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Technology in Education

By

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December, 2014

A project submitted to the

Department of Education and Human Development of the

State University of New York College at Brockport

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science in Education

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Abstract

This comprehensive project examines how overexposure to technology impacts the learning styles of students, and how teaching strategies need to be adapted to meet the changing learning needs of this generation. David Jukes (2010) book, *Understanding the Digital Generation (Teaching and Learning in the New Digital Landscape),* discusses how students learning styles have evolved and changed over the years due to them being inundated with technology from a young age. This paper will examine Jukes claims, discuss how modern teachers need to adapt their teaching styles to reach students of the Digital Generation, and will offer practical lessons that teachers can use in their classrooms to help promote student engagement in class activities.

There second part of the paper is a comprehensive unit on folktales. The unit consists of 11 lessons, and several of the lessons incorporate the technology strategies that have been discussed in the paper. Students will conduct several writing assignments: using word processors, online writing applications, and websites. Students will engage in collaborative group projects. The final assignment in the unit will ask students to compose an original folktale with illustrations. This final assignment will need to be turned in in a professional format. Students will either have their book bound, or it will be turned in in a binder or portfolio. These lessons will also adhere to the New York State Common Core English Language Arts Learning Standards.

Chapter 1

Introduction

There seems to be a growing disconnect between the way students learn and how they are being taught. One of the reasons there are disconnects between teachers and students is technology. Technology is not a bad thing. However, overexposure to technology can alter the way students will be most successful at receiving information. Because of the constant access students have with technology from a young age, their perceptions and how they access and receive information effectively have been drastically altered. This paper examines the relationship that modern students have with technology, the effects of that relationship, and how teachers need to adapt their teaching styles to reach this generation.

It is imperative that teachers are willing to alter their teaching styles in order to effectively reach this group of students. Throughout this paper, there will be suggestions of class activities and practical lessons given to help teachers bridge the gap that they may have with their students.

Problem Statement

The influence of technology has changed the way modern students effectively receive information. However, many teaching practices are still the same. Students today are not programmed to learn the same way that their teachers before them did. Rowley (2014) comments on the changing learning needs of students: “The pedagogical needs of tertiary students have changed…. as a result, the need for curriculum renewal has been brought to the forefront of the quality learning and teaching debate” (p. 28). Most classrooms have the teacher in front lecturing while the students sit at their desks and receive the information presented by their teacher. This may have been an effective means of instruction in years past.

The amount of time students spend interacting with technology has shaped the way that they learn. Jukes (2010) says that students of "the digital generation" have been surrounded by technology most of their lives: "For most of the digital generation, there has never been time in their lives when they haven't been surrounded by computers, digital videos, cell phones, video games, then internet, and online tools…" (p. 185). This constant exposure to technology has impacted the way students prefer to receive information. If they are never taught in a way that reaches them, they will never fully engage in classroom activities. Students will not be engaged and eager to learn if their learning needs are not being met. Puckett (2013) argues that "as students' learning styles are addressed, they become more engaged in learning, and their success rates will rise" (p. 7). If the current curriculum and the way information is presented to students does not change, students will lose interest in learning. Teachers must be willing to adapt their teaching styles and use differentiated instruction to help meet the needs of the changing student population.

Significance of Problem

Students using technology is not the issue. Technology is now a part of our world, and students should be well versed in how to use it. However, the problem arises when students have used technology so much throughout their lives that it has altered the way they receive and process information. They're learning styles have been altered due to overexposure to technology. Krisova & Pokoray (2013) explain: "…the learning process, i.e. its progress and efficiency, is influenced by the way (style) each student learns" (p.175). Teachers need to be ready to offer students practice in thought processes that exist outside of the technological realm while at the same time not completely dismissing the new learning styles that have emerged in students as a result of being inundated with technology from a young age.

If student learning styles are not fostered in the classroom, problems with engagement in classroom activities begin to arise: “Every student has his individual learning style which the teacher should respect and thus support his effective learning processes. Correct recognition of the student’s learning style is a skill of a good teacher” (Krisova & Pokoray, 2013, p.185). Teachers need to spend the time and make the effort to learn about their students learning styles. If teachers are cognizant about how their students learn, their students will ultimately be more engaged and enthusiastic about classroom lessons.

Rationale

Engaging modern students through the use of technology in the classroom is imperative. Using technology can help engage students in classroom activities and help them understand difficult concepts by using a framework that they are already familiar with. Puckett (2013) argues: “Implementing video technology, according to Pellett and Pellet (2009), is an essential opportunity to create engaging learning scenarios for students that promote critical thinking and creativity” (p. 7). Students that are already familiar with how to use technology successfully can work on developing higher order thinking skills by using this medium.

Technology can also help English as a Second Language (ESL) learners become more successful with integration into predominately English speaking classes: “As students were engaged, the English Language Learners’ scores improved … the visual opportunity of understanding vocabulary and seeing an example of it made comprehension of the terms more feasible” (Puckett, 2013, p. 7). When ESL learners were able to see the vocabulary visualized it aided in their comprehension. If they were already familiar with how this technology worked, they can jump right in with developing their English language skills. This is a meaningful and important implementation of technology in the classroom.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to examine the gap between how teachers teach and how students learn as a result of early exposure to technology. This paper will look at claims made by David Jukes (2010) in his book, Understanding the Digital Generation (Teaching and Learning in the New Digital Landscape), and will offer practical strategies for teachers to use to help engage modern students in classroom activities. Chapter 3 of this paper will focus on implementation of technological lessons that will meet the needs of digital learners through the lens of a unit on folktales. The lessons showcased from the folktales in the chapter 3 unit plan will be those that directly relate to the issues that Jukes discusses in his book. These lessons are meant to be practical resources that will help teachers successfully reach their students through the meaningful implementation of technology in their classrooms.

Definition of Terms

Digital Generation- The term David Jukes uses to describe the generation of kids that have grown up using technology. (Jukes, 2010, p. 185).

Epals- A website that houses a global community in which classrooms from around the world can connect and correspond with each other (www.epals.com).

Folktales- "[Folktales] began as an attempt to explain and understand the natural and spiritual world and are used to make social issues, history, and natural phenomena understandable to children… These culturally cherished tales share common plots wherein good overcomes evil, justice is served, and a happy ending ensues" (Rupiper & Zeece, 2005, p. 377).

Google Docs- An online word processor offered through Google in which a document can be written by one or multiple individuals. Comments can be made right on the document or edited by a specific group of people. It can then be shared publicly or privately.

Voice Thread- Is an online application that lets users create a profile. The service allows users to "upload, share and discuss documents, presentations, images, audio files and videos. Over 50 different types of media can be used in a VoiceThread" (www.voicethread.com).

Summary

Technology needs to have a purpose in the classroom. It needs to be more than just the teacher using a slide show or showing video clips on the Smart Board. Technology should be integrated into the class, and the students should have access to it. This will provide opportunities for students to engage with material, and they will be more interested in class time as a result.

How can students be effectively engaged in class materials? Teachers need to be willing to put in time and training within their district to learn how to use technology effectively in their classrooms. There is no single way to incorporate technology into classes, but the teacher needs to figure out what devices/programs will be most effective in reaching his or her students. The more students are interested in class activities, the more they will try to succeed. It is the goal of every teacher to make sure we help our students succeed to the very best of their abilities and beyond.

Chapter 2

Background and Literature Review

The ever changing world of technology has not only impacted society, but it has also altered the way that students receive and process information. The students of this technologically advanced generation are developing learning styles that differ drastically from the instructional practices that have been handed down to teachers over the years. There needs to be a shift in instructional delivery if teachers want to be able to effectively engage their students in classroom activities. Jukes (2010) refers to students who have grown up using technology as "The Digital Generation." He further posits that "constant exposure to digital media has changed the way the digital generation processes, interacts, and uses information" (p. 185). It is for this reason that teachers need to alter their instructional methods in order to ensure that they are effectively engaging students in the classroom. Altering lesson plans and incorporating technology in meaningful ways to class lessons are positive ways to reach students of this generation. This paper will periodically refer to lessons from the Folk Tales unit that has been developed for the second part of this comprehensive project. The lessons that are referenced in this paper will be those that have a heavy technology focus. There will be detailed plans for these lessons in Chapter 3.

Because many of today's students have been exposed to technology since they were young, it has affected the way their minds work and how they process information. There are many positive aspects that result from learning how to proficiently use technology from an early age. For example, students are able to access information quickly, learn how to interact with several different forms of media simultaneously, and they are able to communicate with friends and family around the world. However, with all these positive elements, there are also some

downsides to being overexposed to technology. Multitasking has become second nature to modern students, but there are some drawbacks to overdeveloping this skill. Jukes (2010) quotes Small and Vorgon about the problems that can occur as a result of excessive multitasking: "… while multitasking is an essential skill in the digital world, to minimize the negative aspects of doing multiple tasks simultaneously, we must balance multitasking with developing single-tasking skills as well" (p. 270). Even though students can operate several different web pages, watch t.v., and talk with friends all at the same time, it is important that they can also focus on a challenging task with all of their attention. To do this, teachers need to give their students plenty of time to practice working on a single difficult task. Students should also be given strategies to help them adjust to working on a single difficult task. However, having students multitask during lessons can also be a positive way to engage them by allowing them to use skills that they have already developed.

For their final project in the unit on folktales, students will be asked to create an original folktale and turn it in in story book format. The folktale will need to be between five and seven pages long, and the students will need to read their story and discuss their writing strategy in front of the class in an eight to ten minute presentation. This extensive project will require the students to commit themselves to a comprehensive project in which they write a lengthy assignment and make preparations to report what they did to the entire class. The students will need to utilize several different skills to complete this assignment successfully. They will need to spend time brainstorming and doing outlines to draft a compelling story. There will be several opportunities given in class for students to work on their projects.

While technology needs to be utilized in the classroom, the teacher should not be the only that has access to it. Husby (2013) states: "When the only technology in the room is a computer,

the teacher stands by it to share information (usually in the form of a Power Point). Students are positioned as receivers of the information the teacher gives" (p. 49). In this scenario, the students are passive. They are not searching out the information for themselves, but they are only processing what information the teacher gives them. This is very similar to how lessons have always been delivered. The only difference: teachers are using computers instead of a chalk board or an overhead projector. This is not an effective way to reach students that are used to looking up information on the internet on their own. This dichotomy in the teacher/student exchange of information does not encourage the students to become independent: "… the ways we teach should also change, because technology has been shown to affect both learner engagement and motivation" (Husby, 2013, p. 46). Teachers need to be aware that the technology their students use on a daily basis has an impact on how they prefer to receive information.

There is a stark distinction between how members of the digital generation prefer to learn, and how their teachers present information to them. Jukes (2010) states that "digital learners prefer receiving information quickly from a variety of sources while many educators prefer slow and controlled release of information from limited sources" (p. 869). Students prefer to get as much information as they can from multiple sources in order to best understand how to solve a problem. However, teachers usually give information from the textbook and possibly a couple other similar sources. Jaeger (2012) argues that students should be allowed the freedom to access several complex texts simultaneously while aided by technology. The author states that this type of activity is "a major shift away from [the] text driven instructional model that enables the teacher to teach from a text outline that has been mapped and paced for coverage. We want to uncover and discover, rather than cover" (Jaeger, 2012, p. 31). This type of approach allows

students to access and interpret complex texts quickly and pull out meaningful information instead of being fed little pieces of progressively complex material. While this strategy will take time for students to perfect, it allows them to learn similarly to how they would while surfing the internet.

Teachers need to make sure that their students know how to multitask: “effective multitasking is really about having a good memory capable of paying attention to several inputs at one time and being highly independent at task switching” (Jukes, 2010, p. 869). The teacher has to be sure that when students are multitasking; they are able to switch their focus completely to deal with each source with 100% of his or her attention. If students are not able to do this effectively, then the teacher should go back to having students concentrate on one single difficult task at a time. The teacher can then slowly bring in other documents or sources for students to work with to help improve their multitasking skills.

Another lesson in the folktale unit will have students develop a country in which folktale and other fantastical characters live. In groups of 4 or 5, students will need to draw a picture of what the country looks like, a picture of the country’s flag, develop customs and laws for the country, and determine what characters would live there and why. The students will have a limited time to do this activity (around 15 – 20 minutes), so they students need to collaborate effectively to make sure every task is accomplished. To complete this task each student will have to take on a specific job while still checking with his or her other group members to make sure they are all on the same page. This will hopefully allow students to move between different group assigments while still having their own specific job to do.

Students of the digital generation prefer to learn information “just in time,” and their teachers usually present information to them “just in case.” Jukes (2010) further explains this

concept: “Schools are organized around ‘just in case.’ Just in case it’s on the exam. Just in case you need you need to know something to pass this course…” (p. 908). With a high focus on standardized testing, it is not surprising that this type of teaching is taking place in many schools. Teachers are worried that if their students do not perform well on tests, those bad scores can have a negative impact on their performance reviews. This leads to more time doing test preparation during class time than actually learning new and relevant information. It can also be very difficult to engage students while doing constant test prep. This type of teaching also does not line up with how they want to learn. Jukes (2010) describes the “just in time” learning style: “Just in time learning is about having the skills, knowledge, and habits of mind that will allow them to continuously learn and adapt just in time, when the next window of opportunity or area of interest opens to them” (p. 908). Having this type of learning taking place in classrooms will increase student engagement dramatically. They are not sitting there being fed information; they are learning and researching topics that they are already interested in. This type of strategy would be most effective in research projects, because students would be able to find a topic that they are passionate about.

With technology impacting the way that instruction is conducted in the schools, classroom management strategies need to be modified as well: “If teachers assume that students can complete their classroom work by themselves and do not changer their classroom management approaches in technology-integrated classrooms, problems may occur” (Varnak, 2013, p. 140). If every student is using a computer or IPad during class time, teachers need to lay down clear rules about what the students should be doing with these devices. They should only be working on classwork, and not surfing the internet for unrelated topics or playing games. Teachers may initially have to monitor the students more closely to make sure they are staying

on task. Once students have proven they can use the devices properly, teachers should be able to spend more time on instruction instead of closely monitoring student activity on these devices.

With the increased use of computers for research projects, it is important that students be taught how to discern reliable information from biased or deliberately misleading information when using online sources. Costello-Dougherty (2010) states, "Separating fact from falsehood can be a challenge for anyone, but it's especially tough for students, who may be less skeptical and more trusting than adults" (www.edutopia.org). Some websites may seem like they are providing legitimate information to the untrained eye, so teachers must provide examples of several sources to help students develop the skills to know when they are being duped.

There is a website that I have used in the past to express the need to carefully monitor internet sources. The website describes an unusual creature called "The Pacific Northwest Tree Dwelling Octopus." This site is completely fake, but it uses technical words to describe this creature. It provides a scientific name for the octopus, talks about eating and mating habits, and gives a description of how the octopus traverses the tree branches and has adapted from ocean living to living in trees (Zapato, 1993, About Section). While this site is an obvious fabrication, it can help students learn to distinguish between fact and fiction. Having a discussion about some of the information that seems credible on this site, and the obvious made up facts, such as the tree octopi's natural enemies are house cats and sasquatches (Zapato, 1993, About Section, para.6) can prepare students to distinguish more subtle bias in several online sources. Another useful activity would be to play several news clips talking about the same story from a variety of credible and farcical sources. The students could then conduct a similar project on their own to see if they can spot credible and biased or false information while doing online research.

Because of the way students of the digital generation prefer to receive information, the way lessons are presented in the classroom needs to be changed as well. Although it is important to incorporate technology into lessons, technology should not be used just for the sake of using it. The technology needs to have a meaningful purpose in the lesson. Young (2010) discusses an activity based around the novel, *The Scarlet Letter,* in which students had to wear their own "letter" and document the experience: "Students could record their initial ideas about guilt and shame, as well as their experiences wearing a symbol of one of those themes in blogs. Using video cameras to record their experiences could add a multimodal element to those reflections" (p. 30). Having students use blogs and video cameras creates opportunities to share their ideas and experiences with other classrooms in the district, state, country, or even, world. The students would then have opportunities to discuss how these themes of shame and guilt are dealt with by their peers around the world. They can discuss what values are the same or different between the cultures, and how crimes or the justice systems work. Adding a media element to this lesson allows the class to branch outside of the four walls of their classroom and interact with individuals on a much larger scale. If blogging with other schools isn't feasible, wearing symbols around school will create opportunities for discussion with their friends and fellow students. This is a great way to get students discussing class material outside of the classroom, and they will also need to use higher order thinking skills to explain how the course material relates to them.

Google has a lot of great applications and tools that can help digital students feel engaged in the classroom. The site features a website and blog creator, and also has a document tool which I will describe in more detail. *Google Docs* is very similar to Microsoft Word, but it has several features that are not included with the Microsoft Word Processor. The software allows the document to be edited by anyone with a link to it, and it has a comment feature which is

useful for both teachers and students. Sara Ring (2010) talks about the many benefits of *Google Docs*: "Not only can your students create electronic documents and spreadsheets, they can instantly access and edit each other's essays, post their work to a blog, publish it as a web page, and create eye-catching presentations all within the same program" (www.edutopia.org). This type of software will be extremely engaging for students who enjoy working with computers. This can also be a great resource to use in group work. The group members don't have to meet in person, because each individual can go their group's Google Doc and make changes and add extra information. This is also a great resource for teachers, because it allows them to provide timely feedback and monitor their students' writing processes. It is always difficult to return papers to students in a timely manner, but this software lets "the teacher ma[ke] comments right on the document, which allow[s] the student the opportunity to improve his or her work before they turn in the final assignment" (St. John, 2012, p. 23). Making comments on students' papers right in this document builder can eliminate the need to collect rough drafts, outlines, and other step checks in the writing process. Everything can be done right in *Google Docs*, and the paper becomes more of a collaborative effort than an individual effort. Students can get timely feedback while their topic is still fresh in their minds instead of waiting 2 or 3 weeks to get their rough draft returned to them. Students will be more engaged and excited about writing if they are able to view how others are writing, get timely feedback from their instructor, and have the ability to peer review others' work all from their own computer.

My folktales unit includes a group project where students are required to use Google Docs to complete it. The assignment asks them to construct an original folk tale in a group of 3 or 4 students. The folk tale needs to be between 5 and 8 pages long, and each group member is responsible for writing a section of the story. They will be given the assignment and groups in

class, and they will have time in class to brainstorm ideas with their groups. They will not do any writing on paper besides an outline. They will use Google Docs to compose their folk tale. Each member will submit their portion of the project right into a Google Document. Group members will have the ability to make comments and make changes to the story right in the application. Clear communication will be essential for this activity to ensure all member's sections are edited smoothly with one another to make a complete coherent piece of writing. I will also be able to monitor each groups writing and collaborative process and make comments in Google Docs as well.

Using social media and phone applications that students use every day can encourage students to become engaged in the writing process. However, "because schools tend to block access to social-networking sties, many educators have a tough time harnessing their potential as a teaching tool…" (Boss, 2009, www.edutopia.org). While student teaching, the English teacher I was shadowing developed a Facebook project for her students. She did not use the actual Facebook site; she used a program called "Faux Book." It was very similar to Facebook, but it did not require an actual Facebook account to use it. Students had to pick a character from the book they were reading, make a profile page for him, add friend (other characters from the book), list interests and hobbies, and post comments from himself or other characters to his wall that referenced important events in the book. I thought this was a great idea. Students were engaged with the assignment, because Facebook was something that they used regularly. However, for those students without Facebook accounts, they did not need to join to complete the assignment. The students could also get pictures of famous people to represent the characters in the book, so this allowed them to be creative by casting the book. This was an incredibly engaging activity that catered to the interests to students of the digital generation.

Another lesson that will hopefully engage students and encourage students to get excited about writing involves Bitstrips. Bitstrips is a popular application that is available on the iPhone, Droid phones, and the Amazon Kindle (Bitstrips.com). Bitstrips allows the user to insert themselves into a variety of pre-created comic strips. The lesson would ask students to create between five and seven different bitstrips. The comics could be related under a single theme or picked completely at random. However, the students will need to string each of their comics together through writing for the second part of the lesson. Bitstrips has a variety of themes to choose from including: kindness, compliments, gifts, romance, pranks, insults, complaints, attacks, work, school, home, and several others (Bitstrips App). With such a variety of situations at their disposal, students should have no trouble finding something that fits into their interests. After the students have created their comics, they will be asked to write a one to two page story in which they link each of their comics together through a well-conceived narrative. The piece needs to be written in the form of a short story, and the student must write about each comic strip and how he or she goes from one situation to another. The paper should also use proper grammar and there should be a definitive beginning, middle, and end to the story. This assignment will require students to use higher order thinking skills, because they will need to describe in words what is happening in the comic strip they created. They will also have to think of a plausible way to link these different scenarios together using proper transitions. This assignment will hopefully engage all students by appealing to several different areas of interest.

Technology has drastically changed the way students of the digital generation process and access information. Students have incredible amounts of information at their fingertips. It is up to educators to shift their instructional techniques in order to engage students. While technology should be utilized during class time, it needs to be used in ways that will add richness

to class time. Technology should never be used just because. By assisting students in being able to discern credible from biased information online, allowing students to become proficient in several different technologies, and giving students the opportunities to learn and engage with new material in ways that meet their learning styles, teachers will greatly assist their students in being ready to enter the modern workplace.

Chapter 3

Application

Unit Summary

This comprehensive unit on folktales implements several of the strategies discussed in Chapter 2. Students use technology as a critical part of their lessons, and as a result they will become more engaged with classroom materials. Students will be more receptive and engaged with these lessons, because they are asked to use the technology that they have been using from a young age. In the Group story students will write collaboratively using the online application, Google Docs. Students are also asked to create a story from a different cultural perspective using the resources on www.voicethread.com. These types of lessons allow students to interact with new and challenging material while exploring that material with tools they have already mastered. Students will also have the opportunity to connect with a classroom in a different state or country through www.epals.com.

Throughout this lesson students will also examine how beauty is portrayed in our culture, whether book covers or movie trailers are more effective, explore different cities that folktale characters have travelled through, and they will compose an original folktale in story book format for the final project of this unit. These lessons are designed to be a practical guide that any teacher can adapt to fit the needs of his or her students. These lessons combined with the teacher's own ingenuity should be a good starting point if he or she is having trouble finding ways to effectively incorporate technology into his or her classroom.

The unit is organized into 11 lessons that explore several facets of the folktale genre. Each individual lesson includes the following parts: Title of Lesson, the New York State Common Core standards the lesson adheres to, the objective of the lesson, the materials needed

for the lesson, an anticipatory set, the body of the lesson, a guided practice section, a closing section, and a section for homework. Each of these components is essential to making a well-rounded lesson plan. The anticipatory set is designed to help pique student interest in the topic. The anticipatory set is usually a video or an article that has to do with the topic we are discussing for the day. Each lesson also demonstrates scaffolding and modeling. In each lesson, I model or the class practices the skills that they will be utilizing in the guided practice section. The bulk of the modeling is done in the body of the lesson. This is where we as a class work together to try to solve the problem of the day. In the guided practice section, students will be doing independent work and attempting to master the skills that have been covered earlier in the lesson. The closure of the lesson brings the class back together, and it offers them some time to reflect on what they have just done. The homework is usually a follow up opportunity to further engage with the information presented in class.

Unit Map

1. Introduction to Folktales
2. Connect with another culture (Epals)
3. Group Story (Google Docs)
4. Voice Thread Project
5. Beauty Examination (The Ugly Princess)
6. Journey across America
7. Movie Trailers v. Book Covers
8. Create a Country
9. Communication
10. Compare real life heroes to folktale characters
11. Final Project

Lesson 1: Introduction to Folktales

Standards:

New York State (NYS) Common Core (CC) Reading Standard for Literature 8.2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

NYS CC Reading Standard for Literature 8.5: Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.1a: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence:

a .Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

Objective: Students will be able to identify the characteristics of folktales and explain how these themes and characteristics differ or are similar to other stories.

Materials: Venn Diagrams, copies of "Paul Bunyan," "Pecos Bill," and "Casey Jones."

Anticipatory Set:

In pairs, students will tell their partner some of the favorite stories they heard growing up. Students will be asked to reflect about what stories stood out and why. When they share with their partner, they will figure out common elements between the 2 stories. After 5 minutes, we will come together as a class and each group will share what they discussed.

Body:

As a class, we will identify literary elements that are common among folktales (good vs. evil, happy endings, fantastical characters, etc.). The tropes will be written on the board, and we will discuss how folktales differ from other types of stories (fiction, essay, nonfiction, etc.).

What makes folktales unique? The students will be filling in a Venn diagram as characteristics are named in which they compare the folktale genre to other genres.

Guided Practice:

Students will break into groups of 3 and read either "Paul Bunyan," "Pecos Bill," or "Casey Jones." In their groups, they will identify tropes of the folktale genre. With a partner, they will read the story, write down different aspects of the story, and identify whether the elements are exclusive to folktales or a shared trope with another genre. Students will have between 15 and 20 minutes to complete this activity.

Closure:

After students are finished, we will discuss some of the elements they discovered in their groups. What specific events in the folktale stories were different than other genres? Folktales often deal with universal elements, so many of the traits of folktales will appear in multiple genres. However, we will discuss what makes these elements unique in folktales vs. other forms of literature.

Homework:

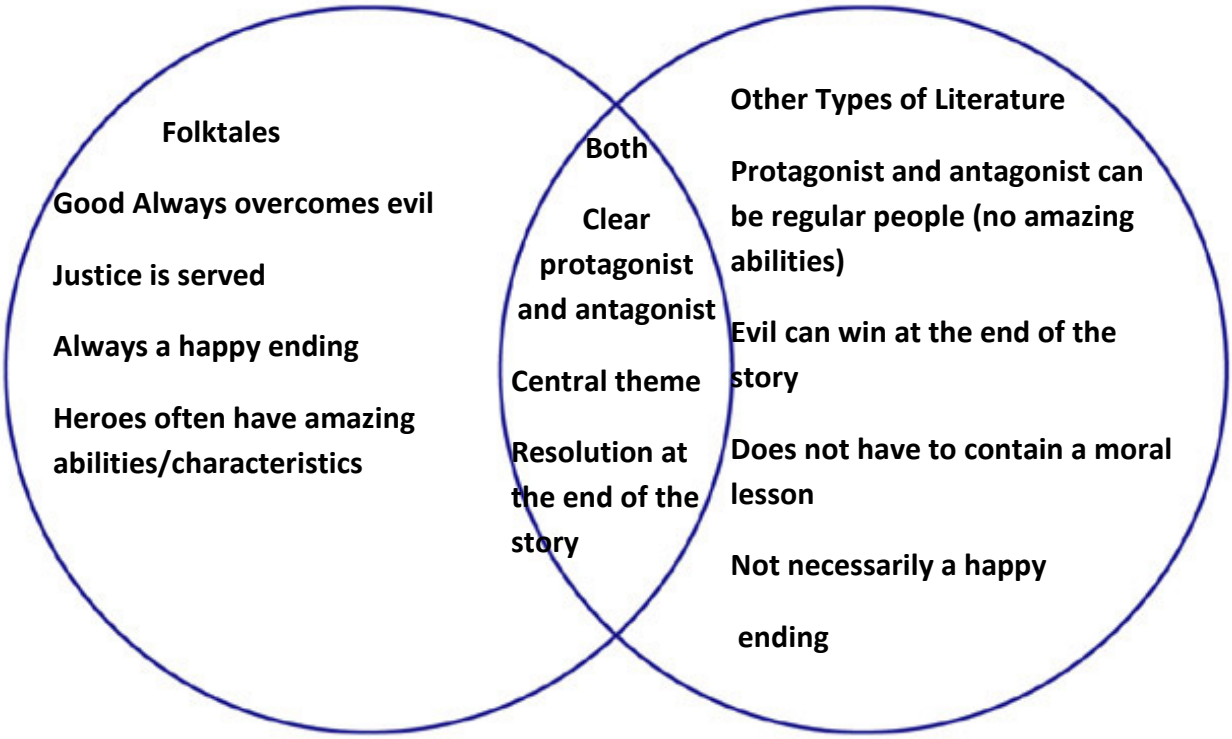
For homework, students will find an example of a modern day television show or book that has folktale elements as a main part of the story. Students will write a short paragraph about how this show, book, or movie has elements of the folktale genre.

Citations:

Venn diagram downloaded from:
http://www.educationworld.com/tools_templates/venn_diagram2.doc

NAME: Student

TOPIC: Folktale Characteristics



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Lesson 2: Connect with another culture

Standards:

NYS CC Speaking Standard 8.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Objective:

Students will discover if folktales from other countries use similar literary elements. Students will connect with a student from a classroom around the world using the website, e-pals.

Materials: Computers with internet and e-mail capability, downloadable copy of chosen folktale, paper, and pens/pencils

Anticipatory Set:

I will have done some leg work before this lesson can be done in class. Epals allows classrooms from around the world to connect and communicate with each other through e-mail or Skype (www.epals.com). This class will be conducted in the computer lab or possibly a video chat with the other class if an agreed upon time can be arranged. Students will be assigned a partner from a class in a different country.

Body:

Students will be given their assignment and the guidelines they need to follow. They will be corresponding with this other student in an effort to find out if all folktales share similar elements. In preparation for this assignment, students will be asked to pick a folktale to share with their pen pal. They will need to summarize the story for their partner and explain why they

enjoy it. Their partner will have prepared their own materials as well. Students will also get to know their "ePal" by trying to get to know him or her on a personal level.

Guide Practice:

Students will be corresponding with the "ePal" over the next two to three weeks. During this time period, they should find out about their pen pal's school, hobbies, interests, and family life. After they get to know each other, they will share their folktale and why it has significance for them. After each students shares their folktale, they will open a dialogue about how their stories are the same, different, and what themes emerge from both stories.

Closure:

Students will write a 1 – 2 page reflection about their experience. They will need to include their pen pals name, his or her interests and hobbies, family life, favorite school subject, and what they learned about folktales during this assignment. The presentation will need to be between 5 and 7 minutes long.

Homework:

Besides the written reflection and keeping up correspondence with their "ePal," there will be no homework assignments aside from the written reflection. However, students will be encouraged to keep writing their pen pal throughout the school year. This will hopefully lead to a new friendship and they will be more aware of a culture much different from their own.

Name: Date:

Period: Connect with another culture

Assignment: Making a pen pal from another country

1. This assignment will allow you to make connections with a student your age from another country using the website www.epals.com. You will be assigned a pen pal from our sister class. After you receive your pen pals name and contact information, it is up to you to reach out to him or her.

2. When you make contact with your pen pal, find out about what their life is like. Ask questions about their family and school life, what their hobbies are, and anything else you'd like to know about them. After you've finished the "get to know you" phase, you will begin to talk about folktales.

3. Folktale Assignment: You will share one of your favorite folktales with your pen pal. They will do the same. You will both discuss why you chose that folktale, and you can branch out into discussion about how each one represents its respective culture.

4. Reflection: As your folktale discussion comes to a close, you will need to write a 2 page reflection about your experience. Include some of the information you learned about your pen pal, which folktales the two of you discussed, and what you learned about your pen pal's culture through the reading of that folktale.

Lesson 3: Group Story Project

Standards:

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.3 a-e: **3.** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.

d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.5: With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas efficiently as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

Objective:

Students will compose a 5-8 page original folktale in a group of 3 or 4 students using Google Docs.

Materials: Computers with internet capability

Anticipatory Set:

Students will engage in a timed group writing activity where each person writes a section of a story. They will pass the story to another person at their table after two to three minutes of writing. I will give the students a scenario and they will each begin writing a story based on that prompt. They will have 2 minutes to write as much as they can. They must stop wherever they are in the story, even if they are in the middle of a sentence. They will then pass their story to the next person in their group and that person will have 2-3 minutes to continue the story. This process will continue until each person has the story they started with. Groups will have 5-7 minutes to read the stories among their groups. Each group will then pick 1 story to share with the class. The prompt will be*:* "You and a group of your friends have been dared to stay in a haunted house overnight. You are walking up the path to the house…".

Body:

Students will be given the assignment that they need to create an original folktale with a group of 3 or 4 other students. It will be very similar to the activity they just did. However, they will need to work together to edit and make a coherent story. The story can be original, or it can be a modern adaptation of a classic folktale. The students will be writing their story on Google Docs. Using this application, students will be able to write, edit, and make comments about the text without having to meet or send e-mails. They will be given time in class to organize their project and assign each person a part to write. The final draft of the project will need to be between 5 and 8 pages long.

Guided Practice:

Students will be able to organize their initial thoughts in class, but the actual writing portion will take place on Google Docs. I will also be able to monitor their progress and make comments of my own using the application. The students will have to work together to make sure each person writes a different part of the assignment, and that it flows and is properly edited into one cohesive story. Each member of the group can edit the document and make comments or notes about what should change in the application as well. This should help keep an open window of communication, so they can complete this project successfully.

Closure:

After successful completion of the project, each group will read their story to the class. They will also need to give a brief summary of their experience working as a group through Google Docs and what struggles or other issues arose during the writing of this assignment. Presentations should take around 10 – 15 minutes depending on story length.

Homework:

Students will need to complete their final project and a 1 page written reflection about the process. I will need one story from the group, and a written reflection from each member.

Name: Student Date:

Period: Group Story Project

Assignment: Group Story using Google Docs (worth 90 points)

1. *Task:* In groups of 3 or 4, you will create a 5-8 page original folktale. Each person will be responsible for writing part of the story. Each individual member is responsible for writing 2 pages for his or her part of the story. You will compose your story entirely on Google Docs. You will also read your story in class in a 10 – 15 minute presentation.

2. *Google Docs:* Your group will need to create a Google Document on Google. It should be set to private. The only people that should have access to it are your group members and myself. This way, I can monitor your progress and make comments as necessary. You will be able to make comments and edit the story right on the document. **Note:** Make sure you do not edit someone else's part of the story. If you see something that needs to be changed, highlight it and make a comment or send them an e-mail with your suggestion.

3. *Written portion* (80 pts divided over entire group): The story will be primarily written on Google Docs. However, you will have time in class to do conferences where you discuss what each person will contribute to the story. You will need to figure out a general plot for your group's story, so each member has an idea where the story will begin and end. Each part should flow nicely into the other, and it should appear to be 1 coherent story. You will all have to take part in the editing process to make sure this happens. **Remember:** Each person is responsible for 2 pages of their own writing!

4. *Presentation* (10 pts.): Each group will also be responsible for doing a 10 to 15 minute presentation about their story. Each group member will read their part of the story to the class, and you will discuss any problems you had while writing. Was it easier to write on Google Docs

then having to e-mail copies or hand papers back and forth to one another? What were the benefits? How did you come up with a story that all members agreed upon?

Assignment will be graded on the following scale:

	25 - 45 points	46 – 58 points	59 – 69 points	70 – 80 points
Written Piece (length, spelling and grammar, and story cohesion)	The final story was too short, no or few members wrote 2 pages on their own. Story did not connect well, and parts seemed disjointed. There are frequent spelling/grammar errors throughout.	Story was correct length, but there were discrepancies. Many story elements didn't fit or weren't resolved at the end of the story. There are many spelling/grammar errors throughout.	Story is the correct length, and it flows nicely. There may be minor unresolved issues. There are little to no spelling/grammar errors.	Story is the correct length, and it has excellent cohesion. It needs no revising or editing. There are minimal spelling/grammar errors.
Presentation	0 – 3 points: Presentation is very short. Not well organized. Many missing pieces.	4 – 6 points: Presentation was about the correct length. However, still disorganized. Not every member was ready to present.	7 – 8 points: Presentation was well organized and met the time limit. May be a few minor communication	9 – 10 points: Presentation was organized, met the time limit, and all facets of directions. Was engaging and

			errors.	kept audience interested.

Lesson 4: Voice Thread Presentation

Standards:

NYS CC Reading Standard 8.11: Interpret, analyze, and evaluate narratives, poetry, and drama, artistically and ethically by making connections to: other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

NYS CC Speaking/Listening Standard 8.5: Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.

Objective:

Using Voice Thread, students will rewrite a classic folktale from a different cultural perspective.

Materials: Computers with internet and microphone capabilities, *Chinese Cinderella* by Adeline Yen Mah

Anticipatory Set:

We will read a couple chapters from the novel, *Chinese Cinderella* by Adeline Yen Mah. We will examine the similarities and differences to the classic story of Cinderella. Why does the author call herself Cinderella? What is the significance of the culture change on the outcome of the story?

Body:

What if Johnny Appleseed was from China and threw rice grains, or Paul Bunyan was Russian? How would these cultural shifts change the story? We will work together to outline a classic folktale and transition it from a different cultural perspective. We will use the Johnny Appleseed example, because we will have had some insight on Chinese culture from the AdelineYen Mah story. We will do an outline on the white board together. What would Johnny Appleseed's personality be like if he was Chinese? What areas of China would he travel too? How would he be received? Who or what might he encounter on his travels?

Guided Practice:

Using the website, www.voicethread.com, students will create an account made visible only to myself and the rest of the class. Students will then create a presentation where they alter a classic folktale as if it took place in a different culture. Using the Voice Thread application students can create a slideshow, upload pictures and videos to their presentation, and record their voice to present their project orally. If students do not wish to record their voices, they can type text to facilitate their presentation. Each student in the class will be required to look at and comment on at least three different presentations. I will make comments on all projects. At the end of the assignment, students can make their project public on the website if they choose to do so.

Closure:

We will talk about this assignment in our next class meeting. Students will once again have the opportunity to present their projects, and the process they used to transition a folktale to another culture. I will also look at publishing these projects or the Google Docs assignment to the class website or other youth writing publication site.

Homework:

Students will need to bring a 1 page analysis of one of the projects they commented on. They will need to discuss what they liked about the project, what could be improved, and what they learned about a new culture that they didn't know before.

Name: Student Date:

Period: Voice Thread Project

Assignment: Create a folktale from another cultural perspective using Voice Thread (30 points)

1. *Voice Thread account:* For this assignment you will need to create a private account on www.voicethread.com. Don't worry it's free! We will do this in class, so that everyone is on the same page. You will also have to add the class and myself to the list of people that can view your project. After the project is finished, you can make your presentation public if you would like to.

2. *Task:* Your task is to tell a classic folktale as if it took place in another culture. You will need to do some research about the culture you are writing your story from. Remember our discussion about how Johnny Appleseed would look if it was written in China. You can choose from any folktale (if we have read it or not), and you will need to decide what cultural perspective you would like to write from.

3. *Presentation:* This is where your Voice Thread account comes into play. Instead of handing in a written copy, you will create your story on Voice Thread. You can upload pictures, videos, and record your voice to read or make comments about your presentation. If you don't have microphone capabilities, you can type text that will appear along with your slides. You will then share your video with all of us. You will also be required to make comments on 3 of your classmates' videos. The presentation should be at least 8 slides. It needs to be long enough for you to tell your entire story. More than 8 slides is fine. Less than 8, you should probably add more to your story! Remember to include elements of the culture you're researching in your story! *Hint:* It may be helpful to include some information about the culture you researched before you start presenting your story. Also **remember to cite your sources!!**

	0 - 10	11 – 17	18 - 24	25 - 30
Presentation	Story is incomplete and does not meet the required length. There is no narration or text to go along with the story.	Story is correct length, but is not a complete story. No resolution can be seen. There is little narration or text to explain the story.	Story meets the required length and meets all requirements. There is significant narration or text to accompany the presentation.	Story exceeds parameters. It is well crafted, engaging, and has a distinct climax and conflict resolution at the end of the story. The narration or text blends well with the story, and is beneficial to the reader.
Cultural Presence	There is no or very little representation of another culture in the story.	There are some references to another culture, but the references are not explained well.	There are many references to another culture. The story is crafted well around this culture. The references are explained most of the time.	Culture references are blended seamlessly with the story telling. The references are explained and integrated into the storytelling.
Spelling/Grammar Errors	There are several spelling and grammar errors throughout the project.	There are many spelling and grammar errors throughout the project.	There are some or very little spelling and grammar errors throughout the project.	There are little or no spelling and grammar errors throughout the project.

Lesson 5: Beauty Examination (The Ugly Princess)

Standards:

NYS CC Speaking/Listening Standard 8.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

NYS CC Speaking/Listening Standard 8.2: Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

Objective:

Students will be able to develop a well thought opinion on the nature of beauty and the way that it is represented in our culture.

Materials: Copies of "The Ugly Princess," Smart Board, *Youtube,* paper, and colored pencils.

Anticipatory Set:

We will read the story, "The Ugly Princess," as a class (http://www.worldoftales.com/European_folktales/Romanic_folktale_2.html). The class will do a brief summarization activity with this story. We will then transition to the topic of beauty. How is beauty portrayed in the story? How is beauty portrayed in our culture?

Body:

I will show 2 *YouTube* videos to the class to help us understand how beauty is portrayed in our culture. We will also examine why this trend exists, and if it has an impact on how people view themselves. The first video shows a model being made up from start to finish, the air brushing and editing process of the photo, and the final presentation on a billboard (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYhCn0jf46U). The second video has real women describe

themselves to a sketch artist. Then, complete strangers that met the women briefly describe their appearance to the same sketch artist (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qxk0Xs69ioA). We will discuss both of these videos and try to decide if society's definition of beauty is realistic, and whether or not it has an impact on how the general public views themselves.

Guided Practice:

Students will get in groups of 2, and draw a portrait of their partner. Students will be reminded the goal is not to be mean, but to explore how each person has something beautiful about them. After they are finished, they will write 3 things they like about that person (appearance or personality) on the paper.

Closure:

I will ask the question: "Is society's definition of beauty realistic?" Hopefully, the students will answer no. We will discuss how we can help to change this view.

Homework:

Students will be asked to watch television for an hour that evening. During that hour, they need to keep a log of how many make/up or beauty commercials they saw, how many times a person's beauty was referenced or paid attention to (on a show or in a commercial), and how that made them feel when compared with the videos we watched in class.

Lesson 6: Journey across America

Standards:

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.8: Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

Objective:

Students will be able to describe at least 2 towns that one of the folktale heroes we read about passed through. Students will explain what is significant about the town, and write down its population and at least 3 interesting facts about each location.

Materials: Maps of the United States, markers or colored pencils, paper, and computers with word processors.

Anticipatory Set:

What is significant about your town? I will pose this question to my students at the beginning of class. We will discuss some important facts about Rochester, NY (Kodak and Xerox were founded here, the University of Rochester, Wegman's supermarkets, etc.). I will make the point that every town in America has something unique about it, and several of our folktale heroes travelled through America. I will ask: "What do you think they might have encountered if they were real people and stopped in these towns today?" This question will lead us into the next portion of our lesson where we plot Johnny Appleseed's journey.

Body:

Using the story, “Johnny Appleseed,” and a map of the United State displayed on the Smart Board, we will plot his journey across America (http://www.bestapples.com/kids/teachers/johnny.shtml). The story begins in Leominster, Massachusetts and ends with his burial in Fort Wayne Indiana. We will plot 5 of the towns and states he travelled through during his 50 year journey across the north eastern United States (http://www.bestapples.com/kids/teachers/johnny.shtml).

Guided Practice:

Students will pick a folktale character that we have or have not read about, and they will chart their course on a map of the United States. Students will have maps of the U.S. printed out, and they can plot the journey of their chosen character as they read the story. After they finish plotting, they will pick two destinations their character went. They will research these destinations to discover what that character might have encountered when he or she travelled there.

Closure:

At the end of this activity. Students can briefly share what they learned and what towns they will continue to research for homework. I will ask the question: “Why did these characters travel so much?” and “Is it important to the folktale myth that there is a lot of travelling?”

Homework:

Students will do a 1 page write up about the 2 towns they are researching. This will be due during the next class period with their map.

Lesson 7: Movie trailers v. book covers

Standards:

NYS CC Literature Standard 8.7: Analyze the extent to which a filmed or live production of a story or drama stays faithful to or departs from the text or script, evaluating the choices made by the director or actors.

Objective:

Students will be able to compare/contrast book covers and movie trailers. They will create a book cover for one of the folktales we have read in class.

Materials: Copies of *The Lord of the Rings*, *Pet Sematary*, *Sherlock Holmes*, and *The Hunger Games*, *Youtube*, paper, and colored pencils or markers.

Anticipatory Set:

I will have 4 books displayed in the front of the classroom. We will discuss the importance of how book covers attract readers. Who is the targeted audience? What can you infer about the story based solely on the book cover? Would you be more likely to pick up a book if there is a lot happening on the cover?

Body:

For the main portion of this lesson, we will be comparing movie trailers to the covers of books. We will be looking at *The Lord of the Rings*, *Pet Sematary*, *Sherlock Holmes*, and *The Hunger Games*. For each trailer, we will discuss what the book cover told them about the book and what the movie trailer told them about the movie. Has the targeted audience changed? Is the book cover or the trailer more engaging? Why? Students will have to explain whether the trailer or the book cover would encourage them to read or watch the movie. Which achieves its purpose more effectively?

Guided Practice:

The students will design book covers for 1 of the folktales we have read in class. The purpose of this assignment is to think about the most important parts of the story and translate that information to the book cover. The drawing will need to be a full page and colored.

Closure:

Students will have the opportunity to share their covers at the end of class, and we will discuss what challenges they had. Why did they include certain elements of the story while leaving others out? How did they decide what was the most important element to include on the cover? What will people know about their chosen story based on their designed cover?

Homework:

Students will compare another book cover to movie trailer for homework with a 1 page written comparison. They can pick any book and movie to compare. In their reflection, they will need to address the same issues we raised in class.

Lesson 8: Create a State or Country

Standards:

NYS Social Studies Geographic Reasoning Standard 4: Recognize and analyze how characteristics (cultural, economic, and physical-environmental) of regions affect the history of the United States.

NYS Social Studies Comparison and Contextualization Standard 1: Identify a region of the United States by describing multiple characteristics common to places within it, and then identify other similar regions inside the United States.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.2b: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

b. Develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.

Objective:

In groups, students will develop a state or country where folktale characters would live if they existed in real life. Students will need to develop customs, laws, a flag, and create a map of their country.

Materials: *Youtube*, paper, and colored pencils or markers.

Anticipatory Set:

We will start by watching a video game preview for "The Wolf Among Us" (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7a_St9DTuO0). The video game depicts fairy tale characters living among humans. They use magic and have strict laws to avoid being discovered by the

humans they live among. Is this how you would envision characters living in the world? Would they live out in the open or hide their identities?

Body:

The students will be creating a country or state in which characters from folktales reside. To prepare for this assignment, we will be discussing what important elements are necessary to successfully run a country. We will examine how the United States runs. What are the branches of government? How does each one operate? How do the states work? What are important laws that govern the country? (We will not go in depth with this section. This could be a paired lesson with a social studies class to go deeper into each of these areas. The purpose of this portion is to get a general understanding of what goes into running a successful country).

Guided Practice:

I will place students in groups of 4 for this activity. They will have the rest of the class period to name their country, draw a map of their country, develop a flag for that country, and come up with laws/customs and a general description before the end of the period. Students will need to work collaboratively to make sure all parts of assignments are completed before the end of class.

Closure:

In the last 10 minutes of class, each group (or as many as time allows) will present their project. I will collect the drawings and descriptions each group has. Groups that did not have a chance to present will have the opportunity at the beginning of the next class.

Homework: No homework for today.

Lesson 9: Communication

Standards:

NYS CC Speaking and Listening Standard 8.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.1 a,b: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.

b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

Objective:

Students will learn about effective communication through "Attack of the Mammoth." They will come up with 3 ways they would have tried to get the husband's attention in the story.

Materials: Copies of "Attack of the Mammoth," paper, pens and pencils, and *Youtube*.

Anticipatory Set:

The class will begin with 6 students playing a game of telephone. I will whisper a phrase into the first person's ear, and they will pass the phrase down the line until it gets to the last person. The last person will say what they thought they heard. We will discuss how much the original phrase differed from what was said at the end of game.

Body:

As a class, we will read "Attack of the Mammoth" (http://americanfolklore.net/folklore/2010/07/attack_of_the_mammoth.html). The story is about a woman unsuccessfully trying to warn her husband about an impending mammoth attack. She

tries several times to warn her husband, but he refuses to listen. As we read the story, students will fill out a summarization worksheet. We will pause to discuss why they think the woman was unable to communicate with her husband? Was the husband the only one at fault? Did he not deem his wife's warnings worthy of consideration? Is there another way the wife could have warned her husband?

Guided Practice:

Students will write down 3 different ways they would have tried to communicate the impending danger to the husband. They will also discuss whether or not they think he would have listened based on what happened in the story. Students will share their ideas with a partner, and turn in the summarization sheet and their strategies at the end of class.

Closure:

As time permits, I will play a video of an Ukrainian sand artist (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=518XP8prwZo). She draws several events set during World War II. Before the video begins, I will ask students to tell me ways of communicating without using words. After the video, we will discuss if this woman communicated her story effectively.

Homework:

Students will write a 1 paragraph reflection about a time when someone did not listen to them. They will have to discuss if they communicated effectively, whether or not the person was receptive, and if there was a way they could have communicated differently.

Lesson 10: Compare real life heroes with folktale heroes

Standards:

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

Objective:

Students will compare real life heroes to folktale characters. They will discuss whether or not modern heroes can one day become a legend that people tell stories about (such as Davey Crockett).

Materials: Articles on Davey Crockett and Amelia Earhart, computers with internet capability, *Youtube*, paper, and pens and pencils.

Anticipatory Set:

We will read a brief biography on Amelia Earhart (http://www.ameliaearhart.com/about/bio2.html). We will discuss what made her heroic? Did she perform any feats that could become the stuff of legend? Could she one day have a folktale based around her, especially with the fact that she mysteriously disappeared?

Body:

We will look at what makes someone heroic? Whether characters or real life people, what are the qualities that appear in a hero? We will discuss the criteria that make a literary character

heroic, and decide if a real person can have folktales developed about them. I will mention Davey Crockett. We will read stories told about him and an actual biography about him (http://www.biography.com/people/davy-crockett-9261693#synopsis).What changed? Why would stories develop about this man? Is it unreasonable to think stories get stretched about modern heroes?

Guided Practice:

Students will research another hero from history. There are no real limits about who they can research, but they do have to be a historical or modern person that has done something seemingly incredible (Medal of Honor winners, presidents, scientists, explorers, etc.). They will need to do a brief biography about what this person did, whether they have achieved folktale status, and if they could eventually have folk stories told about them. Students will need to accurately cite the sources that they retrieve their information from.

Closure:

To close, I will play a portion of an interview between Glenn Beck and Marcus Luttrell about the movie *Lone Survivor* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2BwI2V0O9s). Luttrell is a former Navy SEAL and was involved in a major fire fight in Afghanistan with three other men. He was the only one who survived, and he was protected by a town of Afghani civilians after escaping the attacking force. He was recently played in the movie, *Lone Survivor*, by Mark Wahlberg. He explains what happened in reality vs. what was portrayed in the movie. This will be a good guideline to help students finish their biographies.

Homework:

Students will finish the projects they started in class today. It will need to be between 3 and 5 typed pages.

Name: Date:

Period: Real Heroes

Assignment: Comparing real heroes with folktale characters

1. *Research*: You will research an actual person from American or World History. The person should have achieved an amazing accomplishment or survived an incredible ordeal. You will pose the question: Can this person achieve folk hero status?

2. Written Portion: You will write a 3 to 5 page paper in which you tackle the above question. You should write a brief biography about the person you are research (no more than 2 pages). **Make sure to cite your sources!!** Then, you will argue whether or not this person could eventually have folktales written about them. You can reference other folktales or persons in history to make your point. Remember Davey Crockett had folktales told about him while he was still alive! This assignment will be due 3 days from today. You will have a large portion of this class period to start your research and do an outline for your paper.

3. *Works Cited page*: You will need to have a works cited page for this project using MLA format. You can refer to the school website if you have questions about how to properly cite sources. I am also available for help as needed.

Lesson: Final Project

Standards:

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.3 a-e: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.

b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.

c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.

d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.

e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or e vents.

NYS CC Writing Standard 8.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

NYS CC Language Standard 8.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

NYS Language Standard 8.2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Objective:

Students will compose an original 5 – 7 page folktale with illustrations (drawn or downloaded images) to be presented in storybook format.

Anticipatory Set:

Students will alter a section of 1 of the folktales we have read in preparation for their final assignment. This will be a 5 minute writing activity. Students will choose one of their favorite folktales from this unit, and they will change one of their favorite scenes. This will only need to be 1 or 2 paragraphs, so it will not be a lengthy activity.

Body:

After completion of the writing activity, I will hand out the final project for the folktales unit. Students will be creating their own original folktale or comic book (still in folktale style) in book format. There will need to be illustrations, the book will be presented professionally (either in a binder or bound and covered), and be well written with little or no grammatical errors. Students will need to turn in an outline, a rough draft, and their final project. They will have two to three weeks to complete this assignment. The typed rough draft of the narrative will be due halfway through the project. Students will also be able to use story book or publishing software if they have access to it (I will try to make it available to all students if it is offered through the school). If not, turning the story in in a 3 ring binder will be acceptable.

Guided Practice:

Students will have between 2 and 3 weeks to complete their final writing assignment. They will be responsible for turning in an outline, a rough draft (text only) and a final copy. The project will be presented in storybook format: a professional appearance, little to no grammatical errors, illustrations (drawn or downloaded from internet), and should represent their best writing.

There will be several workshops conducted in class time to give students enough time to submit a polished product.

Closure:

Students will read their story to the class and talk briefly about their idea, the writing process, and their inspiration for the story. The presentation should be around 10 or 15 minutes depending on story length.

Name: Date:

Period: Final Project

Assignment: Final Paper (100 points)

1. *Task:* You will compose a completely original folktale for your final project in this unit. It will be in storybook format (either bound or presented professionally in a portfolio or binder). It will also need to have illustrations. The final story should be at least 10 pages. You do not need an illustration on every page, but there should be enough to help guide your story. There should be no less than 5 illustrations in your final draft. You will need to turn in an outline, a rough draft (text only), and a final draft. You will also do a presentation where you read your story to the class.

2. *Outline* (10 points): You will start your outline in class today. This will give you an opportunity to begin brainstorming: Develop your plot, characters, setting, and conflict. I would like a copy of your outline by next class. This outline is subject to change. I just want to know where you think you're headed. This early due date will force you to start seriously considering the topic of your story.

3. *Rough Draft* (15 points): This will be due 2 weeks after your outline. This is a text only assignment. This should be a completed story, but you can still make changes in the editing process. This should be very close to a final product and represent your best work. No illustrations need to be turned in along with this draft.

4. *Final Draft* (75 points): This should be turned in looking professionally. Your final draft should be free of all spelling and grammatical errors, be bound or turned in in a binder, should be complete with illustrations and text. The illustrations can be drawn or downloaded from the internet (if you download a picture make sure you cite where you got it from). The final copy will need to be at least 10 story book pages (Illustration on top, text underneath). It can be more

than that. It should be a complete story (beginning, middle, end, conflict, and conflict resolution). Remember the characteristics of folktales as you write: Good wins over evil and justice is served at the end of each story!

5. *Presentation* (0 points): For your presentation, you will show your book to the class and read it aloud. The presentation does not have to be lengthy. 7 – 10 minutes should be more than enough time. You can also talk about your writing process and any difficulties you had during this project. This is meant to be a fun day where everyone shares their stories, so this piece will not be graded.

This rubric is for the final paper:

	0 - 25	26 - 40	41 – 60	61 - 70
Written Portion	Story is not the required length. It has little to no character development. There is no apparent conflict or resolution. There are several grammatical errors throughout.	Story does not meet required length. There are folktale elements in the story, but they are not fully realized. Project needed more time being revised before it was turned in. Many grammatical errors are present.	Story meets the requirements of length and content. There are developed characters and a clear conflict and resolution to that conflict. There are some grammatical errors.	Story exceeds all requirements. Folktale elements are clearly established throughout the story. Fully developed characters and a clear conflict enrich the story. Little or no

				grammatical errors are present in the story.
Professional appearance	The story was not turned in in a binder or bound. There are little or no illustrations to add to the story.	The story was turned in in a binder. There are some illustrations present, but they do not add to the story.	Story was submitted professionally. There are many illustrations. They add to the enjoyment of the story.	Story is bound or presented professionally in a binder. The illustrations fit perfectly to add enjoyment of the story.

Chapter 4

Conclusions and Recommendations

Powell, Cleveland, Thompson, and Forde (2012) state: "Research on student learning suggests that students learn best when they are motivated and engaged in authentic tasks that relate to their own lives" (p. 47). If students are not completing class work that they feel is relevant to their lives, they will be less motivated to participate in classroom activities. If the above statement is combined with the following statistic, "… 8- to 18 – year olds devote approximately 7 hours a day to using multimedia technologies outside the class room," it can be determined that technology is the focal point of many young people's lives (Powell, Cleveland, Thompson, & Ford, 2012, p. 46). If teachers want their students to stay engaged throughout the school year, the lessons used in the classroom need to reflect the interests of the students they are teaching.

As demonstrated in the folktale unit plan, not every single lesson has to have technology in it. However, the meaningful use of technology should be implemented regularly to keep student engagement high. Crearie (2012) explains what a functioning technology classroom should look like: "In a well-designed technology-enhanced learning environment, learners should be able to engage in the process of manipulating information and critical thinking as well as expressing and sharing their knowledge to peer-learners" (p. 106). Students should not just be receivers of information presented by the teacher, but they should have an active role in accessing multiple sources of information to determine what is relevant and necessary for the current lesson. This opportunity gives students ownership of what they will be learning, and they will ultimately be more engaged and motivated when exploring new information in their classrooms.

While technology does not have to be the focal point of every lesson, students still should have the opportunity to engage in this medium regularly. If there have been several classes where students have not had the opportunity to utilize technology in their learning process, the opportunity should be presented to them if only to help reengage them in classroom activities. Ely, Ainley, & Pearce (2013) argue: "When students have been working on a task and their cognitive resources are depleted, introducing something that triggers interest can serve to replenish resources increasing the likelihood students will reengage with renewed enthusiasm" (p. 14). If students are engaged in a particularly difficult task for an extended period of time, it is beneficial to give them a break using something that holds their interest. A review game on the Smart Board, a relevant video on *Youtube*, or even just playing some music to help them refocus can all be helpful tools to get students to reengage with a difficult task.

The teacher is ultimately responsible for engaging his or her students in the classroom. This takes a lot of work, but teachers need to spend time getting to know their students. When teachers know what engages their students, they can incorporate those interests into their lesson plans. Powell, Cleveland, Thompson, & Forde (2012) state what character traits are seen in a successful teacher: "…successful professors often employ and are adept at using a variety of instructional strategies" (p. 42). Successful teachers are able to pull a variety of lessons out of their tool box to help engage every student in their class. It takes effort to get to the learning needs of all one's students, but the results are worth the efforts. Using technology, paired with the knowledge of student learning needs, will ultimately make for a richer and more engaged student body.

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