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Standards-Based Education: Lessons for the Essential Academic Learning Requirements in the Seventh-Grade Social Studies

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STANDARDS-BASED EDUCATION: LESSONS FOR THE ESSENTIAL
ACADEMIC LEARNING REQUIREMENTS IN THE SEVENTH-GRADE SOCIAL
STUDIES

A Project Report
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
Education

by
Karl Anton Schelbert

August 3, 2000

ABSTRACT

STANDARDS-BASED EDUCATION: LESSONS FOR THE ESSENTIAL ACADEMIC LEARNING REQUIREMENTS IN THE SEVENTH-GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES

by

Karl A. Schelbert

July, 2000

This project focuses on aligning seventh-grade social studies with Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements, the state's curriculum guide. In the last decade standards-based education has swept across the United States and the results in Washington have changed the face of education. The project itself presents a variety of lessons that are aligned with the seventh-grade standards for social studies. Lessons are separated into the four disciplines in social studies: history, geography, civics, and economics. Each lesson teaches some aspect of a selected social studies requirement. The review of literature examines the standards-based reform and its resulting affects in Washington State, particularly social studies. Those results include the Essential Academic Learning Requirements and the Washington Assessment of Student Learning.

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CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Graduate Studies

Final Examination of

Karl Anton Schelbert

B.A. Western Washington University, 1997

for the degree of

Master of Education

Master Teacher

Committee in Charge

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3:00 p.m.

Courses presented for the Master's degree

Courses No.	Course Title	Credits	Instructor	Quarter Completed
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Chapter One

Introduction: The Outline of Education Reform in Washington State

Throughout the 1990's many states across the country, including Washington, began steps towards standards-based education. In Washington this meant developing curriculum standards that outlined what teachers should teach and students should learn. From this reform, the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) were developed (Commission on Student Learning, 1998). Immersed within the state's model of reform are performance standards. Noddings (1997) describes performance standards as ". . . degrees of mastery or levels of attainment" (p. 185). The Certificate of Mastery will be the performance standard required of students graduating in 2006 and thereafter (Commission on Student Learning, 1997). To receive a Certificate of Mastery, however, students must show a specified "degree of mastery" on the performance assessment, the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) (Commission on Student Learning, 1997). The assessment, or WASL, tests the student's mastery of skills and knowledge set forth by the EALRs (Commission on Student Learning, 1997).

What caused or lead to these dramatic changes in Washington state education? The answer to this question and further explanations of EALRs, the WASL, and the Certificate of Mastery will be explained in chapters one and two of this project.

Standards-based reform began with the passage of House Bill 1209 during the 1993 legislative session in Olympia, Washington. The legislation called for sweeping changes to the state's educational institution. Specifically, the Commission on Student Learning was established to carry out reform goals outlined in House Bill 1209 (H.R. 1209, 1993). Those goals included creating higher standards, or EALRs, for: reading, writing, communication, mathematics, science, social studies, arts, and health and fitness (Commission on Student Learning, 1998). In addition, the Commission was responsible for adopting state assessments, the WASL, and developing the Certificate of Mastery (1998). The problem examined in this project then, is to determine how to provide students with the knowledge needed for success with social studies standards.

Scope of the Project

This project will focus on curriculum materials that are aligned with state standards for seventh-grade social studies. A critical aspect of this project is understanding what constitutes the social studies Essential Academic Learning Requirements. Additionally, the project will review the literature surrounding standards-based reform. The literature includes a brief history of the reform, and what effects the reform has had in Washington.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to provide some examples of curriculum materials that align with the standards-based Essential Academic Learning Requirements for seventh-grade social studies. Due to a lack of social studies curriculum resources that specifically align with the state's seventh-grade requirements, this project is intended to make a significant contribution to professional material available. Creswell argues the greatest rationale for studies are those areas of research that lack sufficient literature (1998). After reading through this project, it is hoped that middle school social studies educators will gain a greater understanding of performance-based education and how to effectively align the EALRs with their curriculum. Additionally, this project may assist individuals in recognizing what elements are missing from their social studies curriculum and begin the process of alignment.

Need for the Project

In 2006, passing the Washington Assessment of Student Learning will become a graduation requirement (Overview of the State, 1997). Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that all teachers work towards state goals for student knowledge. To prepare students for success on the eventual state assessment in social studies, teachers of this subject need to align their curriculum as soon as possible. To help avoid potential low scores on initial versions of the social studies WASL, teachers need to begin the process of

change. All educators, regardless of experience, must work together to help students meet these new graduation requirements.

Project Limitations and Assumptions

This project is limited because the lessons are designed to address the seventh-grade EALRs only. Materials needed to address either the fourth or tenth-grade essential academic learning requirements will not be provided due to the large scale of such a topic. Additionally, lessons will be relevant to social studies and not other content areas. Another limitation of this project is the absence of a strong expanse of research regarding new curriculum as it pertains to the social studies EALRs. Further research will be necessary to determine whether or not the proposed curriculum and lessons within this project help students achieve the standards set forth by the state.

One of the major assumptions regarding this project is that fifth and sixth grade students have been taught the EALRs through grade six. This corresponds with the idea of skill building and mastery as outlined in the EALRs technical manual (Commission on Student Learning, 1998).

Definition of Key Terms

EALRs : The Essential Academic Learning Requirements (Commission on Student Learning, 1998)

Commission: The Washington State Commission on Student learning
(Education Reform Act, 1993)

NCSS: National Council of Social Studies (National Council 1997)

OSPI: Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

WASL: Washington Assessment of Student learning (Commission on Student Learning, 1998)

Final Product

This project is divided into five chapters with chapter two analyzing the background of standards-based reform, the resulting effects in Washington, and opinions on reform. A brief comparison of the EALRs to national standards in social studies is necessary in chapter two to establish relevance to national ideals. Chapter three will explain the procedures used in developing the curriculum samples. Chapter four includes the sample lessons that are aligned with the EALRs. Chapter five will summarize the project and offer conclusions as well as recommendations for meeting social studies and reform goals.

Chapter Two

Introduction

Every year, more states are creating standards for individual content areas. In its annual report, Making Standards Matter, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) concluded that “twenty-two states met the AFT criteria (for academic standards) in 1999, up from thirteen in 1995” (1999, p.1). The seeds of today's standards reform explosion were sewn in the late eighties and early nineties. Several significant documents from the late eighties impacted and forever changed standards-based social studies education in the United States (Holum, 1998).

The first report, from the Bradley Commission, provided recommendations for curriculum goals in social studies (Bradley Commission, 1988). Building a History Curriculum: Guidelines for Teaching History (1988), offered proposals on what social studies content should be learned in grades kindergarten through twelve. Providing greater detail at individual grade levels, the National Commission on Social Studies in Schools (NCSS) released Charting a Course: Social Studies for the 21st Century (1989), which recommended curriculum be established for each individual grade level. The United States Government provided support for standards in education a year later with the development of Goals 2000 (National Education Goals Panel, 1997). Goals 2000, a collaboration between then president George Bush and governors of the United States, called for standards to voluntarily be

established by individual states (National Education Goals Panel, 1997). These reports established the groundwork for standards-based education (Holum, 1998).

Individual districts and states across the country have responded differently in their acceptance of the standards movement. Whitmire (1999) notes that some districts have chosen what some may consider an extreme direction following E.D. Hirsch, educator, author, and speaker, by establishing standards based upon "The List" compiled in his 1988 book Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know. "The List" is derived of names, places, events, and terms that demonstrate a foundation of knowledge Hirsch believes every American ought to know (Hirsch, 1988). In contrast, many states, including Washington, have chosen to develop their own standards (American Federation of Teachers, 1999). Two results of the shift towards standards reform have significantly impacted education in Washington: the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs), the standards of student learning; and the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), the state's measurement of student knowledge of the EALRs (Commission on Student Learning, 1998). These elements of reform are examined in-depth later in this chapter. But first, a brief outline of NCSS standards in social studies provides a look at what has been established at the national level of social studies education.

National Standards in Social Studies

The NCSS established a national standard for standards-based reform in the social studies (1997). The NCSS standards provide a baseline of national standards to which individual states can compare, or develop their standards (1997). Standards are divided into the ten strands listed below.

The standards are outlined in the following list:

“Social studies teachers should possess the knowledge, capabilities, and dispositions to organize and provide instruction at the appropriate school level for the study of...

- ⇒ Culture and Cultural Diversity
- ⇒ Time, Continuity, and Change
- ⇒ People, Places, and Environments
- ⇒ Individual Development and Identity
- ⇒ Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- ⇒ Power, Authority, and Governance
- ⇒ Production, Distribution, and Consumption of Goods
- ⇒ Science, Technology, and Society
- ⇒ Global Connections
- ⇒ Civic Ideals and Practices” (National Council of Social Studies, 1997).

Elements of these standards can be found in the social studies standards of Washington and other states (State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2000).

The Essential Academic Learning Requirements

Washington state's social studies standards, the social studies EALRs, will be analyzed in significant detail because they are the curriculum guide for teachers of the subject.

In the Commission's Essential Academic Learning Requirements Technical Manual, social studies is broken down into four categories: civics, history, geography, and economics (1998). Under each branch are requirements, components and benchmarks. For each branch the individual learning requirements are very broad. The requirements illustrate what students are to learn. Components offer more specific detail on each learning requirement. Most learning requirements in the social studies section have two or three components. Each component is broken down further into several benchmarks. The benchmarks tell exactly what students must learn to achieve mastery of a single requirement. The benchmarks are aligned with three grade levels: fourth-grade, seventh-grade, and tenth-grade. Those are the three grades in which assessments are currently given for reading, writing, listening, and mathematics (Commission on Student Learning, 1998). Appendix A is a partial copy of page nine from the Essential Academic

Learning Requirements Technical Manual which explains the “requirement”, “component”, and “benchmark system” (Commission on Student Learning, 1998).

In the discipline of history, the Commission (1998) established three EALRs students must be able to comprehend by seventh grade. Directly stated, requirement number one reads, “the student examines and understands major ideas, eras, themes, development, turning points, chronology, and cause-and-effect relationships in U.S., world, and Washington State history” (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p. 85). The broad scope of this requirement allows teachers a great deal of flexibility in what they teach and how it is taught.

Under the first requirement are several components that narrow the historic focus. For example, component 1.1 states students must “understand historical time, chronology and causation” (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p. 85). The other components cover the understanding of historic developments and cultural influences on our regional as well as global society (1998).

History requirements two and three center on comparison/contrast and technology’s influence on societal changes. Comparison and Contrast is only one micro-aspect of Washington State’s reform. Evidence for this comes from comparison and contrast skills required in other disciplines, as well as on

WASL tests (Commission on Student Learning, 1998). A student's ability to compare and contrast, therefore, is an integral part of many EALRs.

The second discipline within social studies is geography. Though not listed, the five themes of geography are present within this section. Those themes are location, place, region, human interaction with the environment, and movement. The themes are combined and overlapped into three requirements. The first requirement, "using geographical tools," encompasses location and region. Place and region are key elements to the second essential academic learning requirement, "understanding places and regions" (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p. 91) And finally, the analysis and interaction between humans and the environment described in the third essential learning requirement, covers human environment interaction as well as movement.

More specifically, by the seventh grade, students must know how to both comprehend and construct maps for their own uses. Map analysis is a critical part of geography, and this is reflected in the benchmarks under several components. Within components, 1.1 and 1.2, for example, you'll find the phrase "...**maps** and globes..." which is a testament to the significance of map skills in the EALRs (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p.93) Remaining components address the need to understand the interactions humans have with their environment as well as how specific environmental features dictate human settlement (Commission on Student Learning, 1998).

This section is then an easy transition for the teacher because the typical seventh grade curriculum covers the five themes of geography around the world (Auburn School District, 1992-93). The Auburn School District social studies curriculum guide addresses human-environment interaction as “describe the impact of development on the global community as it appears to human and natural resources” (1992-93, p. 18).

The third discipline is civics. Civics consists of two areas: developing an appreciation of the U.S. style of government and understanding global interactions. EALRs one, two, and four focus on government and the roles of citizens (Commission on Student Learning, 1998). Requirements one and two focus on the understanding of the United States’ basic beliefs and why the world has organized governments. For example, the first EALR requires “the student understands and can explain the core values and principles of the U.S. democracy as set forth in foundational documents, including the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution” (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p. 97).

Once students have a firm understanding of United States government history and organization, they can proceed to learn about international relationships. The third EALR requires “the student understands the purposes and organization of international relationships and how U.S. foreign policy is made” (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p. 101). So the civics

discipline consists of two areas: developing an appreciation of both the U.S. style of government, and global interactions.

The fourth civics EALR, as mentioned previously, centers on roles of citizens in a democracy (Commission on Student Learning, 1998). In her 1999 State of Education Address, Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Terry Bergeson, spoke about the need for practical civics. Bergeson alluded to the fact that “there are consequences for positions that we take, involving complex values and requirements involved in our highly interdependent society” (Bergeson, 1999, p. 5). Benchmark two under Civics component 4.1 mirrors this idea stating “how responsibility to the common good might conflict with the exercise of the individual rights, for example, ... property rights” (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p. 102). Civics, therefore, is just one essential aspect in the development of an active member of society. “Providing opportunities for students to become responsible citizens . . .” is one goal of the 1993 Education Reform Act (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p. 6).

Unlike other social studies EALRs, economics, the fourth discipline within social studies, is very brief having only one requirement. Relative to others, economics is extremely broad touching on only the most basic of economic principles. Requirement one maintains that “the student understands basic economic concepts and analyzes the effect of economic systems on individuals, groups, and society” (Commission on Student

Learning, 1998, p. 103). Economics is also essential in knowing how to "...measure the local, state, or national economy..." (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p. 106). This knowledge will contribute to creating more "... responsible and effective citizens . . ." which is the overall goal of social studies (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p. 83).

Comparing the Standards

Overall, the EALRs and NCSS standards contain many commonalities. Many general concepts are evident in both documents. Environment, interaction, and culture are all concepts found in both lists of standards, as well as, in social studies curriculums across the state. For example, the Auburn School District curriculum guide for social studies in 1993 contained all of these concepts (Auburn School District, 1993). The similarities between the NCSS standards and the EALRs were confirmed by Holum's survey of social studies teachers in Washington state. Holum presented the statement "NCSS Standards and state Essential Learning Requirements contain many commonalities" (Holum, 1998, p. 63). Using a Likert scale, Holum found "eighty-two percent of the teacher respondents believe the state and local standards share common elements" (Holum, 1998, p. 67).

Despite the overriding similarities in content, there are several significant differences between the EALRs and the national standards; one of which involves the instructional practices of educators.

Currently, Washington state offers only content guidelines; guidelines for instructional methods are not a part of the EALRs . According to the NCSS, a true standard for social studies education involves an educators knowledge and abilities, as well (1997). The NCSS's local arm, the Washington State Council for the Social Studies, provides examples of effective social studies education. Examples include, “. . . integrated curriculum, inquiry oriented teaching, and those practices that foster democratic citizenship.” (Washington State Council for the Social Studies, 2000, p.1) The EALRs offer no such emphasis on pedagogy as part of its social studies standards.

The EALRs deviate from national standards in recognizing map skills as a necessity in geography. The researcher assumes understanding location is crucial in both teaching and learning about geography, history, and economics. Support for this is found in several areas of the geography section of the EALRs technical manual which requires map analysis (1998). Providing a real location to a conflict or issue is important, yet it does not appear within any of the NCSS standards for the seventh grade level.

A final difference is the absence of psychology from the EALRs when compared to the national standards. Information about psychology's role in Washington reform is not available in the technical manual or on the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction's website. Whether it was considered insignificant or just not important relative to other issues at this time is

unknown. In contrast, the state teacher certification requirements do consider psychology as part of social studies (Endorsements on Teaching, 1997). This may be one issue addressed in future meetings concerning reform. Currently, Washington's social studies standards are generally consistent with national standards, but with more of a Pacific Northwest focus.

Washington Assessment of Student Learning

To assess students' knowledge of the EALRs, the other significant result of standards reform in Washington, the WASL, was voluntarily administered to schools during the 1996-97 school year (Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5825, 1999). The WASL is a performance-based assessment required of students in grades four, seven, and ten. Reading, writing, listening, and mathematics are the four content areas mandatorily assessed at this time. Science assessments are forthcoming with pilot tests having already been administered during the 1999-2000 school year and mandatory testing in 2000-01 (Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5825, 1999). WASL tests for several disciplines, including social studies, have yet to be developed. An assessment for social studies was originally scheduled to be available to districts on a volunteer basis by the 2002-2003 school year. Mandatory testing then would have begun during the 2005-2006 year (Commission on Student Learning, 1999). However, the 1999 legislative

session resulted in these dates being pushed back to an unspecified date (Major Changes Made, 1999).

Linked to the WASL is the Certificate of Mastery which “. . . gives evidence that students have obtained the skills, and knowledge they need to live, learn, and work in the 21st century” (Commission on Student Learning, 1997, p.1). In its report Guidelines for the Washington State Certificate of Mastery, the Commission decided the certificate of mastery shall become a graduation requirement for the class of 2006 (1997). Due to the significance of the WASL and similar assessments across the country linked to graduation requirements, these assessments are being referred to as “high stakes testing” (Whitmire, 2000). Thoughts on high stakes testing are addressed in the following section.

Attitudes towards reform

State standards and assessments are not unique to this state as noted previously in this chapter. In fact, many states across the nation are embracing reform models similar to Washington State. For example, Massachusetts and Virginia have in place a system of state standards and assessments (Whitmire, 1999). Nel Noddings, education professor at both Stanford and Columbia Universities, has analyzed the movement towards standards in education, asking, “. . . who will benefit and who will be harmed, whether the foreseeable harms are outweighed by the long-term benefits . . . ”

(Noddings, 1997, p. 186). In her article, Noddings (1997) highlights some pros and cons of standards-based education. Noddings notes, “. . . standards may create the illusion that everyone now has a fair chance and that any resulting differences in outcomes - with regard to jobs or further education - are the fault of those who didn't try hard enough. Some people will be squeezed out in a system governed mainly by standards” (p. 186). Often, according to Noddings, (1997) it is the poor and minorities that suffer the most negative effects. Such was the case in Massachusetts where officials creatively avoided a situation in which 83 percent of Latinos and 80 percent of blacks would not have earned a diploma from high school due to not meeting standards (Whitmire, 1999).

Seattle Post-Intelligencer reporter Frank Shrontz voices several benefits of standards in Washington state. “. . . Standards tell students exactly what they are expected to know and be able to do . . .” (1997, p. 1). In addition, parents and teachers receive solid data on their child's performance and likewise, communities receive feedback on the quality of their local schools (Schrontz, 1997). With standards, Washington's education system now has a way of tracking progress of students, schools, and districts. If the standards are good, then this could be a step in the right direction. The quality of the social studies EALRs, however, is in question. The American Federation of Teachers, which analyzed the EALRs in all disciplines, found the standards to be sub-par. Of particular concern was “. . . too little attention

given to history" (Houtz, 1997, p. 1). Are the social studies requirements appropriate for students' needs? To assess the validity of the social studies requirements, one can look at the NCSS standards as a means of comparison.

How have other states dealt with the issue of high stakes testing? In California, performance tests were used and later eliminated in 1994 because of pressure from community members that questioned the test's reliability (Houtz, 1997). Houtz (1997) notes, Kentucky has been more successful using performance assessments to determine which districts receive bonus funds and which need state intervention. Washington's success or disappointment with WASL tests will be determined in the future. At present, Washington is in an evolutionary state of assessment reform. Chris Piphon from the Education Commission of the States describes the change. "There's a whole curriculum-alignment process that goes on once the test is out. This is all sort of changing the foundation under the house, brick by brick" (Houtz, 1997, p. A1). Along with the change however, has come opposition.

Across the country voices of opposition to standards-based reform and high stakes testing have surfaced, primarily from parents. Whitmire (1999) noted the resistance movement of parents in Virginia and Wisconsin to high stakes testing. In Virginia parents argue against the standards claiming they are "impossibly high standards" (Whitmire, 1999). Wisconsin governor Tommy Thompson's efforts to implement graduation tests were rebuked by

parent complaints to legislators (Whitmire, 1999). In Washington state, 200 parents, politicians and educators rallied in Olympia speaking out against reform (Hopkins, 2000 p. 1). One candidate for OSPI, Arthur Hu voiced his opinion of Washington's system of reform. "Education reform is about destroying education as we know it and replacing it with a new model . . . and that new model just sucks" (Hopkins, 2000). Despite these negative attitudes toward standards-based reform, the past decade has shown the majority of citizens and educators approving the use of standards in education.

Holum (1998) cites the 1991 Gallup Poll's overwhelming support for national curriculum standards. Both Hopkins (2000) and Whitmire (1999) acknowledge the supporters of reform. Phillip Daro of the New Standards Project, describes his feelings towards the assessment aspect of reform. "Performance-based tests are more realistic, more practical, more like people are evaluated in the workplace" (Houtz, 1997). Katie Haycock of the Education Trust, concurs with the "real life" qualities of standards reform. "I don't think we should continue trying to shield kids from blows they will inevitably feel when they get out of high school and can't read or write" (Whitmire, 1999). A Certificate of Mastery is an attempt eliminate Haycock's scenario by providing proof of a student's knowledge and will ensure that graduates of Washington's education system have the foundation for success, not just a good self-esteem brought on by social promotion (Commission on Student Learning, 1997).

Perhaps the most significant endorsement of social studies standards education in Washington state comes from Holum's study (1998). As a part of the study, Holum concluded that a majority of social studies educators teaching grades 4-12 in Washington support the use of standards in education (1998). Some of her conclusions are as follows:

- ⇒ "96% believe standards are necessary
- ⇒ 88% of teacher respondents believe that use of state Essential Learning Requirements would help school districts produce a better product
- ⇒ 70% believe that state Essential Learning Requirements will have a positive affect on student learning" (p. 67-68).

Holum's data was compiled from a questionnaire sent to social studies teachers around the state to which fifty teachers responded (1998). The researcher found Holum's dissertation study to be the most relevant and thorough research available specific to the topic of social studies reform in Washington state.

Summary

In 1993 our state took aggressive steps towards increasing student achievement. States all across the country will observe what is taking place now and in the coming years. House Bill 1209, undoubtedly influenced by standards-based reform reports early in the decade, has had a major impact on the education system in Washington State. With EALRs and the WASLs,

all levels of education have had to make adjustments to meet the challenges presented by standards-based reform. From elementary through college and all points between, reform has forced changes. Primary, middle, and secondary educators have incorporated WASL test preparation into the curriculum. Universities have had to embrace the EALRs and prepare new teachers with the necessary skills for successful reform application. As for social studies educators, the WASL pressure is not yet intense, but the time will come.

Chapter Three

Procedures

After a year of teaching (1998-1999) the researcher realized the significance of WASL tests. As a language arts teacher at Auburn's Rainier Middle School, the researcher feels especially responsible for preparing students for assessments in writing, reading, and listening. Discussions of low test scores from colleagues, administration, and state politicians are heard after the release of each year's results. Do our children know what they are learning? Are the necessary pieces of information being taught to our students? Is the state assessment just too difficult? While searching for answers to these and other questions, it was discovered that low scores in reading, math, and writing were due to several factors.

First, the new form of assessing the knowledge and reasoning of students was something unfamiliar to many students and even teachers. Even before schools piloted the tests, Terry Bergeson gave warning of low scores on the initial assessments (Clayton, 1997). Test questions were vastly different from those seen on previous comparison assessments used by Washington State. Another factor was teacher-unpreparedness. Many teachers, including colleagues, dramatically changed some aspects of their curriculum to better suit student needs on the WASL. For example, at Rainier, language arts teachers met weekly to develop curriculum geared

towards WASL preparation. Witnessing fellow educators change curriculum, particularly with reading and writing, initiated the idea for this project.

The researcher decided that changes to the curriculum must begin immediately in attempt to soften the affect of initial assessments for social studies. Because the EALRs are to be learned by all students in the state of Washington, the researcher decided the requirements shall be the focal point of change in curriculum. Increased mastery of concepts found within the Essential Academic Learning Requirements Technical Manual will better prepare students for state assessments in all disciplines.

The majority of curriculum materials were created by the researcher specifically for this project, and with an EALRs focus. Two social studies colleagues at Rainier Middle School, Ed Bender and Robin Light contributed ideas to chapter four.

Each lesson is preceded by a lesson outline which provides some general information. At the top of each outline is the discipline focus for the lesson. Again, the four disciplines covered are history, geography, civics, and economics. The next item is "lesson topic," which is similar to a subtitle of the lesson. A background of the lesson explains the context in which an individual lesson is taught. Objective(s) and the EALRs are listed as well. The outline concludes with a list of materials necessary and any special instructions for the lesson.

In general, the creation of an assignment began with the analysis of a particular EALR and how it could be taught to students. Typically there is one assignment or project per EALR. One or two EALRs have multiple assignments. In most cases, the objective for a lesson is taken almost directly from either a benchmark or component. The next task was to develop an idea that would both teach the concept as well as fall within the parameters of a somewhat typical seventh-grade social studies curriculum. For this reason, a unit, or cluster of units, was not composed so as to avoid limiting potential ideas. Lack of a unit's restriction enabled the creation of lessons that encompass a variety of regions worldwide.

Chapter Four

Introduction

Chapter four of this project can be used as a resource to begin filling curriculum gaps in respect to the EALRs. The following samples are a variety of projects and assignments that meet several seventh-grade state requirements for each discipline within social studies. The samples will be organized according to discipline. For example, the history curriculum will be followed by four geography sample lessons. Civics and economics will round out the chapter respectively.

History

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies / Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Developing a timeline of significant events on the African continent

Background:

This lesson is a good introduction to the significant events in the African continent's history. More importantly, this would teach students to carefully create an accurate timeline in which dates are spaced appropriately on a line.

Objective:

To recognize the most significant historical information from reference materials

To create an accurately proportioned timeline with dates

Essential Learning:

EALR 1, Component 1.1

Understand historical time, chronology, and causation

Materials:

Outside sources of research information will be needed. Books on particular technology or products. Access to reference materials

Special Instructions:

1. Go over directions with students.
2. Do a made-up example for the class.

Africa History Timeline

Directions:

Create a timeline of African history using the handout. You will need to have 20 dates listed on the timeline. Each date will need a descriptive phrase about the event. Choose the most significant, or important events. Write very neatly and alternate where you write on the timeline. For example, write one phrase below the line and the next above the line.

Making the Line:

You must accurately place the dates and descriptions on the timeline. The best way to do this would be to use a ruler and place the dates for every 100 years on the line first. (see example below) Making a date outline first will ensure that your line is spaced appropriately. Use a ruler to help figure out equal distances between each 100 year line.

Begin by making a line and finding the exact middle. Mark that 1000A.D. The left end will be 0, and the right 2000A.D. Use the ruler for accuracy.



Next, find the middle point between 0 and 1000. Mark this as 500A.D. Do the same between 1000 and 2000 except mark it as 1500A.D. Use the ruler for accuracy.



Finally, fill in the remaining century marks. Use the ruler for accuracy.



A few examples. Notice the alternating high/low placements on the line.

(1300's)
Great Zimbabwe
flourishes



(1200's)
East Coast trading
cities prosper



History

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies / Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Organizing notes for a research paper/report

Background:

This lesson is one that is good for use when taking notes for a report on Africa. Organizing notes during any research process is very important and that is the purpose of this lesson. The format can be modified to meet most note-taking needs.

Objective:

To demonstrate the ability to take notes relevant to the topic
To distinguish between more and less significant data

Essential Learning:

EALR 2, Component 2.2, Benchmark 2.
Organize and record information

Materials:

Library reference materials as well as informational books on various African nations and peoples. Access to World Wide Web would be beneficial as well.

Special Instructions:

1. Go over directions with students.
2. Prepare an example of notes for student viewing.
3. Review general note-taking skills.

Researching the Africa Report

Directions:

Throughout your school career you will be researching for reports and other information. Learning how to document your data is a necessary step along the way. Choosing significant information and organizing it is a very important part of the research process. Your task is to record your information on the organizer below. As you look through reference books, newspaper articles and magazines, search for the notes that relate to your topic. Place notes in the most applicable (appropriate) category. Well organized notes will help make it easier on you when it is time to write an outline or rough draft.

Using the organizer: List all of your notes in the "general" column. When you've completed all note-taking then you will take the five best notes, those five that are most relevant to your topic, and list them in the "best five" column. The "best five" column will become the basis for you paragraphs for each section of the report.

Categories:

General Notes	5 Best Notes
physical geography	

Culture-

History-

Other-

History

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies / Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Understanding technology's affect on society

Background:

Students often have a difficult time comprehending how things were done before all of our technological advancements. This lesson could be used early in the year during introduction of social studies or when comparing and contrasting developed and under-developed nations.

Objective:

To identify origins of a product invented within the last 150 years

To recognize several changes resulting from the product

Essential Learning:

EALR 3

The student understands the origin and impact of ideas and technological developments on history and social change.

Materials:

Attached handout of African history

Special Instructions:

1. Go over directions with students.
2. Do an example on the board.

Product Research

Affects of technology on society

Every year the world changes as new technology is developed. These changes are sometimes subtle and sometimes dramatic. Think back to your earliest days, what major changes have occurred in your lifetime?

You will be choosing a major product of the last 150 years and researching it. You will have two days in the school library to find and collect data. When you're finished you should've answered all questions and be prepared for oral questioning. Everything being turned in must be typed.

Define **obsolete** _____

AREAS OF RESEARCH: Write a paragraph on each of the following.

- ◆ Brief history of the product including when it was invented and by whom
- ◆ Identify two products that are now obsolete as a result of your product.
- ◆ Description of the product—What is it?
- ◆ Two new industries or products that your product lead to
(example—the automobile led to tire companies and car stereo products)

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED WHEN THE RESEARCH IS COMPLETE:

1. How does this product affect you?
2. Describe several ways this product/idea has affected society.
3. Would society be better with or without this product?
4. In your opinion, what will be the next invention to replace your product?

GEOGRAPHY

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies/ Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Graphing climates and precipitation of Europe

Background:

This can be used as part of an introduction to Europe

Objective:

Demonstrate ability to create accurate, colored bar and pie graphs using information provided from the text

Essential Learning:

Geography EALR: 1, Component 1.1, Benchmark 2;
Use data and a variety of symbols to create thematic maps and graphs...

Materials:

Geography Text, colored pencils, 2 pieces unlined white paper, ruler, compass

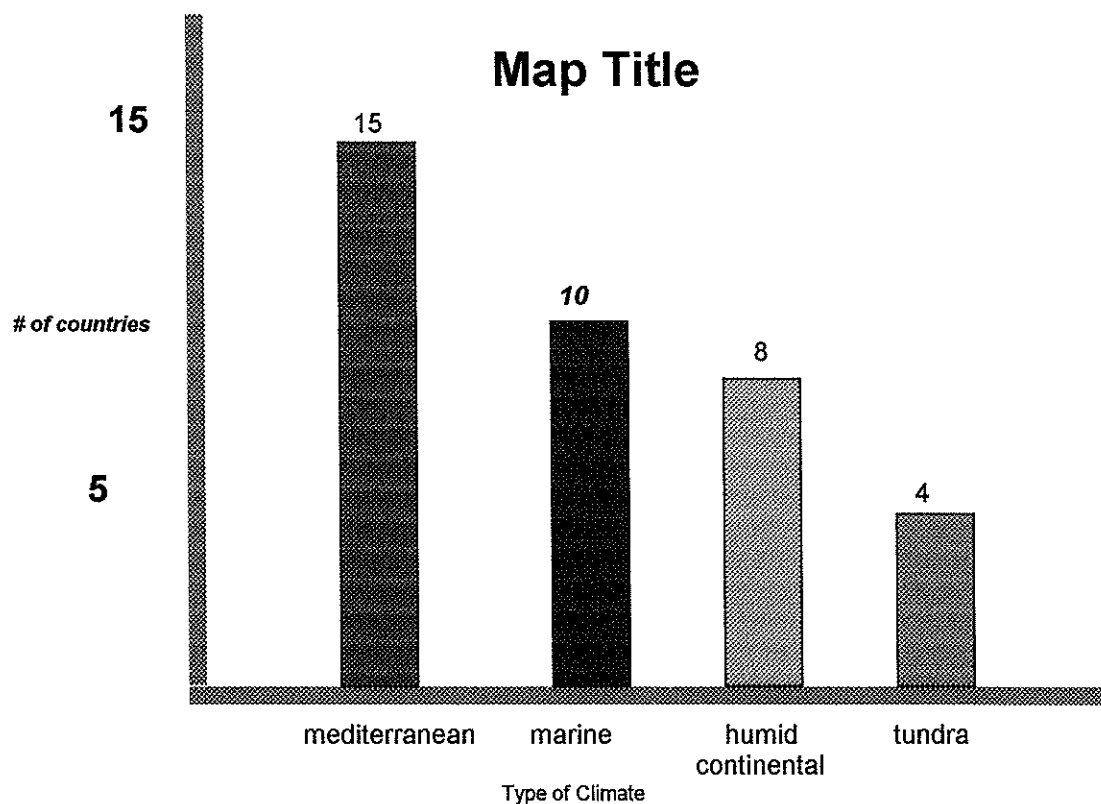
Instructional Sequence:

1. Go over directions with students.
2. Demonstrate how to identify climate zones on the map and count the number of countries with at least a partial desert climate.
3. Have students total the countries with respective climates before constructing graphs.
4. Next, on the board draw an example of both a bar and pie graph with labels.
5. Do the first graph item with the class.
6. Assist and spot check student work.

Graphing Europe's Climate And Precipitation

Directions:

Using the map of Europe's climate you will identify the number of countries with each particular climate. The same will be done for precipitation. For example, if there are 15 countries with a mediterranean, 10 marine, 8 humid continental, and 4 tundra, then your graph will look similar to the one below.



You must have the following:

- Graph title- clearly visible at the top of the graph
- Label on the vertical axis- (# of countries)
- Label on the horizontal axis- (type of climate)
- Bar graph-colored
- Number on each bar
- Accuracy

GEOGRAPHY

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies/ Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Identifying and comparing characteristics of the Pacific Rim and Pacific Northwest

Background:

This lesson would assist in teaching about both regions, their characteristics, and connection to one another

Objective:

Identify ten characteristics of each region
To demonstrate his/her knowledge of the Pacific Northwest as a region within the Pacific Rim.

Essential Learning:

EALR 2, component 2.3:
Identify the characteristics that define the PNW and Pacific Rim as regions

Materials:

Information on both regions

Instructional Sequence:

1. Go over directions with students.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST / PACIFIC RIM

(WHY ARE THEY REGIONS?)

DIRECTIONS:

Answer all of the following questions correctly. You will need to identify 10 characteristics of the Pacific Rim. Basically, ten things that describe the Pacific Rim. The same will be done for the Pacific Northwest. Ten characteristics that describe the Pacific Northwest.

Pacific Rim

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Pacific Northwest

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Do you agree with the statement: "The Pacific Northwest is part of the Pacific Rim." Explain in a paragraph why you agree or disagree. Write your answer on the back of this paper.

GEOGRAPHY

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies/ Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Human interaction with the environment

Background:

This lesson can be used early in the school year when introducing social studies and explaining the relevance of the course.

Objective:

To recognize how each individual needs and relies on the environment

Essential Learning:

EALR 3, Component 3.1, Benchmark 2:
Analyze consequences of use, and possible alternatives
the different ways people use the environment

Materials:

None

Special Instructions:

1. Go over directions with students.

How Do You Use Our Environment?

Everyone in society uses and relies on the environment for survival—some more directly than others. For example, farmers need good weather conditions to grow strong, healthy vegetables. An individual that purchases vegetables at the supermarket relies much more indirectly on the weather. The supermarket consumer, or vegetable buyer, needs to eat the foods that are grown in the proper weather conditions.

Your task will be to develop a list of ways in which you are directly and indirectly dependent upon the environment. Each column below must be completed. We will make a class list once everyone has completed the assignment.

-link to the environment-

Directly	Indirectly
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.
6.	6.
7.	7.
8.	8.

Do you think people rely more on the environment now or 100 years ago? Explain.

Civics

project

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies / Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Comparing nations of Asia using technology

Background:

This is a lesson that would be used towards the end of a unit on Asia. It is useful in helping students identify some reasons why countries are or are not successful.

Objective:

To identify the characteristics of a developed country with a high standard of living
To examine which types of governments create high standards of living for its citizens

Essential Learning:

EALR 2, Component 2.3
Compare and contrast democracies with other forms of government

Materials:

World almanac, information on different governments,
Computers with the Powerpoint program

Special Instructions:

1. Read directions carefully.
2. Put students in groups of three.
3. Assign two countries per group, preferably one poor and one wealthy nation.
4. Students will need some previous knowledge of Powerpoint program.
5. Allow one day for creating practice slides.

Asian Powerpoint Presentation

Your group will compare the economic and resulting social conditions of two Asian countries. Groups will offer a five minute powerpoint presentation will be explained to the class. Create slides that provide explanations and comparisons of different terms and statistics. You will draw conclusions about the relationships between a nations economic status, education and societal welfare. You will need to answer several questions about your findings. Following are the things you must have in your presentation to achieve a passing grade:

- Comparison of at least five demographic terms
- At least one graph
- Each slide needs a transition effect with sound
- Clip art and/or photos that relate to content are required for every slide
- Colorful pages, variety of colors/shades
- 6-9 slides, no more than 9!!
- Rehearse your oral presentation, use note-cards

** These are minimum requirements, to achieve an "A" you must exceed these standards.

Questions to answer (one answer per group). Write answer on evaluation sheet.

1. What are some characteristics you would expect in a country with low rates of literacy? What about high literacy rates?
2. How does the government of a country influence economic success? What types of governments create better economies
3. How much emphasis is put on education in your country? How has this affected literacy rates?
4. What are the life expectancies and growth rates in your countries? How are these indicators of a country's status.

Civics

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies / Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Learning about the Declaration of Independence

Background:

This is a brief introductory lesson that would accompany the Constitution lesson. This lesson would be taught during a unit on the United States government. Unlike an 8th grade U.S. History course, the 7th grade will only really introduce the documents, not study them for an extended time period.

Objective:

To comprehend why the document was written
To identify several areas of injustice by the King of England

Essential Learning:

EALR 1, Component 1.1
Understand and interpret the major ideas of foundational documents

Materials:

Copy of Declaration of Independence

Special Instructions:

1. Go over directions with students.

Discovering the Declaration

Learning about the Declaration of Independence (1776)

The Declaration of Independence in 1776 was a document that outlined why the 13 Colonies wanted to be independent from Great Britain. Thomas Jefferson, the main author, and others leaders like John Adams and John Hancock decided to write a letter to the King of England explaining some of the problems colonists had with the King. This declaration is an important part of our country's history because it basically said to the King, you're unfair, and we're starting our own country. Read the document carefully and look for examples of how the colonists were treated unfairly.

DIRECTIONS:

Using your a copy of the Declaration of Independence, correctly answer the following questions. You'll fill in the blanks where appropriate and write complete sentence answers for the rest.

1. On _____ 1776, the Declaration was approved by the Continental Congress.
2. Why was the Declaration written?
3. _____ wrote most of the Declaration.
4. List the three unalienable rights. _____

 Add two more rights that you believe should've been included in the Declaration.

5. Identify and list 3 complaints against the King of England. _____

6. Which is the most significant violation? Why? _____

7. What is the "natural law?"

8. According to the Declaration, what can people do if the natural law is violated by a government? _____

9. What are some things that you'd consider a violation of natural law?

10. In a small paragraph, explain what you've learned about the Declaration of Independence. _____

11. What are two questions you still have about the Declaration?

CIVICS

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies / Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Three branches of the United States Government

Background:

This lesson could be used when during a unit on U.S. government or in comparing our system to that of another nation.

Objective:

To understand and apply the information presented in Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the U.S. Constitution

Essential Learning:

EALR 2, Component 2.1, Benchmark 2:
Describe the structure of the U.S. government
(legislative, executive, and judicial...)

Materials:

Copy or original of Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the U.S. Constitution

Special Instructions:

1. Go over directions with students.

Three Branches of Government

The United States Constitution established three branches of government. Looking at the Constitution, you will answer questions for each branch: the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial. For each section answer all of the questions correctly.

Article 1 The Legislative Branch established our Congress which is composed of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Fill in the blank provided by looking at the title of section.

1. Section 1-- A Two-House Legislature
2. Section 2-- _____
3. Section 3-- _____
4. Section 4-- _____
5. Section 5-- _____
6. Section 6-- _____
7. Section 7-- _____
8. Section 8-- _____
9. Section 9-- _____
10. Section 10-- _____

Article 1 of the Constitution is important because

Article 2 of the Constitution established the Executive Branch or the offices of the President and Vice-President.

Fill in the blank provided by looking at the title of section.

Section 1 President and Vice-President

Clause 1 _____

Clause 2 _____

Clause 3. _____

Clause 4 _____

Clause 5. _____

Section 2 _____

Section 3 _____

Section 4 _____

The Executive Branch is important because

Article 2 of the Constitution established the Judicial Branch ⁵⁶
which is our federal court system.

Section 1

Section 2

Clause 1

Clause 2

Clause 3

Section 3

Treason

Clause 1

Clause 2

Vocabulary:

a) Treason _____

b) Jurisdiction _____

c) Appellate Court _____

CIVICS

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies / Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Understanding several major types of government systems used throughout the world

Background:

This lesson would provide an introduction to the great variety of government systems that can be found around the globe.

Objective:

To develop knowledge of three characteristics of each government type represented on the worksheet
To recognize similarities and differences between democracies and other governments

Essential Learning:

EALR 2, Component 2.1,
Compare and contrast democracies with other forms of government

Materials:

Political systems worksheet, or similar information

Special Instructions:

1. Go over directions with students.

WORLD GOVERNMENTS

Directions:

Using the worksheet on political systems, you provide answers to the questions. Make sure that you browse the entire political systems worksheet before answering any questions. If you have any questions quietly ask a neighbor for assistance. All answers can be found on the worksheet. Be sure to write neatly.

Vocabulary

1. alliance- _____

2. apartheid- _____

3. multiparty elections- _____

4. privatization- _____

5. Prime Minister- _____

6. cabinet- _____

Fill in the blanks with words or notes for each style of government. The notes should explain each government.

Multiparty Democracy

1. A multiparty democracy allows voters to _____ which candidate and party they would like in office.

2. A constitutional monarchy is

_____.

3. The _____ is an example of a presidential republic in which the president is head of _____ and

_____.

4. Federal republic's such as Germany give each individual

or county, a great deal of power.

5. True/False-- ____ The Queen of England runs the government.

One-Party State

1. Only one political _____ is allowed in a one-party state.

2. Explain how a leader is chosen in a one-party state. _____

_____.

3. Theocracies are led by _____ leaders, such as the Pope.

4. _____ is an example of a one-party state.

5. _____ is an example of a one-party state.

6. True/False- ____ Some African countries are no longer one-party.

Military Government

1. Military governments typically rise occur after a _____, or overthrowing of the government.

2. _____ and _____ are abolished.

3. What happens to political parties? _____

4. True/False- _____ Military governments are often in poor nations.

Dictatorships

1. _____ people usually hold most of the power in a dictatorship.

2. How do dictators usually come into office? _____

3. True/False- _____ Dictators are often brutal in running a country.

Absolute Monarchy

1. An absolute monarchy is similar to a dictatorship in that _____ person has the majority of power.

2. In an absolute monarchy, only members of the _____ may be chosen as king or queen.

3. True/False- _____ Some monarchs share power with lower cabinets.

CIVICS

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies / Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

United States foreign involvement in Asia, particularly wars after 1945

Background:

This lesson could be used when studying U.S. foreign policy or for Asian studies. One could also look at the results of these issues and compare the different paths each country has taken since their war.

Objective:

To understand why the U.S. government fights abroad.
To recognize the important impact these conflicts can have on our global society

Essential Learning:

EALR 3, Component 3.1,
Understand how the world is organized politically and how nations interact

Materials:

Textbook or other source containing general information on the Korean, Vietnam, and Gulf Wars.

Special Instructions:

1. Go over directions with students.
2. Work through the first example with them to assure accuracy.

U.S. in Asia 1950-1990

Fill in the sections with information from the book. Use the index to find on what page each item is discussed. Be sure and answer the follow-up questions at the end of this page.

Korea

<i>Who</i>	<i>What</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Why</i>	<i>How</i> <small>(resolved)</small>

Vietnam

<i>Who</i>	<i>What</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Why</i>	<i>How</i> <small>(resolved)</small>

Gulf War

<i>Who</i>	<i>What</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>Why</i>	<i>How</i> <small>(resolved)</small>

Give 3 reasons why the U.S. would be involved in these countries? Find the answers, don't guess.

CIVICS

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies / Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Debating a classmate on an environmental or social issue that is relative to the Pacific Northwest

Background:

This is fun lesson for students and teachers. Debating an issue is great for seventh-grade block teacher because the skills of debate can be taught in language arts and used in geography. Typically, I have used the lesson towards the end of the year when students choose an issue discussed during the year.

Objective:

To demonstrate skills in logical reasoning on given issues
To recognize the important of discussing and solving important issues
To show a similarity between classroom debate and informed citizens

Essential Learning:

EALR 4, Component 4.2,
Identify and **DEMONSTRATE** rights of U.S. citizenship

Materials:

Outside sources of research information will be needed

Special Instructions:

1. Be very clear on appropriate behavior and conduct. This project will take at least a week to complete. Be sure students choose a topic that has information.

Debate A Classmate

Instructions:

As a citizen of the United States of America when you reach age 18 you will be allowed to vote. Voting enables you to determine who you want making major decisions. Voting also gives you a choice in determining taxes, laws, policies, and government decisions. Your eventual right to vote was given in the Constitution, and because voting is so important, every voter should be able to make an informed decision on the ballot.

There are several things to remember for your debate

- Organize your notes and materials.
- Dress nicely and maintain good posture and poise.
- Speak clearly and at the appropriate pace.
- Try and make the audience agree with your opinion.
- Be knowledgeable about both sides of the issue so that you will give a clear rebuttal.

Rules for the debate:

- 7-10 minutes per debate.
- Each person gets 2 minutes for an opening statement.
- Each individual will give a 30 second closing argument
- You must wait for the other person to stop talking before you give a rebuttal.
- No yelling, rude behavior, etc...
- No personal comments/ranks on the other person.

Debate grade will be determined by:

Opening statement

appropriate length _____/3
position statement _____/3

Rebuttal

arguments prepared _____/3
intelligent rebuttals _____/3
opposite viewpoint
awareness _____/3
closing argument _____/3

Overall

good voice _____/3
courteous _____/3
well prepared _____/3
organized _____/3

Economics

Subject/Grade:

Social Studies / Seventh-Grade

Lesson Topic:

Researching contemporary and future professions

Background:

This lesson is good to use when discussing regions or countries with strong economies and high standards of living. A key element to this particular lesson is having students realizing the connection between strong economies and what professions exist in those areas.

Objective:

To identify several crucial details about jobs such as education, wages, and future demand
To recognize the relationship between prosperous regions and their job opportunities
To gain a more insightful understanding of two careers

Essential Learning:

EALR 1, Component 1.2
Observe major forms of business and related careers

Materials:

Source with general economic terms and examples of them

Special Instructions:

1. Go over directions with students.
2. Do a made-up example for the class.

SEARCHING FOR A CAREER

You will need to research a career and gather the following information. You will choose your own career from the books provided in the library. Once you've picked your career, you will fill out this page. Record your findings on a piece of notebook paper.

- **One paragraph** description of the job (on the back of the paper) who, what, ect....
- What are the education requirements (H.S. diploma, college, masters degree?)
- How much experience is needed
- What are the physical demands of the job/if any
- What are the wages
- Would the job be in urban or rural areas
- What is the future demands for this job

Is this a job you would enjoy? Why or why not? (answer below) 1 paragraph

Could you support your family with this job?

Chapter Five

Summary

The lessons in the project provide at least one activity for most continents covered in a typical seventh-grade social studies classroom. None of the activities require one single social studies text because the lessons and projects were specifically designed to have a broad appeal. In addition, many activities require the use of outside sources of information that most schools have at their disposal. One goal was to avoid alienating teachers in lower socio-economic areas. This was accomplished by maintaining a somewhat generic format to lessons.

The lessons and projects covered a variety of learning styles in attempt to generate successful opportunities for all students. For example, children with exceptional fine-motor skills can excel at the chance to create a detailed and aesthetically-pleasing timeline. Those who learn through more concrete activities benefit from the "Organizing Notes for a Research Paper" assignment. Likewise, technologically advanced youngsters can use their ability to create colorful graphs using computer programs.

A benefit of the "Asian Powerpoint" lesson is the opportunity for peer tutoring and discovery. Knowledgeable students teach those individuals who are unfamiliar with the program. Other students enjoy the satisfaction of discovering fascinating intricacies of the software. In developing diverse

lessons and projects, students can both hone strengths, as well as improve weak areas with the help of peers and teachers.

Conclusion

The purpose of the project was to develop social studies lessons that align with the Washington State social studies EALRs for seventh-grade. Due to forthcoming assessments in social studies and the lack of aligned curriculum resources available at this time, this project was necessary to begin the shift to alignment with state standards. In the State of Education Address, Bergeson (1999) alluded to the continued perseverance and dedication of Washington's transformation. The review of literature provided insight into standards-based reform and attitudes surrounding the issue. The study by Holum (1998) concluded that an overwhelming majority of social studies teachers in Washington state not only support standards-based education, but also endorse the EALRs as benefiting students as learners.

The lessons in this project provide quality examples to social studies educators working on reform in the classroom. The lessons have contributed to an area desperately lacking in social studies, aligned curriculum. The reason for this lack of curriculum development is likely the fact that social studies assessments do not exist at this time. It is hoped that educators will not follow mathematics and writing in resorting to reactive measures to

counter dismal scores on the WASL. Making curriculum modifications now will ease the initial shock of state assessments.

Recommendations:

The researcher recommends preparation for state assessments in social studies begin immediately. Results from the first several WASL test in mathematics and writing have shown that Washington state's students have not received sufficient preparation for success on the assessment. Much of this may be attributed to the format and style of the WASL which require the explanation and demonstration of one's abilities rather than simply bubbling in an answer. As students adjust to the format and teachers begin to align their curriculum more closely to the EALRs, scores will rise as they have across the state between 1998 and 1999. The scoring trends of the state can be found under *Education Profile* (1999) on the OSPI website. Some educators, have had to look more closely at teaching the EALRs since seeing the statewide WASL results. Teachers need to reference the EALRs technical manual more and more in order to help students improve future scores. Presently, educators are "digging out of a hole" so to speak to get the students on track with WASL. To avoid playing "catch-up" in social studies educators must begin making proactive rather than reactive changes. Have your curriculum ready for the WASL. Preparing ahead of time is not the only changes teachers have to make.

This recommendation is directed primarily at veteran teachers, those who have taught essentially the same curriculum for the past fifteen or more years. So much has changed in the world and educators should *attempt* to keep pace. If a classroom teacher takes a proactive stance and readies the curriculum for social studies assessments, then space must be made available. Essentially, some old classic lessons that no longer carry relevance to either the EALRs or the WASLs, need to be set aside to make room for information contemporary students need. Clean out the files. In doing so, teachers can help students receive the knowledge they need to meet graduation requirements. After all, “the first job of schools is to ensure students more fully master these basic skills as the tools to success in later learning, life and work” (Commission on Student Learning, 1998, p. 1). A teacher’s job, then, is to arm those students with the skills necessary for success.

The next recommendation is two-fold. It begins with having a general understanding of our state’s reform and where it is going in the future. A simple way to gain knowledge on reform is by visiting the OSPI’s website at <http://www.K12.wa.us/reform>. There is enough detail on this website to inform educators on a variety of reform topics, from the Certificate of Mastery to House Bill 1209. Educators do not need to know everything, but some appreciation may redirect their teaching towards a more reform-minded focus.

The second aspect of this recommendation is to participate in workshops focusing on developing and teaching standards-based curriculum. Most colleges and universities in our state offer classes on this topic. Use the internet to search catalogs of a college or university near you offering classes best suiting curriculum needs. Take the class and see if it makes a difference in your approach to teaching.

For a peek at the future of social studies reform in Washington State, take a close look at what has happened in other subject areas. Preparing a reformed social studies curriculum now benefits teachers and, most importantly, the students. So look through the Essential Academic Learning Requirements Technical Manual and find what requirements you are already teaching and, more importantly, identify the gaps. Talk with colleagues in your building and see if they have some ideas that will help you develop a more complete curriculum.



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Appendix A

How to Read the Technical Manual

(taken from page 9 of the technical manual)

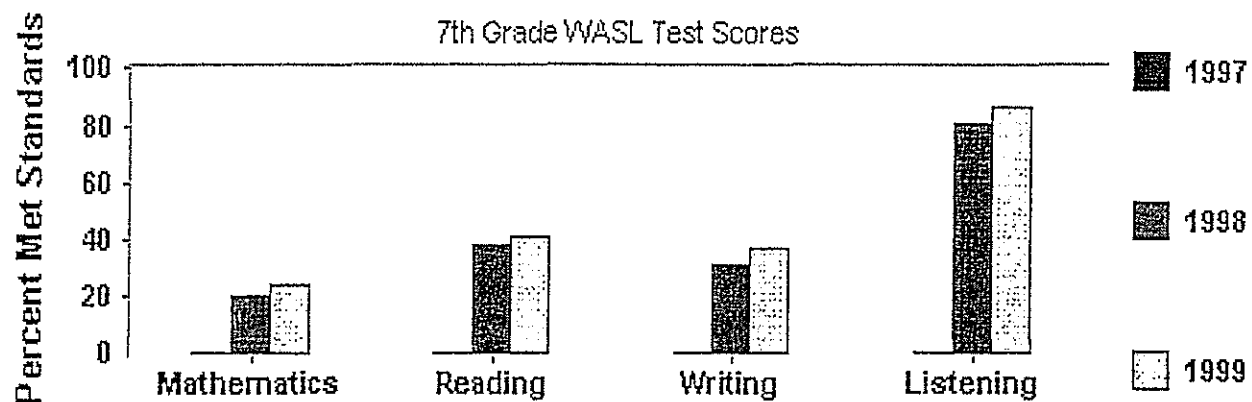
1. The student understands and uses different skills and strategies to read.

To meet this standard, the student will:

Components	Benchmark1-Grade4	Benchmark2-Grade7	Benchmark3-Grade10
1.1 use word recognition and word meaning skills	apply phonetic principles to read including sounding out, whole words, and initial letters	apply phonetic principles to read including sounding out, whole words, and initial letters	apply phonetic principles to read including sounding out, whole words, and initial letters
	use language structure to understand reading materials including prefixes, suffixes, and contractions	use language structure to understand reading materials including prefixes, suffixes, and contractions	use language structure to understand reading materials including prefixes, suffixes, and contractions
1.2 use features of non-fiction text and computer software	locate and use text organizers (title, headings, table of contents, index, captions, numbering, glossaries, etc.)	use organizational features of printed text (title, headings, table of contents, index, captions, numbering, glossaries, appendices etc.)	use complex organizational features of printed text (title, headings, table of contents, index, captions, appendices, prefaces, endnotes etc.)
	recognize organizational features of electronic information such as pull-down menus, key word searches, icons, etc.)	use organization features of electronic information (microfiche headings, and numbering, cd-rom, internet, etc.)	use organization features of electronic information (electronic bulletin boards, and databases, e-mail, etc.)

WASL Scoring Trend (Statewide Averages)

7th Grade	1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999
Mathematics		20.1	24.2
Reading		38.4	40.8
Writing		31.3	37.0
Listening		80.2	86.9



(OSPI, 2000)