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The Impacts of Integrated Teaching in the Elementary Classroom

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THE IMPACTS OF INTEGRATED TEACHING IN THE ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM

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RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What can be done to allow for ample instruction time for all subject areas?
- What subjects can I teach in an integrated manner in order to create a well rounded curriculum?

LITERATURE

- Causes students to “produce or construct knowledge rather than simply act as consumers of knowledge” (Beane & Brodhagen, 2002)
- Often passed over because of the extra work it requires in planning lessons (Bryant, 2005)
- The value of integrated lessons centers on students being able to understand the concepts being taught as well as recognize their connections (Stump, et. al.2009)
- Allows non-core subjects , such as P.E. a place of value in the classroom (Solomon and Murata 2008)
- No irrefutable conclusions citing the positive or negative effects of integration on student achievement

METHODOLOGY

- Taught 25 4th grade students and 25 kindergarten students
- Diverse Classroom Atmosphere
- Planned and taught lessons employing integrated curriculum (Math, Social Studies, Language Arts)
- Developed an understanding of what my students learn on a daily basis and how I teach integrated lessons
- Collected students’ work from each lesson and then used them to analyze any evidence of impact on students’ understanding after I had taught multiple integrated lessons
- Engaged students in classroom conversations about their understandings of the different subject areas and their connection to one another.

DATA

- Math & Language Arts (Number Recognition)
 - Kindergarten, October 2009
 - An exploratory lesson designed to increase students’ ability to recognize numbers 1-10 in three forms: written, numeric, and visual representation.
- Math, Art, & Social Studies (Counting)
 - Kindergarten, November, 2009
 - A lesson on counting using Thanksgiving as a theme and context for counting problems.
- Social Studies, Art, & Language Arts (Midwest)
 - 4th Grade, February 2010
 - A lesson on the Midwest taught through various literature resources as well as maps ending with a final visual arts project.
- Language Arts & Social Studies (Writing)
 - 4th Grade, March 2010
 - A lesson on writing persuasive essays and introductory paragraphs taught through researching states in the Midwest in various sources.

FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

- It is important to treat both subjects being integrated with equal significance.
- Integrating non-testable areas such as the arts with core subjects helps to maintain their value in the classroom.
- Subjects such as art and math, and social studies and the language arts have natural connections that can be built upon.
- Emphasizing connections to students helps in retention.
- Bolster student interest and formal reasoning skills, as well as encourage creativity and critical thinking.
- Impact depends on specific classroom makeup regarding the students.