtually absent in the classroom due to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) mandate (Pederson, 2007). This mandate is the source of tension in schools today, and because of NCLB, there is little time left in the day to teach anything other than reading and math.

Social studies is defined as "a basic subject of the K-12 curriculum that 1) derives its goals from the nature of citizenship in a democratic society that is closely linked to other nations

and peoples of the world; 2) draws its content primarily from history, the social sciences, and, in some respects from the humanities and science; and 3) is taught in ways that reflect an awareness of the personal, social, and cultural experiences and developmental levels of learners” (Beal & Martorella, 1994, p.7). In the way social studies is defined today, it is the subject that will teach students about our nation’s history, traditions, achievements, and aspirations. It will help them be prepared as citizens who understand their rights and duties to make this nation a functioning place (Beal & Martorella, 1994). Because of all these ideas it is crucial that we make time to teach social studies in our schools today.

There are many varied definitions of what social studies education should include with little consensus on the topic. “One of the most remarkable aspects of the history of social studies has been the ongoing debates over the nature, scope, and definition of the field” (Beal & Martorella, 1994, p.7). Some of the competing definitions are as follows:

- 1) Social studies education should develop students who understand and carry out their civic responsibility as required by a democracy; and 2) social studies education should develop students who can use critical thinking and problem-solving skills in order to make wise civic, social, and personal decisions and choices” (Mills, 2001, p.82)
- Social studies is the integrated study of the social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence (Beal & Martorella, 1994,p.7)
- The social sciences are concerned exclusively with the education of citizens in a democracy, citizenship education consists of two related but somewhat disparate

parts: the first socialization, the second counter socialization(Beal & Martorella, 1994,p.7)

- Social studies is the transmission of cultural heritage, teaches methods of inquiry, helps develop informed social criticism, and encourages personal development (Berson, Cruz, Duplass, & Johnston, 2009, p.2)

In writing this paper the following statement will be used as the definition of social studies instruction. “The basic goal of social studies education is to prepare young people to be humane, rational, participating citizens in a world that is becoming increasingly interdependent” (Berson, Cruz, Duplass, & Johnston, 2009, p.2). Social studies education includes the academic disciplines of anthropology, sociology, psychology, geography, economics, political science, history, American studies, and philosophy (Force, 2002). All of these disciplines are used to meet the basic goal stated above.

The National Council for Social Studies has developed standards for teachers to use when teaching social studies that are consistent with 1) a constructivist view of learning, and 2) the teaching and lessons have the essential characteristics of powerful learning. A constructivist view of learning describes learning as an intellectual process by which learners develop what they know by fitting new ideas together with ideas they have already learned from previous experience. The result of this type of learning is made up of three elements: 1) knowledge they gain from the new experience, 2) their prior understanding, and 3) their personal connection of the new and the old (Force, 2002). Social studies teaching and learning is powerful when it is meaningful, integrative, values-based, challenging, and active (Force, 2002). In order to fit the teaching of social studies into the day many teachers are developing plans that integrate the

learning into other subject areas. This is a good start, but may provide only surface level learning. It is important to society that more instruction is provided in schools related to social studies education. Many people believe that children will naturally pick up on cultural universals and acquire an understanding of why things in our society and in the world are the way they are by making their own meaning of what they encounter. One study interviewed various age groups on topics such as clothing, food, and shelter to determine what their understanding was of these basic needs. They found that “the knowledge they do accumulate is limited, disconnected, and frequently distorted by naïve ideas or outright misconceptions” (Brophy & Alleman, 2002, p.104). Children were found to be unable to make meaning of their basic needs and because of this education needs to be responsible for helping them understand the world they are a part of.

Purpose of the Project

The project portion of this paper is designed to help students develop an understanding of the people that are represented in their own communities. The project begins by having students explore the makeup of their unique classroom. This is done by creating a class museum with each student bringing in an artifact to represent their home culture. For students to be effective citizens in this country they need to be aware that this country is made up of people with all types of backgrounds. This should lead to the development of compassion and understanding for those who are different than them. “Cultural proficiency is a way of being, a mindset that esteems one’s own culture while positively engaging with those whose cultures differ from our own. It is honoring the differences among cultures, viewing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgeably and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups” (CampbellJones, CampbellJones, & Love, 2009, p.86).

Social studies education needs to be a part of the curriculum taught in schools. It is the job of public schools to educate children to be participating members in American society.

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act established the following goal:

“By the year 2000, all students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they might be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our Nation’s modern economy” (Beal & Martorella, 1994).

This goal was made before the NCLB act became a mandate in 2002. To date this goal has not been achieved. Has the world changed so much that this is no longer a valid goal to hold? In this project a variety of methods for teaching social studies will be proposed so that this goal can still be met while holding true to the standards that are required under NCLB. Though the time for this goal to be met has passed it is still a valuable goal and should be seen as being active in schools today.

Limitations/Scope of the Project

This project reviews the history behind social studies education in America. It identifies what should be included in teaching social studies, what should not be included, how to teach social studies effectively, and theories behind why social studies is taught. This project will be based on Washington state standards for second grade. This is a project that targets second grade,

but could be adapted to use in other grade levels. Also integrated will be the subjects of geography, anthropology, economics, and civics.

A limitation of this project is that there is a lot of information available on this topic, but only the research related to the focus of the project will be included. The research has to do with the history of teaching social studies, the methods utilized for teaching social studies, and the inherent value in teaching social studies to all students. There also will be research in creating units for social studies and what that should look like. The unit plans in the project will be outlined with possible lessons, and loose time frames. Every classroom will have a different time frame available for teaching social studies. The lessons are more of an outline so that instruction can be adapted to the community around the school and the makeup of the classroom. Another limitation of this project is that it will be designed specifically for primary students. Teachers will have to adapt lessons to meet the needs of older students. The majority of this project will be an outline of what units should look like by integrating social studies into other subject areas.

Definition of Terms

Eurocentric- Considering Europe and Europeans as focal to world culture, history, economics (Dictionary.com).

Expanding Communities Model- Developed by Paul Hanna and was continually refined from its start in the 1930s through the 1960s. The model is a set of concentric circles to represent the expanding communities of people. Each widening circle represented a larger community in which the child belongs. As children matured through the grade levels, they were exposed to the ever-widening communities. It starts with home, family, and school then moves to the

neighborhood, local community, state, nation and finally out into the international community (Stallones, 2002).

National Council for the Social Studies- Founded in 1921, National Council for the Social Studies has grown to be the largest association in the country devoted solely to social studies education. NCSS engages and supports educators in strengthening and advocating social studies. With members in all the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 69 foreign countries, NCSS serves as an umbrella organization for elementary, secondary, and college teachers of history, geography, economics, political science, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and law-related education (Force, 2002).

No Child Left Behind - In 2002, President George Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The focus of the law has three main parts: 1) increased accountability through testing and teacher certification, 2) greater school choice for students through vouchers, and 3) more flexibility for state and local education agencies to spend money as they see fit as long as Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) is attained. The law put immediate emphasis on the content areas of math and reading and extended the focus to science in 2006-7 (Beal & Martorella, 1994).

Social Studies- Refers collectively to history, geography, American Studies, economics, political science, civics, anthropology, sociology, philosophy, and psychology (Force, 2002)

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Social studies education plays an important role in developing children into citizens that are active in making decisions for how things function in this country. Without learning about the past, the present, and where the future leads they may not have the understanding to make educated decisions around which issues are important to them. They will not see the value in voting and standing up for issues that concern them and the world they live in (Beal & Martorella, 1994). In a 1916 report there was a lot of discussion about teaching more than just history and geography but also teaching with the combined social sciences. Even with this report and other similar report there has been little change in this field to date. There have been new approaches and methods in how social studies is taught, but the ideas and content remain virtually unchanged (Duplass, 2007). With the mandated act of No Child Left Behind there is little to no time left in the day for social studies instruction. The only viable solution to this issue is to integrate instruction into the subject areas of reading and writing and to provide chances for critical thinking and problem solving about who we are as people and how we fit into the larger society (NCSS, A Vision of Powerful, 2008).

This chapter will focus on the history behind the teaching of social studies. It will take the reader through the years starting in 1916 and moving into present day discussing the leaders in social studies theory. The theories will include how and why social studies should be taught to the youth of this nation. It will then discuss the value in teaching social studies in schools today

This purpose is primarily to develop citizenship in the new generation of the country. The chapter ends with suggested methods for effectively teaching social studies to foster citizenship development.

The History of Social Studies

There has been much debate as to what the term social studies means, but this area of education has made slow progress over the years. "Social studies has used the same scope and sequence approach to elementary education for more than a half century. Considering the obvious technological changes and transformation of American society since its adoption and with the advent of the standards-based education, it is time for a new approach" (Duplass, 2007, p.137). The arguments for what should be taught have not provided one clear definition in this subject area. Ross and Marker (2005, p. 139) claim that "The history of social studies in the twentieth century is the story of a field of study not yet coming of age." They continue to state that in the first hundred years of the field there has been "confusion, competing visions, inconsistency, incoherence, and intolerance." With these issues the result has been debates that focus on the irreconcilable differences about what the social studies is and what it should be (Ross & Marker 2005). Many questions about what social studies is have come up because of these differences in thought. Some say it should be history with attention to current events, while others think of it as a merger of history, geography, civics, economics, sociology, and other social sciences. Still others look at it as being courses such as career education, ethnic studies, peace education, character education, and drug education, or that it is used to cultivate skills like decision making, interpersonal relations, and critical thinking (Ravitch, 2003).

Ravitch (2003) claims that until 1913, history was history and the term social studies was an unknown. Thomas Jesse Jones was one of the first educators to use the term “social studies” referring collectively to history, economics, political science, and civics (Lybarger, 1983).

Thomas Jesse Jones was the chairman of the committee that in 1916 wrote a report that became the single most influential document in creating the scope and sequence for social studies in the United States. This report was written by the National Education Association Committee on the Social Studies and its recommendation for coursework can still be seen in many American schools today (St. Jarre, 2008). This committee produced what James Harvey Robinson a member of the committee called the “New Social Studies” in two reports. The reports were *The Teaching of Community Civics* in 1915 and *The Social Studies in Secondary Education* in 1916 (Lybarger, 1983). “Throughout the report, the Committee clearly called for an integrated program of instruction in those disciplines whose subject matter was directly related to the organization and development of human society, and to man as a member of social groups” (Whelan, 1991, p. 196). The ideas presented in these reports explains the purpose of social studies instruction as being the promotion of the social well-being of the community. These ideas being taught in courses titled “Problems of American Democracy” and “Community Civics.” In these courses the topics covered were discussion of health, protection of life and property, recreation, civic beauty, wealth, communication, charities, and corrections. These topics were called “elements of welfare” and emphasized the role of the government in promoting the welfare of city residents. When these topics are taught students will see the relationship between work and citizenship, having good work ethic and looking with contempt at laziness and inefficiency (Lybarger, 1983). When being taught social studies students were expected to “gather facts for themselves, to weigh and judge the relative value of facts, to observe social

phenomena, to understand that such phenomena were many-sided and complex, to use their reasoning powers in forming conclusions, to base their conclusions on a dispassionate consideration of the relevant facts, and to submit their conclusions to criticism” (Whelan, 1991, p. 196). The theory behind these topics was that there should be a connection to the present life interests of the student and could be used by the students in their present process of growth. There should be flexibility in the curriculum based on the needs of the group of students being served (Whelan, 1991).

After these reports were written the field now known as social studies started to gain more attention. “Social Studies received further support when in the 1918 *Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education* called for the unified study of subject areas heretofore taught in isolation. This course, called social studies, would have as its main goal the cultivation of good citizens” (Berson, Cruz, Duplass, & Johnston, 2009, p. 1). It was suggested that historical studies did not contribute to social change and had no value. This report when it appeared was thought to be at the very height of modern progressive thought. It had a devastating impact on the instruction of history and helped boost its replacement by social studies. It was not hard to argue against this thought because the study of ancient history, European history, and English history were seen to have no contribution to social change or improving student’s readiness for vocation. These subjects started to drop out of the curriculum. They were considered too “academic” and did not meet student’s immediate needs. At this point it was mostly secondary education that was affected (Ravitch, 2003). The emphasis seen on citizenship development was understandable at this time because there was a large increase in immigrants coming to the country due to World War I. The social studies courses addressing citizenship were seen as a tool to develop patriotism among the new foreign born citizens (Berson, Cruz, Duplass, & Johnston, 2009).

In 1921 a new service organization called the National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) was formed and one of its main goals was citizenship education. This organization is now one of the largest in the United States to focus exclusively on social studies education. It was designed to be a coordinating entity at a time when social studies was immersed in disagreement on scope and sequence. There were continually issues between teacher educators and content specialists as there were no certification requirements. The founders of the organization who were from Teachers College at Columbia University saw NCSS as being the unifying organization that could merge the social studies discipline with education (Berson, Cruz, Duplass, & Johnston, 2009).

The 1930s saw a change in the focus schools took in educating students. "Socialization, not intellectual enrichment, was the demand of the 1930s and for many decades after in the elementary grades" (Ravitch, 2003, p. 4). During this time one national report after another insisted that social studies should replace chronological history and that young people should study immediate personal social problems instead of the distant irrelevant past. The emphasis was placed on current events and social problems of today. During this time historians did not fight this idea and also believed that their fields of study should be saved for the social elite and those who were college bound. Historians believed that the study of chronological history was not appropriate for the average citizen because it was too far intellectually above them (Ravitch, 2003). At this time Harold Rugg developed a series of social studies textbooks that the reformers of social studies instruction approved of. They wanted teachers and the curriculum to play a strong role in the social transformation of American society. The Rugg textbooks melded materials from history and the social sciences into an issues-oriented, unified-field approach to social studies. Almost every topic was introduced through a social issue or problem connected to

students' lives. The writing was lively and engaging, and the series was thoroughly illustrated and filled with interesting charts and graphs. It became the best selling social studies series of its time. Despite his desire to provide a balanced book his materials contained a significant amount of social criticism and raised considerable questions about the traditional role of the government. Eventually the controversy regarding this series grew so much that it came to be seen as Un-American and left the public thinking that the field of social studies was some sort of radical plot (Evans, 2006).

Around the same time as Rugg in the 1930s another approach to teaching social studies was on the rise. Paul Hanna's solution replaced the method currently taught in American schools at the elementary level. Instead of waiting until upper elementary to introduce several social sciences or only offering history and geography he developed a curriculum that would start in primary education (Stallones, 2002). Hanna's model, *Expanding Communities*, for the first time introduced the social sciences (anthropology, sociology, psychology) in elementary school as being equivalent to history, geography, and civics which up to this point were only highlighted in elementary learning (Duplass, 2007). This model was continually refined throughout the 1930s to the 1960s, but the general idea was that in K-1 the children would learn about home, family, and school. Second grade would focus on the neighborhood, and third grade the local community studying those who protect them, provide them with food, transport of people and goods, and learn that there are many jobs to make a community run smoothly. In fourth grade they would look at the state and regions of the state while fifth grade would study the nation and the inter-American community. In sixth grade and beyond students would study the international community. The model was a set of concentric circles to represent the expanding communities of people. Each widening circle represented a larger community to which a child belongs. As

children progressed through the grade levels, they were exposed to the ever-widening communities. This is the expanding community model that is still seen in education to this day. The ideas in the circles were the content approach to teaching, but Hanna also had a thematic approach that went with each community. These ideas that were explored were protecting and conserving, creating, governing, producing resources, transporting, expressing, educating, recreating, and communicating. These thematic concepts are not as widely seen in schools today because state standards are not this specific (Berson, Cruz, Duplass, & Johnston, 2009).

In the 1960s secondary social studies saw a change with the introduction of the elective system. Courses like anthropology, economics, sociology, and psychology were added to the curriculum that had before been primarily limited to world history, world geography, government, and U.S. history. Advanced placement courses were also added (Berson, Cruz, Duplass, & Johnston, 2009). During the mid-60s it was decided that social studies education needed to be reformed and this went on through the early 1970s. The social studies had a period of innovation in both the development of curricular materials and related teacher education efforts. The hard work and reform of this period became known as “the new social studies.” Despite the efforts of reform the new social studies projects collectively failed to affect in any significant way the scope and sequence patterns already in place in the United States. The process of reform did help in the emergences of social sciences, the use of commercial and teacher made supplies, and the use of media in teaching. It opened the door for more active involvement from students and the use of instructional strategies that emphasized students’ inquiry into the learning process (Beal & Martorella, 1994).

In 1987 E.D. Hirsch developed a concept called *Core Knowledge* which has been presented as an alternative to Paul Hanna's *Expanding Communities*. Core knowledge deemphasizes the social sciences, and there is little about economics. Instead it offers a cohesive, ordered development of American and world history, government, and geography (Duplass, 2007). He proposes that there is a core of information that every American should know. This method seemed to be going back to the former ideas behind the teaching of social studies. Aside from history there should also be instruction on democratic ideology and literature that amplifies the human experience. The content is organized to introduce students to subject matter at all grades but at different degrees of intensity (Berson, Cruz, Duplass, & Johnston, 2009).

Social studies in the 21st century have been more than names and dates, countries and capitals. Curriculum trends include integrating literature and social studies, emphasizing multicultural themes, ethics and values, and social issues. Debates have ensued over what students should know and be able to do in the social studies, and have led to the development of national standards. The Goals 2000: Educate America Act established the goal to ensure that all students leave school showing competency in civics, government, economics, history, and geography to be prepared, responsible citizens (Beal & Martorella, 1994, p.6).

In 2002, President George Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The focus of the law has three main parts: 1) increased accountability through testing and teacher certification, 2) greater school choice for students through vouchers, and 3) more flexibility for state and local education agencies to spend money as they see fit as long as Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) is attained. The law put immediate emphasis on the content areas of math and reading and extended the focus to science in 2006-7. Social studies is completely absent

(Pederson, 2007). The result of these new mandates is that a certain amount of time has to be spent each day on teaching literacy and math. Many teachers sacrifice social studies to be sure they can fit all the literacy and math into the schedule. Often teachers try to fix the time issue by using some literacy time and strategies for social studies, which often leads to a surface learning, studying no one topic in depth. Many people believe that social studies instruction will continue to lessen over time (Knighton, 2003). Since the introduction of NCLB there has been a steady reduction in the amount of time spent in the teaching of social studies, with the biggest decline seen in elementary schools. In addition much evidence is showing that American children are receiving little to no instruction in the core social studies disciplines of civics, economics, geography, and history (NCSS, 2007). “That such a situation has evolved is untenable in a nation that prides itself on its history, its system of government and its place as a leader in the global community” (NCSS, 2007, p. 284). In a study of social studies taught in South Carolina it was seen that 81% of students in grades 3-8 were deemed “non-proficient” in the subject. When looked at by school level, 80% of elementary school students were seen as “non-proficient.” Administrators were looking at the idea of including social studies into the state standardized test so that it would be an area of focus once again (Lintner, 2006).

Where can social studies education go from here? According to Duplass, (2007, p.141) “The goal should be to have a scope and sequence for K-5 that is supported and adopted by the national associations and state departments of education so that book adoption boards and publishers will feel compelled to use it.”

Value in Teaching Social Studies

Social studies instruction is vital in preparing children of the present to be informed functioning citizens of the future. It is the subject that teaches them about the nation's history, traditions, achievements, and aspirations preparing them for the responsibility of exercising their rights and duties as citizens. It will help inform them how to be functioning, positive members of society and make improvements to the country. "The purpose of social education is for citizens to learn how to judge for themselves what will secure or endanger their freedom" Thomas Jefferson as quoted by (Ross & Marker, 2005, p.187). Without this instruction they might not hold the values that have made this nation what it is (Beal & Martorella, 1994). "Not learning what it means to be an American could have some dire consequences down the road" (Burroughs, Groce, & Webeck, 2005). If students leave school only being taught math and reading with no social studies instruction they will likely leave unprepared to become informed, responsible, and engaged citizens of their communities. Citizenship instruction taught through social studies cannot be forsaken for the subjects that are tested (Burroughs, Groce, & Webeck, 2005). With a growing disconnect between school and community there is greater impact on children's intellectual, social, and moral development. Citizenship requires recognition of what it means to be a part of something and many children today know only what it means to be part of their immediate family (Burroughs, Groce, & Webeck, 2005).

The teaching of social studies is essential in fostering an understanding of historical, political, and cultural understanding so that democracy can survive. When students understand the core content knowledge of civics, economics, geography, and history it will help ensure their readiness and willingness to assume citizenship responsibilities. Powerful social studies

instruction will lead to well-informed and civic-minded people who can make better choices in the democratic society of which they are part of (NCSS, *A Vision of Powerful*, 2008). Good social studies programs prepare students to identify, understand, and work to solve the challenges facing a diverse nation in a world that is tied closer together than ever. Education for citizenship should help students to acquire and use skills they have learned to become competent citizens throughout their lives. Competent and responsible citizens can then participate thoughtfully in their community, be involved politically, and show moral and civic qualities (NCSS, *A Vision of Powerful*, 2008).

To be able to teach what it means to be a citizen in a democratic society a definition of citizenship needs to be explored. Being a good citizen could mean people who do not lie or steal, in general people with morals. They vote and obey the law; they might be community-spirited, and possibly volunteer for a charitable or civic organization. They treat each other with decency and respect. They might be politically involved, take an interest in public affairs, work for causes, and express their views. Overall citizenship involves morality. A democratic society is one with institutions and practices that follow two basic rules: 1) everyone's interests are equal, and therefore has an equal right for interests to be fairly considered in decision making; and 2) everyone has an equal right to have a fair influence on decisions (Strike, 2007). With these ideas more clearly defined the job is now to develop citizens who are capable and knowledgeable enough to make a positive impact on society. Without teaching social studies these concepts are greatly overlooked. Children who are not taught the importance of these concepts grow up to be less likely to vote and less likely to contribute to society. The danger of not teaching things like government, economics, and geography will be that they are less likely to work together to solve

public problems, which will cause them to allow others to make public policy choices for them (Zamosky, 2008).

Young students growing up in a democratic society in an increasingly interdependent world need to experience social education so that they might learn acceptable values, attitudes, and dispositions. Young children often display historic presentism, which means that they look at technology and people of the past as being inadequate or lesser than present time because they are unable to appreciate them within the context of their time and place. They also might portray national or cultural chauvinism which means they might think of unfamiliar customs as funny or weird (Brophy & Alleman, 2009). Early social education can help insure that these ideas do not harden into more firmly held prejudices. This will help in providing them with information and socialization that supports the development of historical empathy, identification with humans outside of their immediate life, recognizing that people are generally more alike than different, the idea that many technologies might seem primitive but are actually sensitive, and that many customs may seem different but have parallels to their own society. Social education will provide students with important fundamental understandings about the social world and their place within it (Brophy & Alleman, 2009).

Thomas Jefferson and other founders of this country emphasized the importance of a democracy that depends upon the education and participation of its citizens. The need for an informed people is why such a thing as free public education exists. Fully developed citizens of this nation are needed to carry on the democratic traditions that make this country what it is (NCSS, A Vision of Powerful, 2008). "A primary object... should be the education of our youth in the science of government. In a republic, what species of knowledge can be equally

important? And what duty more pressing... than... communicating it to those who are to be the future guardians of the liberties of the country?" George Washington as quoted by (NCSS, Social Studies in the Era, 2007, p.284).

Methods for Teaching Social Studies

There are many definitions of what should be included as components of social studies. For the purpose of this paper there are two primary goals in social studies education. The first being that "social studies education should develop students who understand and carry out their civic responsibility as required by a democracy." The second "That social studies education should develop students who can use critical thinking and problem-solving skills in order to make wise civic, social, and personal decisions and choices" (Mills, 2001, p.82). The methods and classroom strategies that are used should help meet these goals. For example there should be role playing, inquiry, values clarification, critical thinking, and problem solving all with the idea of achieving the goal of civic competence and social skills related to being a member of society (Mills, 2001). From what is seen in classrooms today there is a significant gap between the goals mentioned and the goals and methods that are understood by those teaching social studies in the classroom. Many classroom teachers that have been interviewed teach social studies on a surface level without developing critical thinking or problem solving. It is viewed as a non-subject that is not considered to be as important as reading and math (Mills, 2001). Often what is seen in the classroom when social studies is taught is the use of textbooks and worksheets where no inquiry or critical thinking is needed. Often these materials are supplemented with an occasional video and may be followed with a discussion that is mainly dominated by the teacher. Once in while this seat work will be interrupted with some group work and tests to measure student learning

(McCall, 2006). Besides the methods that are being used to teach social studies the content is usually focused on history and geography using rote memorization. These concepts are important, but there should also be included individual development and identity, global connections and science, technology and society (Tanner, 2008).

Many classrooms during social studies instruction turn into teacher centered rooms instead of student centered, which takes the learning process out of the students hands. They then rely on the teacher for all the right answers (Tanner, 2008). The problem in social studies education is the profound absence of thoughtfulness (Wills, 2007). “Each lesson should 1) be integrated with reading, language arts, or science; 2) involve the students in active participation through cooperative learning or inquiry; and 3) require the students to use higher-level thinking skills to classify, interpret analyze, or evaluate information” (Tanner, 2008, p. 43). According to the National Council for the Social Studies there are five qualities that make social studies instruction powerful and authentic:

- 1) Social studies teaching and learning are powerful when they are meaningful
 - Meaningful social studies builds curriculum networks of knowledge, skills, beliefs, and attitudes that are structured around enduring understandings, essential questions, important ideas, and goals.

- 2) Social studies teaching and learning are powerful when they are integrative
 - The subjects that comprise social studies- i.e., history, economics, geography, political science, sociology, anthropology, archaeology, and psychology- are rich, interrelated disciplines, each critical to the background of thoughtful citizens. The social studies curriculum is integrative, addressing the totality of human

experience over time and space, connecting with the past, linked to the present, and looking ahead to the future. Focusing on the core social studies disciplines, it includes materials drawn from the arts, sciences, and humanities, from current events, from local examples and from students' own lives.

- 3) Social studies teaching and learning are powerful when they are value-based
 - Social studies teachers recognize that students do not become responsible, participating citizens automatically. The values embodied in our democratic form of government, with its commitment to justice, equality, and freedom of thought and speech, are reflected in social studies classroom practices.
- 4) Social studies teaching and learning are powerful when they are challenging
 - Student work should reflect a balance between retrieval and recitation of content and a thoughtful examination of concepts in order to provide intellectual challenges. The teacher must explain and model intellectual standards expected of students. These include, but are not limited to: clarity, precision, completeness, depth, relevance, and fairness.
- 5) Social studies teaching and learning are powerful when they are active
 - Active lessons require students to process and think about what they are learning. There is a profound difference between learning about the actions and conclusions of others and reasoning one's way toward those conclusions. Active learning is not just "hands-on," it is "minds-on" (NCSS, A Vision of Powerful, 2008).

Social studies instruction needs to offer experiential learning to students. A constructivist approach that allows students to ask their own questions and seek their own answers keeps them

engaged (Hope, 1996). A constructivist view of learning describes learning as an intellectual process where learners develop what they know by fitting new ideas together with ideas they have already learned. The result of this type of learning is made up of three elements: 1) knowledge they gain from the new experience, 2) their prior understanding, and 3) their personal connection of the new and the old (Force, 2002). The constructivist approach to teaching social studies allows students decide what citizenship means from their viewpoint. What is my responsibility? What are my values? What is the right thing to do? What side should I support? Student should become active, rather than passive learners. One way to do this is through service learning projects (Hope, 1996). All these concepts are important in providing purposeful, thoughtful, and meaningful social studies instruction, but will be a challenge to address in the classroom with the limitations No Child Left Behind has brought.

The key to being able to teach social studies in the classroom today is by integrating it into other subject areas. The literacy block is a perfect place to start. There are a lot of written resources available that will aid in teaching social studies. Fiction, nonfiction, and other written sources such as newspaper articles are great places to find information to launch topics for social studies. Incorporating social studies learning into writing instruction is also another way to integrate subject areas (McCall, 2006). Many teachers have been interviewed around this topic and all said that in order to fit social studies into the day they had to integrate it with other subjects. The easiest and least forced are reading and writing. These areas naturally fit in with some social studies instruction. In order to provide meaningful and powerful instruction in the social studies work needs to be done outside of these blocks as well (McCall, 2006).

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

To find the sources necessary to complete this project the use of the Central Washington University online library of databases was used. The primary sources used were educational full text, academic search complete, ERIC, and JSTOR. The search used in each of these sites was primary social studies, teaching social studies, social studies in education, social studies and elementary school, methods in teaching social studies, citizenship education, and various other plays on these words. The search at first was limited to full text articles, but then this was no longer determined to be a criterion. When an article was found that seemed to be valuable based on the abstract then the interlibrary search was used to obtain those articles. Once articles were found and read if they were shown to be valuable to the project, then the references used in that article were researched to see if they could also be of value. Also used was Central Washington's Summit which is an inter library loan for books. The books chosen to be used had been referenced in articles that were found to be valuable.

The criteria that was used for evaluating the sources, was first to make sure it came from a known educational database, then checking that the journal the article was from was known as publishing valid researched pieces of work. Once those things were confirmed then the article abstract was read. If it seemed to fit into one of the three previously selected topics used in the paper the article was saved or printed to be read further. The sections the articles needed to fit into were the history of teaching social studies, the value in teaching social studies, and the methods to teach social studies. When all of these criteria were met the article was saved to be used in writing chapter two of the project.

Implementation

This project is designed for use in elementary classrooms. It is specifically designed for second grade classrooms in Washington State since it is designed around the state standards for social studies. It can be adapted for use at any grade level and would be a good community builder regardless of what grade level uses it. This project will be tried out by the second grade team at White Center Heights elementary next year. Some of the project will be utilized this year and taught as time allows. The idea is to give the units to be taught to all second grade teams in the district so that teachers have a common resource to teach social studies in their classroom. There is already interest from other second grade teachers who have heard about this project. They would like to try to see how it can fit into their schedule next year.

The units in this project are designed to be taught throughout the whole year as a unifying theme across all subject areas. If this is not possible in a classroom the social studies units can be taken and taught separately. There are projects in each of the three units that can be taught alone without the other accompanying lessons. The plan is flexible enough that anyone can teach some or all of the units. Every school and every classroom has a different amount of time and freedom to teach social studies.

CHAPTER IV

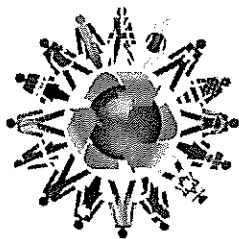
THE PROJECT

Introduction

One of the main goals of teaching social studies is citizenship education. “The social studies is an integration of experience and knowledge concerning human relations for the purpose of citizenship education.” (Beal & Martorella, 1994, p. 7). There are many different perspectives on what citizenship education means and its purpose. The units in this chapter will assume that citizenship education is the transmission of cultural heritage for the use of decision making and personal development to create a positive self-concept and a strong sense of personal worth (Beal & Martorella, 1994). This will be done through the study of the community and the cultures that make up the community. The goal is to lead to an understanding of how the community works as well as the variety of ways that communities organize themselves.

The study of cultures will develop cultural proficiency in students. “Cultural proficiency is honoring the differences among cultures, viewing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgeable and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups” (Lindsey, Roberts, & Campbell-Jones, 2005). The units to meet these goals are; our community, communities needs and wants, and participating in the community. There will be explicit instruction in these areas during the social studies block, but work will be integrated into all subject areas. The study of culture and community will be a unifying theme throughout the entire year, and will fit into the year plan where appropriate. During reading there will be an emphasis on multicultural literature and communities, and nonfiction reading around various communities, and cultures/countries

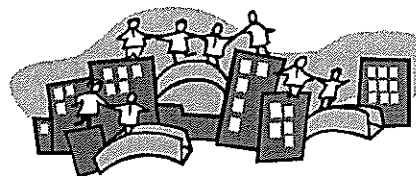
needs and wants. The study will focus on those cultures represented in the classroom. Writing assignments will follow these themes giving students a chance to write about their home culture and create some nonfiction writing about travel to another country. Field trips will be relevant to what is studied at that time and art will center on traditional art from the countries studied. A big project at the beginning of the year will be the creation of a museum in the classroom to show the various cultures that make up the community in which students live. This will be done by having each student bring an artifact in that represents their home culture. Parents will be invited to a showing of the museum with the students leading tours of the class museum. There will then be a potluck with dishes from the unique culture of each family. This will give students a chance to see who makes up the community and to provide an understanding that everyone comes from different backgrounds, but still have the common goal of creating an environment that is productive. This will then branch out to each country of origin studying the clothes, food, celebrations, and other commonalities. The end of the year project will be a service project created by the students to show that we need to be active citizens to ensure there is support for positive community living.



Cultures in our Community

A Social Studies Unit

Written by: Anna Buglino



Colleague Introduction

This social studies unit is designed to create community and understanding in the classroom. Through the study of culture students will become more aware of the differences in each other, which should lead to being more compassionate about the unique traits they see in others. As students learn this valuable lesson in the classroom it will translate to creating citizens that are competent in understanding the cultural makeup of this country.

The plan for this social studies unit is to teach it as an integrated unit with reading, writing, math, art, and field experiences. It can be taught as little or as much as time allows, and can be taught without integrating into other areas depending on the flexibility in your curriculum materials. There are three units taught throughout the year. The first is called our community and teaches about what a community is, who is in the community, and how communities are alike and different. The main portion of this unit is creating a classroom museum which will portray the cultural make-up of the classroom representing the community. This leads into a study of the countries your students families come from. The second unit teaches about the goods and services in the community, and the last unit is creating a service project in the community. Student will walk away with an understanding that they play a role in creating a safe, productive community and that they can make a difference.

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White Center Heights' 2nd Grade Curriculum Map * Bold is integrated social studies unit

	Sept-Oct 4-5 weeks	Oct-Nov 5 weeks	Nov-Dec 4 weeks	Jan-Feb 8 weeks	Mar-Apr 8 weeks	May 4 weeks	June 3 weeks
Reading	Readerly Life (memoir) -Why do we read? -How do readers choose books? -How do readers get in and stay in their books? -How do readers think and talk about their reading? -Include books centered on culture and community	Realistic Fiction -relating to characters -predict/infer -story elements -big ideas -Include multicultural books (Jalapeno Bagels)	Fairytales; -What do we expect from fairytales? -story elements -compare/contrast -sequence of events -cause/effect -theme/big idea -Include fairytales/folktales from countries represented in class	Informational Text -text features -text structures -main idea/detail -summary - text around holidays, clothes, schools, food, shelter...around the world	Reading to Learn -using resources to learn about a topic of interest -fact/opinion -using functional documents to plan a trip -Building the idea of how to research about a country	Poetry -literary devices -Include poems representing cultures around the world	Culminating Project -service project in the community
Writing	Writerly Life Launching Small Moments, Pick topics that could lead to being an artifact		Writing for Readers	Revision Authors as Mentors	Nonfiction Writing -Country report/ travel guide?	Poetry -Poems about self/culture/artifact	
Science	Soil			States of Matter	Rainforests	Butterflies	
Field Experiences	Museum Trip		Walk around neighborhood		Zoo Field Trip		
Social Studies	Burke box in class Unit 1	Unit 1 Our Community	Unit 2 Communities meeting needs			Service Project Unit 3	
Art	Traditional art	From	Countries	Represented	In classroom		

Purpose of Unit Outline

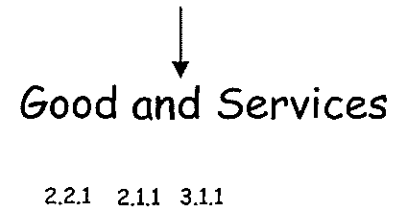
The next page is a unit outline for the year of social studies instruction. This plan is for those who will be using this unit plan without integrating it into other subject areas. It gives the three units that should be taught throughout the year to incorporate all the second grade social studies standards. It shows which standards are taught where, and the break-up of sections within each unit. This way pieces of the year long unit can be taught where time allows for those who are unable to make the time to teach the whole unit as it is designed. There still will be value and learning if all that can be taught is parts of the whole unit, though the suggestion is to teach all of it so that students can gain the most instruction around community, compassion for others, and what being a citizen means.

What is a Community?

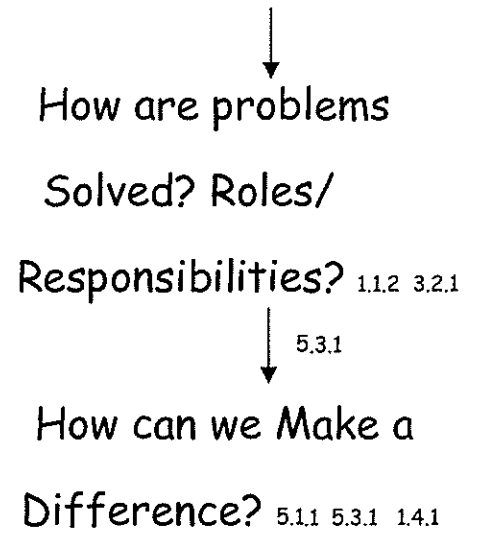
Unit 1 Our Community



Unit 2 Communities Needs & Wants



Unit 3 Participating in the Community



* Numbers are the GLEs met based on Washington Social Studies Standards

Unit 1

Our Community

What is a community?

GLEs to be addressed:

- 1.1.1 Understands the key ideal of public or common good within the context of the community
- 1.2.1 Understands the basic organization of government in the community
- 1.2.2 Understands the basic function of government and laws in the community

Lesson(s) 1-3 depending on time

Materials: Butcher paper, markers, various community books, paper for students, pencils

Launch: Students complete a KWL chart about what community means, then have students go back with partners and write down laws/rules that they think exist or should exist in the community, have them share.

Teaching: Read aloud a book about what makes up a community and discuss anything more they can add to KWL chart.

(Same day if time or next lesson)

Explicit instruction about how the community around school is governed, what the government does, and discuss some common laws.

-this can be done through books, or through conversation

-add to KWL chart

Partners discuss and decide if there are any burning questions that should be researched and answered.

(Same lesson, or next)

Research burning questions with students using books, computer, or have the questions already answered and discuss with class, add to KWL chart where needed.

Assessment: Students write down two things they learned about the community they live in, and why those things are important to them

What is a Community?

Know Already	Want to Know	Learn

Who is in our community?

GLEs to be addressed:

4.1.1 Understands and creates timelines for events in a community to show how the present is connected to the past

4.2.1 Understands individuals who have shaped history in the local community

1-2 months to create museum

This section of the unit is designed to allow students to study the people that make up the community through a study of themselves, since they are representative of the community they live in. Students will work together to create a museum of artifacts that represents their home life/culture. Through this students will understand the people who have shaped the community into what it is today. (During this time in writing students will be working on a personal and cultural report to be hung up at the museum, resources will be included at end of unit outline. They will also be creating traditional art from cultures represented in the classroom.)

Launch: To launch this section of the unit students will go on a field trip to a local museum that has artifacts from many cultures/countries on display. The goal is for students to start getting a picture of what types of things can be used as an artifact. An example is the Burke Museum in Seattle, specifically the storytelling tour.

Lessons 1, 1-3 days: What is an artifact?

Various lessons to teach: what an artifact can be for the class museum.

- World cultures box from Burke Museum has various artifacts included that students can handle

- Teacher brings in artifacts from own life and explains why appropriate, also has teachers with other cultural backgrounds bring in artifacts to share with class (pictures, clothing, cooking utensils, can be a written story, routine...)
- Once students seem to understand what an artifact is have them work with partners to brainstorm ideas. Teacher confers with pairs and helps students pick a couple of options to bring from home

Lesson 2, 3-5 days: Artifact write-up

Students will write what their artifact represents to them, and why they chose to include it in classroom museum.

- Teacher will model writing about artifact, and then students will work on their own writing, they will edit, have teacher edit, and then produce a final copy

Lesson 3, 2-3 days: Artifact plaque

Students will create a plaque to hang or place next to artifact.

- Teacher models taking artifact write-up and creating a summary from it to put on a plaque that will be next to the artifact in the museum, students will then work on their own

Lesson 4, 1-2 days: Creating display board

With teacher guidance students will create a display board that will house their artifact, write-up, plaque, traditional artwork, and personal and cultural report.

Lesson 5, 2-4 days: Practice as a museum docent

Students will become familiar with everyone's displays so that they are able to be museum docents. They will be giving tours of the museum to other students, and to families on the night or afternoon the museum is open. May need to have note cards written with reminders of important information, which will depend on the level of students in class.

Lesson 6, 1 day: Invitation

Students will make an invitation or several inviting family to come to the open house of classroom museum. A possible idea is to have students ask family to bring in a dish of food that can be shared representing their family's culture. After students have led families on the tour there will be a potluck.

Lesson 7, 1 day: Reflection

Students will take time to reflect through writing, a survey, or both on what they learned about others in the class after working on this project.

Artifact write-up

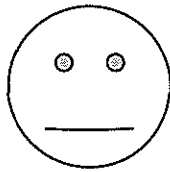
What is your artifact? _____

Where is it from? _____

What does it say about your family? _____

Reflection

Did you enjoy creating the museum?



What was your favorite part of this project? _____

What did you learn about people in our class? _____

Is there something else you think should be included in the museum? _____

Personal and Cultural Report

Start with a student photo

Under photo include:

- Who they are
- Where they were born
- Who raised them
- What their position is in their family
- What interests they have

Then have a family photo

Under photo include:

- Who their family is
- Where were they born and raised
- What do they do as a family
- What kind of food do they eat
- What celebrations do they have
- What are their beliefs

How are communities alike/different?

GLEs to be addressed:

4.2.1 Understands individuals who have shaped history in the local community

3.1.2 Understands the physical characteristics of places in the community

This part of the unit will be a study about the countries where people from the community originate. Students will look at how their community and communities in other countries are alike and how they are different. For this to be accomplished students will study the land, clothes, food, shelter, schools, holidays and so on. Giving students a better understanding of where the people who shape their community come from, and they will gain insight into why things look and are the way they are.

Lesson 1-4 weeks

- Teacher will read various fiction and nonfiction books to show the similarities and differences between the communities students live in, and the communities they look at based on cultures represented in the classroom. Things to compare are listed above, but many others can be found as well
- Teacher and students co-create Venn diagrams based on information learned, and then gradually release to kids to complete in groups/pairs and eventually individually

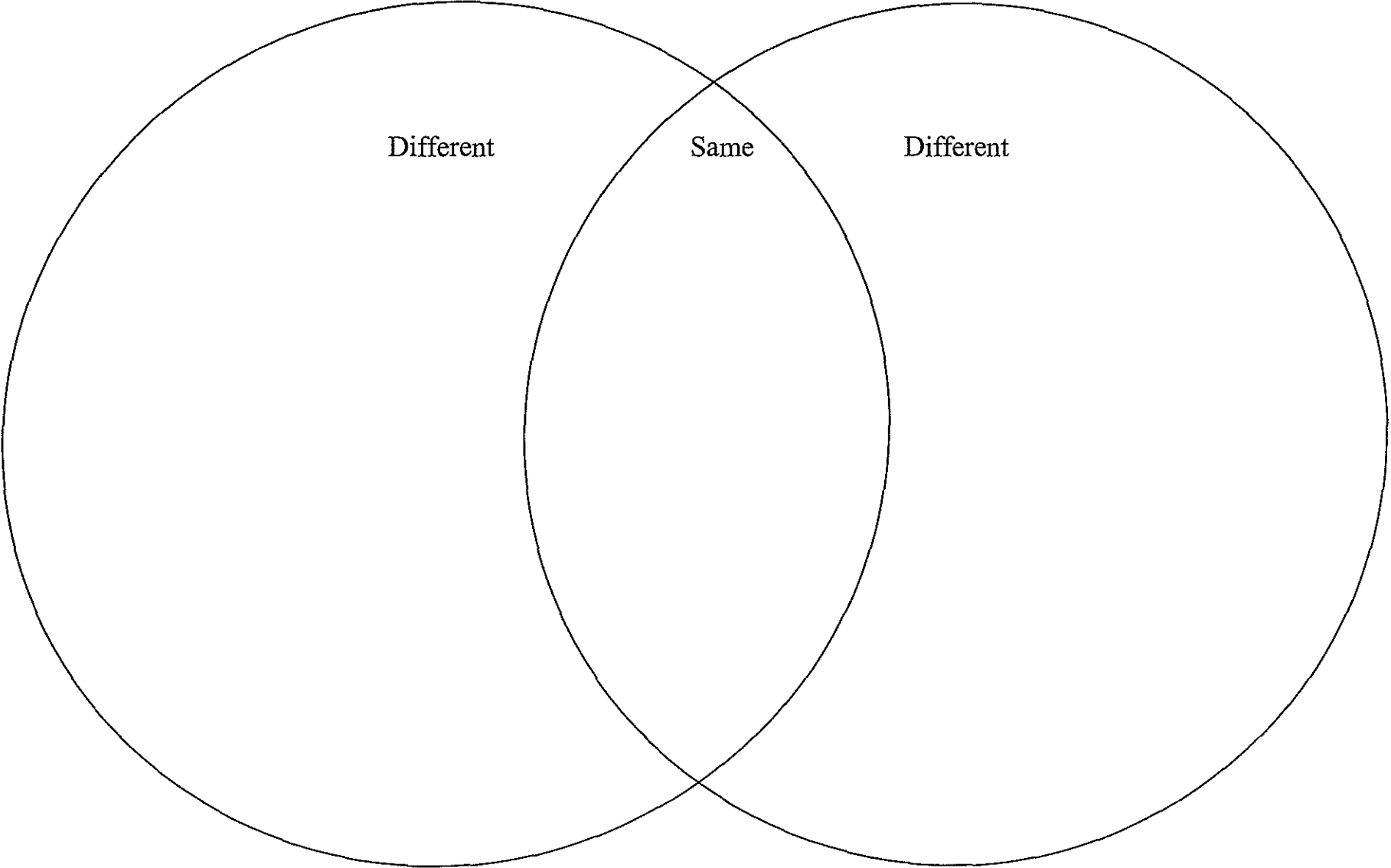
Assessment: Students write one common theme they noticed in different communities

Name: _____

Date: _____

Our Community

Country: _____



Unit 2

Communities Wants and Needs

Good and Services

GLEs Addressed:

2.2.1 Understands the basic elements of a community's economic system, including producers, distributors, and consumers of goods and services

2.1.1 Understands that members of the community make choices among products and services that have costs and benefits

3.1.1 Understands and applies basic mapping elements such as compass rose, labels, and a key to read and construct maps that display information about neighborhoods or local communities

Launch: To launch this unit students should be taken on a walking field trip of their community to see what services are available, and to get a layout of the community in order to construct a map.

Lessons 2-5 weeks

- Discuss with students what was seen on the field trip, talking about the difference between consumers, distributors, and naming what services are offered
- Read various nonfiction books that discuss the mentioned items above
- Discuss careers that are needed to ensure the community is able to function
- Create a map of the community: using important buildings, streets, neighborhoods...
- Students will pick a community helper to interview and study then present to class

Assessment: Students answer what is one service the community could not survive without?

Why?

Please note:

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Chapter 4: Images on page 46 through page 53 have been redacted.

Unit 3

Participating in the Community

How are problems solved? Roles and Responsibilities?

GLEs addressed:

- 1.1.2 Applies the key ideal of the public or common good to uphold rights and responsibilities within the context of the community
- 3.2.1 Understands that people in communities affect the environment as they meet their needs and wants
- 5.3.1 Engages in discussions to learn about different points of view on issues

In this portion of unit three students will understand how the problems in a community are solved. They will also learn about why there are certain rules/laws in place to ensure a safe, clean community. They will learn their role in the community, and the roles of others in the community, while understanding the responsibilities each of these groups has as well.

Launch: Pose a common problem to students that occurs in the school (i.e. running in the halls, fighting, trash, hall passes...) and have them discuss why the rule is in effect, then have them discuss what would happen without that rule, and lastly discussing how to enforce the rule.

Lessons 2-4

- Using KWL chart from unit 1 discuss the laws/rules students identified, have them talk about why they are in effect, what would happen if laws didn't exist, who needs to obey the laws, and whose responsibility is it to ensure laws are being followed

Assessment: Students create a law they think should be in effect in the community, fill out other pieces of the chart about this law.

Thinking about Laws/Rules

Law	Why do we have it?	What would happen w/out?	Who obeys?	Whose responsibility to uphold?

How can we make a difference?

GLEs addressed:

5.1.1 Understands multiple points of view on issues in the community

5.3.1 Engages in discussions to learn about different points of view on issues

1.4.1 Understands that citizenship and civic involvement in the neighborhood and community are the rights and responsibilities of individuals

In this section of unit three students will be designing a service project to complete in the community. They will design it from start to finish, and it will end with an assembly for the school to show what has been accomplished and to encourage other students to do their part in keeping the community safe, clean, and ensuring a positive environment.

Launch: To get students excited about this project start by having them brainstorm a list of ideas of things that they can help improve, organizations they can donate to, or charities they can help. Once a good list has been developed tell them that they are going to accomplish one of these things and have them vote on the one they want to work on as a class.

Lessons 3-6 weeks

- Once an idea has been chosen for the class project there needs to be a brainstorming session for what needs to be done, materials needed, how long things will take, basically how to accomplish the end goal
- Students should decide on committees to ensure completion of project, and then decide which committee they want to be a part of, later a time line will be created for due dates of jobs
- Once jobs have been assigned then students need class time to get the work done, posters, flyers, materials gathered, phone conversations....
- Students should visit other classrooms to tell about the project and get others interested
- Once project is completed students can have an assembly

Ideas for Service Project

Responding to needs within the school	Responding to local needs
Supporting local organizations	Other ideas

Writing Announcements: Planning Guide

Who: _____

What: _____

When: _____

Where: _____

Why: _____

COMMITTEE TASK SHEET

Due Date	Job	Person in Charge

Self Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____

What was the project: _____

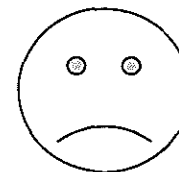
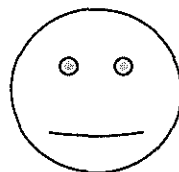
I worked with my group



I worked well with others



I got ready to work quickly



Next time I need to: _____

Book Ideas to be used with Unit 1

Fiction –A look into the lives of children from other countries now living in America

Angel Child, Dragon Child Michele Surat

My Little Island Frane Lessac

Brothers in Hope Mary Williams

Beatrice's Goat Hillary Clinton

Grandma Calls Me Beautiful Barbara Jooose

Tall Boy's Journey Joanna Kraus

Tiny Tortilla Arlene Williams

How My Parents Learned to Eat Allen Say

Sense Pass King Katrin Tchana

Lucy's Family Tree Karen Schreck

My Chinatown Kam Mak

Big Jimmy's Kum Kau Chinese Take Out Ted Lewin

Armando and the Blue Tarp School Edith Fine

I Hate English Ellen Levine

This is the Way We go to School Edith Baer

We all Went on Safari Laurie Krebs

Throw Your Tooth on the Roof Selby B. Beeler

Nonfiction – to be used when looking at similarities and differences between community and other countries

Fingers, Forks, & Chopsticks Patricia Lauber

I am American Charles Smith Jr.

Kente Colors Debbi Chocolate

Celebrating Powwow Bobbie Kalman

What is Culture? Bobbie Kalman

Shoes, Shoes, Shoes Ann Morris

Hats, Hats, Hats Ken Heyman

All- World Book's

A Look at... Books Helen Frost

Our American Family Books Isobel Seymour

Mexico ABCs Sarah Heiman

If the World Were a Village David Smith

Children Just Like Me

It's Back to School We Go Ellen Jackson

Going to School In India Lisa Heydlauff

Around the World Books Margaret Hall

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This project is designed to show educators the importance of teaching social studies to create active, knowledgeable citizens of the United States. Through a look at the history of social studies education in America it was shown that not much has changed, though there are many different theories regarding the best approach to teaching social studies. The general consensus is that it should include integrating teaching from various subject areas including history, geography, civics, economics, sociology, anthropology, sociology, and psychology. The conflict is in how this should be taught, and how in depth should each area of study be. In earlier years it was believed that social studies education should be seen in secondary schooling, but in the 1930's more materials were produced to include social studies education in primary schools.

Ideas were also changing to believe that the reason social studies should be taught is for citizenship education. The belief today is that students need to learn about the history of the world and country they live in so that they become effective citizens prepared to take on the responsibilities they will obtain as adults. The value in starting to teach children about citizenship, and the country they live in is that they learn how to judge for themselves what will secure or endanger their freedom. They will learn how to be active members of their community to ensure its success. If these things are not taught in our schools they will not be learned, and the future of America is at risk. Studies have shown that children are not able to understand basic needs and wants by simply observing the world around them. They need to be taught how the

world functions socially, politically, and economically, and have hands on experiences in making change so that they are prepared as adults for these challenges.

There are many different opinions on what method should be used to teach social studies education and citizen development. The similarities concluded that students need to engage in meaningful, integrative, value-based, challenging, and active lessons. There needs to be thoughtfulness in what is taught, and students need to feel a connection to what they are learning. Without this it will not be meaningful to them and will produce no change in thinking. The unit plans in this project incorporate this thinking by creating lessons that are relevant to the children participating. The units are designed to teach about community in a way that the students can take ownership of their own ideas and actions. They learn about their community through their own experiences, and see that they can make a positive change by designing and completing a service learning project. When teaching these units together students will learn that communities are made up of a variety of people who all contribute in their own way to how the community functions.

Conclusions

I gained a great deal of knowledge while working on this project. When I started working on it I was excited to finally plan a social studies unit that I could teach in my classroom. I always knew that teaching social studies was important, but after working on this project a whole new level of importance was created in me. I looked at social studies education as history and geography mixed with some cultural learning. Now my understanding is much deeper than that. Those things are important in teaching social studies, but other elements need to be included as well. The goal I now have is to do my part in developing culturally competent citizens who

understand that they have a role to play in the world. I hope to spread this understanding to other teachers so that we can work together to vertically align instruction, because as one teacher of one grade level there is only so much I can do. My plan based on the learning I acquired while working on this project is to help my second graders understand the community in which they live. Students have the right to understand how a community works, what its needs are, the laws, what their role is, and how they can make a difference in today's world.

Recommendations

I would like to see additional professional development in the instruction of social studies. The district I work in, and really the country as a whole, is lacking in its social studies instruction. It has been set to the side for the subject areas of reading, writing, and math; so that students can pass the tests they are given. I believe that we can teach social studies through thoughtful integrated units of study. I would like to work with my staff to create units in all grade levels to ensure that our students are prepared for the future. I hope that this work will spread through the district and then from this district to others.

More research will need to be conducted to show the value of teaching social studies, and identifying consequences if it is not taught. In my project this was discussed, but not to the degree necessary to experience real change in how social studies is taught in schools today. More research will need to be done on instruction of other grade levels. My focus was second grade since that is where the units I created will be used. With thoughtful planning there could be wonderful change in social studies instruction as it is taught today.

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