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**RESTRUCTURING SECONDARY SOCIAL STUDIES:
RESULTS OF THE HUMANITIES PROJECT AT
GREECE ATHENA HIGH SCHOOL**

FINAL THESIS

Submitted to the Graduate Committee of the
Department of Education and Human Development
State University of New York
College at Brockport
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Masters of Science in Education

by

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CHAPTER I

Statement of the problem

Problem:

A widely held belief is that American students are not learning enough to compete in today's world. This belief was enhanced in April of 1983, when the report *A Nation at Risk* was released by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. The results caught much of the United States off guard. One quote from the report said "the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people." (p. 1) The alarm is still ringing, because results of recent studies are not showing significant improvements. One such report came from the Digest of Education Statistics in 1992 which compared S.A.T. scores. The average scores for 1980-81 were 424 in Verbal and 466 in Math. The scores for 1990-91 were 422 in Verbal and 474 in Math. (cited in Wilk "From risk" 1993)

Recent findings also show a lack of knowledge in the field of Social Studies. In September 1987, researchers Diane Ravitch and Chester Finn reported, "American 17 year-olds display a 'shameful' knowledge of U.S. history and literature" (cited in Wilk, "From risk" 1993, p. S9) In January of 1989, The Joint Council on Economic Education reported, "American students have a weak grasp of basic economic concepts" (cited in Wilk, "From risk" 1993, p. S9) The National Assessment of Educational Progress announced in February of 1990, high school seniors had "critical shortcomings" in geography. (cited in Wilk, "From risk" 1993) Another report from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, two months later, revealed U.S. students only showed a "limited" understanding of

important concepts in U.S. history. (cited in Wilk, "From risk" 1993) These studies and others that show similar results, have led to a call for change in Social Studies instruction and the structure of American schools in general.

Need for the study

Hundreds of programs with a variety of different ideas on "saving" our schools have been attempted, but most schools have gone relatively unchanged since *A Nation At Risk* was released. One problem is because many of the teachers in the field have little time to sort through all of the different reforms. The ideas for restructuring needs to be presented and evaluated so educators can see alternatives.

Another problem for teachers is that many of the programs that have been reported in educational journals and magazines only concentrate on the large restructuring plans that have changed entire buildings. Many schools do not have a majority of teachers that are willing to change, and therefore reform minded teachers need a way to change within a "normal" school structure.

The Humanities program at Greece Athena High School offers an option that does not drastically change the rest of the school's structure, yet does provide the opportunity to implement instructional reform for a cache of students and teachers. It is an integrated program of Art, English, and Social Studies, that keeps the same teachers and students together for two years. The program started in the fall of 1990, and by 1993 there was a need for an evaluation.

The teachers who started Humanities, wanted an evaluation of the students performance and of their attitude toward the program. They wanted to find out if the program had benefited the students, and if so, what parts of the program

helped them the most? The principal who helped install the program was also leaving at the end of the 1993 school year and because of budget cuts, the future of the program was possibly in jeopardy. If an evaluation showed positive results, then the results could be publicized to protect the program. It could also be used to encourage other teachers to follow a similar design. If there were points of the program that were not successful, then they could be altered to correct the problems.

Questions

Since the goal of school is to educate our young people for the future, the overall question that needs to be addressed is, "Does restructuring schools benefit the students?" A special emphasis will be given to Secondary Social Studies instruction and the Humanities program that was implemented within the traditional setting at Athena High School.

To determine the "benefit" of Humanities, the following six questions will be addressed.

1. Did the students' understanding and use of learning styles help them remember more information?
2. Did the emphasis on world news, provide students with a better understanding of current events?
3. Did having the same teachers and students for two years, assist students in their learning?
4. Did having a greater amount of student interaction, assist students in their learning?
5. Did the integration of Global Studies, English, and Art, by theme, make it easier for the students to understand the material from all three?
6. Did Humanities prepare students for life after 10th grade?

CHAPTER II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

The nationwide call for restructuring schools created a wide range of ideas since the early 1980's. The first section of this chapter will describe individual issues that have been discussed in recent literature. The second section will describe problems reformers have encountered. The third section describes five programs that incorporate a number of the restructuring efforts mentioned in the first part, plus some other unique ideas.

General Ideas for Restructuring

Rethinking "Time"

One of the main structures of school that could be changed is the concept of time. Presently, a typical high school year consists of 180 days, of eight, 45 minute periods. The school calendar usually runs from September through June, with two months off for the summer. Many educators, see great potential in restructuring the element of time. Some believe rethinking time, could address the problem of student motivation and curriculum. Many believe the current system suppresses educators' creativity and student achievement. (Summerfeld, 1993, p. 14)

Theodore Mitchell, the U.C.L.A. Dean of Graduate School in Education, believes the current system was designed for an earlier era and no longer meets the needs of today's students. He said:

"It was built around an industrial model... in which teaching children to respond to different tasks by moving in an orderly fashion at different points according to a

well- structured and fragmented day was precisely the type of schooling that was required by a society that was highly industrialized, mechanized, and routinized." (cited in Summerfeld, 1993, p. 14)

There have been a number of examples to alter the traditional concept of time in school. One plan at Sweetwater Union High School in Chula Vista California allowed students to attend school for only two hours a day and then attend to individual work at home. They did this to attract students who were dropping out because of financial reasons. As a result of this program, the school dropout rate fell from 9.9% to 4.1%. (Summerfeld, 1993)

Some schools have extended the number of hours that students spend in school. This extension could apply to the whole school, or to just a portion of the students who want more schooling either before or after regular school hours. Another idea is adding the number of days to the school year. A 1992 Gallup Poll showed 55% of the respondents favored a 210 day school year. (cited in Summerfeld 1993) Many states would like to increase the time, but money is a big problem. (Summerfeld 1993)

Other schools keep the same amount of time in school, but rearrange it. One idea is an extended school year. This keeps the 180 days, but would spread it out over a whole year. They do this to handle increased enrollment or to stop the "drop off" in learning that takes place over summer vacation. Some concepts eliminate the eight period form and set blocks of time. Teams of 5-7 teachers decide how to use the time, and meet everyday during a common planning time. (Summerfeld,1993)

Critical Thinking

Perkins (1993) writes that students are taught how to memorize for a test and are then allowed to quickly forget the material. He suggests teachers refocus instruction to address higher level thinking, such as critical thinking. He is not alone in believing critical thinking is important. One teacher believes the right way to teach means "giving students plenty of hands-on learning opportunities and helping them begin to think critically and to talk with one another and work together to solve problems" (Viadro 1993, p.10) George Hanford (1993) believes critical thinking is working in the classroom, and is an important part of the reform movement. He said some early reform movements ran into problems, but he believes critical thinking skills have been steadily growing. He said this occurs because individual teachers who have been trained in critical thinking instruction pass their knowledge to others in their school.

Site Based Management and Shared Decision making

Educator Seymour Sarason (cited in Bradley and Olson, 1993) argues that a change in authority is important. He said: "When a process makes people feel they have a voice in matters that affect them, they will have a greater commitment to the overall enterprise, and will take greater responsibility for what happens to the enterprise". (p. 10)

To take this thought one step farther, Bradley (1992b) writes "Researchers have found that the most successful schools are those in which teachers, principals, and students feel a sense of ownership, have created a distinctive culture, and have the freedom to go about achieving their goals". (p. 16)

A growing trend in the reform movement is to change the decision making authority from the district office to individual

schools. The schools often have teachers, administrators, parents, students, and business people on committees. Giving teachers a say in the way the school is run is designed to allow them to meet the students' needs and to create reforms that they see are needed. Requesting parents and students to share in the decision process also is important because after all, they are the consumers in the educational business. And finally, inviting the businesses to take a role is important, because they will eventually want to use the product (the students) that comes out of the schools.

Denver is an example of a school district that adopted this philosophy. A principal, three teachers, a counselor, two parents, a businessperson, and a student recently planned the school's budget. Bradley and Olson (1993 p. 10) wrote that site-based management provided "greater parent and community involvement in schools, and that teachers morale has improved". The results, however, have not shown a dramatic gain in student achievement or innovations in classroom practices. (Bradley and Olson, 1993.)

Team building

One idea that seems important in many new programs is teamwork. Deborah Meier, the founder of the Central Park East Secondary School in New York City, believes in the concept of teachers working with one set of students in a collaborative setting. "This approach, Ms. Meier argues, means that teachers can easily make decisions, alter plans, rearrange schedules, regroup students, share ideas, and observe each other's work" (Olson, 1993a p. 18)

Gene Maeroff (1993) believes some teams could be designed around a subject matter, or as part of an interdisciplinary teaching unit, but he writes it is not necessary.

He believes teams should come together to change the school. He proposes a team of around six teachers, a principal, and maybe a few others associated with the school, attend a workshop for a week over the summer. One of the goals would be for each team to analyze conditions at their school and devise strategies for improvement. He said they should be "prepared to take the lead in involving the larger school community in change" (Maeroff, 1993, p. 514, 515)

Integrated Curriculum

There are a wide range of possible integrated ideas. One is a total staff approach, which would coordinate the staff around a central theme for a given amount of time. Another possible idea is organizing teams of students into a block period of time, and giving one teacher the responsibility of teaching two or more subjects. A third possibility, which will be discussed in the next paragraph, is interdisciplinary teaming. This helps students understand a topic by looking at it from different vantage points. The degree of integration in each of these programs depends upon the teachers' and the school's commitment. (Vars, 1991)

Interdisciplinary instruction relies on a team approach that incorporates two or more subject areas. The team usually is assigned one group of students and focuses on a central theme to design instruction. The National Council for Social Studies (1991) reports, "The skills and knowledge gained from study involving a variety of disciplines enhances the Social Studies program as well as other parts of the curriculum" (NCSS, 1991, p. 290) They also said "Social Studies topics provide a natural framework for structuring the entire middle school program" (NCSS, 1991, p. 290)

Heterogeneous grouping

Heterogeneous grouping occurs when students of different abilities are together for class instruction. This is one of the most controversial restructuring topics, but it appears that heterogeneous grouping is favored by most of the reform minded educators and policy makers. The National Governors' Association, the Carnegie Corporation, and The National Education Association, all recommended detracking. (Oakes and Lipton, 1992)

Studies that look at this topic have come up with conflicting results. One study by Chen-Lin Kulik and James A. Kulik of the University of Michigan examined 52 studies of ability grouping in secondary education and found, "There were small but significant gains made on achievement examinations when students were grouped by ability rather than grouped heterogeneously... Most likely to benefit from grouped strategies were gifted and talented students in honors courses; average and below-average students received only minor benefits." (cited in Rose, 1992, p. 7) Other results according to Oaks and Lipton, (1992) say the opposite, and they seem to be supported by more people. They write that "research on tracking and ability-grouped class assignments has provide striking evidence that these practices have a negative impact on most children's school opportunities and outcomes. (448)

Oaks and Lipton (1992) give many interesting points for detracking. One reason they do not like tracking is because low income and minority groups are disproportionately being placed in lower tracks and not challenged enough to succeed. They believe that detracking would help all students and look at intelligence as being multifaceted. Oaks and Lipton (1992) believe student differences could become assets rather than liabilities if looked at from a different perspective. They

recognize that teachers can not teach the same way that they are used to, and suggest a restructuring process needs to occur. Some of their ideas include long term projects, cooperative learning, and different assessment techniques.

Problems

Anytime something is drastically changed there will always be some problems in convincing people it is needed.

Restructuring the schools is not an exception. Convincing teachers that a change is necessary can be a problem. Many people like the memories of the past or are just unsure how the changes would effect them. Many unions have taken up this fight and have curtailed some reforms. Bradley (1992b) writes:

attempts to give schools greater control over their budgets, staffs, and programs... have run into the desires of Unions to protect the tenure and seniority policies, centralized hiring, and common work rules that have been key features of teacher contracts. (p.16)

Viandro (1993) writes that one problem for restructuring projects is a lack of professional development. If fundamental changes are asked of the teachers, then she argues support must be provided to teach the way the framework is intended. Faith Dunne (cited in Cushman 1993) argues that clear goals and teamwork are required. and says, "If they don't do that... no change is going to work" (p. 2)

Restructured Schools

A study that compared 42 schools showed student achievement depended on the individual school's commitment to restructure. The schools that they studied were classified into either one that showed a sustained commitment to restructuring, one that shifted from one short term project to

another, or one that felt it had no need to change. The results overwhelmingly showed that the schools committed to restructuring, were more likely to show student improvement from year to year than students in the other schools. The group that did not change, however often had better results than the schools that moved from one reform to another. Schools benefit when they had a committed principal, staff development, partnerships with businesses, and a common vision and philosophy. (Olson, 1993b)

Examples of Projects

Paideia

Paideia was one of the first efforts to change American schools. It was created in 1982 by Mortimer J. Adler and 21 educators. They believed all students could learn and supported detracking, a rigorous academic curriculum for all students, and a grading system that did not compare other classmates. Three "columns" or modes of teaching and learning were suggested. The first, was traditional didactic teaching. The second was "coaching", or having teachers guide students as they learn. The third column of strategy suggested the use of Socratic seminars in the classroom. This asked students to read classical texts or original documents and discuss them with classmates. (Viadero, 1993, p. 12, 13)

A criticism of Paideia is that it did not set up an example for schools to follow. About 200 schools say they follow the Paideia principle, and incorporated Socratic seminars, but few of them follow all of the suggestions. The results have been mixed, but most of the schools that use the principles see positive gains. Results from studies at four schools in the inner-city of Chicago have shown an improvement in pupils' writing and reasoning abilities. Educators have also found that "many of the students

considered to be low achievers tend to excel in Socratic discussions" (Viadero, 1993, p. 13) Mr. Nenbirkow, the head of the National Paideia center at the University of North Carolina said gifted students have a tougher time in the seminars, because there often is no right or wrong answer. (Viadero, 1993)

Coalition of Essential Schools

One of the educators working with Mortimer Adler was TheodoreSizer. He is the Chairman of the Education Department at Brown University. He took the Paideia project one step farther and formed the Coalition of Essential Schools. He explained how to organize the resources in a school and put some of the Paideia principles into practice. (Viadero, 1993, p. 12)

A belief of the coalition is that "there is no one best model. That each school must be shaped by its own people, and must respect the community it serves". (Sizer, 1993, p. xi) The Coalition does, however, believe in general ideas and organizes its philosophy around Nine Common Principles. Some key ideas include: agreeing on a problem, setting clear goals that everyone believes in, and using staff development that stresses the importance of teamwork. Some of the ideas that are practiced in the 500 schools which have bought into the program include: heterogeneous grouping, integrated curriculum, site-based management, block scheduling, advisory periods, planning backwards, and exhibition projects. (Cushman, 1993)

Philadelphia

One reform movement in the high schools took place in Philadelphia. They created "charters" which are semi-autonomous schools within their walls. Each charter serves a heterogeneous mix of 200-400 students. The program was

described as teams of 10-12 teachers who "share common planning time and develop their own instructional methods and curricula, which are often interdisciplinary". (Bradley, 1992a p. 17) The goal is to form a sense of connection and commitment to the charter, and have the teachers and the students remain together for four years. The charters have also pushed to get more parents involved in the classroom. (Bradley, 1992a)

Each charter is different. Some emphasize humanities or multicultural studies, while others prepare students for careers in business or human services. Some of the charters are also using performance assessments. Because of the differences, it is difficult to give general results, but the teachers seem to believe it is working. Zachary Rubin, a history teacher said "his students' grasp of the subject has increased markedly since teachers at his school organized their instruction around such themes as 'creation'" (Bradley, 1992a, p. 17) Another teacher said students and teachers working as a team, cut down the attendance and discipline problems because "students know that their teachers are in close contact with each other" (Bradley, 1992a, p. 17)

There are some problems with the program. Mr. Schwarts of the Pew foundation, which have given millions of dollars to the program, complained that most of the English or History teachers have been teaching for over 20 years, and are reluctant to try new approaches. Some of the teachers complain about students and teachers moving to different buildings, which can hurt the team structure. They also worry about teachers and administrators who are resistant. A teacher said, "One of the most difficult challenges is to identify the administrative and procedural hurdles that interfere with high school restructuring and to work with district officials to remove them". (Bradley, 1992a, p. 17)

The Co-Nect School

Co-Nect was a recent winner in the New American Schools Development Corporation (NASDC) "break the mold" competition for grants. James Mecklinburger,(1992) writes, "The key idea is to organize schooling into a 'community,' featuring 'self-managing clusters' of perhaps six teachers and 100 students who would stay together for several years." (p. 286) They concentrate heavily on using technology and believe it can help create "broader, deeper, and stronger learning" (Mecklinburger, 1992, p. 286) It plans to serve grades K-12 in inner cities, and bring teachers, administrators, parents, and community leaders together. They plan to transform the curriculum to have instruction based on student "projects and seminars", and have innovative assessment and student planning. (Mecklinburger, 1992, p. 286)

Edison Project

Another restructuring idea that is being created, is the Edison project. Even though the final design has not been introduced, a core team has been working on interesting ideas. The seven member core team is made up of a former president of Yale University, a public school administrator from Chicago, and representatives from Washington think tanks, the New York media world, and computer laboratories from Silicon Valley. (Walsh, 1993)

The goal of the project is to set up 200 schools nationwide, serving 100,000 to 150,000 students. These would be private schools costing a reasonable tuition. Some scholarships would be provided for needy children. Some of the ideas that are expected to be established in these schools are: a longer school day and year, computers for every student,

employment of students in cafeteria work and other jobs, integrated curriculum, parental involvement, and higher pay for teachers. Eventually they hope their success will change public school. A problem with this project is the question of how to pay for it. It will cost a great deal of money to build and start up new schools. They are hoping states will help out with the cost, but they are not making that a requirement. (Walsh, 1993)

CHAPTER III

Procedure

Description of the Case Study - Humanities

The Humanities program was started at Athena High School in the fall of 1990. Fifty, ninth grade students started the program and forty-six eventually finished it in June of 1992. Each year since a new group of students started, and there are now two separate teams of three teachers that follow the students from 9th to 10th grade. The qualities of the program that makes it different from traditional classroom instruction can be described as structural and instructional differences. Though there is an obvious overlap between the categories, the distinction should make it easier to understand.

Structural Chart

	Humanities	Traditional
Grouping	Heterogeneous	Homogeneous
Time	a) Instructional Block- 3 periods b) provides extended/shortened time periods	40 minutes, no flexibility
Teachers	Team: English, Social Studies, Art, Academic Achievement	Separate Academic areas
Planning	Teachers Team: 40 minute planning	Individual planning by separate academic teachers

Instructional Chart

	Humanities	Traditional
Instructional delivery	a) Parallel integrated instruction of 9 and 10 blocks of curriculum b) Thematic based on exploration of essential questions	a) Separate academic disciplines- no overlap b) Grade 9- regional (non Western) Grade 10- Europe (chronological)
Learning style focus	a) Student awareness and use b) Instructional methods adhere to all 3	Teachers option
Assigned countries/ regions	Students are specialists in one area, and are taught other areas from different students	Teachers option

Summary of the differences

The category of structural differences explains how the Humanities program is set up compared to traditional classes. The students are heterogeneously mixed with the same teachers for two consecutive years. They are scheduled for a block of an hour and forty-five minutes a day (2 1/3 periods of classes at Athena). The scheduling is flexible because of the time block, but a typical week's schedule included 4 classes of English and Global Studies, and 2 classes of Art. Fifteen minutes a day (1/3 of a period) is spent on current events. The rest of the "3rd" period is taken as lunch. The staff includes one teacher from each subject- English, Social Studies, Art, and an Academic Achievement advisor. The second year of the program included

another certified English teacher who was working as an intern. The teachers meet every day in a 40 minute team meeting to discuss the students and arrange activities and projects.

The category of instructional differences is used to explain how the students were taught or expected to learn. This can be broken down into three differences. The major difference is the designed integration of Art, English, and Social Studies. Even though they are normally presented separately as explained above, each subject is supposed to cover material that centers around one theme. A second difference, is the designed effort to base lessons around the three main learning styles: linguistic, visual, and kinesthetic. Students identify and are taught the consequences of their learning styles so they are able to use their strongest style, and try to build up the other two. Many of the lessons include cooperative learning or other activities where students work together, building off each other's strengths. A final instructional task that differs from traditional classes is assigning students countries and regions of the world that they are expected to become specialists of. They complete special projects and are required to find two articles on their region each week. They summarize the article, and, during news time, present their information to other students.

Questions

The main question is: Did the students benefit from the restructured Humanities program? The term "benefit" will be defined by determining the answers to the following six questions:

1. Did the students' understanding and use of learning styles help them remember more information?

2. Did the emphasis on world news, provide students with a better understanding of current events?
3. Did having the same teachers and students for two years, assist students in their learning?
4. Did having a greater amount of student interaction, assist students in their learning?
5. Did the integration of Global Studies, English, and Art, by theme, make it easier for the students to understand the material from all three?
6. Did Humanities prepare students for life after 10th grade?

Methodology

The evaluation of the above questions will be based on an action research study of the first group of students who completed the program. These 46 students are now in traditional classroom settings studying American history with students who were not involved in the Humanities program.

Subjects

The school is in a suburban area, just outside a medium to large city. Most of the students come from a middle class background, but there are some areas with poor economic conditions. The Humanities students represented a well rounded mix of the student population.

Instruments

The instruments of this action research were designed to gain a perspective of the program from the students, Humanities teachers, and teachers who taught the students a year after the program was completed.

New York State exams

Global Studies test scores from the New York State Regents and Competency exams were obtained by the researcher. The results of exams from 44 Humanities students were compared to a random sample of 44 students from the rest of the sophomore class at Athena. The exams of the second set of students were randomly selected from all 217 students who were tested on the Regents or Regents Competency Test.

Student Survey

Forty-three of the 46 former Humanities students were contacted and filled out a survey about their experience. Two of the three that did not complete a survey no longer attend school at Athena, and the other was on an extended vacation when the surveys were given. The survey was designed by the researcher and was broken into three parts. (See Appendix A)

The first part had eight questions designed to gain information about the students, so as to be able to later compare responses by gender and or labeled academic ability.

The second part consisted of sixteen separate statements. The students were asked to respond to them, by circling: *strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree*. These questions were an attempt to separate the Humanities program into different components and discover what the students liked most, and what they thought did not help them.

The third part consisted of two open ended questions. Students were asked to compare their experience in 11th grade Social Studies class with Humanities, and to make comments about any other feeling they had towards the program.

Student Interviews

Twelve interviews were conducted by the researcher from a random sample of students who completed Humanities. The names of the 12 students were chosen randomly from 43 available Humanities students. The selecting process was stratified to make sure equal representation was given to males and females and to the three different academic phases. Three A phase students, six B phase students, and three C phase students, represented the actual 21% A phase, 58% B phase, and 21% C phase. The interviews lasted 10 to 15 minutes and consisted of 10 questions in which students were asked to respond to different aspects of the Humanities program. (See Appendix B) This was an attempt to gain explanations about why they liked or disliked parts of the program.

Survey of Humanities' teachers

The four teachers that were a part of the program for the full two years were all contacted and completed a survey. The survey was written by the researcher and broken down into three parts. (See Appendix C)

The first part, consisting of five information questions, was administered so the researcher would be able to discover the background of the teachers involved.

The second part consisted of 15 separate statements. The teachers were asked to respond to them, by circling: *strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree*. These questions were asked in an attempt to separate the Humanities program into different components. The questions were the same ones asked of the students, but were altered to a teacher's perspective. This was done so it would be easier to compare the two perceptions of the program.

The third part consisted of three open ended questions. Teachers were asked to respond to why they joined the Humanities project, what was their evaluation of the first year, and any other comments that they might have.

Survey of Eleventh grade teachers

The three teachers that taught the former Humanities students the year after the program were contacted and completed a survey. The survey was written by the researcher in an attempt to find out if they could notice strengths or weaknesses with the students who completed the program. (See Appendix D)

The survey was broken down into two parts. The first part consisted of six separate statements. The teachers were asked to respond to them, by circling: *strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree*. The second part consisted of four open ended questions. Two dealt with Humanities students' preparedness for eleventh grade Social Studies, and the other two asked them to comment about their opinion of the students and the program.

Limitations

It is important to note that there were limitations to this study. A broad statement about the value of the Humanities program at Athena would be unwise, because the study only addresses the results of a program in its first cycle, and only one team is evaluated. It should also be noted that a founding teacher will also not be with the program for future years. She was the Academic Achievement advisor, who helped students that were having difficulty, and she taught all of the students their learning style. The position probably will not be replaced.

It is also questionable whether the results represent the ability of the teachers that taught the program, or if it represents the structure of the program. It seems clear that the results would reflect a combination of the two. This would mean, however, that the second group that went through this program, might show different results, because of a different set of teachers.

Another limitation was the make up of the students. The "ability" of the first set that went through the program was proportionately dispersed, if their tracking range is valid. The next two groups to go through the program, reflect a greater number of students tracked into lower tracks.

A last limitation that needs to be stated was that some of the students instructed outside of Humanities, changed teachers in the middle of their tenth grade year. This inconsistency could lower the average grade for those students who took the New York State Regents and Competency exams.

CHAPTER IV

Results

The results of the instruments used to evaluate Humanities showed overwhelming support for the program. The most reliable sources of information were the New York State Global Studies exams and student responses from the surveys and interviews. The Global Studies exams were the same for both groups and, therefore, the results can compare the extent of Global Studies knowledge that Humanities and traditional students learned.

The students' responses are important because their educational growth was the motivation for the creation of the program. The students are best qualified to answer the question of whether Humanities benefitted them. At the same time, it is important to realize that each student and his/her experience is different, so numerous quotes are provided to show individual opinions.

The surveys answered by Humanities and eleventh grade teachers were also important because they provide a different perception of the students and the program, but their responses could be influenced by outside factors. The Humanities teachers may want positive results because they were responsible for educating the students and believe in restructuring efforts. The eleventh grade teachers may favor other results because, according to a Humanities teacher, many of the teachers opposed the program before it even started. The 11th grade teachers also did not know the Humanities students before they taught them and, therefore, were restricted to only what they could observe after the program was completed.

Data Collected from the Instruments

New York State Global Studies Exams

In traditional classrooms, A and B phase students usually take the regents exam, and C phase students take the competency exam. In Humanities, teachers and students together select the test best suited to the students' academic ability. Some C phase students in Humanities are recommended to take regents. If students from either group fails the regents exam, then they must take the competency exam. Students must pass one of the tests as a requirements for graduation in New York state.

The data collected from the New York State Global Studies exams are represented in the following charts:

Regents exam results - Humanities students

Grades	A	B	C	D	F
# of	3	10	11	9	3

students

* The three that failed averaged an 83% on the competency

Regents exam results - traditional A and B phase students

Grades	A	B	C	D	F
#of	2	5	11	6	12

students

* The twelve students that failed averaged a 78% on the competency

Competency exam results - Humanities students

Grades	A	B	C	D	F
# of	0	7	1	0	0

students

Competency exam results - traditional C phase students

Grades	A	B	C	D	F
# of students	1	1	1	1	4

Summary of the Results from the exams

The results of the state exams, show that the Humanities students were more prepared for the tests at the end of the second year of Global Studies. The average grade for the sample group of traditional students was a 69%, while the average grade for the Humanities students was a 75%. Thirty-three Humanities students passed the test and three failed. Of those 36 students, four of them probably would not have taken the regents if they were in traditional classes because they were labeled C phase. The three that failed the regents, later took the competency and averaged an 83%. Twelve out of the 36 traditional students from the sample group, failed the regents exam and their average was a 78% on the competency. A Chi-square was used to determine if the results from the two samples of regents scores were significantly different. (See Appendix H) The results showed that there was a significant difference in the two sets of grades.

The results on the competency exam show even greater results for Humanities. Seven out of the eight students for Humanities scored between 80% - 89%. The eighth scored a 70%. The grades for the eight C phase students from the sample group, was a 91%, 83%, 70%, 67%, and four below a 65%. This test needs to be passed with a 65% or higher to graduate from high school in New York State. A Chi-square was used again to determine if the results from the two samples of competency scores were significantly different. (See Appendix I)

The results showed that there was a significant difference in the two sets of grades.

One could argue that Global Studies Regents test results do not really reflect a students' knowledge. Regents exams, however, are the traditional measure of knowledge in 9th and 10th grade Social Studies curriculum.

Student Surveys

The Humanities students' survey reflected positive attitudes about the program. The majority of students answered *agree* or *strongly agree* on all sixteen questions about the benefits of Humanities. General information question were asked on gender and academic phase but neither category seemed to make a difference when calculating the results. This leads to a conclusion that the benefits of Humanities does not restrict itself to a certain gender or to students with a certain level of academic ability.

One interesting statistic from the Humanities survey was the expected grade for 11th grade Social Studies class compared to the final grades earned in Humanities. Twelve percent more of Humanities students expected to receive an overall grade of an A or a B in 11th grade. The reason for higher grades can be due to a variety of factors. One assumption could be that eleventh grade Social Studies was easier, but that was contradicted by written responses from an open ended question comparing Humanities and American History classes. By a ration of two to one, the students wrote that 11th grade was harder than Humanities. That can lead to even more questions about why the student felt it was more difficult, and some of those will be answered later in this chapter.

Student Interviews

All twelve students interviewed answered yes to the question of whether Humanities was a beneficial experience. Other questions in the interviews asked them to comment on certain parts of the program that differed with traditional classes. Most differences were viewed as beneficial and some parts of the interviews will be provided later in this chapter.

Humanities teachers' survey

The surveys to the Humanities teachers overwhelmingly gave support to the program. Occasionally they did not answer a question because they felt unable to do so, but they all circled *agree* or *strongly agree* to the questions they answered. They felt that the program had been beneficial to the students in numerous ways.

11th grade Social Studies teachers' survey

All three of the 11th grade teachers found it difficult to make general statements and conclusions about their students who completed Humanities because each student was different. Two of the three teachers were generally not supportive of the program. They said there was "no observable difference" between the two sets of students. Of the six specific questions asked of them, the same two teachers did not circle an answer for three of them, and marked an X between *agree* and *disagree*. One of those questions asked if the students had an understanding of current events, and another asked if they would recommend future 9th grade students to take Humanities. The "third" teacher answered *agree* and *strongly agree* to those same questions.

Two other questions asked if Humanities students earned higher grades in their classes than other students who were not

in the program, and if former Humanities students were more likely to ask questions or stay after school for additional help. All three teachers answered *disagree* or *strongly disagree*. The responses to the grades question are interesting because Humanities students said they had higher grades in 11th grade than they did in Humanities, but the grades must not have been high enough to make a noticeable difference to the teachers.

Analysis

The six questions originally asked in chapter three will be answered by looking at all of the results collected from the action research. Most of the analysis will concentrate on student responses from the surveys and interviews, but the Humanities teachers', and 11th grade Social Studies teachers' comments will be included when appropriate.

Did the students' understanding and use of learning styles help them remember more information?

One of the first things students were presented with in Humanities was learning style information. The following are the results from three questions that Humanities students were asked, and two questions the Humanities teachers were asked:

<u>Student Survey</u>				
Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Most of the teachers in Humanities designed class work that addressed different learning styles	47%	53%	0%	0%
2. I remembered more information because of class activities that involved different learning styles.	43%	45%	12%	0%

3. I use my knowledge about my learning style to help me learn in current classes.	25%	60%	15%	0%
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Teacher Survey

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. In Humanities I designed class work that addressed different learning styles	25%	75%	0%	0%
2. The use of different learning styles helped the students remember more information.	50%	50%	0%	0%

Results of the surveys show all of the Humanities students and teachers believe class work addressed different learning styles and that this helped the students remember more information. Eighty-five percent of the students also believed their knowledge of learning styles helped them in classes a year after the Humanities program was over. This shows that the students believe knowing how to apply their learning style was a benefit for learning material in Humanities and beyond.

Many of the students used the open ended questions at the end of the survey to write more about learning styles. This shows it was a very important part of the program. The following statements were provided when the students were asked to compare 11th grade Social Studies to Humanities.

1. "This years Social Studies class is harder for me to understand and grasp. I believe it is because of the style of teaching. In Humanities we used various types of learning techniques."
2. "the way my teacher teaches doesn't click with my learning style. (linguistic vs. visual)"

3. "Last year seemed so much easier to understand because of the style in which it was taught."
4. "It is harder because the teacher doesn't address all learning styles."
5. "This year was a big change... My notes this year are verbal compared to last year's on the board."
6. "This year it seems to be more difficult to comprehend and fully understand what the teacher teaches. Humanities used visuals and plays which in turn I was able to understand better."

These quotes show that students are fully aware of their learning style and can critique the teachers methods. This could explain why many of them said 11th grade was more difficult than Humanities. A concern is that they could use the lack of different teaching strategies as an excuse for not succeeding. This however does not seem to be the case if the 12% increase of A and B grades that was mentioned earlier is accurate.

Some students who believed knowledge of their learning style(s) benefited them in 11th grade, wrote:

1. "Humanities was a benefit. I feel I was much better off this year than non-humanities students- if I don't understand something, I can almost teach myself the material."
2. "It taught me how to learn and study correctly. Without it, I probably would not have a B in Social this year."
3. "I'm doing much better because I use my knowledge from last year to help me this year."

All of the students in the interviews believed knowing their learning style was helpful. The following is one of those interviews:

Researcher: "Did the Humanities teachers design class work that addresses different learning styles?"

Student: "Yes"

Researcher: "Did this help you remember more information?"

Student: "It helped a lot. Since I was visual, I did the visual work and then I started the linguistic... She taught us different learning techniques and how to use them to learn"

Did the emphasis on world news, provide students with a better understanding of current events?

Humanities spent 15 minutes a day on current events. The following chart and comments show that they believe this time gave them a greater understanding of world events.

<u>Student Survey</u> Questions.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The news time in Humanities helped me have a better understanding of current events around the world.	34%	56%	7%	2%
2. Because of the Humanities program, I am now more likely to watch or read the news	17%	46%	34%	2%

Ninety percent answered *agree* or *strongly agree* where asked if they had a better understanding of current events around the world as a result of daily current events. One student wrote at the end of her survey "I learned a lot about different cultures around the world and even learned about countries that I didn't even know existed".

The students that were interviewed added more detail to this response. The following is one response: "Did the news

time give you a better understanding of current events around the world?"

Student: "Yeah it did."

Researcher: "Can you give an example?"

Student: "During the desert storm situation, I would not have known what was going on. ...I never read the newspaper before Humanities. They would explain it to you. They would explain different points and it would be interesting. ...I still read about Angola, I didn't even know there was a country named Angola before I was assigned it"

The number of students who reported they continued to read or watch the news saw a drop a year after the Humanities program was over. This could be expected because they were not assigned to read the paper in 11th grade classes. In the interviews, two people said they would have read or watched the news whether they had been in Humanities or not. Having 63 percent say they were now more likely to read or watch the news because of Humanities is a positive accomplishment for the program. They are more likely to make better citizens as adults because they will be more likely to be informed on the issues.

Did having the same teachers and students for two years, assist students in their learning?

As the following responses to questions from the student survey shows, having the same teachers and students for two years in a row was a great benefit for the students.

<u>Student Survey</u> Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I was more likely to participate in class because I had the same students and teachers for two years.	51%	44%	5%	0%
2. Because I had the same teachers for two years in a row, they were better able to address my academic strengths and needs.	71%	29%	0%	0%

Having seventy-one percent of the students strongly believe teachers were able to better address their academic strengths and needs is impressive. This is important because it suggests teachers will know in what areas the students need help, and will spend more time on that subject or area of learning. Feeling more likely to participate in class is also important because students need to be active participants in learning and must be comfortable in seeking answers to questions they might have. The Humanities teachers supported both of these ideas in their survey and also circled the *agree* or strongly *agree* choices.

Some comments that the students provided showed that having the teachers for two years was important to them. One of them wrote, "because we were with them for 2 years, they became my friends and not just my teachers. Even though we got a lot of homework, I still had fun." Another wrote "It has a family atmosphere. The classmates are your brothers and sisters. The teachers are your parents and room 250 is like a home".

The students who were interviewed, supported this position.

Researcher: "Was it helpful to have the same teachers for two years in a row?"

Student 1: "Definitely. You got to know them, and they got to know you and how you learned. They could apply the lessons to the different students. That way we learned"

Student 2: "When I went back the second year, it was just easier. You knew the teachers. They knew your learning style and they knew what was going on in your life. They understood you."

Did having a greater amount of student interaction assist students in their learning?

The following three questions were asked in an attempt to find out if student interaction helped them understand material and if having students from different academic abilities motivated them to learn.

<u>Student Survey</u> Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Student interaction was greater in Humanities than in my classes now.	79%	26%	2%	2%
2. I understood the material better in Humanities because other classmates helped me learn.	27%	53%	17%	2%
3. Because of the Humanities policy of having students from different academic levels (phases), I was more motivated to learn.	14%	49%	34%	2%

All but two of the students believed student interaction was greater in Humanities than in their 11th grade classes. In this survey more people circled strongly agree, than in any

other. Responses to the two other questions, however, could be considered more significant because they show student interaction as being helpful. These responses reflect that a majority of the students believed classmates helped and even motivated them to learn.

One of the 11th grade teachers was very supportive of the heterogeneous grouping that Humanities uses. She wrote "Since society is mixed, the Humanities students are better prepared for life out there because they have had to learn with all types (ability levels) which should enable them to be better citizens in the future." This brings up separate questions about the effects of heterogeneous and homogeneous grouping that can not be answered in this study. However, the evidence does show that this group of heterogeneously mixed students feel other students can help them learn.

The third question in the chart was one of the only questions that showed a significant difference in responses from students in different phases. Ten out of the 12 C phase students agreed that having students from different academic levels motivated them to learn. That is a strong statement for continuing heterogeneous grouping because it appears to motivate the lower ability group and possibly challenges them to do more work. Only about half of the A and B phase students agreed, but even that is encouraging, because it still appears to have motivated some of them. A different study would be needed to see if the presence of lower phase students had any negative effect on those students that answered *disagree* or *strongly disagree*.

Some of the students commented about the importance of group work at the end of their survey. One wrote: "This year is harder because it (Social Studies class) doesn't use groups like last year did". A few students also mentioned different projects

that they worked on with students in Humanities and how much they enjoyed and learned from them.

Most of the students in the interviews also believed student interaction supported them in their learning.

Researcher: "How did your classmates from Humanities help you in your schooling?"

Student: "We had a lot of group projects. We worked together in groups so you could get different ideas and other peoples thoughts besides your own."

Researcher: "Did that help you?"

Student: "Yes, instead of being out on your own, there was a group effort."

Did the integration of Global Studies, English, and Art, by theme, make it easier for the students to understand the material from all three?

In the survey, this question was broken into two parts. One dealt with the benefits of integrating the curriculum and the other dealt with learning Social Studies by themes. The results of the survey are as follows:

Student Survey

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Combining the study of Global Studies, English and Art made it easier to understand and learn the material from all three.	43%	52%	4%	0%
2. Learning Global Studies by theme (Ex - Revolutions) instead of learning by countries (Ex - 6 weeks on Russia) was easier to understand.	41%	49%	10%	0%

Ninety-five percent of the students believed combining the study of Global Studies, English and Art made it easier to understand the material from all three. This shows that they believe integrated instruction benefitted learning. One of the students wrote "when all 3 subjects relate, it helps you remember. Now when a topic comes up, I remember a project I did in Art or a short story or novel in English. It helps me understand how the government or people felt."

An 11th grade teacher also saw this extend to 11th grade American History. In regard to the former Humanities students, she said: "Contentwise they can put info from different disciplines together and use it"

The other question showed 90 percent of the students supported the concept of learning Global Studies by theme. One student gave the reason it was a benefits in the following interview:.

Researcher: "Do you think learning Global Studies by theme was easier to understand and remember than learning by countries or regions?"

Student: "I thought the theme helped a lot because all the revolutions were somewhat related to each other. It made you understand what countries go through before a revolution, or what ever the topic was. There was usually a pattern."

Not all of the student supported learning by theme. One wrote: "Last year, Social Studies was done topically, where this year it is done chronologically. I think it would be better if Social Studies was done chronologically." This shows that all students are different and that it is difficult to adapt teaching to all students. Anytime school is restructured it can effect some less positively.

Did Humanities help the students for life after 10th grade?

This question was broken down into two questions for the student survey. One dealt with 11th grade Social Studies, and the other dealt with making informed decisions on world issues. Other comments added at the end of this section, show how Humanities affected some students in other ways besides the two mentioned.

<u>Student Survey</u>				
Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Humanities prepared me for 11th grade Social Studies better than other students who had traditional classes.	22%	49%	27%	2%
2. Because Humanities combined English, Art, and History ideas, I am able to make better informed decisions about world issues.	20%	70%	10%	0%

Seventy-one percent of the Humanities students supported the statement saying they had better preparation for 11th grade Social Studies than other students who had traditional classes. One student wrote: "When my current teacher asks a question, most people say 'I don't know', but the students who participated in Humanities answer, and the teacher is often impressed as to how much we remember (details, names, places etc.)" Another wrote "Being able to remember history from last year helped me... I could understand the tie of the U.S. to the world and its relationship." Neither of these students was backed up by their teachers who responded no difference between Humanities and traditional students.

The other question on the survey asked if combining English, Art, and Social Studies, made it easier to make better

informed decisions about world issues. Ninety percent of the students supported this statement, but few of the students wrote comments to support this.

There were numerous comments on other ways that Humanities affected their life for the future. Four statements were:

1. "Humanities was the most rewarding experience of my high school years. I'll take the memories with me throughout my life and the things I learned will help me to succeed in my collegiate experience."
2. "Humanities provides a different and new way of learning and encourages a higher level of thinking."
3. "Humanities helped me to have self confidence in speaking in front of large groups. Working with Mrs. Durbin, and Mrs. Moran and all the writing we did helped to improve my overall writing. I started with C's and D's in writing and now write A and B papers."
4. "I think I learned much more than other people I know."

CHAPTER V

Conclusions / Implications

The findings of this study strongly indicate that the Humanities program benefited the students who participated in it from September of 1990 to June of 1992. This can be supported by the New York State Regents and Competency exams and the student responses to their survey and interviews.

Five characteristics that made the program unique compared to a traditional setting, were evaluated. All five were found to benefit the majority of the students.

The understanding and use of learning styles, was one of the important characteristics of the Humanities program. More students commented on learning styles than on any other characteristic of the program. Because the students were extremely positive about its use, some could argue that all teachers should address different learning styles when teaching, and all students should learn what their learning style is. Both of these may be good ideas, but it is also important to have the students attempt to build up their other strengths. The three learning styles Humanities concentrated on were linguistic, visual, and kinesthetic. Most of the students said their strongest learning style was visual or kinesthetic but many colleges and jobs rely heavily on linguistic skills. The strengthening of all three styles were emphasized in Humanities so the students would learn the material, and be prepared in the future.

Learning styles could be taught in other classes, but most teachers do not attempt it. It is easier in Humanities because of the block time schedule. Learning styles does not take a large amount of time to teach, but showing the students how to adapt this knowledge to help learn and study, does take time. Most

teachers are not willing to make that commitment when they have such a large amount of content material to cover.

The Humanities teachers made the commitment and tried to implement all three styles when teaching. The students found this helpful, but many of the traditional teachers that the students had after the program, do not consider learning styles in their teaching. Some former Humanities students have found it difficult to adapt to traditional classes because of a lack of visual and kinesthetic techniques. This however, does not seem to have lowered their grades. Some students said they were able to adapt their teachers instructional style to fit their learning style.

Because Humanities spent fifteen minutes a day on current events, the students were more aware of events around the world. They were required to write a summary on two articles a week and usually three stories were discussed each day. Most of students said this helped them understand current events around the world and that they were more likely to read or watch the news. Some students also indicated that current events helped them have a better grasp of geography. Current events may have also helped them for the exams at the end of the year, because during news time, the students and teachers often would look into the background of countries and make historical connections.

Current events are included by some traditional teachers, and it does not need to be designed exactly the same way as Humanities to be successful. Each case would need to be evaluated separately, but if the Humanities program is typical, then it should be used by more teachers. A problem with using current events in the traditional setting is the amount of time it would take to use it. Humanities was able to overcome that

problem because of their block-time schedule that allowed them to take time from each subject.

The third characteristic that was discussed in this study, was the benefit of having the same students and teachers for two consecutive years. The students strongly believed the teachers were better able to address their academic strengths and needs. They also thought they were more willing to participate in class. Both of these are important to the education of American youth.

Having the same teachers, can also be a benefit on a personal level. Some of the students commented on not needing to get to know new teachers for their second year. They already knew what the teachers expected and some felt closer to their Humanities teachers. It was interesting to observe the amount of former Humanities students who still went to their old "Humanities room" to eat lunch and talk to other Humanities students and teachers. This observation supported a girl who made a reference to students being like brothers and sisters, teachers being like parents, and room 250 being like home.

The relationship with teachers is a factor that needs to be addressed further. A valid question of the program is how many of the students believed they benefited from Humanities because of the teachers instead of the restructured parts of the program. Six of the 12 students that were interviewed said the teachers were the best part of the program. The same 12 students were asked if it was the design of the program or the teachers that made it beneficial. Almost all of them said it was a combination of both. This study was limited in its ability to determine the extent of the teachers impact on the programs, but it was a contributing factor to the success.

The idea of having the same teachers and students together for more than one year is not new. It has also shown

positive results in other restructuring programs, such as the project in Philadelphia, mentioned earlier in the review of recent literature. (Bradley, 1992a) This topic should be investigated further to see if other schools have had such positive results. It would be interesting to see if students still have positive experiences when they are with teachers that they do not like.

A fourth characteristic that makes the program different than traditional classes in the use of student interaction. The students were mixed heterogeneously and expected to help each other on a number of projects, plays, and other group activities. The students said this helped them understand the material better. Ten out of 12 students who were classified as having low ability, believed they were motivated by classmates. The study did not find statistics for traditional students, but it would be surprising if many of them were motivated by their peers.

The final characteristic of the Humanities program that was investigated, was the integration of the three subject areas around one theme. The teachers used team meetings to discuss topics for future lessons. They tried to show the students the connection between disciplines and the policy seemed to be successful. The students believed it was easier to learn the material this way. They also thought it was beneficial to learn Global Studies by theme instead of by countries or regions. There may be some valid concerns about the significance of the last question because the students did not have an opportunity to experience the other style. Their opinion, however, at least shows that they felt it was beneficial.

There is no doubt about the success of the Humanities program. The only question is what made it such a successful experience. The results showed it was not limited to just one factor. These results need to be publicized so teachers and

students who are frustrated with the traditional setting can see a successful alternative.

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Appendix A
Survey to 1990-1992 Humanities Students

The following survey is an attempt to get your perspective of the Humanities Program. Please take your time and answer these questions as best as you can. You do not have to give your name and your specific answers will not be shown to any of your former or present teachers. Thank you!!

Information:

Please circle the answer that best applies to you.

1. My present Social Studies class is:

11AP 11B 11C

2. My gender is:

Male Female

3. I presently read or watch the news:

Frequently Sometimes Rarely

4. Expected Social Studies grade for this year:

A B C D F

5. Average Social Studies grade for Humanities:

A B C D F

6. Social Studies test at the end of Humanities:

Regents Competency

7. My grade on the test in #6:

A B C D F

Survey

Please circle the answer that best applies to you.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Combining the study of Global Studies, English and Art made it easier to understand and learn the material from all three.	1	2	3	4
2. I was more likely to participate in class because I had the same students and teachers for two years.	1	2	3	4
3. Because I had the same teachers for two years in a row, they were better able to address my academic strengths and needs.	1	2	3	4
4. Most of the teachers in Humanities designed class work that addressed different learning styles	1	2	3	4
5. I remembered more information because of class activities that involved different learning styles.	1	2	3	4
6. I use my knowledge about my learning style to help me learn in current classes.	1	2	3	4
7. The news time in Humanities helped me have a better understanding of current events around the world.	1	2	3	4
8. Because of the Humanities program, I am now more likely to watch or read the news	1	2	3	4
9. Having more than one teacher in a classroom helped me learn.	1	2	3	4
10. Having an extra person besides the Art, English and Social Studies teacher, to teach learning styles, add information, and pull individual students aside for help (Ms. Witt's <u>position</u>) was a benefit.	1	2	3	4

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. Learning Global Studies by theme (Ex - Revolutions) instead of learning by countries (Ex - 6 weeks on Russia) was easier to understand. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. Student interaction was greater in Humanities than in my classes now. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. I understood the material better in Humanities because other classmates helped me learn. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. Because of the Humanities policy of having students from different academic levels (phases), I was more motivated to learn. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. Because Humanities combined English, Art, and History ideas, I am able to make better informed decisions about world issues. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 16. Humanities prepared me for 11th grade Social Studies better than other students who had traditional classes. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Comparing Social Studies this year versus last year...

Other comments about your attitude toward the Humanities Program.

Appendix B

Sheet used for Interviews with Humanities Students

Name: _____

Phase: _____

Questions:

1. Do you think combining Art, English and Global Studies made it easier for you to learn the material from all three? _____

Why/ why not/ examples? _____

2. Was it helpful to have the same teachers and students for two years in a row? _____

Why/ why not/ examples? _____

3. How did your classmates from Humanities help you in your schooling? _____

Is it any different with your classmates from this year?

4. What is your learning style? _____

Did the Humanities teachers design class work that addressed different learning styles? _____

Did this help you remember information? _____

Why/ why not/ examples? _____

5. Did the news time give you a better understanding of current events around the world? _____

Why/ why not/ examples? _____

6. Do you think learning Global Studies by theme was easier to understand and remember than learning by countries or regions? _____

Why/ why not/ examples? _____

7. How do you see your Global Studies class as helping you in the future? _____

8 Do you think Humanities on a whole, was a beneficial experience? _____

Was that because of the design of the program or the teachers?

Explain? _____

9. What was the best part of Humanities? _____

10. What part of Humanities could have been better?

Appendix C

Survey to 1990-1992 Humanities Teachers

The following survey is an attempt to get your perspective of the Humanities Program. I am doing this for my Masters thesis at SUNY Brockport and would appreciate it if you could take the time and answer the following questions. Please do not give your name or answer questions that you feel uncomfortable about. Thank you for your time!

Information:

1. The number of years you have been teaching.

2. The areas that you are certified to teach.

3. Other classes besides Humanities that you teach now, or have taught.

4. The highest educational degree that you presently hold.

5. Your opinion of restructuring Secondary Social Studies (positive, indifferent, or negative). _____

Survey:

Please circle the answer that best applies to you and the humanities program.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Combining the study of Global Studies, English and Art made it easier for the students to understand and learn the material from all three.	1	2	3	4
2. The students seemed comfortable and more likely to participate in class because of having the same teachers and other students for two years in a row.	1	2	3	4
3. Because I had the same students for two years in a row, I was better able to address their academic strengths and needs.	1	2	3	4
4. In Humanities I designed class work that addressed different learning styles	1	2	3	4
5. The use of different learning styles helped the students remember more information.	1	2	3	4
6. The news time in Humanities helped the students have a better understanding of current events around the world.	1	2	3	4
7. Because of Humanities the students are now more likely to read or watch the news.	1	2	3	4
8. Having more than one teacher in a classroom helped the students learn.	1	2	3	4
9. Having an extra person besides the three subject areas, to teach learning styles, add information, and pull individual students aside was a benefit to the students.	1	2	3	4
10. Learning Global Studies by theme (Ex - Revolutions) instead of learning by countries (Ex - 6 weeks on Russia) was easier for the students to understand.	1	2	3	4

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 11. Student interaction was greater in Humanities than in most classes students have. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 12. The students understood the material better in Humanities because their classmates helped them. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 13. Because of the Humanities policy of having heterogeneous classes, many of the students were more motivated to learn. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 14. The Humanities program has given the students a broad background to make better informed decisions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 15. The Humanities students were more prepared for 11th grade Social Studies than other students. that went through the traditional system. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

I volunteered to teach in this program because...

My evaluation of the first group of students to go through Humanities is...

Other comments about your attitude toward the Humanities Program...

Appendix D

Survey to 11th grade Social Studies Teachers

The following survey is an attempt to get your evaluation of students who have completed the Humanities Program. A list of the students that went through the program is attached. I am doing this for my Masters thesis at SUNY Brockport and would appreciate it if you could answer the following questions.

Thank you for your time!

Please circle the answer that best applies to your students that have completed the humanities program.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The students seem to have a general knowledge of Social Studies information that was required for them to learn in 9th and 10th grade.	1	2	3	4
2. The students show an understanding of current events around the world.	1	2	3	4
3. On the average, grades for the former Humanities students are higher than students that did not complete the program.	1	2	3	4
4. The former Humanities students are more likely to ask questions or stay after school if they do not understand something.	1	2	3	4
5. The former Humanities students seem to have informed opinions about world issues. (Example: The role of the U.S. in Bosnia)	1	2	3	4
6. I would recommend future 9th grade students to take Humanities.	1	2	3	4

The students that completed the Humanities program seemed prepared for 11th grade Social Studies because...

The students that completed the Humanities program did not seem prepared for 11th grade Social Studies because...

Other comments about your students who completed Humanities?

Other feelings about the Humanities Program?

Appendix E

Results of the Survey to the 1990-1992 Humanities Students

Information: From 42 of the 46 students that completed the program

1. Their present Social Studies class:

11AP -21% 11B -57% 11C -21%

2. Gender :

Male -50% Female -50%

3. Amount of time they read or watch the news:

Frequently -28% Sometimes -70% Rarely -2%

4. Expected Social Studies grade for this year:

A -12% B -64% C -24% D -0% F -0%

5. Average Social Studies grade for Humanities:

A -15% B -49% C -34% D -2% F -0%

6. Social Studies test taken at the end of Humanities:

Regents -83% Competency -17%

7. Grade on the regents:

A -8% B -40% C -29% D -20% F -3%

8. Grade on the competency:

A -14% B -71% C -14% D -0% F -0%

Survey

Percentages of the students answers.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Combining the study of Global Studies, English and Art made it easier to understand and learn the material from all three.	43%	52%	4%	0%
2. I was more likely to participate in class because I had the same students and teachers for two years.	51%	44%	5%	0%
3. Because I had the same teachers for two years in a row, they were better able to address my academic strengths and needs.	71%	29%	0%	0%
4. Most of the teachers in Humanities designed class work that addressed different learning styles	47%	53%	0%	0%
5. I remembered more information because of class activities that involved different learning styles.	43%	45%	12%	0%
6. I use my knowledge about my learning style to help me learn in current classes.	25%	60%	15%	0%
7. The news time in Humanities helped me have a better understanding of current events around the world.	34%	56%	7%	2%
8. Because of the Humanities program, I am now more likely to watch or read the news	17%	46%	34%	2%
9. Having more than one teacher in a classroom helped me learn.	32%	59%	9%	0%

10. Having an extra person besides the Art, English and Social Studies teacher, to teach learning styles, add information, and pull individual students aside for help (Ms. Witt's <u>position</u>) was a benefit.	31%	64%	5%	0%
11. Learning Global Studies by theme (Ex - Revolutions) instead of learning by countries (Ex - 6 weeks on Russia) was easier to understand.	41%	49%	10%	0%
12. Student interaction was greater in Humanities than in my classes now.	79%	26%	2%	2%
13. I understood the material better in Humanities because other classmates helped me learn.	27%	53%	17%	2%
14. Because of the Humanities policy of having students from different academic levels (phases), I was more motivated to learn.	14%	49%	34%	2%
15. Because Humanities combined English, Art, and History ideas, I am able to make better informed decisions about world issues.	29%	70%	10%	0%
16. Humanities prepared me for 11th grade Social Studies better than other students who had traditional classes.	22%	49%	27%	2%

Additional comments: Provided by the answers to these questions

Comparing Social Studies this year versus last year...

Other comments about your attitude toward the Humanities Program. _____

Appendix F

Results of the Survey to 1990-1992 Humanities Teachers

Survey:

Percentages of the teachers answers.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Combining the study of Global Studies, English and Art made it easier for the students to understand and learn the material from all three.	75%	25%	0%	0%
2. The students seemed comfortable and more likely to participate in class because of having the same teachers and other students for two years in a row.	75%	25%	0%	0%
3. Because I had the same students for two years in a row, I was better able to address their academic strengths and needs.	87.5%	12.5%	0%	0%
4. In Humanities I designed class work that addressed different learning styles	25%	75%	0%	0%
5. The use of different learning styles helped the students remember more information.	50%	50%	0%	0%
6. The news time in Humanities helped the students have a better understanding of current events around the world.	50%	50%	0%	0%
7. Because of Humanities the students are now more likely to read or watch the news.	25%	50%	0%	0%
8. Having more than one teacher in a classroom helped the students learn.	75%	25%	0%	0%

9. Having an extra person besides the three subject areas, to teach learning styles, add information, and pull individual students aside was a benefit to the students.	50%	50%	0%	0%
10. Learning Global Studies by theme (Ex - Revolutions) instead of learning by countries (Ex - 6 weeks on Russia) was easier for the students to understand.	25%	25%	0%	0%
11. Student interaction was greater in Humanities than in most classes students have.	50%	25%	0%	0%
12. The students understood the material better in Humanities because their classmates helped them.	25%	75%	0%	0%
13. Because of the Humanities policy of having heterogeneous classes, many of the students were more motivated to learn.	50%	50%	0%	0%
14. The Humanities program has given the students a broad background to make better informed decisions.	50%	50%	0%	0%
15. The Humanities students were more prepared for 11th grade Social Studies than other students. that went through the traditional system.	50%	25%	0%	0%

* Note that not all of the questions were answered and therefore do not equal 100%

Additional comments: provided by the answers to the following questions.

1. I volunteered to teach in this program because...
2. My evaluation of the first group of students to go through Humanities is...
3. Other comments about your attitude toward the Humanities Program...

Appendix G

Results of 11th grade Social Studies Teachers' Survey

The following questions were asked to the three Social Studies teachers that had the Humanities students, a year after the program.

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The students seem to have a general knowledge of Social Studies information that was required for them to learn in 9th and 10th grade.	0%	66%	0%	0%
2. The students show an understanding of current events around the world.	0%	33%	0%	0%
3. On the average, grades for the former Humanities students are higher than students that did not complete the program.	0%	0%	66%	33%
4. The former Humanities students are more likely to ask questions or stay after school if they do not understand something.	0%	0%	66%	33%
5. The former Humanities students seem to have informed opinions about world issues. (Example: The role of the U.S. in Bosnia)	0%	33%	0%	33%
6. I would recommend future 9th grade students to take Humanities.	33%	0%	0%	0%

* Those questions that do not equal 99% is because the teachers either did not answer that question or put an X between agree and disagree

The following are open ended questions that were answered by the 11th grade Social Studies teachers:

1. The students that completed the Humanities program seemed prepared for 11th grade Social Studies because... _____

2. The students that completed the Humanities program did not seem prepared for 11th grade Social Studies because... _____

3. Other comments about your students who completed Humanities? _____

4. Other feelings about the Humanities Program? _____

Appendix H
Chi-Square for New York State Regents Exams

	A	B	C	D	F	
Grades	2	5	11	6	12	36
	3	10	11	9	3	

$$\begin{aligned}
 \chi^2 &= \frac{(3-2)^2}{2} + \frac{(10-5)^2}{5} + \frac{(11-11)^2}{11} + \frac{(9-6)^2}{6} + \frac{(3-12)^2}{12} \\
 &= \frac{1}{2} + \frac{25}{5} + \frac{0}{11} + \frac{9}{6} + \frac{81}{12}
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\chi^2 = 13.75$$

$$\text{Crit } \chi^2 (\alpha = .05, df = 4) = 9.49$$

\Rightarrow Reject H_0

\Rightarrow Significant difference between distribution of grades.

Appendix I
Chi-Square for New York State Competency Exams

	A	B	C	D	F	
Grades	1	1	1	1	4	
	0	7	1	0	0	8

$$\begin{aligned}
 \chi^2 &= \frac{(0-1)^2}{1} + \frac{(7-1)^2}{1} + \frac{(1-1)^2}{1} + \frac{(0-1)^2}{1} + \frac{(0-4)^2}{4} \\
 &= \frac{1}{1} + \frac{36}{1} + \frac{0}{1} + \frac{1}{1} + \frac{16}{4}
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\chi^2 = 42$$

$$\text{Crit } \chi^2 (\alpha = .05 \text{ df} = 4) = 9.49$$

\Rightarrow Reject H_0

\Rightarrow Significant difference between distribution of grades