Integrated curriculum in the elementary classroom

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Integrated curriculum in the elementary classroom

Abstract
Integrated curriculum can be broadly defined as using a theme to connect standards and objectives from multiple subject areas in a meaningful way to create relevant, student-centered learning tasks that promote social growth and deep comprehension. This type of instruction can promote higher-order thinking skills, cooperative learning, motivate students to engage in their own learning, and many other "intangibles".

The purpose of this project was to create an integrated unit for a first-grade classroom. The outcome will be an actual unit that can be used as a guide for teachers. However, another purpose of the project was to grasp the concept of how to create an integrated unit to further develop more integrated units in the future.

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INTEGRATED CURRICULUM IN THE ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM

A Graduate Project
 Submitted to the Division of Literacy
 Department of Curriculum and Instruction
 In Partial Fulfillment
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 Masters of Arts in Education
 UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Integrated curriculum can be broadly defined as using a theme to connect standards and objectives from multiple subject areas in a meaningful way to create relevant, student-centered learning tasks that promote social growth and deep comprehension (Morris, 2003; Shanahan, Robinson & Schneider, 1995; Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009; Vars, 2001). This type of instruction can promote higher-order thinking skills, cooperative learning, motivate students to engage in their own learning, and many other “intangibles” (Vars, 2001, p. 9).

Currently, the importance placed on high-stakes testing promotes teaching in silos in order to cover the content of each specific subject area (Vars, 2001). Teaching in silos simply refers to teaching each subject separate from the other subject areas, with no connections between subject areas. Whereas integrated curriculum “allows students to make connections among various subjects, while also helping to solve the teacher’s dilemma of having so much to accomplish in a limited time” (Morris, 2003, p. 165). Students need to be able to transfer their knowledge into other useful situations, and not simply regurgitate information that is often required in silo teaching. In order for students to engage in this type of transfer, the students need to be motivated (Shuman, 1975).

Shuman’s (1975) work on motivation and its effects on students’ reading recognized the broader effects motivation, and the lack thereof, can have on students.

If any one factor limits the horizons of young people, it is non-involvement in the learning process. Apathy is a major ill in many of our schools; from this apathy all sorts of problems – reading problems, discipline problems, writing problems, attendance problems, drug problems, comprehension problems – spring. p. 221
This statement still rings true today. Peck (2010) found that the use of integrated curriculum seemed to include motivation as another important aspect of using integrated curriculum to foster student connections and involvement.

**Rationale for Choosing Topic**

The year prior to beginning this project, I moved from a school that embraced thematic and integrated approaches to teaching, to a school that promoted the use of basal series to teach subjects in isolation. For me, as the teacher, I felt that what I was teaching was very disconnected from one content area to another, and it made transitioning throughout the day a challenge. I then began to believe that if I was struggling with making connections, my students may have also been struggling to make connections. This lead me to dig deeper into integrated curriculum and the effects of integration on students’ learning. My findings from the literature on integrate curriculum provoked me to put my efforts into creating integrated units for my students.

**Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project was to create an integrated unit for a first-grade classroom. The outcome will be an actual unit that can be used as a guide for teachers. However, another purpose of the project was to grasp the concept of how to create an integrated unit to further develop more integrated units in the future.

The target of this particular unit will be used to serve three first-grade teachers at a moderate sized public school in the Midwest. The school serves 370 students and has three sections at each grade level from preschool through fifth grade. Ninety-six percent of the population qualifies for free and reduced lunch.
The three teachers in grade one vary dramatically in teaching experience—one teacher is a veteran teacher of 33 years, another is a first year teacher, and I am a 4th year teacher. Two of the teachers have limited experience in teaching integrated curriculum, and appear to be more comfortable with following the basal series daily for each separate content area—reading, writing, math, social studies, and science. To address the concerns and needs of less experienced teachers in the area of classroom integration of content, this unit is designed to be a cohesive, comprehensive and manageable unit for teachers with little experience with integrated curriculum.

The design of this project is intended to be used as a tool to guide teachers towards integrated curriculum, and to develop an awareness of what the first stages of integrated curriculum could look like. Therefore, the unit begins with a simplistic, or correlated approach (Vars; 1991; Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009) where the content areas all discuss the same topic of communities. As the weeks progress, the unit moves more towards a moderate or integrated approach (Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009). This approach uses literacy to teach about the content areas. The unit begins by using literacy to teach about one content area, social studies. The project progresses to using literacy to teach about two content areas, social studies and science, and ends with integrating math skills into the unit as well. While the project focuses predominantly on integrating curriculum content, it also includes 21st century skills throughout the entire unit.
CHAPTER II
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to explain my methodology for locating and selecting sources for my literature review, as well as the process that was used to create the unit for the project.

Methods for Locating and Selecting Sources

Most sources found for the literature review were found through an electronic database through the University of Northern Iowa’s library. The following index sources were searched: Academic Search Elite (EBSCO), Wilson Educational Full Text, ERIC (EBSCO), and UNISTAR. The following keywords were used within the searches: integrated curriculum, reading motivation, inquiry-based curriculum, multicultural literacy, elementary, authentic tasks, Vars, Shuman, Aiken, Beane, integrated unit development, mentor texts, thematic teaching, benefits of integrated curriculum, concerns of integrated curriculum, and types of integrated curriculum. The articles selected needed to be peer reviewed, and were found from reputable educational journals, books, or authors. Other sources of information were found from books on the given topics within the literature review.

Strategic Literacy Instruction

The term strategic literacy is not a broad category of literacy, but refers to a specific type of instruction that is designed to integrate content with literacy instruction and provides learners with a specific thoughtful approach to their reading and writing. This definition is the lens that was used when selecting literature. The framework that is used within my classroom is the workshop framework. The workshop framework allows students to maintain a predictable
routine and create literacy habits to promote independence (Dorn & Jones, 2012). A typical workshop model includes five components (Dorn & Soffos, 2005). The components include the mini-lesson, small-group instruction, independent practice, conferences, and share time (Dorn & Soffos, 2005). Throughout each of these components, instructional approaches to teach strategic literacy are used to promote independence. This focuses on the workshop model and strategic literacy that create the lens for selecting literature for this project.

**Methods for Creating the Unit**

After reviewing the literature, I relied heavily on the steps outlined by Wiggins & McTighe, 2011 to create my integrated unit. The outline begins by writing and revising essential questions that I would want my students to continue asking themselves even after the unit was complete. Therefore, I needed to look at the district curriculum to decide what topic I would chose for my integrated unit. I chose communities for my topic and then wrote my essential questions. After finalizing the essential questions, the next step was to look at the district standards and what standards this unit would meet. I began looking at the Iowa Core Curriculum—which are my district’s and the state’s standards. I looked at what standards would be addressed when I was trying to help my students develop a deep understanding of the essential questions. The standards were quite numerous, and are outlined in the project. After the standards were chosen, the next step was to decide what final products and projects would be the evidence to determine if students were able to answer the essential questions, and meet the standards of the Iowa Core Curriculum. I then had to decide what learning tasks would help students reach the final projects.

As I began to create learning tasks based on the standards, I created a chart with all of the standards and which standards would be met each week (see Appendix Z). I was then able to
cross check to ensure that all standards were being met throughout the six week unit. As I was cross checking the standards, I realized that I was checking many more standards off than were actually the focus of particular learning tasks. So, I went back through the learning tasks of all of the weeks, and determined which standards were being met directly through instruction, and which standards were indirectly being taught during each learning task. Once again, I did this for each week. This allowed me to see where there were gaps within the unit on specific standards, and where I may have been heavy on one content area, but weak in another content area.

After identifying the learning tasks and standards that were associated with each task, I was then able to start writing the tasks as lessons to be used as a guide for teachers. This was another process of cross-checking. As my lessons were being written, I would find that the lesson was inauthentic, or did not follow the workshop framework, or that a lesson did not promote collaboration amongst students. Because I knew that the literature promoted these types of lessons, I had to go back and revamp many lessons to ensure they were meeting the expectations of the literature stated in the literature review. Within the learning tasks, I also had to find literature that was engaging, used specific language to promote specific skills, and was multiculturally relevant. One of the most challenging tasks was writing the lesson plans in a way that encouraged dialogue in the classroom, and promoted shared authority between the teacher and students.

Lastly, I went through the learning tasks and completed a short narrative about the overview of each day of the unit. This provided the rationale for choosing specific learning tasks and strategies throughout the lessons. This was yet another cross-check for me. There were often times when I would begin to rationalize a step in a learning task, only to find that it did not truly
fit with the effective strategies I laid out in the literature review. This was yet another cross-
check for the finalized, cohesive unit.
CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This literature review includes the need for motivation in classrooms, approaches to motivation through integrated instruction, and overview of the history, benefits, concerns and approaches of integrated curriculum, a summary and benefits of inquiry-based curriculum, the profits of using multicultural and sociopolitical literature within an integrated curriculum, effective literacy instruction strategies, and approaches to design an integrated curriculum unit.

There have been many studies, including Aikin’s 8-Year study in 1942 and Peck’s study of an integrated school in 2010, which have advocated that an integrated curriculum helps to motivate students, develop deep comprehension of content, cultivate higher-order thinking skills, increase literacy skills and create lifelong learners. Through an integrated unit, multicultural and sociopolitical literature can be promoted and emphasized to enhance students’ perspectives of our world. Although the benefits of integrated curriculum are well-known, many educators continue to encourage teaching separate content areas in silos, making no connections for students.

Integrated, Inquiry and Literacy-Based Curriculum

An integrated curriculum allows teachers to connect standards and objectives from different content areas to promote deeper comprehension and student-centered curriculum. It allows students to make more sense of what content is being taught, and encourages students to work collaboratively with one another (Morris, 2003; Vars, 2001). Incorporating inquiry-based instruction into this type of curriculum inspires students to create their own questions about the topic being taught, and make learning more meaningful and relevant (Crick, 2009). Choosing
authentic, multicultural and sociopolitical literature within the unit helps students to understand perspectives of others, while enhancing literacy skills with the use of trade-books (Dorn & Soffos, 2005; Ching, 2005). The use of an integrated, inquiry, and literacy based curriculum motivates students to take charge of their own learning.

Motivation

Motivation is an essential element of any classroom. A motivated learner engages in difficult tasks and perseveres despite obstacles which will inevitably arise (Dweck, 2006). The integration of core content areas and literacy motivated students to write and read more often than in a classroom where core content areas were not integrated (Parsons & Ward, 2011). The curriculum should provide students with the chance to embrace their creativity and promote discussion among students (Crow, 2011; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Johnston, 2012).

In order to increase students' motivation, teachers need to provide students with a variety of choices in their learning (Crow, 2011; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Peterson, Schreiber, & Moss, 2011; Rich, 2009) and in their demonstration of learning. Guthrie and Davis (2003) argue that teachers should encourage inquiry and support “students’ autonomy and decision making... by enabling students to have some control over important aspects of their learning” (p. 68). Crow (2011) suggests that teachers should provide both motivational and cognitive support to their students. This motivational support is increased and encouraged through authentic tasks, interesting material, and collaboration to contextualize students’ learning and promote social interactions among students (Flint, 2010; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Parsons & Ward, 2011; Peterson, Schreiber, & Moss, 2011).
Parsons and Ward (2011) propose that students should be encouraged to inquire in all aspects of their lives—both inside and outside the classroom. Motivation is further developed and enhanced when students are provided stimulating, enriching activities that motivate and engage them and accommodate for their varied interests (Crow, 2011; Dweck, 2006; Parsons & Ward, 2011; Peterson, Schreiber, & Moss, 2011). It is through motivation and engagement that students become more than 8 A.M. to 3 P.M. learners; they become learners for life (Crow, 2011).

In 1975, Shuman wrote an article on motivation and its effects on students’ reading. He recognized the broader effects motivation, and the lack thereof, can have on students. Shuman stated,

If any one factor limits the horizons of young people, it is non-involvement in the learning process. Apathy is a major ill in many of our schools; from this apathy all sorts of problems—reading problems, discipline problems, writing problems, attendance problems, drug problems, comprehension problems—spring. p. 221

This statement still rings true today. Peck (2010) argues that through an integrated curriculum, students can become motivated to be the owners of their learning.

**Integrated Curriculum**

Integrated curriculum can be broadly defined as using a theme to connect standards and objectives from multiple subject areas in a meaningful way to create relevant, student-centered learning tasks that promote social growth and deep comprehension (Morris, 2003; Shanahan, Robinson & Schneider, 1995; Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009; Vars, 2001). Harville (1954) and Faunce and Bossing (1958) also discussed the trend of integrated curriculum and student-centered approaches to curriculum that occurred in the 1930s and 1940s. Aikin (1942) conducted an Eight-Year study of the effectiveness of integrated programs. In this study Aikin followed
1,475 students from thirty different schools from high school through college. The thirty schools were considered to be implementing an integrated curriculum. Each student was paired with a student who did not attend a high school with integrated curriculum. Aikin (1942) found that all students from the integrated schools performed just as well, if not better, than those students from other schools. The students from the integrated schools were also significantly more involved in the community than those students who did not attend schools with integrated curriculum. These results were confirmed in other studies (Morris, 2003; Peck, 2010; Vars, 2001). Vars (1991) found that “students in integrated programs performed as well or better on standardized achievement tests than students enrolled in the usual separate subjects” (p. 15). All of these programs included student-centered approaches, the connection of subjects to one another, teaching for deep comprehension, and making learning meaningful, authentic, and relevant (Vars, 2001; Morris, 2003). Many of the integrated curriculums included students involved in field work outside the school and working with the community to create end-products (Peck, 2010; Curtis, 2002). Unfortunately, with high-stakes testing and mandates for schools, many teachers and schools have moved away from the idea of integrated curriculum and have moved into more scripted basal approaches to teaching subjects in silos (Peck, 2010; Vars, 2001; Virtue, Wilson, & Ingram, 2009). Although many educators are currently teaching from basal series and are teaching in silos (Peck, 2010; Vars, 2001; Virtue, Wilson, & Ingram, 2009), there are many benefits to changing the instruction into a more integrated approach.

**Benefits of Integrated Curriculum**

The benefits are not just academic achievement, but include promotion of life-long learning, classroom management, and social developments (Curtis, 2002; Peck, 2010,
Using an integrated curriculum allows teachers to make professional decisions about the curriculum that is taught in their classrooms (Vars, 2001).

In regards to academic achievement, students involved in an integrated curriculum perform well on standardized tests (Aikin, 1942). Equally as important, integrated curriculum exposes students to more expository texts which improves vocabulary and world knowledge, even with a large and culturally diverse high school (Chilla, Waff & Cook, 2007). Peck (2010) found that reading achievement increased 26% (from 50% of students reaching desired results to 76% of students reaching desired results) after the school-wide implementation of an integrated curriculum. In addition, research has shown through an integrated curriculum students are encouraged to engage in exploration, research, and questioning skills that are high-order thinking skills (Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009; Peck, 2010). Some researchers have argued that more traditional curriculum promotes superficial learning and surface-level thinking (Shanahan, Robinson & Schneider, 1995). Even more importantly, when using this type of curriculum integration, students are not only performing well on tests, but are actually retaining information (Curtis, 2002).

The benefits of integrated curriculum are far more than just academic benefits. When using an integrated curriculum students actually make connections to help retain information (Peck, 2010; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Vars, 2001; Morris, 2003; Shanahan, Robinson & Schneider, 1993). These connections to real-life, authentic, and meaningful tasks engage and motivate students. They become invested in the work because it’s relevant and it makes sense (Vars, 2001; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Peck, 2010; Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009; Morris, 2003; Shanahan, 1997; Shanahan, Robinson & Schneider, 1993). Not only are students motivated individually, but through integrated curriculum, students are encouraged to work cooperatively—
which, for many students, is motivation in and of itself (Vars, 2001; Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Shanahan, Robinson & Schneider, 1993). Cooperative learning and helps lower disciple problems in the classroom as well, because students are on-task and are taking ownership and responsibility of their learning (Curtis, 2002; Peck, 2010; Guthrie & Davis, 2003).

Integrated curriculum promotes life-long learning in students, where the love of learning continues on past the school years (Vars & Beane, 2000). Both Vars and Beane (2000) argue that this life-long love of learning positively affects society in general, creating thoughtful, engaging, and problem-solving citizens. Because of the deep-thinking, problem-solving and critical literacy that students encounter during an integrated curriculum, students tend to continue to think deeply even outside of the classroom, and try to solve problems that come up within their own worlds—not just in school, and can extend into society’s problems (Vars, 2001; Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009). Because of the amount of group work involved in an integrated curriculum, integration also helps students to look at other people’s perspectives. It allows students to understand how another person is thinking, how to realize that they’re opinions are not the only ones, and how to work with others in order to come to conclusions—all tasks that effective adults are involved in daily (Shanahan, Robinson & Schneider, 1993; Vars, 2001, Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009). Most importantly, integrated curriculum encourages the collaboration of community involvement. If students are taking social action within a community at a young age, the likelihood of continued community involvement is high, creating active citizens in a democratic society (Curtis, 2002; Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009). Despite the benefits of an integrated curriculum, there are reasons beyond mandates and high-stakes testing for teachers to not implement integrated curriculum.
Concerns of Integrated Curriculum

Integrated curriculum is more challenging than teaching from a basal series (Shanahan, 1997). Integrated curriculum requires common planning time amongst teachers if there are more than one teacher per grade level, or even in schools where different teachers teach different content areas. It takes much more time to plan an integrated unit, than to make lesson plans from a basal series. Decorse (1996) suggests that teachers are not given a sufficient amount of time to create these types of units. Decorse (1996) also argues that relationships amongst teachers and overall school culture plays a role in creating integrated units. If teachers that are planning together have very opposing views of what effective curriculum is, creating an integrated unit can be extremely challenging. Some teachers simply do not see integrated curriculum as an effective way of teaching (Decorse, 1996). If there are teachers that do not want to partake in integrated curriculum, the amount of teachers gathering materials lessens, making it more of a burden for the teachers who do want to integrate curriculum. Having materials and deep content knowledge of a topic is essential for integrated curriculum, and can be quite a challenge for one teacher to do alone (Decorse, 1996). Another obstruction for integrating curriculum is teachers’ fear of straying from the more structured and task/skill-oriented framework of today’s public schools (Vars, 2001; Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009). Teachers see creating integrated curriculum as too intimidating without the support of basing instruction on teachers’ manuals and textbooks (Vars, 2001). Vars (2001) even goes as far to say that because many teachers have not experienced this type of instruction, there is a “lack of qualified teachers” (p. 14).

However, Virtue, Wilson and Ingram (2009) believe the benefits of overcoming these challenges is worth the effort, and that all teachers have the ability to create integrated curriculum if the desire is there. In addition, Vars (2001) considers it a “blatant violation of
everything that is known about individual differences and about the impact of threat to human thinking” when teachers teach strictly to the demands of high-stakes testing and forgo the democratic, student-centered approach of integrated curriculum. Yet another reason that any educators relinquish integrated curriculum is because of the belief that because poverty is currently a large correlation to literacy achievement, these schools need high-structure and a rigid curriculum (Peck, 2010). However, research has shown that within a poverty-stricken, poor achievement school, integrated curriculum is precisely what made the difference.

**A Case Study of Integrated Curriculum**

The integrative approach is an approach that can be used in all types of schools—including high poverty, persistently low-achieving, and urban schools—as demonstrated by Quest Elementary School (Peck, 2010). Quest is located in a large Northeast city with high poverty and a variety of ethnicities—80% of the population is considered low-income, with ranges in student population to include 65-75% African American, 10-12% Hispanic students, 12-20% Caucasian, and 2% other. There are approximately 300 students in the school—two classes per grade level. It is one of the top 15 most high poverty cities in the United States.

The school began as a magnet school, using a very thematic and integrated approach. However, when district requirements became more strict (specific time on-task mandated, specific approaches to instruction required), and leadership changed, the school culture and instruction changed dramatically. Teachers knew there was a problem when they were talking about what page they were on in their basal instead of how they could help students gain deep conceptual understanding. At that time, only about 50% of students were in the successful levels of literacy—scoring 3’s and 4’s on a district-wide scale of 1-4. Because the entire district was
underperforming, the superintendent promoted taking on different programs. Quest decided to implement the Expeditionary Learning Schools (ELS) design. The curriculum put reading and writing at the core of the curriculum, and reintroduced integrated curriculum back into the school. The design supported “inquiry-based learning, assessment-based literacy instruction and curricular alignment” (Peck, 2010, p. 396) to promote ownership of learning.

The process of full implementation throughout the entire school took four years to develop a supportive environment, dedicated teachers, and involved community members. But after the four years, Peck (2010) reported that,

Over the last six years reflect growth in all areas, including scores of 100% in math, science, and social studies, meaning that all students performed at the two highest levels. In literacy, 76% of students achieved the highest two levels, making them the second-highest achieving school in the district” (p. 400).

This demonstrates that even in high-poverty school districts, integrated curriculum can be implemented and does increase student achievement. While Quest was successful with an all-staff, intense, inquiry-based approach, there are many ways to integrate curriculum (Peck, 2010; Vars, 1991).

Approaches to Integrated Curriculum

An all-staff approach to integrated curriculum is defined as when the entire staff of a school works collaboratively towards an integrated model within each classroom, and even across grade levels and subject levels to ensure that one grade leads into another grade (Vars, 1991). A school may also use a team approach, where teachers that teach the same grade level work together to create integrated units based on the standards and objectives for that specific grade level. Or, individuals can work to create integrated curriculum within their own classroom, regardless of what the other classes in the school are doing (Vars, 1991).
Even after determining who will create the integrated units, there are many approaches that an educator could take to integrate curriculum. To best understand all of the approaches, the many different ones have been divided into three categories: simplistic, moderate, and intense approaches to integrated curriculum (Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009; Morris, 2003; Shanahan, Robinson & Schneider, 1995; Shanahan, 1997; Vars, 1991).

**Simplistic.** Simplistic models of an integrated curriculum are those where each subject area is focusing on the same topic, but are not interweaving with one another (Vars, 1991, Morris, 2003; Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009). Vars (1991) and Virtue, Wilson and Ingram, (2009) call this approach a correlated approach, whereas, Morris (2003) names models like this “connected, nested, shared, or sequenced” (p. 16). Morris (2003) also gives an example of this model where in literacy student might read *A Taste of Blackberries*, which touches the topic of bees, and in science, they study bees. However, there is no reading or writing connection focus on what the students learned about bees in science. This approach simply talks about the same topic in different subjects.

**Moderate.** When content areas are tied together by a theme, rather than just studying a similar topic in individual subjects, this is called “webbed” or “threaded,” according to Morris (2003). Vars (1991) describes a similar approach but using the language “core approach” to integrated curriculum, while Shanahan (1997) calls it a thematic unit, and Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, (2009) refer to this method as “integrative/interdisciplinary” approach. No matter what one person calls it versus another, this approach uses literacy to teach about content areas, and then also uses information from content areas to problem-solve and find information based on student inquiries, in order to complete some type of culminating project (Vars, 1991; Shanhanan, Robinson & Schneider, 1995; Shanahan, 1997; Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009; Morris, 2003).
An example of this might be using the theme of taking care of the environment where students try to persuade people to create composts in their homes. Students would use reading skills to find information about composting, science skills to learn about how composting is effective for the earth, social studies skills to implement the civic duty of conserving the earth’s natural resources, math skills to collect data on how many items are thrown away in the home when it could have been composted, and ends with a persuasive writing piece on the importance of composting in the home. The final project would be an actual compost for the home.

A relevant final project, whether it be community-based or not, is a major component in this more moderate approach of integrated instruction (Vars, 1991; Virtue, Wilson & Ingram, 2009). Shanahan (1997) and Shanahan, Robinson and Schneider (1995) cautions educators that themes and topics are very different in regards to integrated curriculum. Topics are simply studied within individual subjects, and can make learning more fun, while themes create transferable goals across curricular areas. His great example (1997) was when teachers think they are teaching thematically because they use the topic of penguins. Students then read penguin books, do math worksheets that have them count the penguins, and students write stories on penguin shaped paper. This does not really teach students all that much more about penguins. However, a theme could be “how do humans effect the animal world”? Then, penguins could be one piece of this theme that leads to a culminating end-project that students demonstrate their deep conceptual knowledge based on inquiry.

**Intense.** Taking integration beyond the classroom is what Morris (2003) considers a “network” or “immersed” (p.165) approach to integration. This is when students become increasingly interested in a certain theme, and spend their own time inquiring about this in and outside of classroom time. Virtue, Wilson and Ingram (2009), suggests an intense approach
called the “integrative” approach, in which students spend class time within the community
doing field study, and conducting a service-learning project. And lastly, Vars (1991) proposes an
intense model of integration to be a “student-centered integrative” approach. This is when
students and teachers work together to decide upon a theme to inquire about, develop questions
about the theme to delve into, decide how the class will carry out the inquiry, and then, together,
decide how the students will be assessed at the end of the unit. Each of these approaches is
extremely student-centered, creating an intense integration approach.

Virtue, Wilson, and Ingram (2009) suggested in order to get started with an integrated
method, educators should begin with a simple approach. For the purposes of this project, the
thematic approach to integrated curriculum, or more moderate approach, was used (Shanahan,
1997). In addition to the integrated curriculum, there was a large focus on an inquiry-based
curriculum.

**Inquiry-Based Curriculum**

An inquiry-based curriculum is a topic that has been around the educational scene since
1916 when Dewey discussed the importance of inquiry and emphasized the benefits of
collaboration, motivation, and social interaction. Inquiry-based learning can be described as an
“authentic real-world task, co-constructed with the learner, demanding a range or competences,
depending on teamwork and mentoring, with high levels of feedback, stretching the regular
boundaries of time and space in school…while educating the whole person” (Crick, 2009, p. 87).
Inquiry-based learning is grounded in the constructivist theory of students creating their own
learning (Buhrow & Garcia, 2006). It allows students to propose the questions to be solved, and
solve questions that are relevant to their lives (Crick, 2009; Gregerson, 2011; Eick, Meadows &
Balkcom, 2005; Etherington, 2011; Guccione, 2011). This looks very different than the traditional classroom that uses strictly textbooks and basal series (Crick, 2009; Etherington, 2011).

A traditional classroom, more than likely, has the teacher giving directions or providing information to students that (supposedly) receive the information, internalize it, and then show their knowledge through some type of worksheet assessment (Guccione, 2011). Rather than using a prescribed curriculum, in inquiry-based curriculum, the teacher may generate the overall topic and create an increased curiosity about the topic, but students generate the questions that they want solved in regards to that topic. (Crick, 2009; Etherington, 2011; Gregerson, 2011). Through mini-lessons directed by the teacher, students decide if the question they ask can be answered easily by looking up the information, or if the question needs multiple resources and analysis to come to a conclusion. After choosing a good researchable question, the teacher models different strategies to conduct research. Students then have time to begin their own research and make connections. This can be done in groups or individually (Crick, 2009; Etherington, 2011; Gregerson, 2011). “The classroom (can get) loud” (Guiccone, 2011, p. 516) during this time, which can make some teachers weary. After students have gathered the information needed, they then decide how they want to present the information (Crick, 2009; Gregerson, 2011). This type of instruction allows students to move from the passive receivers of information into their own decision-makers and teachers; they learning by doing, instead of listening; the emphasis of learning is the process not the product (Crick, 2009; Etherington, 2011; Johnston, 2012).

In addition to students having ownership over their learning, there are many other benefits to inquiry-based learning. Parsons and Ward (2011) discuss the idea that allowing
students to engage in authentic, real-world problems through inquiry, promotes higher level thinking skills and motivation in students. Inquiry-based learning also allows for differentiation; students are not only able to choose what they are interested in, but are able to research and create at their own level—with the teacher’s coaching to go further (Gregerson, 2011). In addition, inquiry helps students to activate prior knowledge and internalize new discoveries, which helps students to retain information (Crick, 2009; Curtis, 2002). There is also a social aspect that cannot be ignored, as Guiccione (2011) suggests that the “dialogue arising from cooperative inquiry is the most effective means of knowledge construction” (p. 515). Through mentor texts, and texts for students to use, teachers can also provide a variety of resources for students to gather information needed. With this variety of texts, educators can ensure students are using multicultural literature to enhance critical literacy for students.

Multicultural and Sociopolitical Literature

When choosing texts for an integrated curriculum, it's important to keep in mind the sociopolitical and multicultural aspect of different texts. Research has shown that young children are making sense of the world around them, just as adults are. They are aware of race and begin to make their own assumptions and form their own judgments at an early age. Boutte, Lopez-Robertson, & Powers-Costello (2011) state, “Between three and five years of age, they start drawing conclusions about essential aspects of their identities such as race” (p. 336). They learn racism through a multitude of ways, such as the television, literature, and even just listening to adults (Boutte, Lopez-Robertson, & Powers-Costello, 2011). Park (2011) finds similar results in her research study with the same age group. She stated that “young children in this study were actively enacting racial and ethnic identities, constructing theories about how differences operate, making choices about whom they played and interacted with, and making sense of the
multitude of messages they received” (p. 388). Students studied in a second-grade classroom were addressing ideas about antiracism and privilege, where Rogers and Mosley (2006) this is an age where their ideas “can be solidified or challenged” (p. 483). At such a young age, children are already starting to form “misconceptions...due to the influence of their parents and the media” (Cai, 2002, p. 137). If students are already starting to form these views, it’s important to help make accurate assumptions, and choose literature that portrays accurate information and creates positive attitudes towards cultural differences (Cai, 2002). Cai (2002) states that “it is imperative to move from informing to empowering students when we use multicultural literature” (p. 134). Teachers should use “books operating in these spheres (to) teach children to work collaboratively, to cultivate interethnic friendships, and to see each other through eyes of care rather than hate” (Ching, 2005, p. 135) to promote discussion. Ching (2005) also “believe(s) that safe narratives ‘protect’ young readers from fully comprehending the violence that modern nation states necessitate in their formation and sustained unity” (p. 135). An effective multicultural piece of literature promotes cultural sensitivity, endorses authenticity of the culture, and shares historically accurate points of view. These pieces stray from stereotypes, and teach the hardships and celebrations of different cultures, allowing students to become culturally sensitive (Ching, 2005).

However, some teachers choose not to incorporate multicultural and sociopolitical literature into their curriculum, especially in the early grades (Cai, 2002). Teachers often think young students should maintain their innocence, (Boutte, Lopez-Robertson, & Powers-Costello, 2011) that it is developmentally inappropriate material (Schall & Kauffman, 2003), and that it’s too complex and advanced for young children (Park, 2011). The main issue with teaching about race to young children is that many teachers want to avoid complex issues and teach
colorblindness and racial harmony to ensure they are not overwhelming students (Boutte, Lopez-Robertson, & Powers-Costello, 2011; Ching, 2005; Mosley & Rogers, 2006).

Research often argues against these points. It is argued that educators do not want to teach colorblindness purposefully, but that the general discomfort of teaching about racial issues often results in teaching colorblindness. Many teachers are accustomed to teaching children to value everyone, regardless of race, or other cultural practices. Consequently, teachers spend so much time teaching about how to accept others no matter what, that teaching students how to recognize and counter racism is often forgotten (Boutte, Lopez-Robertson, & Powers-Costello, 2011). Additionally, students are more aware of race and complex issues than many think (Cai, 2002) and educators need to mold young minds instead of trying to change stereotypes later (Rogers & Mosley, 2006; Schall & Kauffman, 2003; Ching, 2005; Salas, Lucido, & Canales, 2002).

The second issue is that “teachers in general want to protect children from knowledge of these issues,” (Schall & Kaufmann, 2003, p. 36). This issue is one that has been looked at intensely from the Piagetian perspective of when children are developmentally ready for complex issues. In the past, it has been said that children under the age of 7 could not go away from their egocentric attitude to understand racism. However, more recent studies have shown that this timeline of readiness is actually occurring earlier, even at the preschool age (Park, 2011). As a matter of fact, much research has shown that young students can even reach the “highest level of Bank’s hierarchy (is), the Social Action Approach” (Boutte, Lopez-Robertson, & Powers-Costello, 2011, p. 6).
In 1997, Hade stated, “silence is the oxygen of racism and bigotry” (p. 237). And again, in 2005, Dressel discussed that it is the “teachers, parents, and students—that is most often responsible for perpetuating racism, and they do so by not talking about things (i.e., through a structured absence)” (p. 753). Educators may not purposefully be teaching colorblindness, but because of their unfamiliarity of the issue, they are ignoring the issue (Boutte, Lopez-Robertson, & Powers-Costello, 2011).

It is also important to be aware of focusing on racial harmony (Ching, 2005). It’s so easy to want students to think that everything is happy and perfect. It’s so easy to teach that we treat everyone equal, regardless of their skin color. And although this is important to teach, it’s even more important to teach about the struggles that have occurred, and still occur between races (Boutte, Lopez-Robertson, & Powers-Costello, 2011; Park, 2011; Rogers & Mosley, 2006). This is what calls our students to social action, and allows them to make a difference. Boutte, Lopez-Robertson, & Powers-Costello (2011) state that,

Finally, silence in early childhood classrooms on issues of racism prevents preparation for active and informed participation in our democratic society, which includes multiple (even dissenting) perspectives. Silence on racial issues sends a strong message to children that it is taboo to discuss these issues in school (p. 339).

It is a disservice to children and a disservice to society if educators choose not to explore and inform our young students about racial and sociopolitical issues—the choice of a piece of literature is crucial in creating active participants in our society.

**Designing Integrated Curriculum**

When designing an integrated curriculum, it is imperative to start with the topic to be studied in depth, and ensuring that it is relevant to students’ lives (Wiggins & McTighe, 2011:
Morris, 2003; Vars, 2001). After selecting a topic to explore, there are various methods to begin planning. Morris (2003) suggests starting with standards and skills within the district and deciding which standards in each content area are going to be addressed within the unit. Wiggins and McTighe (2011) and Vars (2001) suggest starting with essential questions that are going to be addressed, and how students will continue to ponder these questions even after the unit is done, and how the questions will transfer into real-world situations, and then looking at what standards connect to the essential questions being addressed. Morris (2003) also looks at life skills and transfer of knowledge, but he looks at this after standards have been established as guidelines.

Vars (2001) and Morris (2003) advise that the next task is to begin establishing relevant activities that go along with the topic. These activities are not set in stone, however, because students may take the curriculum in a different direction than planned—and that’s the beauty of integrated curriculum—it can be planned out, but is really co-constructed with the students to serve a higher purpose of meaningful learning to engage the learners (Guthrie & Davis, 2003; Parsons & Ward, 2011; Vars, 2001). Wiggins & McTighe (2011) add a step before getting to the activities. This is called the evidence stage, where teachers, with or without student input, develop an idea of a performance assessment to be used at the end of the unit to allow students to demonstrate their understanding of what has been learned throughout the unit. In addition to a performance goal to show evidence of learning, other evidence to show that students are meeting the goals is laid out. This might include specific skills that students should acquire, and what evidence would be used in order to ensure that students did acquire this skill. Once the evidence is in place, the teachers should establish some type of pre-assessment to figure out what students already know about the topic and how the curriculum will shift based upon students’ prior knowledge. After the evidence assessment, and pre-assessment ideas are completed, then
Wiggins & McTighe (2011) move towards learning activities as Vars (2001) and Morris (2003) recommended. No matter which model is followed closely, all three of these models suggest moving backwards in the planning of an integrated unit. Rather than starting with the fun, cute activities that have been done over and over again, the first step is to look at why students are even learning about this topic in the first place, and what transferable skills and knowledge will be attained, and then teachers should look at how to get students to that point through learning activities and tasks.

During the process of deciding upon different learning tasks and activities, the importance of literature choice becomes exceptionally important (Dorn & Soffos, 2001). This is where educators can really focus on sociopolitical and/or multicultural literature for students, to enhance their perspectives about the world, at the same time as answering real-life questions (Cai, 2002). This is also when books are chosen as mentor texts and can really scaffold students' own research and knowledge. Depending upon the grade level, texts can be chosen to help students begin to develop complex and simplistic questions, to help support planning of research, to help support the structure of writing that will coincide with the unit, and other various types of texts and instruction to be used within the unit (Smith & Johnson, 1994).

**Using Effective Literacy Strategies Within an Integrated Unit**

When developing integrated curriculum, teachers need to be aware of how different instructional strategies and learning activities will be most effective for the students. “A teacher’s first order of business is to learn and use best practices for effective reading instruction” (Reutzel & Cooter, Jr., 2007). Throughout the curriculum, it is important that the teachers are engaging the students in three types of reading: reading to children, reading with children, and reading by
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children (Reutzel & Cooter, Jr., 2007). There are a variety of instructional strategies that support these different types of reading.

**Workshop Framework**

The workshop framework allows students to maintain a predictable routine and create literacy habits to promote independence (Dorn & Jones, 2012). It also allows teachers to develop grade-level content in a whole-group setting, follow up with differentiated instruction in a small-group or one-on-one context, conclude with a debriefing sessions and teacher assessment, and finally, create opportunities for students to transfer their learning to varied contexts (Dorn & Jones, 2012, p. 117).

A typical workshop model includes five components (Dorn & Soffos, 2005). The components include the mini-lesson, small-group instruction, independent practice, conferences, and share time (Dorn & Soffos, 2005).

The first component of the workshop model is the mini-lesson. During the 10-15 minute mini-lesson, the teacher explicitly teaches and models the focus concept. The focus concept is the concept that is to be taught that day. It could be a “component of the reading process—for instance, comprehension strategies, workshop procedures, vocabulary investigation, or language studies” (Dorn & Soffos, 2005, p. 66). They also allow time for students to participate in guided practice—where the teacher and students work together on the concept (Dorn & Soffos, 2005).

After the mini-lesson has taken place, three different components of the workshop can take place simultaneously. One of the components is independent or group practice. During this time, students are working independently or with a small group to promote transfer of the concept that was taught during the mini-lesson. Students need “opportunities to apply their knowledge without guidance” (Dorn & Soffos, 2005, p. 67). Another component of the
workshop is small-group instruction. This is a time when the teacher can meet with groups and differentiate the instruction to meet the needs of different students. This could include guided reading. The teacher may also have one-to-one conferences during this time. The student and teacher discuss what the student does well and on what the student can continue to work. This establishes ownership and creates goals for the student to reach (Dorn & Soffos, 2001, 2005; Ray & Laminack, 2001). Conferences, the third component, are extremely important for the teacher to formatively assess the students’ comprehension of reading and writing concepts (Dorn & Soffos, 2005). It is a time for the teacher to allow the student to share his/her knowledge of a piece that is being read or written. The teacher can then determine the next instructional steps to take in order to further the comprehension of the particular student (Dorn & Soffos, 2005).

Lastly, the whole group participates in share time. Share time allows students to have an authentic audience for the work they are engaging in during the workshop framework, while promoting accountability that students have work to share. This is also a formative way of assessing students’ understandings of concepts and can then aid the teacher for future instructional plans (Dorn & Soffos, 2005).

The workshop model begins with the explicit mini-lesson, and this lesson sets the tone for the rest of the workshop. One way to ensure the mini-lesson is effective is by carefully selecting mentor texts to use during the mini-lesson.

**Mentor Texts**

Mentor texts are texts that are selected to teach specific writing skills or literacy concepts to students (Dorfman & Cappelli, 2007). The text can be referred to over and over again in order to show concrete examples of specific writing strategies that the author displayed. “In other
words, they become our coaches...” (Dorfman & Cappelli, 2007, p. 3). Mentor texts help students to actually think like a writer by viewing texts as authors, rather than just readers.

Choosing a mentor text can be the beginning of an efficient mini-lesson if chosen carefully. The text needs to be interesting enough that the students want to continue to revisit it. The organization of the language in the text needs to provide a model for reinforcing a particular language skill and is easily detectable for the students to refer back to when they are crafting their own writing. The text may also be used to spark ideas for writing (Dorfman & Cappelli, 2007). To initiate this whole process of working with text, the lesson should begin with an interactive read aloud to enable students to enjoy and discuss the text.

**Interactive Read Alouds**

Teachers should read aloud to students daily—no matter what the age of the students. An interactive read aloud is when a piece of text is being read aloud and the adults and children “...stop and talk about the text and the pictures” (Reutzel & Cooter, 2007, p. 52). The teacher should model fluency, prosody, and strategies used to decode unfamiliar words or vocabulary, as well as think aloud processes that demonstrate the procedures used to comprehend the text (Reutzel & Cooter, 2007). This allows students to be exposed to many genres and reading habits, while enhancing background knowledge. Read alouds should involve books that “will challenge children’s intellectual development but not exceed their emotional maturity” (Reutzel & Cooter, 2007, p. 53).

Teachers should begin a read aloud with a brief introduction to the book, and give the students a set purpose for listening during the text (Reutzel & Cooter, 2007). Throughout the text, discussion and interaction are encouraged to support comprehension. Teachers should be
sharing with the students what they are cognitively thinking in their heads, which can be done effectively through think alouds.

**Think Alouds**

Think alouds are defined as the articulation of the thought process (Smith, 2006). Think alouds are commonly used to make tangible to students the thought process that goes through the teacher’s mind when problem-solving or comprehending. This allows the teacher to model what the students should do when mentally comprehending a text (Smith, 2006; Reutzel & Cooter, 2007). To take this one step further, the teacher should record on an anchor chart what is happening cognitively for the students to refer to as a scaffold during independent or group practice.

**Anchor Charts**

Anchor charts (see Appendix B) are charts that are created by the teacher and students together. They “highlight specific guidelines or behaviors for performing a particular literacy task” (Dorn & Soffos, 2005, p. 69). Anchor charts can relate directly to the think-alouds performed because they outline the thinking process of a particular concept and later on can be used as a scaffolding tool. Typically, the charts are created during mini-lessons and are kept visible for the students to reference during workshop time when the teacher is unavailable (Dorn & Soffos, p. 70). Anchor charts could highlight workshop routines, guidelines for independent reading, book organization, reading log examples, examples of figurative speech, or the many comprehension strategies with which students struggle (Dorn & Soffos, 2005).
Comprehension Strategies

Anchor charts can aid students with comprehension strategies when such strategies become challenging for students to use independently. “Children’s understanding of books that they read, hear, and view is an active, constructive meaning-making process that requires the coordination of various skills, knowledge, and strategies” (Paris & Paris, 2007, p.2). There are a variety of strategies that can be used to increase student comprehension, including, “activating prior knowledge, predicting, organizing, questioning, summarizing, and creating a mental image” (Dougherty Stahl, 2004, p. 598). These strategies should be taught explicitly through modeling and teacher talks to scaffold students’ comprehension and to eventually transfer to an independent use of the strategies. “Innovative comprehension instruction that minimizes decoding demands can provide direct benefits to children before and as they learn to read” (Paris & Paris, 2007, p. 30). Some effective strategies for comprehension include visual representation (such as graphic organizers, story maps, webbing, and KWL charts (See Appendix B)) activating prior knowledge (such as picture walks and teacher generated questions), responding to the text (such as retelling, teacher-generated questions, reciprocal teaching, and think-pair-share), and fix-up strategies which help with fluency and decoding (Paris & Paris, 2007; Dougherty Stahl, 2004; Ogle, 2009; Reutzel & Cooter, 2007).

Visual representation strategies can include graphic organizers, story maps, webbing, and KWL charts. The graphic organizer uses pictures or diagrams to provide the students a systematic approach to make the task less complicated for the student, as well as teaching content. Graphic organizers can aid in comprehension because they “(1) provide a logical means of preteaching the technical vocabulary of a content chapter, (2) present the students an idea framework designed to show important conceptual relationships between content vocabulary,
and (3) help content teachers clarify teaching goals” (Tierney & Readence, 2005, p. 411). Story maps are visual representations that the teacher or student can use to help sequence and make sense of any narrative (Tierney & Readence, 2005). The teacher can use a story map to help aid in creating questions to ask for comprehension, and it can aid the student in sequencing the events of the story. Similarly, semantic webbing can help conceptualize ideas from pieces of texts and is done so in a way that connects pieces of information together. Lastly, the KWL chart “represents a three-step procedure intended to help teachers become more responsive to helping students access appropriate knowledge when reading expository text” (Tierney & Readence, 2005, p. 257). The first step accesses what the students already know about the topic—the K. Then, they develop questions about what they want to learn—the W. Lastly, the students focus on comprehension when they fill out the L part of the chart—what they learned from the text. This strategy is also a great way to activate prior knowledge before reading a text.

Activating prior knowledge brings the knowledge that students have about the given text before reading the text. This helps to motivate and consciously engage students in understanding the text (Tierney & Readence, 2005). One way to activate prior knowledge is for the teacher to ask questions to facilitate engagement. Open-ended questions promote the prediction process and get students thinking about what they already know about the topic (Dorn & Jones, 2012). Some examples of questions include: “What do you think the story is about? What is on the book’s cover? How would you feel if you were the character? What do you think will happen next? What else do you see in the picture?” (Dorn & Jones, 2012, p. 37). Similarly, a picture walk can aid in activating prior knowledge. In a picture walk, the teacher shows the pictures to the students and asks questions to facilitate discussion about the pictures. Giving a picture walk engages the students and can set a purpose for reading the text. Vocabulary can be introduced in
a picture walk, predictions can be made, and then the students can check their comprehension by deciding if their predictions were correct (Rhodes, 2008). Making predictions and activating prior knowledge can lead to responding to the text as well.

Responding to the text can be done through a variety of ways including: teacher-generated questions, retelling, reciprocal teaching, and think-pair-share. Teachers may create their own questions that they ask the student after reading text. The questions could have answers that are explicitly in the text or they could be inferential text. This allows the teacher to identify if the student comprehended what was read (Tierney & Readence, 2005). Another response to reading is a retelling. The purpose of a retelling is for students to recall what they have read in a sequential order. It is more open-ended than teacher-generated questions, and allows the teacher and student to evaluate the level of comprehension based on the thoroughness of the retelling (Tierney & Readence, 2005). To engage more of the class, reciprocal teaching can be used. This strategy includes four steps. Before reading the text, the student predict what will happen. The teacher records predictions. Then students generate questions after reading portions of the text. Next, the students summarize what happened in the portion of the text. Lastly, the students and teacher clarify what happened. After students are familiar with this strategy, the teacher then encourages students to lead the strategy and take over the teacher’s role (Reutzel & Cooter, 2007). Finally, think-pair-share can be used to aid in comprehension when responding to text. This strategy allows students time to think about a question on their own, then time to share it with someone sitting next to them, and finally, share their ideas with the whole group. This allows for more collaboration and more participation from the whole group. It also permits students to clarify their comprehension of texts (Reutzel & Cooter, 2007).
When students become cognitive of their reading and identify a breakdown in comprehension, it’s important that they can use fix-up strategies to clarify their comprehension. According to Neufield (2005),

Strategies used by expert readers to address comprehension breakdowns include rereading parts or all of the text, looking ahead in the text, stopping and relating the information presented in the text to what one already knows about the topic, examining other resources addressing the same topic, and seeking support of more knowledgeable others (p. 308).

When students are able to use these fix-up strategies along with decoding strategies, students can then improve their fluency skills.

**Fluency Strategies**

Fluency can be thought of as the bridge from word recognition to comprehension (Rasinski, 2012). It brings the automaticity of word recognition and the prosody needed for comprehension together. Rereading texts is one way to improve fluency, however, it should not be timed rereading (Reutzel & Cooter, 2007; Rasinski, 2012). The purpose of the rereading should reflect deeper comprehension of the reading, along with automaticity of sight words. Prosody can also become more evolved when the student has read the text more than once. Prosody is “reading with expression” (Rasinski, 2012, p.4). This shows a deeper comprehension of the text when students are able to use prosody effectively (Rasinski, 2012). Rasinski (2012) recommends that rereading texts should be done in an authentic manner, and the most obvious reason for rereading texts is for an audience. Rasinski also (2012) proposes having an authentic audience whenever having students reread text, and suggests one easy way to do this is with a script for reader’s theatre. To go one step further, Rasinski (2012) encourages students to create
their own reader’s theatre or scripts during writing workshop to integrate the two areas of fluency and writing.

Writing Workshop and Writing Process

The focus of writing workshop is to inspire students to compose pieces of works and to “reflect often on where they have been as writers and on where they are going” (Ray & Laminack, 2001, p. 5). Throughout the writing workshop, Graves (1994) suggests that students should be encouraged to choose their topics of writing, and the explicit teaching should focus on how to make their writing even better (Ray & Laminack, 2001; Dorn & Soffos, 2001).

According to Ray and Laminack (2001) teachers should instruct students how to “research, explore, collect, interview, talk, read, stare off into space, co-author, and yes, prewrite, draft, revise, edit, and publish” (p.5). Dorn and Soffos (2001), as well as Ray and Laminack (2001) argue that writing should have a purpose and an authentic audience; it should be meaningful to students and not just a task to complete.

Teaching students the writing process is an effective way to improve students’ writing (Dorn & Soffos, 2001). The writing process involves five steps: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing (Dorn & Soffos, 2001). The students begin by prewriting, where they determine who the audience is for the piece of writing, and begin organizing and brainstorming ideas for their piece. Graphic organizers, webs, and notes are all forms of prewriting (Dorn & Soffos, 2001). The students then continue on to drafting their piece. Here, the focus is on the content of the piece of text. The student may write and rewrite sentences over and over again to make them make sense, or to come up with different lead and closing sentences (Dorn & Soffos, 2001). The student then reads the pieces to listeners. The listeners help clarify if the piece makes
sense organizationally, and listens for the style of writing to ensure it is engaging. Feedback from the listener informs the author to change word choices or move sentences around to help clarify the writing (Dorn & Soffos, 2001). The students then edit their own work for mechanical errors and use resources to fix mistakes. Lastly, the students may publish their work, which means to make it acceptable for an audience to view (Dorn & Soffos, 2001). Dorn and Soffos (2001) suggest anchor charts, checklists, and graphic organizers should be provided in order to help scaffold students to become more independent during the writing process. When modeling how to use anchor charts, checklists, and so forth, students should be a part of the creation. They should be involved in the actual writing of the information through interactive writing.

**Interactive Writing**

Interactive writing involves students writing as a whole class. Typically, the whole class would be seated together on the floor in a large space to form a group. Next to the group there would be some sort of writing paper or board that is at a level that both the teacher and students can write. Using this instructional strategy, students and teachers both write the story or words being written using a chart or whiteboard large enough for the whole class to see and read. Students actually come up to the board and write. Students that are still sitting can use individual white boards and practice writing the words, while the peer at the board or chart paper is writing the words as well. This allows students to use each other as references (Dorn & Soffos, 2012). Students should be encouraged to use dialog with one another as a resource, much the same as they are encouraged to use the teacher and anchor charts as scaffolds.
**Dialogue in the Classroom**

In a dialogical classroom, students are just as much an authority figure as the teacher (Johnston, 2004). Fecho, Coombs, and McAuley (2012) define a dialogical classroom as one where “literacy is used to immerse teachers and students in an ongoing reflective conversation with the text of their lives” (p. 2). Students are encouraged to work collaboratively and engage in discussion about their reading and writing to motivate one another and learn from one another. This type of classroom climate relies strongly on the words used by the teacher (Johnston, 2004). The language that the teacher uses needs to be positive and encouraging. For example, “the implications of talking about reading as ‘work’ are different from referring to it as ‘fun’ (Johnston, 2004, p. 9). Open-ended questions should be used to evoke deep-thinking and to elaborate discussions. Students should become the owners of their learning, and teachers should avoid spoon feeding information to students. This type of climate promotes the instructional strategy of using the workshop model, where students are encouraged to become lifelong learners, and to understand concepts more deeply (Dorn & Soffos, 2005). Collaboration amongst parents is also critical.

**Parental Involvement**

“The parent is the child’s first teacher,” is a statement coined by the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy in 1989, and is one that has continued to ring true throughout the literature of family literacy (DeBruin-Parecki, 2008; Chance, 2010). Making literacy connections at home results in improved literacy performance (Zygouris-Coe, 2007). Zygouris-Coe (2007) believes that “parents are critical partners in the education of all children” (p. 60),
and the National Center for Family Literacy has many findings that support the idea that parental literacy influences children’s literacy. For example, they have found that

- 71% of children whose mothers completed college attended early childhood centers in 1996, compared to 37% whose mothers had less than a high school education.
- The more types of reading materials there are in the home, the higher the level of student proficiency.
- By age four, children who live in poor families will have heard 32 million fewer words than children living in professional families (Zygouris-Coe, 2007, p. 60).

There are always ways to involve parents in the classroom. They have a “wealth of knowledge” (Zygouris-Coe, 2007, p.63) that can be shared with the students, making it more “meaningful and relevant” (Zygouris-Coe, 2007, p.63) to the students. Most importantly, “there is a need to create a permanent space for family literacy in the school” (Zygouris-Coe, 2007, p.57) because “children benefit when teachers and parents reinforce the same concepts and ideas” (Darling, 2005, p.476). Additionally, Dorn and Soffos, (2005) argue that students should have an authentic audience for the work they are engaging in, and when students are involved in, and motivated through integrated curriculum, parents are the perfect audience with whom students can share their findings and hard work.

**Conclusion**

Integrated curriculum allows students to make meaningful learning and to become active participants in their learning, rather than passive recipients (Crick, 2009; Ehterington, 2011). Yet, many teachers are fearful and intimidated by the workload of creating integrated units that enable students to make connections and understand content with deeper comprehension (Vars, 2001). Vars (2001) considers it a “blatant violation of everything that is known about individual differences and about the impact of threat on human thinking” (p. 8) when teachers teach strictly
to the demands of high-stakes testing and forgo the democratic, student-centered approach of integrated curriculum. This project is designed to aid teachers in a step-by-step approach to using an integrated unit, to focus on student-centered instruction and the transfer of knowledge.
CHAPTER IV
THE PROJECT

This integrated unit is intended for first grade students. Within different subject areas there are focus topics including: communities, mapping, first person narratives, the writing process, balance and motion, and mathematical problem solving. The unit is six weeks in length and ends with a culminating project where students work collaboratively to create their own community. Additionally, there is a week embedded within the unit that is dedicated to a class service learning project. Table 1 provides an overview of the content within the unit.

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The format of the project is designed so that it is easily accessible for teachers to use as a guide for their integrated unit on communities. Each week begins with an overview of the learning activities for the entire week. Then, each day includes the learning focus of the day, the learning activity components for the day, and an overview for each day. Following this, each learning activity begins with the purpose, standards met, and the materials needed. It continues to provide an outline for how the lesson could be implemented within a workshop framework.

There are also different sections within the unit that are italicized; these portions of the unit are there as examples of what dialogue could be used during specific times of different lessons. These are simply examples and guides for teachers to use, but it is not the intent that this is a scripted curriculum to be followed.
Essential Questions:

- What is a community?
- How do roles change in different communities?
- Why are different community members important?
- How does one community member affect the rest of the community?
- How can I positively impact my community?

Iowa Core Curriculum Standards Addressed:

Literacy Standards:

RF.1.1 Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.

RF.1.2 Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

RF.1.3 Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

RF.1.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

RL1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.

RI.1.1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

RI.1.2. Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.

RI.1.3 Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

RI.1.5. Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text.

W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

SL.1.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
SL.1.3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

SL.1.4 Describe people, places, things and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.

A.1. Employ the full range of research-based comprehension strategies, including making connections, determining importance, questioning, visualizing, making inferences, summarizing, and monitoring for comprehension.

Social Studies Standards:

(P.S. 1.1 is not used because it focuses on the US constitution and this unit focuses on a more immediate level of community—not the country).

B.S.4.1 Understand that different groups may have different rules and patterns of acceptable behaviour.

B.S.4.2 Understand that people belong to some groups because they are born into them and some because they join them.

B.S.4.3 Understand that groups influence one’s thoughts and actions.

B.S.4.4 Understand that a community is a group to which a person may belong.

B.S.4.5 Understand that people tend to live in families in which individuals have different roles.

B.S.4.6 Understand the features of nuclear and extended families.

P.S.1.2 Understand the purpose of rules.

P.S.1.3 Understand the concept of fairness

P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities

G.1.2 Understand representations of locales and regions on maps and globes.

Math Standards:

1.OA.1 Use addition and subtraction within 20 to solve word problems involving situations of adding to, taking from, putting together, taking apart, and comparing, with unknowns in all positions, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.¹

1.OA.2 Solve word problems that call for addition of three whole numbers whose sum is less than or equal to 20, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the
unknown number to represent the problem.

1.OA.3 Apply properties of operations as strategies to add and subtract.\(^2\) \textit{Examples: If } 8 + 3 = 11 \textit{ is known, then } 3 + 8 = 11 \textit{ is also known. (Commutative property of addition.) To add } 2 + 6 + 4, \textit{the second two numbers can be added to make a ten, so } 2 + 6 + 4 = 2 + 10 = 12. \textit{(Associative property of addition.)}

1.OA.4 Understand subtraction as an unknown-addend problem. \textit{For example, subtract } 10 - 8 \textit{ by finding the number that makes 10 when added to 8. Add and subtract within 20.}

1.OA.5 Relate counting to addition and subtraction (e.g., by counting on 2 to add 2).

1.OA.6 Add and subtract within 20, demonstrating fluency for addition and subtraction within 10. Use strategies such as counting on; making ten (e.g., \(8 + 6 = 8 + 2 + 4 = 10 + 4 = 14\)); decomposing a number leading to a ten (e.g., \(13 - 4 = 13 - 3 - 1 = 10 - 1 = 9\)); using the relationship between addition and subtraction (e.g., knowing that \(8 + 4 = 12\), one knows \(12 - 8 = 4\)); and creating equivalent but easier or known sums (e.g., adding \(6 + 7\) by creating the known equivalent \(6 + 6 + 1 = 12 + 1 = 13\)).

1.OA.7 Understand the meaning of the equal sign, and determine if equations involving addition and subtraction are true or false. For example, which of the following equations are true and which are false? \(6 = 6\), \(7 = 8 - 1\), \(5 + 2 = 2 + 5\), \(4 + 1 = 5 + 2\).

1.MD.4 Organize, represent, and interpret data with up to three categories; ask and answer questions about the total number of data points, how many in each category, and how many more or less are in one category than in another.

\textit{Science Standards:}

P.S.1.1 Objects have many observable properties including size, weight, shape, color, temperature and the ability to react with other substances. Those properties can be measured using tools such as rulers, balances and thermometers.

P.S.1.3 Objects can be described by the properties of the materials from which they are made. Properties can be used to separate or sort a group of objects or materials.

S.I.1 Ask questions about objects, organisms, and events in the environment.

S.I.2 Plan and conduct simple investigations.

S.I.3 Use tools to gather data and extend the senses.

S.I.4 Use mathematics in scientific inquiry.

S.I.5 Use data to construct reasonable explanations.
S.I.6 Communicate investigations and explanations

S.I. 7 Follow appropriate safety procedures when conducting investigations.

21st Century Skills:

Civic Literacy
(The essential concepts and skills listed in social studies-political science are the same as Civic Literacy in the 21st century)

C.L.1.1 Understand the basic concepts of government and democracy and that the Constitution defines the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

C.L.1.2 Understand the purpose of rules.

C.L.1.3 Understand the concept of fairness

C.L.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities

Employability Skills

E.S.1.1 Work appropriately and productively with others.

E.S.1.2 Use different perspectives to increase innovation and the quality of work.

E.S.1.3 Use all the appropriate principles of communication effectively.

E.S.2.1 Adapt to varied roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

E.S.2.2 Work effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities.

E.S.2.3 Demonstrate appropriate risk-taking.

E.S.3.1 Use interpersonal skills to influence and guide others toward a goal.

E.S.3.2 Leverage the strengths of others to accomplish a common goal.

E.S.3.3 Demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior.

E.S.3.4 Demonstrate mental, physical, and emotional preparedness to accomplish the task.

E.S.4.1 Perform work without oversight.

E.S.4.2 Use time efficiently to manage workload.

E.S.4.3 Assess mastery of skills.
E.S.4.4 Set and achieve high standards and goals.

E.S.4.5 Engage in effective problem solving process.

E.S.5.1 Deliver quality job performance on time.

E.S.5.2 Demonstrate accountability for individual performance.

Financial Literacy

F.L.1.1 Develop short-term and long-term financial goals

F.L.1.2 Understanding needs vs. wants.

F.L.2.1 Develop a realistic spending plan for financial independence.

NOTE: The workshop framework is used throughout this unit. During the time that there are small group or individual work time, the teacher can be conferencing with students about their reading and writing pieces in progress.
**Week 1: My Family and Neighborhood Community**

This week is a focus on introduction of the family community, and internalizes the meaning of community at the personal, family level. An introduction of maps will occur this week, including what important things are included on maps.

**Week 1- Day 1 Overview**

**Focus:** Students will be introduced to the concept of a community and that people play different roles in different communities.

**Components of Day 1:**

- KWL Chart
- *Humphrey and the Lost Whale: A True Story*
- Communities Member’s Roles
- Who’s in Your Family?

**Overview of Week 1- Day 1:**

The purpose of the first day of the unit is to activate students’ prior knowledge of communities. The KWL chart allows the students to create an idea of what is already known, and more importantly, what students want to learn about communities. This encourages students to begin formulating their own personal questions and start inquiring about communities. It also provides students with a place to record their learning as the unit progresses.

Using *Humphrey and the Lost Whale: A True Story* as a mentor text provides students with the background knowledge and definition of a community. It gives students an example of what communities are, and how they are defined.

Next, role playing different community members provides students with a definition of the word *role* and helps to make the connection that different people play different roles depending on the community. It enables students to concretely apply and understand the different responsibilities people have in different roles. Students then work in groups to determine the various ways people impact communities. By encouraging students to work in groups, they are able to learn to work cooperatively and gain knowledge from their peers, constructing their own learning, rather than just taking in information from the teacher.

Finally, the last activity of using *Who’s in Your Family?* as a mentor text introduces the focus for the rest of the week. The students begin with the community of family because it is familiar and well-known. It helps students identify that families look different, and that family is a type of community. This activity also provides the students to use labeling pictures as a way of writing.
**Week 1- Day 1- KWL Chart**

**Purpose:** Activate prior knowledge and pre-assessment of students’ current understandings of communities.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed through Instruction:**

- W.1.8: With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
- R.F. 1.1: Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
- B.S.4.2 Understand that people belong to some groups because they are born into them and some because they join them.
- B.S.4.3 Understand that groups influence one’s thoughts and actions.
- B.S.4.4 Understand that a community is a group to which a person may belong.

**Materials:**

- “What I Know About Communities” graphic organizer (Appendix A. 1 per student)
- Anchor chart labeled: “What We Know About Communities”
- Anchor chart paper
- http://www.wordle.net/

**Mini-lesson and Guided Practice**

- Explain to students that they will create a quick write. Students will write down as much as they know about communities.
- Show students the graphic organizer labeled “What I know About Communities.” Model how to create a web of ideas around the central topic.

**Independent Practice**

- Give students the graphic organizer labeled “What I know about Communities”
- Conference with students individually or small group.
- Reassure students to try to spell things the best they can, but it is OK if they don’t know how to spell something. Also, remind them that if they can’t write the word, they can draw a picture about what they know about communities.

**Share Time**
• Students bring their graphic organizer to the carpet space.

• Explain to students that the unit of focus for the next couple of weeks is going to be communities.

• Have a piece of chart paper labeled “What we Know about Communities.”

• Ask students what they know about the word communities.

• Write students’ responses on the chart paper—ask students to help you spell words as you write. Be sure to write the name of the student after the idea.

• Explain that we already know quite a bit (or not too much) about communities. Model posing questions to find out what students want to know about communities.

  **Model Think Aloud:** When I want to learn about something, I like to start out with things I’m wondering, or questions about the topic. Starting out with questions helps me to focus on what I want to learn about. One thing I’m wondering about communities is this: Why do we have communities? (write on chart paper labeled: What We Want to know about communities). Another question I have is: Who are members in a community? (write on same chart paper).

• Ask students if they have any things they are wondering, or questions, about communities.

• Record their answers on the same chart paper.

• Have students help spell. Point out how you write letters—tall letters go to the top. Think aloud why you put a question mark at the end of the questions, etc., and record who asked what question.

• Explain to students that they can continue to add to this list as they learn about communities, and have more things that they are wondering.

**If the class has access to computers, rather than using the graphic organizer, the students could use the following website for students to brainstorm prior knowledge about communities: [http://www.wordle.net/](http://www.wordle.net/). The teacher would need to take time to explain how to use the website.**
**Week 1-Day 1- Humphrey and the Lost Whale: A True Story Activity**

**Purpose:** Introduce students to the concept of a community and to define community.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed through Instruction:**
- B.S.4.2: Understand that people belong to some groups because they are born into them and some because they join them.
- B.S.4.4: Understand that a community is a group to which a person may belong.

**Materials:**
- Pail of water
- *Humphrey and the Lost Whale* by Wendy Tokuda and Richard Hall
- 2 pieces of chart paper
- [http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit83/lesson1.html#lesson](http://learningtogive.org/lessons/unit83/lesson1.html#lesson)

**Mini-Lesson**
- Show the pail of water to the class.
- Ask students what could fit in the pail. Ask the students if a fish could fit in the pail. If so, how big a fish could this pail hold? What happens when you put a big fish in this little pail? (It will die because there is not enough room or water for the fish to survive.)
- Introduce the story entitled: *Humphrey the Lost Whale: A True Story*, by Wendy Tokuda.
- Tell the students to imagine that the pail is a freshwater river.
- Give a book introduction.

**Example Book Introduction:** *In this true story, a whale named Humphrey swam into the San Francisco Bay of the Pacific Ocean, and then swam into a freshwater river. The whale could not survive in the confined freshwater, nor could it turn around in the river to get back to the ocean. A community of people came together to help get the whale back into the Pacific Ocean.*

- Write the words *neighborhood* and *community* on chart paper. Let the students define the terms in their own words. Make sure they include that a *neighborhood* is a place where people live, work and play and a *community* is a place that has many different *neighborhoods*.
- Read the story aloud to the children.
Guided Practice:

- After the story, talk about how the people came together for a common purpose. They formed a community of people who cared about helping this whale—people from the neighborhoods, scientists and whale watchers, people with many different talents. They worked together and grew to care for each other, too.
- Ask students to redefine a **community**. Listen for this type of definition: *a group of people who come together for a common purpose.*
- Challenge the students to think of other communities of people who work together for a common purpose (**families, classes, religion, sports teams, environmental organizations, animal-rights groups, etc.**). Tell the students that a person can be a member of many different communities at the same time.
- Ask students to name the communities to which they belong.
- Write these ideas on a chart paper labeled *Communities.*
Week 1- Day 1- Community Members’ Roles

Purpose: Introduce students to the concept that different community members have different roles in different communities.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed through Instruction:

- R.F.1.1: Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
- W.1.8. With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
- S.L. 1.4: Describe people, places, things and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
- B.S. 4.3: Understand that groups influence one’s thoughts and actions.
- E.S.1.1: Work appropriately and productively with others.

Materials:
- Communities anchor chart from previous learning activity
- 1 piece of chart paper per group of 3-4 students
- Writing utensils

Mini-Lesson and Guided Practice

- Gather students at the carpet. Explain what the students will be doing.

Model Explanation: Boys and girls, in different communities there are different members. What is a member of a community? (discussion). And in each community, the members play different roles. Roles are kind of like parts in a play. What type of role does your mom play in your family community? What are her responsibilities? What type of role does your mom play at her work community?

- Model how to role play being a librarian.
- Have a few students role play different community members.
- Role play being a mom, or a dad, or a brother. What are their jobs in the family community?
- Review the list of different communities created in the previous lesson.
- Model how to work in a group.
Model Working in a Group: Each group is going to get their own type of community from our list of communities that we just made. Then, you will write down the different members and their roles in the community that you have. Let me show you what it looks like. Choose 2 students to help model. First, I am going to ask my partners if they would like to write first, or if they would like me to write first. That shows that I am thinking of others, and it will make them want to work with me again if I'm nice, and not bossy. Model asking the students. OK, well first we need a title on our chart paper. If we're doing the Family Community, then we need to write Family Community at the top of our chart paper. Then we are going to make what we call a T-Chart. On one side, we need to write members and on the other side we need to write roles, so that we know what the members of that community do. Who is a member of our family community? Now we write that under members. What are the things that that member needs to do? Talk with the students who are acting as your partners. We write down the things that the member does under roles, because those are the roles the person does in this community. Now I'm going to let someone else take a turn and write. Model again with one more family member.

- Check for understanding. Ask students what they are going to do once they are in their groups. 1) Put the title. 2) Write members and roles under the title. 3) Take turns writing down different members and their roles.

- Split the class into groups of 3 or 4 and assign each group a different type of community from the list.

Small Group Work

- Students work in groups.

- As students are working, periodically gain their attention and ask them to rate themselves 1, 3 or 5 on how well they are working in their group.

- Ask prompting questions as students work.

Example Questions: What does that community member do that is important? Is there more than 1 important role that the community member does? Who else is in that type of community? How can you solve the problem of taking turns? How do you know if you’re on task right now? Are you being a helpful group member? How do you know?

Share Time

- Invite students back together.
- Ask students what are qualities of good speakers.

- Ask each group to share what they did on their poster. Let other students add to the lists if they think of something to add.

- Communicate to students that this week we are going to focus on the family community, but we will be learning more about other types of communities, and can keep adding to our lists as we learn more.
**Week 1 - Day 1 - Who's in Your Family?**

**Purpose:** Students understand the importance of labeling drawings for readers. Students convey the members of their family community.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed through Instruction:**

- R.F.1.1: Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
- R.F.1.2: Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).
- B.S.4.5: Understand that people tend to live in families in which individuals have different roles.
- B.S. 4.6: Understand the features of nuclear and extended families.
- 1.MD.4 Organize, represent, and interpret data with up to three categories: ask and answer questions about the total number of data points, how many in each category, and how many more or less are in one category than in another.

**Materials:**

- Large pieces of white paper (1 per student)
- *Who’s in a Family?* By Robert Skutch

**Mini-Lesson and Guided Practice**

- Show students a couple of pictures of family members. Explain who each family member is and label the people as they are being discussed.
- Ask students to Think-Pair-Share about people in their families.
- Discuss how all families look different from someone else’s family.
- Ask students to think about how the families in the book are similar and different as you read.
- Read *Who’s in a Family*. Discuss the different types of families in the book.
- Model the way that writers sometimes write by labeling pictures.
- Ask students to show different places in the book where the pictures are labeled to help the reader understand who is in the picture.
Independent Practice

- Give each student a large piece of paper. Explain that the students can draw a picture of who is in their family community on the piece of paper.

- Encourage students to label their pictures so that the readers will know who is in their family.

- As students finish, have them make a list of the members of their families, and the roles that each family member plays, just like they did with the Communities and Roles activity earlier.

Share Time

- Divide students in groups of 2-3 and share their drawings and the roles that each family member plays.

- Monitor groups as they are sharing. Prompt with questions.

  Example Questions: Do any of your family members have the same roles as another person in your group? Why do you think family members in different families have the same kinds of roles? Did someone in your group have a different family member that plays a role that no one in your family plays? How does that work?

- Hang up family community drawings and roles lists around the room for other students to see.

- Make a T-chart labeled: “Do You Have a Brother?” Create a T-Chart. One side should say “Yes” and the other should say “No.”

- Ask students to use tallies to represent if they have a brother and write their tally on the appropriate side of the T-Chart.

- Ask: How many students have a brother? How many students answered the questions? Would this information be the same if another class filled out a chart like ours? Why or why not? Ask a student to come write a number sentence to demonstrate how many people took the survey. Repeat with sisters.
Week 1- Day 2 Overview

Focus: Introduce students to maps and map features. Students understand that different communities have different members.

Components:
- *Me on the Map* Mentor Text and Flip Book
- What’s on the Map? Creating a map

Overview of Week 1- Day 2

The first activity of having students create a map will serve as a pre-assessment for the teacher. The teacher will be able to see what current understandings the students have of maps, and can tailor instruction to meet the needs of the students.

The mentor text of *Me on the Map* allows students to conceptualize the idea that maps are made for different communities. Then, showing students various maps, and asking students to find specific elements of a map in groups, gives students the chance to internalize the element of a map because they are actively seeking the elements themselves, and not just memorizing the elements. Providing the opportunity for students to create a map of their own home, offers student the chance to use their own knowledge of their home to make the map meaningful to each individual student.
Week 1- Day 2- Me on the Map Mentor Text and Flip Book

Purpose: Different communities have unique members and maps can represent the members and places in various communities.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- RI.1.3 Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

- B.S.4.5 Understand that people tend to live in families in which individuals have different roles.

- B.S.4.6 Understand the features of nuclear and extended families.

Before reading this book, or doing any of the learning activities for today, give students a piece of paper and tell them to draw a map of whatever they want. Don’t give any clues or ideas—this will be used as a pre-assessment to see what students already know about maps, and can be compared to the map they will create later in this lesson and later in the unit to check for understanding.

Materials:
- Me on the Map by Joan Sweeney
- _______ on the map flip books

Mini-Lesson

- Display Me on the Map to the students..

- Give a book introduction and set the purpose.

  **Model Book Introduction and Set the Purpose:** This book shows how different communities have maps to show the different things that belong in that community. While I’m reading, I want you to think of what different communities did the little girl draw maps for.

- Read Me on the Map.

- Ask students what some of the communities that the little girl drew maps of were. Ask students how the maps help the reader understand what is in each community.
Guided Practice

- Compare the list of communities in *Me on the Map* to the list created yesterday. Ask students what is different and what is similar.

- Review that the little girl starts out with her family or house community.

- Explain to students that they will create their own *Me on the Map* books about the different communities in which they are involved.

- Show students example flip book.

- Show that the first page is labeled *My House*.

- Model how to draw a picture and label the different important things in your house—include your family members. Stress the importance of taking your time, and that illustrators spend a lot of time trying their best and producing quality work (discuss quality).

Independent Work

- Students work on their flipbooks.

Share Time

- Students share flipbooks.
- Ask questions.

**Example Questions:** How is _____'s house similar to _____'s house? What is different about _____’s family and _______’s family? What did _____ do well on their flipbook? What do you like? What could they continue to work on and make better?
Week 1- Day 2- What's on a Map? House or bedroom map

Purpose: Students identify map features and use them to create their own maps.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- G.1.2 Understand representations of locales and regions on maps and globes.

Materials:

- Chart Paper labeled: “What’s on a map?”
- Maps
- Me on the Map by Joan Sweeney.
- Large paper for drawing a map.
- Internet connection for YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=yWr1kCcv6kg#!

Mini-Lesson

- Complete a picture walk of Me on the Map.

- Ask students why maps are different than other pictures (it looks like you’re looking at it from above, it shows where things are at, it has things labeled, smaller things are smaller, labels, etc.)

- Hang up various maps that would excite children (maps of zoos, amusement parks, the community, museums, etc.).

- Have a group discussion of things found on a map. Write them on an anchor chart labeled ‘What’s on a map?’ (title, compass rose, labels, map key) and draw a picture of each.

- Explain the importance of each item.

- Show https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=yWr1kCcv6kg#!

- Explain that students are going to get into groups and are going to look for those map elements on each map, just like the woman in the video did.

Small Group Work and Independent Work

- Put students into groups of 2.

- Give each group 2-3 maps or more. Have them find all of the map elements on the maps.

- Call a couple groups up to point out where the map elements are at on their maps.
• Explain that now, students will become the illustrators and map creators. They will choose to make a map of either their whole house, or just one room in their house.

• Model how to use the anchor chart to be sure that all of the map elements are on the map created.

• Students work on maps individually.

Share Time

• Students share maps with a partner. They check each other’s maps to ensure that all of the features are included on their maps.

• Choose a couple to share with the whole group.
**Week 1 - Day 3 Overview**

**Focus:** Students understand that there are roles in literacy along with communities. Students identify features of personal narrative texts.

**Components:**
- Roles in Literacy
- Personal Narrative Mentor Texts and Checklist

**Overview of Week 1 - Day 3**

Day 3 is about scaffolding students to realize that literacy can be a community as well. Students play charades in order to physically act out the different roles that one can play in literacy. Following charades, the teacher introduces the first step in the writing process—prewriting. Students then apply their knew understanding of pre-writing by creating a list or web of topics they may enjoy writing about. Encouraging students to choose their own topics of writing, rather than always giving them a topic, provides students with choice and makes the writing meaningful to the student. In turn, this is more motivating for students to want to write.

Additionally, students will eventually write their own personal narratives. Introducing students to the checklist of personal narratives, and engaging students in various mentor texts about personal narratives allows the students to gain a deep understanding of how personal narratives are written, and the elements within a personal narrative. The books chosen for the mentor texts also provide multicultural insight.
Week 1- Day 3- Roles in Literacy

Purpose: Introduce different roles that are involved in literacy, including: author, editor, reader, illustrator, storyteller, and actor.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- SL.1.4 Describe people, places, things and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
- B.S.4.1 Understand that different groups may have different rules and patterns of acceptable behaviour.

Materials:
- Anchor chart paper
- Charades cards with the following clues: storyteller, reader, actor, author, illustrator, editor
- Idea bank paper (Appendix C, 1 per child)

Mini-Lesson

- Review the definition of roles and gives some examples.

Example Review: We've been talking a lot about how different people play different roles in different communities. Here at school, we play different roles in our literacy time, too. First, let's refresh our memories. What are some different roles people play in families? Schools? Well, what roles would you think that people play in our literacy community? (author, illustrator, storyteller, reader, actor, editor, etc). Let's make a list of these different roles, and write down what each role does.

- Write “Roles During Literacy” as the title at the top of the Anchor Chart. Write down the different roles within literacy, and the responsibilities of those roles.

Guided Practice

- Explain to students that we’re going to play charades to be able to see what each of these roles really looks like.
- Have 1 student come and pull out a card (you might have to read it to them). Have the student act out what the person in that role would do. Other students guess.
- Continue until all roles are played out.
- Ask students to share with their neighbor—what is their favorite role to play during literacy time?
- Share out some ideas.
- Explain to students that often times, when you are in the role of the writer, you like to make a list or brainstorm different ideas you might like to write about.
- Model a couple of ideas to write about.
• Ask students what they would enjoy writing about.

**Independent Practice**

• Give students idea bank paper and ask them to start recording different things they might enjoy writing about sometime this year.
• Place these in students writing folders for future reference.

**Share Time**

• Ask students to share some of their ideas.
Week 1- Day 1- Personal Narrative Mentor Texts and Checklist

Purpose: Students identify the parts of a personal narrative and recall information from experiences to brainstorm topics of their own personal narratives.

Iowa Core Curriculum Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Materials:
- Mentor Texts:
  - Mentor Texts:

  *The Relatives Came* by Cynthia Rylant (A time family came to visit you.)

  *A Chair for my Mother* by Vera B. Williams (A time something bad happened to your family or a time you saved for something.)

  *Big Mama’s* by Donald Crews (A time you went to visit family.)

  *Roller Coaster* by Marla Frazee (A time you did something new.)

  *Some Birthday!* by Patricia Polacco (A birthday or a time someone surprised/scared you.)

  *Fireflies!* by Julie Brinckloe (A time you caught creatures or something you did with neighbors.)

  *Little Nino’s Pizzeria* by Karen Barbour (A time you worked together as a family.)

  *Family Huddle* by Peyton, Eli and Archie Manning (Something your family likes to do together.)

  *Shortcut* by Donald Crews (A time you were in danger.)

- Personal Narrative Checklist on chart paper (see appendix C for example)
- Personal Narrative Brainstorm Paper (Appendix C, 1 per student)

Mini-Lesson

- Choose 2 of the above books about family to use for a whole group read aloud.
- Think Aloud how to play the role of a reader to be a better writer.

**Model Think Aloud:** *A lot of the time, readers read for fun—just because they like the books. Sometimes, readers read to learn new things. Today, we’re going to be readers that read to learn how to write. The books that I have chosen are all called personal*
narratives. Personal narratives are books that are written about an experience that the character has had. Personal narratives always use the words “I” and “we” because it sounds like character is telling a story about an experience in their life. When we read books, and look for specific characteristics, it helps us to be better writers too because we can use the same characteristics in our writing that authors use in their writing for us, as readers.

- Show students the personal narrative checklist.
- Explain that personal narratives have a title, a main character, use “I”, is about a topic or special event, and is written in order.
- Tell students that you are going to read one of the books from above. Tell them to be listening to see if the author wrote a personal narrative, and what they hear in the book to know that it is a personal narrative.
- Read the book.

**Guided Practice**

- Go through the checklist as a class. Ask students when they heard specific characteristics in the book.

**Example Questions:** Where did you hear the author use “I”? What was the special event or topic of the story? How do we know the story was in order? What words were used?

- Fill in the chart accordingly.
- Read another book, and go through the same process as a whole group. Encourage the students to take the lead filling out the chart.

**Small Group Work**

- Depending on the students in the classroom, there are two different options for application.
  - **Option 1:** A good amount of students in the class that can already read the above titles in the materials listed.
    - Split the class into groups of 2 or 3. Give each group one of the above books, and an individual personal narrative chart. Have students read the book together as a group, and fill out the chart in groups.
  - **Option 2:** There are not many students who can read the titles above.
    - Give students the directions that they are going to fill out the personal narrative brainstorm web about what topic or event they want to write a personal narrative about. Model filling out the brainstorm web. Have students think-pair-share about a couple of their topics before filling out the sheet.
    - Then, as students are filling this out, call over 2-3 students at a time. Read one of the selected titles above, and fill out the individual personal narrative chart as a small group. Continue to do this with different books with different groups until you’ve met with each group.
Share Time

- Add to the large anchor chart—students lead and tell why the book they read was a personal narrative as they fill out the boxes.
  - If Option 1 was used above, then at this time, give students the directions that they are going to fill out the personal narrative web about what topic or event they want to write a personal narrative about. Model filling out the brainstorm web. Have students think-pair-share about a couple of their topics before filling out the sheet.
- Students share ideas about what their personal narrative topic will be about.
- Explain tomorrow, students will play the role of writers, and begin planning for personal narratives.
Week 1- Day 4 Overview

Focus: Students will explore the concept of pre-writing and using story maps to create a story.

Components:
- Story Maps for Personal Narratives: Lead Sentence
- Story Maps for Personal Narratives: Organization
- Story Maps for Personal Narratives: Closing Sentence

Overview of Week 1- Day 4

Today the focus is how maps are not only used to provide information about parts of a community, but they can also be used in literacy to help writers create stories. The mini-lessons focus on the importance of organizing information for readers to have a better understanding of the story. Typically, this type of unit would be done in the beginning of the year, so this could be the first time that students have been exposed to organizing their stories. Therefore, each piece is broken down step by step for the students to have a clear understanding of how to organize their pieces. This connects to the idea of mapping, and role playing in different communities. It also promotes motivation as it is the students’ choice of topics for their personal narratives.
**Week 1- Day 4- Story Maps for Personal Narratives: Lead Sentence**

**Purpose:** Students will explore the concept of pre-writing and using story maps to create a story.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**

- W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

**Materials:**

- Story maps for personal narratives (1 per child, see Appendix C)
- Story map on chart paper to model
- Checklist for personal narratives from previous lesson (see Appendix C)
- Brainstorm web from previous lesson
- Personal narrative mentor texts from previous lesson
- Anchor chart of “What’s on a Map?” from day 2 lesson

**Mini-Lesson**

**When filling out the story map, purposely forget some ending punctuation, beginning capitalization, finger spaces, and spell some words wrong for tomorrow’s lesson.**

- Review the elements on a map from previous lessons.
- Explain to students that today they will be authors of their own personal narratives.

**Model Explanation:** We have been talking about roles in communities. Today we are going to be authors in our literacy community. That means, we have to think like authors. If we are going to be authors of personal narratives, what kinds of things do we need to think about including in our stories? (point out the elements on the personal narrative checklist). We have also been talking about making maps for different communities. Well, guess what? There’s maps in literacy communities too! Authors use story maps to help them plan their stories!

- Show students the story map on the chart paper. Go over each part of the story map.
- Tell students that first they need to focus on a lead sentence.

**Model Think Aloud:** I have to come up with a lead sentence. Hmm. I wonder what a lead sentence is. Let’s look in our books from yesterday. Read the first sentence in a couple of books from yesterday. Explain that the lead sentence tells the reader what the whole story is going to be about, and it’s exciting. Which
sounds better? This story is about the day I got my dog. Or, Getting my dog was the best day ever! Any other ideas? Lead sentences should not only tell you what the story is going to be about, but it should be exciting too.

Guided Practice

- On chart paper or the whiteboard, have a variety of sentences constructed on different topics. One sentence should be a good lead sentence, while the other is poor.

**Examples of sentences:**
- I am going to tell you about my day at Adventure Land.
- One warm summer day, I went to Adventure Land with my family!
- I like to go to the pool.
- Do you like swimming? I do!
- Ask students to decide which sentence is more exciting as a lead sentence.
- Have students take turns coming up with different lead sentences for the teacher’s story.
- Write down students’ lead sentences.
- Choose one as a class.
- Fill in lead sentence on story map.
- Think-Pair-Share. Have students think of what they might choose for their lead sentence from their brainstorm yesterday. Share it with a neighbor, then share as a group.

Independent Work

- Students get their story maps and brainstorm list from the previous lesson.
- Students create a lead sentence for their personal narrative.

Share Time

- Students come together.
- Students share their lead sentences.
- Students comment on one another’s lead sentences and decide if the sentence is exciting and tells the reader what is to come in the rest of the story.
**Week 1- Day 4- Story Maps for Personal Narratives: Organization**

**Purpose:** Students will explore the concept of pre-writing and using story maps to create a story.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**

- W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

**Materials:**

- Story maps for personal narrative (1 per child, see Appendix C)
- Story map on chart paper to model
- Checklist for personal narratives from previous lesson (see Appendix C)
- Brainstorm web from previous lesson
- Personal narrative mentor texts from previous lesson
- Anchor chart of “What’s on a Map?” from day 2 lesson

**Mini-Lesson**

**When filling out the story map, purposely forget some ending punctuation, beginning capitalization, finger spaces, and spell some words wrong for tomorrow’s lesson.**

- Explain to students that the next part of the story map is the ideas that the students brainstormed yesterday.
- Model organizing the ideas on the brainstorm.

**Model Think-Aloud:** *When I look at my personal narrative checklist, I can see that things go in order. Now I have to put my story in order.*

- Model reading each idea from the brainstorm.

**Guided Practice**

- Have the ideas from the brainstorm written on sentence strips.
- Have students help you put them in order so that it makes sense.
- Model putting a number next to each idea on the brainstorm so that the story is in order.
- Tape them onto the next part of the story map.
- Point out that words like, first, then, next, and last help the reader to know that the story is in order.
- Go back and read what has been written so far.
Model Rereading: It's important for me to go back and read what I wrote. My role as an author is to keep checking my writing, so that it makes sense.

Independent Work

- Students go back to their story maps and brainstorm.
- Students number their ideas on their brainstorm.
- Students write their sentences in order on their story maps.

Share Time

- Students come together.
- Students share their story maps.
- Students comment on one another’s lead sentences and decide if the story is in order and makes sense.
Week 1- Day 4- Story Maps for Personal Narratives: Closing Sentence

Purpose: Students will explore the concept of pre-writing and using story maps to create a story.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.
- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Materials:
- Story maps for personal narratives (1 per child, see Appendix C)
- Story map on chart paper to model
- Checklist for personal narratives from previous lesson (see Appendix C)
- Brainstorm web from previous lesson
- Personal narrative mentor texts from previous lesson
- Anchor chart of “What’s on a Map?” from day 2 lesson

Mini-Lesson

**When filling out the story map, purposely forget some ending punctuation, beginning capitalization, finger spaces, and spell some words wrong for tomorrow’s lesson.

- Tell students that first they need to focus on a closing sentence.

  Model Think Aloud: The last thing on my story map is a closing sentence. My role as an author to make sure my readers know that my story is complete. Read a couple of ending sentences from the books from the previous lesson. Which one sounds better? That’s my story. Or, The day I got my dog was the best day ever! Any other ideas? Closing sentences show that the author is finished, and it is exciting, just like the lead sentence.

Guided Practice

- On chart paper or the whiteboard, have a variety of sentences constructed on different topics. One sentence should be a good closing sentence, while the other is poor.

  Examples of sentences:
  - The end.
  - Adventure land is so much fun!
That’s my story.

Swimming is one of my favorite things in the world! It was a great day!

- Ask students to decide which sentence is more exciting as a closing sentence.
- Have students take turns coming up with different closing sentences for the teacher’s story.
- Write down students’ closing sentences.
- Choose one as a class.
- Fill in closing sentence on story map.
- Think-Pair-Share. Have students think of what they might choose for their closing sentence for their stories. Share it with a neighbor, then share as a group.

Independent Work

- Students get their story maps and brainstorm list from the previous lesson.
- Students create a closing sentence for their personal narrative.

Share Time

- Students come together.
- Students share their closing sentences.
- Students comment on one another’s closing sentences and decide if the sentence is exciting and tells the reader the story is finished.
- Explain that using maps in literacy helps students play the role of the author.
**Week 1- Day 5 Overview**

**Focus:** Students understand that there are different sets of rules for different communities.

**Components:**
- Rules in Family Communities
- Rules in Writer’s Communities-Editing Narratives

**Overview of Week 1- Day 5:**

The focus for today is for students to understand the purpose of rules, in both their family community, and then in the writing community. Students begin by thinking about what rules are enforced in their families. This activates prior knowledge, and makes the task meaningful. Students are then encouraged to think critically, and understand why each rule is in place. Consequently, students are asked what would happen if those rules were not in place. The students are then given an opportunity to create their own rules and justify why their rules would be in place if they were the mom or dad of their family. This begins to set the stage for rules within writing.

After students have a deep understanding of why rules are important within their families, they are then introduced to the idea that rules are important in writing as well. The teacher will first activate prior knowledge to see if students are aware of any rules in writing already. After creating a list of rules, the students then, have to justify why each rule would be important in writing. The teacher then presents the pencil rubric which is a visual tool for the students to use when remembering the rules within their own writing. Lastly, the students use the pencil rubric for their own piece of writing—checking it for broken rules. Having the students use their own piece of work, rather than one created by the teacher gives the students purpose and an authentic piece of text to work with—both very motivating pieces for students.
Week 1- Day 5- Rules in Family Communities

Purpose: Students recognize the reason for rules within family communities.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- P.S.1.2 Understand the purpose of rules.

Materials:
- Chart paper with a T-chart labeled “Our Family Rules” and “This is important because…”
- Paper for student writing (1 per student)

Mini-Lesson and Guided Practice

- Explain to students that different communities have different rules. Rules are made to keep people safe, to keep things in order, and to make sure everything works the right way.
- Lead a discussion on the kinds of rules each family has and why each family has established the rules they have.
- Make a list of rules the students share under the “Our Family Rules” and the reasoning under “This is important because…”
- Pose the question: If you were in the role of mom or dad, what kinds of rules would you make?
- Students think-pair-share.

Independent Practice

- Students write a list of rules they would make. They can draw pictures to match their rules.

Share Time

- Students come back to the carpet and share their lists.
- Be sure to ask why those rules would be important in their families.
Week 1- Day 5- Rules in Writers’ Communities—Editing Narratives

Purpose: Give students the tools to edit their own work. Introduce students to the pencil rubric.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed through Instruction:

- P.S.1.2 Understand the purpose of rules.

Materials:
- Chart paper labeled “Writing Rules”
- Story map anchor chart from yesterday
- Students’ story maps from yesterday
- Clean paper for publishing
- Large pencil rubric (See Appendix C)
- Individual pencil rubrics to tape onto desks (See Appendix C)

Mini-Lesson

- Explain that students will play the role of editors today.

Model Think Aloud: Today, we are going to play the role of editors and authors. Who remembers what an editor is? Yes, someone who looks through the author’s writing and checks to make sure it’s written correctly. Well first, the editor needs to know what rules to follow when they edit an author’s piece of writing.

- Ask students if they know any writing rules. Write them down on the chart paper labeled “Writing Rules”
  - Pictures should match the words.
  - Spaces should be in between words.
  - Sentences begin with a capital letter.
  - Sentences end with a period, question mark, or exclamation mark.
  - Words should be spelled correctly.
  - Stories should make sense.
- Tell students that editors have tools to check their work.
- Show students the pencil rubric.
- Explain how each picture on the pencil rubric makes sure that the editor and author are following the writing rules of the writing community.

Explain How to Use the Pencil Rubric: The sun reminds me to check that my pictures match my words. I don’t have any pictures yet, so I can move past that part. The next picture on my pencil rubric is a finger. That reminds me that I need to have spaces in between my words. I’m going to read through my story from yesterday and check for finger spaces (read through and check). The next picture is a capital A with the word “go.” This picture reminds me that I need to check for capital letters at the beginning of my sentences. I’m going to read through my story and make sure I have capital letters (read...
through and check). The next picture is a lot of punctuation marks and the word stop. This picture reminds me that I need to check for periods, question marks, and exclamation points at the end of my sentence (read through and check your story). The last picture is a picture of a person stretching. This picture reminds me to stretch my words out. When I read through my story and find a word that is not stretched out, I can circle it and try it again on another piece of paper. I can also look around the room, and look at my word wall for clues on how to spell the words (model doing this on your story).

Guided Practice

- Ask students to help you go through each stage of the pencil rubric with you on the piece written on the story map from the previous day.

Independent Practice

- Give each student a pencil rubric (tape them on students’ desks).
- Give them their story maps from yesterday.
- Students are should play the role of the editor and edit their work, using the pencil rubric.
- As students finish, give them clean paper to rewrite their story.
- Tell students they can play the role of the illustrator as well, and can draw a picture to go with their personal narrative.

Share Time

- Students share their published stories with a peer.
- Select a couple of students to share the stories with the whole class.
- Hang stories up on the writing wall for all to read.
- For a more authentic audience, ask another class to allow your class time to come and pair up and read their stories.
Week 2: My Classroom and School Community

This week is a focus on the school being a community. We will focus on who the members of the school community are, why each community member is important, why rules are important within school, and maps of different places in and around the school.

**Week 2- Day 1 Overview**

**Focus:** Students value the importance of one another and have respect for the rules of the classroom.

**Components:**
- Creating a Classroom Community: We’re All Connected
- Mentor Text *David Goes to School* by David Shannon and Class Rule Book

**Overview of Week 2-Day 1:**

The purpose of the first activity is to concretely establish the idea that all of the students are connected. When students physically see how the web of string falls apart when someone lets go, this can be internalized on how one person affects the entire group. This activity is set up to create a classroom rapport of respect and responsibility. By encouraging students to give compliments to one another, it helps to set up the dialogical classroom, where students and teacher converse with each other, and engage in conversations.

The second activity reading *David Goes to School* and creating a class rule book establishes that our classroom is a community in and of itself. It encourages students to have a part in coming up with classroom rules, and enables the students to become authority figures within their own classroom. This also brings in the literacy piece of writing. The students are writing for a meaningful purpose, and for an authentic audience. Turning the rules into a classroom rule book to be read by others gives students a purpose of quality writing. It also embraces the idea that a writer’s words must match their illustrations.
Week 2- Day 1- Creating a Classroom Community: We’re All Connected

Purpose: Students will understand how each person in our classroom community affects the entire class.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- P.S.1.3 Understand the concept of fairness
- P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities
- E.S.2.1 Adapt to varied roles, responsibilities, and expectations.

Materials:

- Yarn
- Chart paper
- Chart paper (1 per group)
- Student journals/writing notebooks

Mini-Lesson

- Explain that students have been talking about communities and that community members need to work together in order for their community to work well.
- Explain the rules of the game to the students.

Model Explanation of Game: We have been talking about your communities at home, and how each person in your family plays a very different role, but you need everyone for your family to work as a community. This week we are going to focus on our class as a community. One thing that community members do, is give each other encouragement. Today I want everyone to sit in a circle. We are going to roll the ball of yarn to one another, and when you roll it to someone, you are going to give that person a compliment—say something nice about them—to give them encouragement within our community. When the ball of yarn is rolled to you, you hold onto a piece of the yarn, and then roll it to the next person and give them a compliment. I’ll start.

Guided Practice

- Give a student a compliment and roll the ball of yarn to that student.
- Continue this procedure until all students have a piece of the yarn and have given/gotten a compliment.
- The string should be intertwined between all students.
Tell students to watch what happens when just one person lets go of the string. (Let go of the string and the web should become loose and fall apart).
Ask students how this represents a community.
Take a picture to hang up in the classroom as a reminder that every person in the classroom is part of the classroom community!
Explain how each person in the classroom community should have expectations and responsibilities to fulfill.

Small Group Work

- Ask students to come up with classroom community jobs for each person to have (line leader, paper passer, greeters, messengers, etc.) Be sure there are enough jobs for each student (there may be more than one person for each job).
- List the jobs on chart paper.
- Break students into groups based on how many jobs the class has compiled.
- Each group should come up with a list of rules and/or duties of fulfilling that position within the community.

Share Time

- Groups share the expectations and duties for each job.
- Students decide what 2-3 roles they would most like.
- Students choose their community roles.
- Students can change roles weekly.
Week 2- Day 1- Mentor Text: *David Goes to School* by David Shannon and Class Rule Book

**Purpose:** Classroom rules are created in order to keep people safe and in a classroom of respect.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed through Instruction:**

- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

- P.S.1.2 Understand the purpose of rules.

- P.S.1.3 Understand the concept of fairness

- P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities

- RF.1.2 Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

**Materials:**

- *David Goes to School* by David Shannon
- Chart paper
- Individual white boards (1 per child)
- White board markers (1 per child)
- Alphabet chart with pictures (large for group)
- Alphabet chart with pictures (1 per child)
- Blank paper (1 per child)
- Binder
- Binder sleeves (1 for every 2 students)

**Mini-Lesson**

- Explain to students that they just created roles and rules for different classroom community helpers, but that we need rules for the whole class to follow to.

- Ask students why it is important for the class to have rules. Many students may say so that they don't get into trouble—just let them share for now.

- Tell students that while you're reading *David Goes to School*, they should thinking of why David might get in trouble for doing the things he is doing.

- Read *David Goes to School*.

- Ask students why David would get in trouble for doing the things he did at school.

- Reiterate the fact that rules keep people safe, they help people be respectful, and they help us become independent learners and problem solvers.
Guided Practice

- Write “Our Classroom Rules” at the top of the chart paper.
- Ask students what rules they think our classroom should have. Be sure to ask students why each rule is important.
  - Encourage students to use positive rules: *We should talk use quiet voices* versus *No yelling.*
- Call on a student to share a classroom rule.
- Use interactive writing to fill out the anchor chart.
- Model how to use the white board to practice a word before writing it on the paper.
- Model how to use the alphabet chart to help hear the sounds in words.
- Have students use their white boards to try to write some of the words in the first rule.
- Ask students to share their idea of how to write a rule. As a class, decide the correct spelling of the word.
- Write the rule on the chart paper.
- Continue writing rules, but encourage students to come up and write different words on the chart paper. For example if the rule was: Raise your hand, a student could come up and write “hand” on the chart paper. Encourage all children to try and write the word on their whiteboards.
- Be sure to ask students why each rule is important.
- Once many students have given a rule—ask students to think of another rule they might think is important in our classroom.
- Share their rule with a classmate.
- Explain that each student will write a rule for the class.

Independent Work

- Remind students to use their white boards to practice their words before writing them on the paper.
- Encourage students to illustrate their rule because it will go in the class rule book.
- Give each student a blank piece of paper.
- Students work on writing their classroom rule.

Share Time

- Each student shares his/her rule.
- Put rules in sleeves to create the classroom rule book.
- Put sleeves in the binder.
- Explain that this can be used as a resource when students have trouble remembering what rules need to be followed in the classroom community.
**Week 2- Day 2 Overview**

**Focus:** Interviewing people is one way to understand the different roles that school community members play, and each community member’s responsibilities.

**Components:**
- Class Interview Questions
- Writing Interview Questions
- Poster of School Community Member

**Overview of Week 2-Day 2**

In order for students to learn more about the school community, it is important that the learning is authentic. Therefore, rather than the teacher telling the students what the roles of the school community members include, the students themselves will question the school community members and engage in their own learning. The first activity does not include a small group or independent work time. The reason for this is that the idea of writing interview questions can be extremely challenging for students. It is important that the whole process of writing questions and asking questions is seen by the students so that there is an understanding of where the students are headed in the following learning activity.

Although the second activity of writing group interview questions is not directly tied to a writing standard, the act of writing the questions allows students to work on numerous foundational skills, such as phonemic awareness skills, rereading text after it is written, and writing for a purpose. The students will also work on their speaking and listening skills, as they need to be able to listen effectively in order to report on the answers given. There is also motivation for the students as they are working in groups, and the purpose is authentic.

The poster that will be created after questioning always provides the students with authentic tasks. The students will be able to share their knowledge from their interview questions with their class, and the posters will be displayed for others in the school to view. This also promotes creativity in creating the poster, and once again, is motivating as the students are working in groups.
Class Interview Questions and Interview Process

Purpose: Model how writing questions is an efficient way to understand more about the responsibilities of others.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:
- SL.1.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- SL.1.3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

Materials:
- Chart Paper
- Individual white boards and markers
- Chart paper with interview questions written:
  - What do you do in our school?
  - Can you tell me 5 things you do during the day?
  - Why are you important in our school?
  - What would happen if we didn’t have you in our school?
  - How do you make sure you get everything done?

Mini-Lesson

- Activate prior knowledge about different community member’s roles.
- Ask students who are some people in the school community.

Model Think Aloud: Yesterday, we found out that there are many different roles that we can have within our classroom community. What about our school community? What are some different roles that people play in our school community? (principal, teacher, student, guidance counselor, reading teacher, art teacher, librarian, etc).

- Write this list on the chart paper labeled Roles in “Our School Community.”
- Explain the importance of each member of the school.
- Ask students why they are important to the school.

Model Think Aloud: Each of these people is important to our school community. Let’s take students for example. I know you are important to our school community, and I think I know why. I think it’s because you learn. You are important to our community because you learn. Is that the only reason you are important to our school community? Part of understanding why each person is important to our community, is asking the person what they do that is important. Luckily for me, I have written some interview questions to ask you, my students.

- Show students the chart paper with interview questions written.
- Point out how each question is something that someone wonders, and that they all end
with question marks because they are questions.

- Tell students that you are going to interview them.
- Model how you ask them a question, listen to the answer, and then write down a note about their response.
- Ask them the questions on the chart paper, and write down their responses.
- Point out that you get a lot of information about people when you interview them.

Guided Practice

- Tell students that as a class you are going to interview the principal (have this set up ahead of time).
- As a class, come up with questions you can ask the principal when he/she comes to the class.
- Use interactive writing to write the questions on the chart paper.
- Discuss how you greet the person you are interviewing, shake their hand, and thank them for taking time to talk with you. Discuss how you do this at the end of the interview as well.
- Decide who is going to ask each question to the principal, and who is going to greet and thank the principal.
- Discuss the importance of speaking clearly and with a loud voice when asking questions.
- Have the principal come in.
- Greet the principal.
- Interview the principal.
- Thank the principal.

Share Time

- Ask students what they learned from the principal during the interview that they did not know before.
- Discuss the importance of interviewing someone to find out more about them.
Week 2- Day 2- Writing Interview Questions and Interview

Purpose: Students demonstrate gathering information about community members through writing and asking interview questions.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- SL.1.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- SL.1.3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
- P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities

Materials:
- "Roles in Our School Community" chart paper
- Paper for writing interview questions

Mini-Lesson

- Tell students today they will choose a school community member to interview. (Have the time arranged prior to today with the school community members)
- Have students choose a school community member to interview (2 students per member).
- Explain that the students will need to come up with interview questions to interview their member.

Guided Practice

- Ask students what in the room can help them come up with questions to write.
- Point out the anchor charts of interview questions created earlier to help guide students.
- Ask a student to add on to the list.
- Encourage students to come up with their own questions as well. Think-Pair-Share.
- Remind students to use the pencil rubric when they are finished writing, and encourage students to use their best handwriting so that it looks nice when they interview their member.

Small Group Work

- Students create interview questions for the school community member.
- Guide students with their writing, and observe students' writing as they write in pairs.

Share Time

- Choose 4 or 5 pairs to share one of their questions that is different than the ones on the anchor charts.
• Have students gather together as a group and share some of the questions written.
• Have students give input on the questions shared.
• Model how to take turns during the interview. One person greets, the next asks a question and writes the response, then the other person asks the next question and so on.
• Have students practice this with their partners.
• Allow students to go interview their school community member.
• Collect their answers and questions when they come back.
**Week 2- Day 2- Poster of School Community Member**

**Purpose:** Students share the information gathered from their interviews by designing posters.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed through Instruction:**

- P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities
- SL.1.4 Describe people, places, things and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

**Materials:**

- Posters
- Interview questions and answers
- Pictures of school community members (taken beforehand)
- Examples of posters

**Mini-Lesson**

- Show students a couple of different posters.
- Ask students what they notice about each poster that is the same (Title, words, pictures, organized)
- Discuss that the title of the poster is big and at the top to grab the reader’s attention.
- Discuss that the words on the poster have pictures that match the words.
- Discuss that it’s colorful and it’s easy for the reader to read.
- Tell students they are going to take on the role of the designer and design a poster to share their information of their school community.
- Tell students you are going to model how to design a poster using the interview questions about students.
- Model putting the title “students” on the top of the poster.
- Model figuring out the best space for the picture of the students so that you would fit information around the picture.
- Model taking the answers from the interview and turning them into sentences on sticky notes.
- Model finding a space on the poster to write that sentence and making sure there is space for a picture to match the text and that it’s easy for the reader to read.

**Guided Practice**

- Ask students to model where to put sticky notes on the model poster.
- Write the steps (with pictures) on the board.
1. Title  
2. Picture  
3. Sticky notes  
   - Ask students what they would put as their title on their posters (the name of the school community member).

**Small Group Work**

- Pass out posters to each pair (1 per pair).  
- Give students the picture of their school community member.  
- Give students sticky notes.  
- Students work in pairs from their interviews.  
- Students turn their answers into sentences.  
- Students begin organizing their posters.

**Share Time**

- Have students share what they have done so far on their posters.  
- Point out the parts of posters that students are doing well.  
- Ask students to comment on one another’s posters.
Focus: Students share the information gathered from their interviews by designing posters.

Components:
- Poster of Community Member Continued

Overview of Week 2- Day 3

The process of changing answers to sentences, designing a poster, and making the poster quality is a large task for first graders. This will take ample time. The day is focused on allowing the students to continue to work on their posters. The posters promote collaboration, creativity, phonemic awareness, editing processes, and quality.
Week 2- Day 3- Poster of School Community Member Continued

**Purpose:** Students share the information gathered from their interviews by designing posters.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed through Instruction:**

- P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities
- SL.1.4 Describe people, places, things and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

**Materials:**

- Posters
- Interview questions and answers
- Pictures of school community members (taken beforehand)
- Examples of posters

**Mini Lesson**

- Review the same steps as yesterday.

**Small Group Work**

- Students to continue to work on posters of school community members.

**Share Time**

- Students share completed posters.
- While students are sharing, have other students share 1 thing they have learned from the group, and 1 thing that the pair did well on their poster or presentation, and 1 thing the pair could continue to work on.
**Week 2-Day 4 Overview**

**Focus:** Maps help people understand the different places in different communities.

**Components:**
- School Walk and Map Labeling
- Creating School Maps
- *Me on the Map* Flipbooks

**Overview of Wee 2-Day 4:**

The purpose of the school walk and map labeling is for students to apply their knowledge of how maps work. The walk allows students to actually use a map in order to find specific locations within the school. Doing this within the school also connects to the school community. It is a practical application, and students can recognize that if someone were to come into the building, and was looking for someone in particular, a map would be a great way for the person to find who they are looking for. It is an authentic task, which motivates students and helps foster connections.

The making of a school map shows students transferrable knowledge and understanding of maps. By creating a map, the students are demonstrating their mapping skills. They are also working in pairs, and choosing what they will make their map of. This is motivating to students to have choice and collaboration. It also meets each students’ needs. There may be some students who are able to create a map of the whole school, where other students are just developing their mapping skills and benefit most from making a map of the classroom. The purpose of having a treasure X on their map creates authenticity. If they give their map to another group, and the group is unable to find the treasure, the students will be motivated to fix their map for it to be useable. Likewise, by using other students’ maps to find a treasure, the students are demonstrating whether or not they can follow a map.

Lastly, creating the school page for *Me on the Map* flipbooks promotes the idea that there are many different types of communities, and that each students’ family communities are different than their school communities, but each are important.
Week 2- Day 4- School Walk and Map Labeling

Purpose: Students demonstrate how to follow a map.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- G.1.2 Understand representations of locales and regions on maps and globes.

Materials:

- Map of school (this could be the whole school, just a hall in the school, or just a portion of the school. This should also include a compass rose and a key of important parts of the school—such as the bathrooms, drinking fountains, etc. However, it should not include the labels of different places in the school).
- Map worksheet (http://www.teachervision.fen.com/maps/printable/43250.html)

Mini Lesson

- Activate prior knowledge.

  **Model Think Aloud:** We talked about how each school community member helps out in our school. In order for each person to help, they need their own space. If someone walked into our school and was looking for someone in particular, we would want to be able to explain to them how to find that important school community member. One way we can do this is by giving them a map.

- Tell students they will use a map today to label different places in the school.

Guided Practice

- Take the students on a walk around the place where the map shows.
- Stop along the way to label different places as you come to them.
- Use cardinal directions while on the walk.

Independent Practice

- Give students a map.
- Give the directions on how to find specific places on the map.
- Each student needs to find the map on the treasure by following the directions given.

Share Time

- When getting back to the classroom, use the map to ask questions.
- Ask students *What is south of ______?* *What on the key lets us know where the bathrooms are?* *What is north of ______?* Etc
Week 2- Day 4- Creating School Maps

Purpose: Students create their own maps using map features.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Discussion:

- G.1.2 Understand representations of locales and regions on maps and globes.

Materials:

- Large blank sheets of paper (1 per person)
- Maps from earlier that day
- Anchor chart from week 1 of “What’s On a Map?”

Mini Lesson

- Tell students that they are going to create a map for one of their classmates to use.
- Each student will decide a hall or part of the school (if they’re ready to do the whole school, they can. Some students may just be ready for the classroom) of which they would like to create a map.
- Each student will take an item from the classroom, or “treasure” and place it somewhere on their map. They will have to create a map for a classmate to use to find the item or “treasure” that the student chose.

Guided Practice

- Model creating a map on the white board—review the steps from week 1. Emphasis labeling, key, compass rose, and pictures.
- Ask students to come help label parts of the map.
- Ask students to come draw the next part of the map.
- Model how to put an X on the spot on your map that the “treasure” is.

Small Group Work

- Students create their maps in pairs.
- Once students have finished, pair students up to trade maps and try to find their partners’ treasure, using their partner’s map.
- When students have finished, have the partners show the maps and talk about what was helpful and what was tricky on their partner’s map.

Share Time

- Discuss what worked well on people’s maps and what was confusing.
Week 2- Day 4- Me on the Map Flipbook

Purpose: Students summarize the important community members in the school.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Materials:

- Posters created the last two days
- Flipbooks from week 1

Mini Lesson

- Remind students that they have talked about the family community last week, and this week they explored the school community.
- Review Me on the Map.
- Ask students what types of maps the little girl created.
- Explain that today students will add to their Me on the Map book, and the title for today’s page will be "My School."

Guided Practice

- Discuss what kinds of things might be included on the flipbook page (it can include community members, it can include a map of the school, any way that the student wants to represent the important aspects of the school community).
- Make a list on chart paper while students share ideas.

Independent Work

- Students create their flipbook page.

Discussion: Whole Group

- Students share their flipbook pages.
- Other students comment on what they enjoyed about the flipbook and what needs work.
**Week 2-Day 5 Overview**

**Focus:** How to use the writing process.

**Components:**
- Brainstorming
- Using a Story Map to Write a Story

**Overview of Week 2-Day 5:**

The students have spent most of the week writing about the school community. However, it is important that they are given time to write about topics of their own choice to create motivated writers. Today focuses on reviewing the ideas that writer’s have communities as well, and that writer’s often follow rules, just like other communities. The focus also includes the idea that maps are not just for locating things, but that maps are used as tools for writer’s to organize their work and create stories.
Week 2- Day 5- Brainstorming

**Purpose:** Authors use a process to write, and the process begins by brainstorming ideas about a given topic.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**

- W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

**Materials:**
- Idea bank from week 1
- Chart paper
- Individual white boards (1 per child)
- White board markers (1 per child)
- Alphabet chart (large for group)
- Alphabet chart (1 per child)
- Writing notebooks/journals

**Mini Lesson**
- Tell students they will have a chance to begin their roles as writers today.
- Tell students sometimes writers about something different than what they are learning about.
- Model choosing a topic from the class idea bank in week 1.
- Tell students you will use a web, which is another type of map for writers.
- Model creating a web and putting the idea in the center of the web.

**Guided Practice**
- Ask students to think about all of the different ideas about that topic.
- Write the ideas around the web.
- Have students help number the ideas in order which they make the most sense.
- Give students their idea banks from week 1.

**Individual Work**
- Students choose a topic from their idea bank.
- Students brainstorm ideas that go along with their topic
- Students number the ideas that go along with the topic.

**Share Time**
- Students share their brainstorm webs.
Week 2- Day 5- Using a web to write a story

Purpose: Authors use their brainstorm webs to write a story.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

Materials:
- Idea bank from week 1
- Chart paper
- Individual white boards (1 per child)
- White board markers (1 per child)
- Alphabet chart (large for group)
- Alphabet chart (1 per child)
- Writing notebooks/journals

Mini Lesson
- Model rereading the order that the class numbered the idea web.
- Model checking to make sure that the order makes sense.

Guided Practice
- Use interactive writing to create a class story.

Independent Work
- Encourage students to use their webs to order and create a story.
- Encourage students to use their white boards to practice words they are unsure of how to spell.
- Encourage students to illustrate a picture to match their texts.
- Encourage students to reread their writing, and to use to the pencil rubric after they have finished writing.
- While students are writing, conference with individual students.

Share Time
- Students share stories.
- Ask students if each other’s stories make sense and are in the correct order.
**Week 3: My City Community**

This week is a focus on different roles people play in our city community. Field trips will be taken to see different buildings and roles of different people in our community. Community members (including parents!) will be asked to come in and be guest speakers to the students—telling them about their roles and responsibilities within the community. Rules will be talked about, and why rules are important within communities. Hopefully the mayor would come in to speak about rules within a community.

**Week 3- Day 1 Overview**

**Focus:** Introduce city community members to students and identify students’ prior knowledge of the topic and misconceptions.

**Components:**

- Mentor Text *What Do People Do All Day* by Richard Scarry
- Dramatic Play Time
- Writing Group Interview Questions

**Overview of Week 3-Day 1:**

The first activity of reading the *What Do People Do All Day* is to activate prior knowledge. This is to get students thinking about members of the larger city community. The quick write is done to teach students that not all writing is done in sentences, but that sometimes people make quick lists, as well. This writing component also promotes students to think about phonemic awareness while writing.

The dramatic play is also to activate prior knowledge. The idea of community helpers will be the main focus for the next two weeks, and therefore, it is important to gain as much knowledge about students prior experiences as possible. The dramatic play time offers the teacher a chance to identify stereotypes and misconceptions of different community helpers, and it also allows the teacher to begin to identify which different community helpers may be of high interest, so that the teacher can gather texts as needed. Dramatic play also motivates students and allows creativity to flow. This is also a great way to promote collaboration as well.

Writing group interview questions is somewhat of a review from the previous week. This week there will be less scaffolding in order to determine if the concept of writing interview questions and interviewing is beginning to transfer. Working in groups also motivates students, and having actual community members to interview creates authentic tasks for the students to engage in.
**Week 3-Day 1- Mentor Text: What Do People Do All Day? By Richard Scarry**

**Purpose:** Introduce students to different community members within the city, and students demonstrate an understanding of key details within a story.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Met Through Instruction:**

- RL1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
- B.S.4.4 Understand that a community is a group to which a person may belong.
- P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities.

**Materials:**

- *What Do People Do All Day?* by Richard Scarry
- Chart Paper

**Mini Lesson**

- Express to students that you are going to read a story about a community and that while you are reading you would like them to think about the different community members that are in the story.
- Read *What do People Do All Day?*

**Guided Practice**

- Ask students what community helpers they heard referenced in the book.
- Explain to students that you are going to quick write their answers.
- Explain that this quick write is just a list, and complete sentences aren’t expected.
- Explain that a list moves from one line to the next.
- As students share their findings, record them on the anchor chart.
- Ask students to come up and write their answers on the anchor chart as well.

**Independent Practice**

- Explain that the students will be doing a quick write.
- Students will make a list of community members from the book and other community helpers that they know of that were not listed in the book.

**Share Time**

- Make a list on chart paper of the different community helpers.
**Week 3- Day 1- Dramatic Play Time**

**Purpose:** Students explore the roles of different city community helpers.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**

- B.S.4.1 Understand that different groups may have different rules and patterns of acceptable behaviour.

**Materials:**

- Community helper clothes (chef hats, stethoscopes, police hats, mail carrier uniform, anything)

**Mini Lesson**

- Display the dress up clothes to the students.
- Explain to the students that these clothes are often the type of clothes that community helpers wear.
- Ask students to identify what types of community helpers would wear specific clothing.
- Tell students that if they put on the clothes of a specific community helper, then they should play the part of that community helper.
- Review ways to work together and problem solve if a disagreement arises.

**Guided Practice**

- Ask a student to come put a chef’s hat on.
- Ask the student to model what role playing a chef would like.
- Then, ask another student to come up and take the hat off of the first student because he/she wants to role play being a chef.
- Ask the students how they could problem solve to find a solution.

**Independent Practice**

- Students engage in role playing.
- Take notes of different things students are doing to determine misconceptions or to understand their ideas of what specific community helpers do.

**Share Time**

- Ask students to share some of the different things that they did when they were dressed up as different community helpers.
- Ask questions about what other types of responsibilities different helpers may have.
Week 3- Day 1- Write Group Interview Questions

**Purpose:** Model how writing questions is an efficient way to understand more about the responsibilities of others.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**
- SL.1.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about *grade 1 topics and texts* with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
- SL.1.3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

**Materials:**
- Chart paper labeled “community helpers”
- Paper for writing interview questions
- Interview questions anchor chart from last week

**Mini Lesson**

- Tell students that a panel of community helpers will come to the class to explain their responsibilities within the community.
- Tell students that today they will have a partner and each pair will write interview questions for their community helper. (Have this arranged prior to this week. Ask community members to come (4-5 community members). Utilize parents—ask different parents to come in and speak about what they do for their job, and how they help the community).
- Address the list of the community helpers that will be at the panel or that the students will be visiting on field trips, and have students choose which community helper they will interview.
- Point out the anchor charts of interview questions created last week to help guide students, but encourage students to come up with their own questions as well.

**Guided Practice**

- Ask students to Think-Pair-Share an interview question for a nurse.
- Add the question to the Anchor Chart from last week.

**Group Work**

- Students begin writing interview questions.
- Remind students to use the pencil rubric when they are finished writing, and encourage students to use their best handwriting so that it looks nice when they interview their member.
- Guide students with their writing, and observe students’ writing as they write in pairs.
- Choose 4 or 5 pairs to share one of their questions that is different than the ones on the anchor charts.
Share Time

- Students gather together as a group and share some of the questions written.
- Ask students if the question will help the class learn more about the community member responsibilities.
- Students give input on the questions shared to determine if it will help the students learn more about the impact the community helper makes on the community.
- Model how to take turns during the interview. One person greets, the next asks a question and writes the response, then the other person asks the next question and so on.
- Have students practice this with their partners.
- Show students the community helper journal. Explain that tomorrow, as they interview the community members, they will take notes, so that we can keep a journal of the different important tasks that different community members do.
Week 3- Day 2 Overview

Focus: Understand the different roles and responsibilities within the city community.

Components:
- Community Member Panel
- Community Helper Journal

Overview of Week 3- Day 2:

Much like the interviews of week 2, the first activity of students actively engaging in interviewing community helper members is an authentic and purposeful way for the students to gain information on roles and responsibilities of different community members.

The community helper journal is a way for students to retain the information they have gained by interviewing community helpers. It is also a way to teach about organizing non-fiction texts.
Week 3- Day 2- Community Member Panel

Purpose: Understand the different roles and responsibilities within the city community, and that asking questions is a way to learn more.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- SL.1.3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

Materials:

- Interview questions written on day 1.
- Anchor chart paper
- Video recorder

Mini Lesson

- Explain to students that it’s important to practice their questions before actually interviewing a person.
- Model practicing the questions written, so that it is performed fluently.
- Model taking turns asking the questions and writing down the answers.

Guided Practice

- Students practice their interview questions before the panel comes.
- Community member talk about their job, and more importantly, why their job is important to the community.

Work Time

- Students ask interview questions. Teacher records the answers on chart paper. Videotape to go back and look at how people interviewed.
- Continue until all community members have shared and interview questions have been answered.
- Thank the community member panel.

Share Time

- Ask students what answers surprised them from the panel.
- Show students the website: [http://bensguide.gpo.gov/k-2/neighborhood/index.html](http://bensguide.gpo.gov/k-2/neighborhood/index.html) to learn more about any community member that students were unable to visit or interview.
Week 3- Day 2- Community Helper Journal

Purpose: Students organize their writing.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
- RI.1.5. Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text.

Materials:

- Community member journals
- Anchor chart from community member answers that the teacher recorded during the panel
- A Day in the Life of a Nurse by Connie Fluet

Mini Lesson

- Introduce students to the book A Day in the Life of a Nurse by Connie Fluet.
- Flip through the first couple of pages.
- Ask students how they know what each page is about (there is a title on each page).
- Go back to the table of contents. Show students how the table of contents at the beginning of the book tells you what page to find different kinds of information.
- Introduce students to their community helper journals.
- Model how you are going to skip the first page because at the end of writing the book you will go back and make a table of contents so that the reader can know where to find information about different community helpers.
- Address the notes that were taken from one of the community members.
- Model creating a title at the top of the page (the name of the community helper can be the title).
- Model to students how you take the notes and are going to create a page in your community helper journal so that you will have a book of all different community helpers at the end of the week.

Guided Practice

- Use interactive writing to create a community helper journal page as a whole class, following the steps that were modeled in the mini lesson.

Independent Work

- For students that struggle with writing, the teacher should have starter sentences on each page of the different community helpers.
• Encourage students to draw a picture of the community helper.
• Students work on their community helper journals.
• While students are working on their journals the teacher should work with small groups to get them started.
• After students have a good start, teacher should pull students to review the videotape of them asking their interview questions.
• Have a conversation about what the group did well when asking their questions, and what they can continue to work on. Continue to meet with each group that interviewed today.

Share Time

• Have students share their journals with the class.
• Ask students who else in which they would like to share their journals.
• Discuss how it can be arranged for the students to share their journals with others in order to inform them of what they have learned from the interview questions.
Week 3- Day 3 Overview

Focus: Understand the different roles and responsibilities within the city community.

Components:

- Field Trips
- Community Helper Journals

Overview of Week 3- Day 3:

Much like the interviews of week 2, and the previous day, the first activity of students actively engaging in interviewing community helper members is an authentic and purposeful way for the students to gain information on roles and responsibilities of different community members.

The community helper journal is a way for students to retain the information they have gained by interviewing community helpers. It is also a way to teach about organizing non-fiction texts.
Week 3- Day 3-Field Trips

Purpose: Understand the different roles and responsibilities within the city community, and that asking questions is a way to learn more.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- SL.1.3. Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

Materials:

- Bus for field trips
- Chaperones
- Video recorder
- Paper for taking notes
- Community helper books for the bus for students to look at while driving
- Field trip emergency kit

Procedures:

- Take students to 3-4 different places in the community for field trips.
- Have each community member talk about their job, and more importantly, why their job is important to the community.
- Let students that wrote interview questions ask the questions. Teacher records the answers on paper. Videotape to go back and look at how people interviewed.
- Thank the community helpers for allowing you to visit.
- Continue to the next place.
Week 3- Day 3- Community Helper Journal

Purpose: Students organize their writing.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

- RI.1.5. Know and use various text features (e.g., headings, tables of contents, glossaries, electronic menus, icons) to locate key facts or information in a text.

Materials:

- Community member journals
- Anchor chart from community member answers that the teacher recorded during the panel
- *A Day in the Life of a Nurse* by Connie Fluet

Follow the same ideas as on Day 2. Ask students what else they could do to make the books more interesting.
Week 3- Day 4 Overview

Focus: Students demonstrate an understanding of community helper roles through fluently reading reader’s theatre.

Components:
- Reader’s Theatre

Overview of Week 3- Day 4:

Reader’s theatre is a great way for students to practice fluency. It also motivates students because there is an audience at the end of the practicing. Students are also working on working with one another to ensure that the performance goes smoothly. In this reader’s theatre, students are also encouraged to add or change the script as they see fit according to their interview answers.
Week 3- Day 4- Reader’s Theatre

Purpose: Students demonstrate an understanding of community helper roles through fluently reading reader’s theatre.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- RF.1.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.

Materials:

- Reader’s theatre scripts *An Easy-to-Use Community Helpers Play for Elementary School* from Bad Wolf Press

Mini Lesson

- Explain to students what reader’s theatre is and how it works.
- Explain that there are different parts in reader’s theatre, and how the script works.
- Give each student a copy of the reader’s theatre.
- First, read through the reader’s theatre as a class. Just read it, while everyone else follows along.

Guided Practice

- Read through it again, giving parts to groups of students.
- Remind students these don’t have to be their parts, but this is just to read through the whole script together.

Small Group Work

- Students choose parts of the reader’s theatre in groups of 2-3.
- Encourage students to change the words of their community helper if they would prefer to share something they learned about their community helper instead of the script.
- If 2-3 students would rather choose a different community helper than in the script, encourage them to make up their own script for that community helper.
- Help students change wording if so desired.
- Students practice parts in groups.

Share Time

- Groups perform in front of the rest of the class.
- Discuss what groups did well and what they can work on.
- Discuss how actions help tell a story, and not just words.
- Model how to add actions to the words. Students practice again adding actions.
- Ask students for whom they would like to perform the reader’s theatre. Arrange a possible showing.
Week 3- Day 5 Overview

Focus: Students demonstrate an understanding of community helper roles through fluently reading reader’s theatre.

Components:
- Reader’s Theatre
- Reader’s Theatre Performance

Overview of Week 3-Day 5:

Reader’s theatre is a great way for students to practice fluency. It also motivates students because there is an audience at the end of the practicing. Students are also working on working with one another to ensure that the performance goes smoothly. In this reader’s theatre, students are also encouraged to add or change the script as they see fit according to their interview answers.
Week 3- Day 5- Reader’s Theatre

Purpose: Students demonstrate an understanding of community helper roles through fluently reading reader’s theatre.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- RF.1.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
- P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities

Materials:
- Reader’s theatre scripts
- Community helper clothes
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6X6M-THp2I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6X6M-THp2I)
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKhThfo6N5U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKhThfo6N5U)

Mini Lesson

- Show students [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6X6M-THp2I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6X6M-THp2I). Ask students if they thought the performance was exciting or boring.
- Show students [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKhThfo6N5U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKhThfo6N5U). Ask students if this was more exciting or more boring than the last video.

Guided Practice

- Discuss what made the video better.
- Discuss what actions different groups could do to make the performance more exciting.
- Ask a group to demonstrate how to add actions to their script to make it more exciting.

Group Work

- Students practice with their groups.
- Encourage actions from their groups.
- Encourage students to put on costumes of their community helper parts.

Share Time

- Students practice together as a whole class.
- Teacher videotapes performance.
- Students watch performance and decide what can be better next time.
- Discuss what skills are needed to meet the goals.
- Repeat.
Week 3- Day 5- Reader’s Theatre Performance

Purpose: Students demonstrate an understanding of community helper roles through fluently reading reader’s theatre.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- RF.1.4 Read with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension.
- P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities

Materials:
- Reader’s theatre scripts
- Community helper clothes
- Authentic audience
- Video recorder

Performance
- Students perform reader’s theatre for audience.
- Teacher videotapes the performance to share with the students.

Share Time
- Watch the performance.
- Discuss what went better than the practice video, and what skills were used to make the performance better.
Week 4: Community Member Research and Narrative

This week is a focus on students researching a community member that interests them. The students will take notes on the importance, the responsibilities, and a typical day in the life of the community helper. Students will transfer the note taking into creating a first person narrative about their community helper. Students will rehearse and either role play or use a community helper puppet to share their knowledge with the class. These will be videotaped and shared with parents.

Week 4- Day 1 Overview

Focus: Students define research and determine how to ask a good question in order to research a chosen topic.

Components:

- What is Research?
- Asking Questions
- Creating Buildings with Blocks

Overview of Week 4- Day 1:

The purpose of the first learning activity is to introduce the topic of using research to find answers. Thus far in the unit, students have interviewed people to find the answers to their questions. Now, they will start using texts to find information. This learning activity also activates students' thinking as they are simply exploring books to determine which community helper they will choose to research more.

Although students have been writing interview questions, they have been writing questions that can be answered by someone standing in front of them. This second learning activity of writing questions makes students think more deeply about questions that they can actually find answers to, and that will truly make a difference in their understanding. Giving the students the choice of which community helper they want to research is motivating for students.

Lastly, for those students who are extremely hands-on, providing them with a kinesthetic learning activity can often promote engagement in writing. In addition, now not just social studies and literacy are being integrated, but science is being integrated into the unit as well. Students will begin to understand the relationship of balance and motion as they try to mimic creating the buildings which were seen on their field trips. Taking pictures of their towers, and asking students to write about their observations is very motivating and engaging.
Week 4- Day 1-What is Research?

Purpose: Students understand why research is important and how research can help them to learn more about a topic of interest.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- RI.1.1. Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- RI.1.2. Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text

Materials

- Chart Paper
- Variety of nonfiction books about community helpers
  - Community Helpers at Work: A day in the life of ______ books are great resources
- A Day in the Life of a Nurse by Connie Fluet

Mini Lesson

- Display A Day in the Life of a Nurse to students.
- Ask students what nurses do. Record student answers.
- Flip through the book showing the students the specific questions at the top of the pages. Ask the students the questions and see if anyone knows the answers.
- Explain to students that although we know some things about nurses, there is much more we can learn. One way we can learn more is to research.

Guided Practice

- Ask students what research means. Research means to dig deeper and learn more about a topic.
- Make a list of community helpers on chart paper.
- Use interactive writing to create the list.

Independent Work

- Students create an individual list of different community helpers they would like to research.
- Students begin looking through books about their given topic.

Share Time

- Ask students to share their topics and why they are interested in the community helper.
### Week 4- Day 1- Asking Questions

**Purpose:** Students determine what types of questions will help them to begin researching topics.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**

- A.1. Employ the full range of research-based comprehension strategies, including making connections, determining importance, questioning, visualizing, making inferences, summarizing, and monitoring for comprehension

**Materials:**

- *A Day in the Life of a Nurse* by Connie Fluet
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e64qlUNvh2s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e64qlUNvh2s)
- Chart paper with a large question mark
- Chart paper labeled “question words”

**Mini Lesson**

- Review the headings again of *A Day in the Life of Nurse*.
- Ask students what they notice about the different headings of the book (they’re all questions).
- Explain that when we research, we begin by thinking of questions that we want to know more about.
- Show students the chart paper with the big question mark.
- Ask students what a question is. (a question is something we wonder).

**Guided Practice**

- Using interactive writing, ask students what other questions they would like to know about nurses. Write the questions on the chart paper as students ask them.
- Remind students that the questions should be something that helps them understand the role of the community helper better, and have to be questions that we can find the answers.
- After a list has been generated, ask students to look at all of the questions we asked. What do they notice about the end of all of the questions we wrote? (all have question marks at the end)
- Ask students to look at the words used in order to ask questions.
- Ask students what they notice about the first words in the questions they asked.
- Write the “question words” on a new piece of chart paper (who, what, when, where, why, how).
- Show students the youtube video. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e64qlUNvh2s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e64qlUNvh2s)
- Let students sing along with the video.
Independent Work

- Students choose one of the community helpers they made on their list to research.
- Students think, pair, share which community helper they would like to research.
- Students create questions about the community helper of their choice.
- Monitor and support students as they work.

Share Time

- Students share questions.
- The rest of the class has to determine if the question is actually a question, and if the question helps us learn more about the community helper.
- After a couple of students have shared, then students partner up and read their questions to one another—checking to make sure they are questions and that they can tell us more about the role of the community helper.
- Tell students we will use those questions tomorrow to begin researching our community helpers.
Week 4- Day 1-Creating Buildings with Blocks

Purpose: Students recognize how balance and motion effects the ability to build buildings, such as places within the community.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- S.1.1 Ask questions about objects, organisms, and events in the environment.
- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
- S.1.2 Plan and conduct simple investigations.
- S.1.7 Follow appropriate safety procedures when conducting investigations.

Materials:

- Large building blocks
- Science journals
- Slideshow of different buildings around the community

Mini Lesson

- Display to students a slideshow of different building structures in the community (school, house, bank, hospital, etc.).
- Ask students how they think the buildings are made without falling over.
- Show students the blocks.
- Ask a student to come try and build the blocks as high as they can go without tipping over (most students will build straight up).
- On chart paper, show students how you would draw your representation of the blocks stacked on top of each other.
- Point out that you have to draw the same number of blocks as you used.
- Demonstrate writing a sentence under the picture “I used 5 blocks and stacked them on top of each other to build my tower.”
- Ask students why it would be important to draw a picture and write about their tower (to remember what they did).
- Explain the rules for gathering blocks and putting blocks away safely.

Guided Practice

- Repeat the steps in the mini lesson, but this time ask a student to record their work.
Group Work Time

- Give students blocks to try and build their towers as high as they can without them tipping over. (Some of them might use the skinny side to try and build, some might do it the same way as the demonstration, some might use other methods).
- Encourage students time to draw their towers and write a sentence.
- Take pictures of students’ towers as they are building.
- Ask students to pick up their blocks and put them away.

Share Time

- Students bring their journals to the carpet.
- A couple of students share their journals with their pictures and their writing.
- Show students the slideshow of buildings again. Ask students to look closely at how the bricks are stacked.
- Students should recognize that the bricks aren’t just stacked straight on top of each other but they are zigzagged.
- Discuss how looking at the bricks on the community buildings may help the students build a taller tower.
- Tell students that tomorrow, you’re going to allow them to try and build their towers again, using a different strategy.
**Week 4- Day 2 Overview**

**Focus:** Students understand how to read through a text and take notes on the important details within the text.

**Components:**
- Taking Notes
- Creating Buildings with Blocks

**Overview of Week 4-Day 2:**

The first learning task of taking notes not only focuses on the process of taking notes, but also focuses on students using comprehension skills as they read. The students need to determine importance, monitor their comprehension, and summarize in order to read a text and decide if it appropriately answers the questions previously written. Additionally, because the students were able to choose their own community helper of interest, the task is more motivating for the students.

The second learning task, once again, for those students who are extremely hands-on, providing them with a kinesthetic learning activity can often promote engagement in writing. In addition, now not just social studies and literacy are being integrated, but science is being integrated into the unit as well. Students will begin to understand the relationship of balance and motion as they try to mimic creating the buildings which were seen on their field trips. Taking pictures of their towers, and asking students to write about their observations is very motivating and engaging. Today, students will be problem solving to determine how to make their towers more stable than the previous day. This includes predicting, and trying experiments.
Week 4- Day 2- Taking Notes

Purpose: Students understand how to read through a text and take notes on the important details within the text.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities
- A.1. Employ the full range of research-based comprehension strategies, including making connections, determining importance, questioning, visualizing, making inferences, summarizing, and monitoring for comprehension

Materials:
- Sticky notes (5-10 per child)
- Large posters (1 per child)
- Books about community helpers (lots of books)
- *A Day in the Life of a Nurse* by Connie Fluet
- Individual questions written yesterday about a community helper

Mini Lesson
- Remind students that yesterday they generated a list of questions that you wanted to answer in order to understand the role of a nurse in the community. Today, you’re going to show them how to take notes when you find information that answers the questions.
- Demonstrate how to choose 4 questions to focus on from yesterday.
- Show students the large poster.
- Demonstrate how to fold the poster in half and draw a line on the poster where the fold is.
- Model how to write one of the questions at the top of the poster.
- Write another question under the line that was drawn.
- Repeat this on the back of the poster with 2 more questions.
- Show how you’ll leave a little space at the bottom for other interesting sticky notes that might not answer the questions.
- Allow students to go back and fold their posters, and choose their 4 questions to write.

Guided Practice
- Read through the book *A Day in the Life of a Nurse* by Connie Fluet.
- Model how to stop at certain spots where the book answers one of your questions. Continue and encourage students to tell you when to stop.
- Model how to write that note (in your own words) on the sticky note.
- Model placing the sticky note under the question on the poster.
- Invite students to come place the sticky notes in the correct place.
- Demonstrate that if you find an interesting fact that doesn’t answer one of your questions but you think it’s important to place that sticky note at the bottom of the poster.
Small Group or Independent Time

- Students go back and begin researching their community helper.
- Students may work in pairs if they have the same community helper as another student.

Share Time

- Students share what research they have found so far at the carpet.
- Other students decide if the information answered the question or not.
Week 4- Day 2- Creating Buildings with Blocks

Purpose: Students recognize how balance and motion effects the ability to build buildings, such as places within the community.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- S.1.1 Ask questions about objects, organisms, and events in the environment.
- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
- S.1.2 Plan and conduct simple investigations.
- S.1.7 Follow appropriate safety procedures when conducting investigations.

Materials:

- Large building blocks
- Science journals
- Slideshow of different buildings around the community
- Photographs of towers from yesterday glued into science journals

Mini Lesson

- Have photographs of students’ towers from yesterday glued into their science notebooks.
- Show one students’ journal with the photograph of the tower.
- Tell students to look at their tower, and decide how they will try to build another tall tower today using a different strategy.
- Look at the picture. Ask students what other way the student could build a tall tower today.
- Write under the picture: Today I will ________ to build a tall tower.

Small Group Work and Independent Work Time

- Students to go back to their journals and write their own new strategy.
- Give students blocks to build their towers.
- Take pictures while they are building.
- Monitor and look for students who are using different method to build their towers.
- Students draw their tallest tower and write a sentence about their tower.
- Students pick up blocks (review rules from yesterday).

Share Time

- Students bring their journals to the carpet to share. Choose students who used the
different methods.

- Ask other students: Why do you think this tower was able to be so tall? Why do you think it didn’t fall over?
**Week 4- Day 3 Overview**

**Focus:** Students recognize that they can gather more information if they look at more than just one book.

**Components:**
- Using Multiple Texts to Research

**Overview of Week 4- Day 3**

Today’s learning task will take a significant amount of time due to the fact that many comprehension strategies will be used in order for students to take notes from multiple texts. The task encourages students to find information from more than one text.
**Week 4- Day 3- Using Multiple Texts to Research**

**Purpose:** Students recognize that they can gather *more* information if they look at more than just one book.

**Iowa Common Core Addressed Through Literacy:**

- A.1. Employ the full range of research-based comprehension strategies, including making connections, determining importance, questioning, visualizing, making inferences, summarizing, and monitoring for comprehension

**Materials:**

- *My Daddy the Nurse* by Paul Bruns.
- Posters from yesterday
- Anchor chart with nurse questions from yesterday
- Sticky notes
- Multiple books about community helpers

**Mini Lesson**

- Explain that yesterday you used the book *A Day in the Life of a Nurse* to research about nurses, but sometimes we can find new information in new books.
- Demonstrate how to review the questions and notes from yesterday.
- Ask students to listen for new *information* as you read the book *My Daddy the Nurse*.
- Read the book.
- Demonstrate how to read through this book, and model writing down new information and placing it on the poster.

**Guided Practice**

- Continue having students share new *information*, but have them place the sticky notes in the appropriate places on the poster.

**Small Group and Independent Work**

- Encourage students to continue researching their community helper, but this time to use a different book than yesterday.
- Give students ample time to research.

**Share Time**

- Students share information collected today.
- Ask students how they used new books to find new information.
**Week 4- Day 4 Overview**

**Focus:** Students understand that writers use different ways of organizing writing in order to engage the reader.

**Components:**
- Creating a Lead Sentence
- Dramatic Play Time
- Organizing Notes to Create a Narrative

**Overview of Week 4- Day 4:**

The first learning task of creating a lead sentence will be a review from previous weeks’ lessons, and therefore less scaffolding will be in place.

The dramatic play time, once again allows the students to role play the new information they are learning about community helpers. It also allows the teacher time to notice if any misconceptions are changing, or if there are still misconceptions about specific community helpers. This done in between creating a lead sentence and organizing notes also gives students a break from writing.

The last task, organizing notes is similar to the previous lesson organizing using a story map. This however, does not have a story map, but all of the notes that students had taken from their research. This holds students accountable for rereading their sticky notes, and determining importance of what should come first, second, and so forth in their narratives.
**Week 4- Day 4- Creating a Lead Sentence**

**Purpose:** Students demonstrate an understanding of how the lead sentence gets the reader excited to read and tells the reader what the text is about.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**

- W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.
- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

**Materials:**
- Books used about community helpers
- Chart Paper
- First person narrative anchor chart
- First person narrative checklist (see Appendix C)
- Personal narrative graphic organizer (see Appendix C, one per child)

**Mini Lesson**

- Explain to students that they are going to use their notes from their research to create a book. But that they are going to do this using first person narrative.
- Ask who remembers what first person narrative means.
- Make the first person narrative chart and checklists created in week 1 visible to students.
- Tell students that in order to do this, they get to pretend they are the community helper they researched while they write.
- Before just using notes to write, writers think of a way to use a lead sentence to get the reader excited about the piece of writing.
- Tell students that you are going to read the lead sentence from a couple of books. As you read the lead sentence, tell students to put their thumbs up if they think it gets the reader excited, or thumbs down if it’s boring.
- Read through the lead sentences of the books.
- Make an anchor chart on chart paper called “Good Lead Sentences.”
  - They get the reader excited.
  - They tell what the rest of the writing will be about.
  - Examples: List examples that the students gave thumbs up to while reading the lead sentences of books.
- Look at the nurse poster from yesterday. Reread the information found on the poster.

**Guided Practice**

- Ask students to think of a good lead sentence if I were to pretend that I was going to tell
you about my job as a nurse. Think-pair-share.

- Record student ideas for good lead sentences.
- As a class, determine which ones are good and why.

**Independent Work Time**

- Students go back to their seats and create their own lead sentences for their own community helpers. Remind them to use first person, or to pretend they are talking about themselves.

**Share Time**

- Students share lead sentences in a large group.
- Ask other students to comment on each others’ lead sentences. Did it get you excited? What got you excited? Did it tell you what the rest of the writing will be about? What will it be about?
Week 4- Day 4-Dramatic Play Time

Purpose: Students explore the roles of different city community helpers.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- B.S.4.1 Understand that different groups may have different rules and patterns of acceptable behaviour.

Materials:

- Community helper clothes (chef hats, stethoscopes, police hats, mail carrier uniform, anything)

Mini Lesson

- Display the dress up clothes to the students.
- Explain to the students that these clothes are often the type of clothes that community helpers wear.
- Ask students to identify what types of community helpers would wear specific clothing.
- Tell students that if they put on the clothes of a specific community helper, then they should play the part of that community helper.

Small Group or Independent Work Time

- Students engage in role playing.
- Take notes of different things students are doing to determine misconceptions or to understand their ideas of what specific community helpers do.

Share Time

- Ask students to share some of the different things that they did when they were dressed up as different community helpers.
- Ask questions about what other types of responsibilities different helpers may have.
**Week 4- Day 4-Organizing Notes to Create a Narrative**

**Purpose:** Students demonstrate an understanding of how details in a story should be written in a sequential order for the reader to better understand the text.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**

- W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

**Materials:**
- Research posters
- Lead sentences
- Chart Paper
- First person narrative anchor chart (see Appendix C)
- First person narrative checklist (see Appendix C)

**Mini Lesson**

- Tell students they will use all of the information they have found out about community helpers in order to create a book.
- Explain that before they can just start writing, they have to think about how they are going to organize their notes.
- Tell students page one of their book will be their lead sentence.
- Draw students’ attention to the nurse poster.
- Model determining the most important question on the poster.
- Model writing “Page 2” next to that question.
- Explain to students that the information from that question will go on page 2 of your book.
- Then model looking at the information under that question
- Think Aloud how to determine what sticky notes should go in what order. Label the sticky notes 1, 2, 3 etc.

**Guided Practice**

- Ask students: What question do you think is the next most important question on this poster when talking about nurses?
- Label that question Page 3.
- Then ask students to look at the information under the 2nd question.
- Ask them to put the sticky notes in order of what makes sense. Label the sticky notes in order. 1, 2, 3. Etc.
• Repeat this with all 4 questions and the sticky notes beneath the questions.

**Independent Work Time**

• Students organize their posters by labeling their questions and sticky notes.
• Monitor and be sure that the organization makes sense.

**Share Time**

• Students share their organization with a partner to see if their ideas make sense.
**Week 4- Day 5 Overview**

**Focus:** Writers check their work before they publish their writing.

**Start by giving students more time to organize their posters if needed from yesterday.**

**Components:**
- Writers Use Rules to Check Their Work
- Publishing Work

**Overview of Week 4-Day 5:**

Students will continue to use the pencil rubric used previously in the unit to check their sticky notes. The reason the students are checking their sticky notes is because the students have spent a significant amount of time writing their sticky notes and organizing their sticky notes. To make students write their whole book, edit it, and then rewrite it to publish is a lot of work for these young writers. Therefore, if they edit their work on the sticky notes, they can then just create a published book.

Publishing the book is a great way for students to share their new knowledge on a particular community helper. The students will have an audience for the books next Monday, so it is important that they know the books have a purpose. The students will also be responsible for taking notes on each other’s books, and so the students need to ensure their best work is put forth in the publishing stage.
**Week 4- Day 5- Writers Use Rules to Check Their Work**

**Purpose:** Students use the pencil rubric to edit their sticky notes before making a book.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**

- W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

**Materials:**
- Chart paper labeled “Writing Rules”
- Large pencil rubric (See Appendix C)
- Individual pencil rubrics to tape onto desks (See Appendix C)
- Posters labeled

**Mini Lesson**

- Explain that students are going to play the role of editors.
- Ask who remembers what an editor does.
- Explain that the editor needs to follow rules when editing.
- Ask students what writing rules they are familiar with.
- Write them down on the chart paper labeled *Writing Rules*
  - Pictures should match the words.
  - Spaces should be in between words.
  - Sentences begin with a capital letter.
  - Sentences end with a period, question mark, or exclamation mark.
  - Words should be spelled correctly.
  - Stories should make sense.
- Review the pencil rubric.

**Guided Practice**

- Model going through the pencil rubric on the poster with sticky notes from yesterday.
- Invite students to come forward and make changes on the sticky notes.

**Independent Work Time**

- Students use the pencil rubric to edit their sticky notes.
- Conference with students as they complete their editing.
- As students finish their editing at different times, allow students to begin creating a title page for their book.
Week 4- Day 5- Publishing Work

Purpose: Students publish their edited work.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- W.1.3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.

- W.1.8 With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

Materials:
- Posters with edited sticky notes.
- Blank paper stapled together to create books (1 per child)

Mini Lesson

- Model using the lead sentence and transferring it to page 1 in the book.
- Model using the question labeled page 2 as the title on page 2.
- Model using the sticky notes from that question to create the information on page two.
- Remind students to use first person.

Guided Practice

- Invite students to transfer the question labeled page 3 as the title on page 3.
- Invite students to put the sticky notes in order and transfer them to page 3 in order to create the information on page 3.

Independent Work Time

- Students use their posters and edited sticky notes to create their books.
- Students illustrate their books.

Share Time

- Students share their books with a partner.
- The partners tell each other two things they did well and one thing they could work on for next time.
Week 5: Our Community Service Project and Presentation of Community Helpers
This week is a focus on how we, as first graders, can contribute to our community. It will focus on the planning and the process of putting a project into action at the first grade level.

Week 5- Day 1

Focus: Students present their personal narratives. Students also determine a class service project they would like to accomplish.

Components:

- How to Present Narratives
- Goods Versus Services
- Class Service Project—Choosing a Project

Overview of Week 5-Day 1

There are many different learning tasks that begin to take place today. The first is allowing students to decide what makes a presentation good. By providing examples of good and bad presentations students can strive to do their best. Practicing their presentations also allows students to practice fluency, and presenting their books provides an authentic audience.

The learning task of goods versus services introduces the idea that communities often provide goods and services to one another. It also defines the two words, and sets up for the following learning task.

Finally, choosing a service learning project creates a purposeful, meaningful, authentic way to engage and motivate students in school. They have worked hard in learning about community helpers, and the importance of communities. This provides them with the opportunity to engage in their community. It also supports collaboration, problem-solving, creative thinking, and many other 21st century skills.
Week5- Day 1- How to Present Narratives

Purpose: Students present narratives focusing on presentation voice and style.

Materials:
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHptn_3RyYE
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OziqfPdURB0
- First person narratives

Mini Lesson
- Show students this video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OziqfPdURB0.
- Ask students if this presentation was exciting?
- Ask students if this presenter used a loud and clear voice, if this presenter held the paper easily to hear him, and if the presenter kept their attention.
- Tell students you will show them another video. Tell them to think about if the presenter is exciting, if the presenter is loud and easy to hear, and if the presenter keeps your attention.
- Then show students this video: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SHptn_3RyYE.
- Discuss the reasons that this presenter was more exciting and kept students’ attention.

Guided Practice
- Ask students what types of things they could do to make their presentation exciting and easy to hear.
- Make a list of the things students can do (actions, hold paper down, stand tall, dress up, use puppets, etc).
- Show students the rubric used for presenting.
- Go through the rubric together for students to understand the expectations.
- Ask students if they think the man that presented Toast just did that one time and did it that well?
- Ask students what they have to do in order to present that well.

Small Group Work Time and Independent Work Time
- Students plan their presentations and practice on their own.
- When they feel confident, they practice with one another.

Share Time
- Ask if any students are ready to present today. Allow a couple to share that are ready.
  - If possible, allow students to present in front of other classes, or even parents that
are able to come to the school.
  o Videotape students as they present.
  o Have a few students share each day throughout the week until all students have shared. Find time in the day to show each student their video and go through the rubric together.
**Week 5- Day 1- Goods Versus Services**

**Purpose:** Students understand the difference between goods and services in order to choose a class service project.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**

- P.S.1.4 Understand rights and responsibilities

**Materials:**

- Pictures of electricians, dentists, swim instructor
- T-shirt
- Baseball
- Apple
- Cell phone
- Child’s toy
- Chart paper with a T-chart. One side labeled: Community Helpers. The other side labeled: Good or Service. Under the community helpers list: police officer, grocer, teacher, store owner, waiter, chef
- Blank paper (1 per student)
- 2 Large notecards. 1 labeled “Goods.” 1 labeled “Services.”

**Mini Lesson**

- Show students the following items: t-shirt, baseball, apple, cell phone, child’s toy.
- Ask students to predict how they think all of the items are alike.
- Tell the class that all of these items have something in common. They are all grown or made.
- Explain that items that people can buy are called "goods" if those items were grown or made. Explain further that the word "goods" has nothing to do with being good. It is an old English word meaning merchandise or things you can buy in a store.
- Ask students to name some more items that would be considered “goods.” Make a list.
- Now tell the students that we sometimes buy things that are not grown or made. For example, we get lessons for different things we learn like swimming, piano, tennis, -- but we don't go to a store and point to a lesson and put it on! Instead, a lesson is something someone teaches us. This is called a service.
- Show a picture of a dentist. Ask students to predict if what the dentist does for us is a good or a service.
- We may get our teeth cleaned at the dentist, but it’s not something that we can go buy or make. A teeth cleaning is an example of a service--of something that someone does for us.
Guided Practice

- Show students a picture of an electrician. Ask them to predict if the electrician gives us goods or services.
- Ask students to help you write the definition of goods and services on large note cards.
  - Goods: something we can grow or make
  - Services: something someone teaches us or does for us
- Show children the T-chart of the list of community helpers already created on chart paper (or smart board).
- Ask students to tell you what good or service each community helper provides for the community. Write each good or service across from the name of the community helper.

Independent Work Time

- Give students a piece of blank paper.
- Tell them to draw a community helper on one side of the paper.
- On the other side of the paper, tell students to draw the good or service that the community helper does for the community.

Share Time

- Share students’ drawings. Ask:
  - Is that a good or a service? How do you know?
  - How does that good/service help the community?
Week 5- Day 1- Class Service Project- Choosing a Project

Purpose: Students recognize the difference they can make in their community.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- SL.1.1. Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

Before beginning the class service project you may want to consider the following (recommended by the Peace Corps website).

Reality Check

- How much time can you devote to the planning and implementation of the project?
- How involved do you want your students to be?
- Do you want to make a difference in your own community or in the world at large?
- Do you want to work with an established organization?
- Will students raise money? Give of their time, energy, and effort? A combination?

http://wws.peacecorps.gov/wws/educators/lessonplans/lesson.cfm?lpid=217

Materials:

- The Kid's Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Service Ideas for Young People Who Want to Make a Difference by Barbara A. Lewis

Mini Lesson

- Read a portion of The Kid's Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Service Ideas for Young People Who Want to Make a Difference.
- Ask students what the children did that made a difference in the community.
- Ask students why it is important to provide goods and services to our community.
- Think-pair-share.

Guided Practice

- Ask students what kinds of things they could do to help the community.
- Make a list of student ideas. (some examples to get them going could include: having a bake or book sale and donating money to a cause, making tie-blankets for the humane society for the animals to have warmth in the winter time, community clean up, )
- Tell students that it’s time to take action.

The following are steps recommended to take by the Peace Corps:
• Ask students how they should best put to work their energy, talents, and desire to make a difference. How can they make a difference in their school or our community?

• Explain to students that quality service-learning projects meet these criteria:
  o They meet actual community needs.
  o They are coordinated in collaboration with the community.
  o They are integrated into the academic curriculum.
  o They facilitate active student reflection.
  o They help students use new skills and knowledge in real-world settings.
  o They help develop a sense of caring for and about others.
  o They improve the quality of life for the person(s) served.

• Afterward, explain that planning a service-learning project involves these four steps:
  o Assessing school or community needs
  o Planning a project that addresses the needs
  o Implementing the project
  o Reflecting on what you've learned and evaluating results

• Point out to students that they now have a list of projects they might like to undertake and a list of criteria for them.

• Ask students to look at the list of projects and think about the importance of the needs each option addresses.

**Independent Work Time**

• Give each student a list of the projects the class has proposed and ask the students to do the following: On a scale of 1 to 10, indicate how urgent and important the need is for each project. The numbers 1-3 indicate low; 4-7 indicate moderate; 8-10 indicate a high sense of urgency and importance.

• Ask for volunteers to count the responses and come up with an urgency and importance tally for each option. Then eliminate ideas that have low scores and retain the rest.

**Share Time**

• Review each item with a high score, and have a class discussion of the pros and cons of each proposed project. Honor all opinions expressed because the final choice will need to have the support of all.

• Conduct a second round of scoring on the remaining items. There will usually be one or two projects that clearly stand out. Ask the class to discuss the remaining two or three options and come to consensus on the one project they think would meet an urgent and important school or community need. (In some cases, students may want to do an individual service-learning project, or one with a partner.)

• Once the class has decided on a project, there are many resources on project planning you can use. Useful websites to visit for service-learning project planning include: **Coverdell World Wise Schools**. You will find detailed guidelines, examples of projects, and links to other service-learning sites.

• Let your students know that once they have carefully planned, implemented, and
reflected on their service-learning project, they will have played an important part in forging another link in the common bond of humanity.

The Rest of the Week

The rest of the week will differ for each classroom based on the project that the students choose. Use the following rubric to help guide and plan your week:

http://wws.peacecorps.gov/wws/educators/lessonplans/lesson.cfm?lpid=217

This site is helpful as well: https://www.ffa.org/documents/lts_servicelearningtoolkit.pdf

Before Conducting the Project:

The teacher and the students will want to be sure to do the following after the project is chosen:

- Outline what types of tasks will have to take place in order to complete the project.
- Outline what materials are needed to complete the project.
- Assign pairs or groups of students to be in charge of specific tasks to complete the project.
- Create notes to inform anyone that needs to be informed about the project.
- Make arrangements for any outings or visitors that will take place to complete the project (the teacher may want to request a bus before this week in case there is need for the students to go somewhere at the end of the week).

While the Project is Happening:

When the project is happening, the teacher will want to be sure to capture as much as possible on camera or video camera for students to reflect. If the teacher is busy doing other things, the teacher should assign this task to someone else.

After the Project is Complete:

- Share with students the following ideas for reflection during the project, and once the project is completed, be sure they understand that reflection and documentation are parts of the process. Some ideas to facilitate student reflection:
  - Put together an album about the project containing photos, drawings, and writing.
  - Write letters to the people you worked with or for about the meaning of the project and what you learned.
  - Put together a video of the project and write a narration for it.
  - Visit other classes in your school to share what you accomplished and learned.
  - Share what you accomplished and learned with the PTA/PTO.
  - Write an article for your local newspaper about the project.
Week 6: Our Community Model Project

This week is a focus on students collaborating and creating their own model community using milk cartons as houses, buildings, etc. Students will be given a certain amount of money, and will be able to buy things from the home improvement store to build their own houses. Each building will require 4 squares of land, per milk carton. The group will need to determine what their community needs. Hopefully a city planner would be able to be a guest speaker about the importance of planning a city. Parent night will invite parents to come view their students’ communities and work throughout this unit.

Week 6- Day 1

*If the reflections from the service project were not completed last week, spend time working on students’ reflections.

Focus: Introduction to final project.

Components:

- Individual Map Making
- House Purchase Plan

Overview of Week 6- Day 1:

The individual map making task is the post-assessment for the unit. The teacher can compare this to the first map that was made in week 1 of the unit to determine if the students were able to transfer their knowledge of maps.

The house purchase plan is the first step in the final product. This product also incorporates math into the unit. The students will be creating a model of a house that they want to include in the class community. In this activity, the students have to learn to add multiple numbers and budget in order to stay under 20.
Week 6- Day 1- Individual Map Making

**Purpose:** This will be used as a post assessment to compare to the map made in week 1. Use the same assessment rubric.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**

- G.1.2 Understand representations of locales and regions on maps and globes

**Materials:**

- Large white paper (1 per person)

**Mini Lesson**

- Show students the large piece of paper.
- Tell students they will create a map of a community on this sheet of paper.
- Encourage students to include on the map everything that they’ve learned is on a map.
- Do not go over the features of a map as this is a post-assessment to see what the students know.
- Remind students the importance of neatness on a map.

**Independent Work Time**

- Students work on maps.
- As they finish, they can read books or work on their reflection from the previous week if not finished.

**Share Time**

- Students share maps.
- Discuss the important features of map as students are sharing (compass rose, labels, etc.)
Week 6- Day 1- House Purchase Plan

Purpose: Students create their model house within a budget. Students add and plan to stay within budget.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Literacy:

- 1.OA.2 Solve word problems that call for addition of three whole numbers whose sum is less than or equal to 20, e.g., by using objects, drawings, and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem.
- 1.OA.6 Add and subtract within 20, demonstrating fluency for addition and subtraction within 10. Use strategies such as counting on; making ten (e.g., \(8 + 6 = 8 + 2 + 4 = 10 + 4 = 14\)); decomposing a number leading to a ten (e.g., \(13 - 4 = 13 - 3 - 1 = 10 - 1 = 9\)); using the relationship between addition and subtraction (e.g., knowing that \(8 + 4 = 12\), one knows \(12 - 8 = 4\)); and creating equivalent but easier or known sums (e.g., adding \(6 + 7\) by creating the known equivalent \(6 + 6 + 1 = 12 + 1 = 13\)).

Materials:

- House purchase planning sheet (1 per student, see Appendix C)
- 1 milk carton per student
- House costs poster (see Appendix C)
- Each of the following items should be cut up and put into separate bins and labeled. Cut up 100 or more of each:
  - Popsicle sticks cut up, Label: Fence $1 each stick
  - Different color construction paper cut up into the size of a side of a milk carton and lines drawn across to look like siding, Label: Siding $2 each
  - Red construction paper cut up the size of one side of a milk carton and then marked like bricks, Label: Bricks $3 each
  - Different colored construction paper cut up the size of doors on a milk carton (about 1/2 the height of a milk carton side and 1/3 of the width), Label: Doors, $1 each
  - Colored construction paper cut up to fit from one side of the milk carton over the top of the milk carton and to the other side of the milk carton, then drawn on to look like shingles, Label: Roof, $3 each.
  - White constructions paper cut up into about half the size of the doors, drawn on to look like windows. Label: Windows, $1 each
  - Small pieces of colored construction paper cut up, Label: Flowers, $1 for 5.
  - 4x4 pieces of green construction paper cut up, Label: Yard
- Glue
- Scissors
- Picture of a house with siding
- Picture of a house with bricks
- Play money
Mini Lesson

- Explain that the class is going to make a community out of milk cartons.
- Show students an example of a milk carton decorated as a house.
- Tell students that to start, each student will get to build their own house to be a part of the community. Once everyone has a house built, then the whole class will split up different parts of the community and everyone will get to help build the rest of the community.
- Show students the cost poster.
- Explain that in order to build a house, it costs money, and different parts of a house cost different amounts.
- Explain what siding is compared to bricks. Show a picture of a house with siding and a picture of a house with bricks.
- Ask students what important things each house must have. Make a list on chart paper.
  - Roof
  - Door
  - Windows
  - Siding or bricks on each side
- Tell students they will be on a budget. That means that they each get $20 to plan their house.
- Show students the house building plan. Demonstrate how to fill it out.
- Demonstrate how to use the money to help add lots of numbers and make sure they stay under $20.
- Show students the space for the picture of the house. Then, show them a model of a purchase plan you already have done along with a picture that matches the purchase plan.
- Show how each item on the purchase plan is drawn on the house.
- Show students the labeled bins, and that once they have their house drawn and a budget planned, they can go to the teacher (or the store) to buy the materials to build their house.
- Explain that each milk carton will also need 4 pieces of yard for it to sit on.

Guided Practice

- As a class, repeat the steps modeled in the mini lesson.

Independent Work Time

- Give students their house purchase plan and $20 each to start planning. For those students who are struggling with counting on and adding, give them all $1 bills.
- Students plan.
- As students come to the store, check to make sure their plan is added correctly, and that it is under the $20 budget. Have the student pay you, and allow them to buy their materials needed.
- Students create their milk carton houses.
**Week 6- Day 2 Overview**

**Focus:** Students identify the important parts of a community.

**Components:**
- Class Community Plan

**Overview of Week 6- Day 2:**

The class community plan is an overview of the entire unit. As a class, the students need to determine what is important in a community, and what a community needs to be effective. The students then work collaboratively in groups to design the buildings that are needed within the community. This incorporates math as well. For each milk carton, students need to have 4 pieces of either parking lot or yard. Therefore, if students decide that the hospital should be 3 milk cartons, they have to figure out that they will need 12 pieces of yard or parking lot.
Week 6- Day 2- Class Community Plan

Purpose: Students identify the important parts of a community.

Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:

- 1.OA.6 Add and subtract within 20, demonstrating fluency for addition and subtraction within 10. Use strategies such as counting on; making ten (e.g., \(8 + 6 = 8 + 2 + 4 = 10 + 4 = 14\)); decomposing a number leading to a ten (e.g., \(13 - 4 = 13 - 3 - 1 = 10 - 1 = 9\)); using the relationship between addition and subtraction (e.g., knowing that \(8 + 4 = 12\), one knows \(12 - 8 = 4\)); and creating equivalent but easier or known sums (e.g., adding \(6 + 7\) by creating the known equivalent \(6 + 6 + 1 = 12 + 1 = 13\)).

- B.S.4.4 Understand that a community is a group to which a person may belong.

- E.S.1.1 Work appropriately and productively with others.

Materials:
- Chart Paper
- Materials from previous day
  - Add a bin of gray 4x4 pieces of construction paper labeled: Parking Lot
- Milk cartons (40-60)

Mini Lesson and Guided Practice

- Tell students that today we are going to decide what types of things should be in our community.
- Ask students what is important to have in a community.
- Write down the list on the chart paper.
- Ask students questions to get them to determine some of the important places in a community (examples: Where would people go if they get hurt? How will people get mail? Where will people go to play outside?).
- Go through the list as a class. Decide what the most important places are to include in the community. Star these places.
- Break the students up into groups of 4.
- Go through and take turns allowing each group to choose one place in the community to be in charge of building.
- Continue this until each group has 4 places to be in charge of (1 per student).
- If there are places left over, continue until all of the places are taken by groups.
- Ask students if one milk carton is a house, should the hospital just be one milk carton?
- Discuss what buildings should really be more than 1 milk carton clumped together.
- Remind students that for each milk carton, there needs to be 4 pieces of yard or parking lot.
- Ask students: If you made the police station 2 milk cartons big, how many pieces of yard
or parking lot would you need? (8) Explain that it can be some yard and some parking lot, but there needs to be a total of 8.

Small Group Work

- Students to start building their community buildings.
- Be sure to take pictures while students are working!

Share Time

- Students share their community buildings.
- Students share what was challenging about working in their groups, how they problem-solved, and what went well in their groups.
Week 6- Day 3 Overview

Focus: Creating a community.

Components:
- City Planner Speaker
- Group Map and Community Model

Overview of Week 6- Day 3:

The city planner coming to speak to the students will provide an authentic and meaningful purpose as to why students need to plan their communities before just creating it. This will also promote collaboration while working together as a whole class to plan the community.

The group map and group community model really ties the unit into place. The students have to use their knowledge of maps to create a plan for their community, and have to determine what needs to be in the community. It also promotes a dialogical classroom where students and teachers are engaging in conversations about problem solving and referencing literacy to persuade others why their ideas are important.
**Week 6- Day 3- City Planner Speaker**
Have a city planner come and speak about the importance of planning where different buildings can go in a community, and where roads can go.

**Week 6- Day 3- Group Map**

**Purpose:** Students plan their parts of their community before creating them.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**
- G.1.2 Understand representations of locales and regions on maps and globes.
- E.S.1.1 Work appropriately and productively with others.

**Materials:**
- Buildings from yesterday. Houses from yesterday
- Black construction paper cut up in 4x4 squares in a bin labeled: Roads
- Large pieces of butcher paper (1 per group).
- Large pieces of blank white paper (1 per group).
- 1 inch tiles

**Mini Lesson**
- Tell students that just as the city planner said, it’s important to plan your space before you just start sticking buildings places.
- Talk about why you want space between some buildings, and not just stacked right next to each other.
- Discuss how the houses should be together to form neighborhoods.
- Show students the large pieces of butcher paper.
- Explain that each group will get a paper where they will glue their buildings, yards, parking lots, and roads on.
- Explain that all of the groups will put their butcher paper together to form the entire community.
- Explain that each group will need to have a road that goes from end of the butcher paper all the way to the other end so that it can connect to another groups’ road. Show students the pieces of construction paper that will represent the road.
- Explain that the road will have to be in the middle of the paper to make sure they line up, but that it can zigzag around if needs to (demonstrate what this would look like).
- Discuss what the paper would look like if all of the buildings were on one side of the paper.
- Explain that today students are going to create a map of where each building (and yard or parking lot), each house, and each road is going to go on their butcher paper.
- Show students the 1 inch tiles. Tell them that this will help them plan for their yards and parking lots when they draw their maps.
Guided Practice
- Have students help create the beginning of one group’s map.

Small Group Work
- Students will work on their maps and show the teacher their map of their buildings, houses, roads.
- Teacher should check to make sure each building has a road connected to it, that each building has the correct amount of parking lots/yards, and that there is a plan for any big gaps in the map (park, pool, etc).
- Give students butcher paper.
- Allow students to start putting their buildings/roads/parking lots/yards onto the butcher paper according to their map.
  - Do not let students glue until everything is on the butcher paper in the correct space!
Week 6- Day 4 Overview

Focus: Communities need labels and rules.

Components:
- Street Signs and Stop Lights

Overview of Week 6- Day 4

Students continue to work on the community maps. But today, the teacher will introduce the importance of street signs and stoplights within a community and how it helps a community follow rules.
**Street Signs and Stop Lights**

**Purpose:** Students add labels to their communities.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**
- RL1.2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson.
- RI.1.1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- RI.1.2 Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
- P.S.1.2 Understand the purpose of rules.

**Materials:**
- Straws
- Construction paper
- Markers
- *Kids Learning - Knowing Your Traffic Signs For Kids* by Antione Jackson

**Mini Lesson**
- Read students *Kids Learning - Knowing Your Traffic Signs For*
- Discuss the importance of street signs, stoplights, and signs on different buildings.
- Ask students how they could go about making street signs, stop lights, stop signs, and so forth.
- Tell students that today they need to add items to their community such as street signs, building signs, cars, etc.

**Guided Practice**
- Ask a student how they could create a stoplight or street sign.
- Provide student with straws construction paper and markers.
- As a class, decide how to make the stoplights and street signs.

**Small Group Work**
- Students work on their projects in their groups.
  - As groups begin to finish, you could have extra butcher paper for them to create a rural part of the community (airport, farms, etc.).
- When everyone finishes their group community, put the pieces of butcher paper all together (you may need to clear some desk room).
Share Time

- Ask if the community has everything they need.
Week 6- Day 5 Overview

Focus: Presenting the community.

Components:
- Presentation Preparation
- Parent Viewing

Overview of Week 6- Day 5

Having an authentic audience is extremely motivating for students. For the final presentation, students will create a script for their section of the community. The script will be written as a group, and will describe why the community needs the particular buildings and community helpers in their section of the class community. Students will write the script, practice the script which increase fluency, and present the script to an entire audience. The students will have to work collaboratively to accomplish these goals.

Additionally, the students will have time to show their parents/guardians the other work that has been done within this unit, including the personal narratives, the research books, the school maps created, the Me on the Map flipbooks, and other pieces of work that have been completed.
**Week 6- Day 5-Presentation Preparation**

**Purpose:** Students will plan what will be said about their part of the community.

**Iowa Common Core Standards Addressed Through Instruction:**
- E.S.1.1 Work appropriately and productively with others.

**Materials:**
- Paper
- Books
- Community Model
- Script

**Mini Lesson**
- Explain to students that each group is going to be in charge of presenting why their part of the community is important.
- Show students a script.
- Explain that a script helps people present information in groups, and allows each person to know when it’s their turn to talk.
- Explain that students are going to create a script today about their community. Each person has to talk about why something in their part of the community is important.
- Model how to write a script.
- Explain that once the script is written, everyone needs a copy of it so they know when it’s their turn to talk. Then the script needs to be practiced.

**Guided Practice**
- Practice writing a script about why the hospital would be important for the community.

**Small Group Work**
- Students begin writing scripts in their groups.
- Once scripts are written make a copy for each group.
- Let students practice scripts.

**Share Time**
- Practice with all groups reading their scripts in order.
**Week 6- Day 5- Parent Showing**

**Materials:**
- Scripts
- Slideshow of pictures of students working on the community
- Projector
- Community model all put together (either on top of all of the desks, or on the floor with the desks pushed aside).

**Procedures:**
- As parents come into the classroom, have the slideshow of students working showing on the screen (you can play the music: We Built This City by Starship playing)
- Once all parents have arrived, have students share their scripts, and other work.
- Enjoy refreshments with parents and encourage students show parents other artifacts they have created in the last 6 weeks.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

This project provided an in depth examination of one unit designed to meet the standards for social studies, science, mathematics, 21st century skills, and literacy for the first grade level. Within this project teachers are provided with an overview of a six-week unit on communities. The guide provides the purpose of each learning activity for each day, the Iowa Core Curriculum standards that are met each day, and possible examples of how to implement each learning activity. The purpose of this chapter is to give a summary and recommendations for this project.

Summary

The purpose of this project was to create an integrated unit for a team of first grade teachers to use as a guide for their first experience teaching an integrated unit. The project was created in a manner that was conducive to integration, inquiry-based learning, finding and analyzing multicultural texts, and the promotion of collaboration. The unit is a six week unit based on communities as the core topic of each subject area. The use of this unit is intended to promote deeper comprehension through integrated and hands-on learning. The learning activities that were used were based on effective literacy strategies found in the review of literature. The focus was to begin with one specific content area (literacy) and integrate other content areas through the one content area.
Recommendations

“The continuing challenge is to design curriculums that simultaneously take into account solid subject matter, the needs of the learner, and society’s problems” (Vars, 1991, p. 15). It is recommended that students are involved when creating fully integrated units, and that the students are studying subject matter that is relevant in the society which they live. Additional recommendations for creating an integrate curriculum in first grade include reviewing literature for effective strategies in other content areas other than literacy in order to provide a more in-depth and integrated unit. Yet another recommendation would include working in collaboration with others in order to create the unit. This would bring more connected ideas to the forefront and more knowledge of specific strategies to use for learning activities.

Furthermore, it is recommended that when integrating curriculum, promoting inquiry, and project-based learning, that the teacher facilitate a dialogical classroom with shared authority and a community of respect (Johnston, 2004). In order to create a dialogical classroom, it is recommended that the teacher carefully choose their words as to motivate students, and not hinder their creativity and thinking. It is also recommended to encourage students to question each other and constructively criticize each other’s work in order to allow students to have authority within the classroom. In order for students to work in collaboration with one another during an integrated unit, dialogue is a necessity.
CHAPTER VI

REFERENCES


Virtue, D. C., Wilson, J. L., & Ingram, N. (2009). In overcoming obstacles to curriculum integration, L.E.S.S.S. can be more!. *Middle School Journal, 40*(3), 4-11.


Appendix A

Charts of Iowa Core Curriculum Standards Met Weekly
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Appendix B

Examples of Strategic Literacy Instruction Strategies
Example Anchor Chart

**Reading Response Journal**

How to start my response...

if I have a...

- **Question**
- I have a question about...
- I wonder...
- What does...
- Why...

**Predictions**
- I have a prediction about...
- I wonder if...
- I predict...
Example Graphic Organizer

Name: ____________________  Date: ________________

Character: ____________________

I like the character ____________________ because

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Example Story Map

How-To 

Sentence:
Gymnastics

My dog

Favorite pet

My family

Example Webbing

Ideas to Write About
Example KWL Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>K</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What we Know</td>
<td>What we Want to know</td>
<td>What we Learned or still want to Learn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C

Printables Needed For Unit
What I Know About Communities
Personal Narrative Checklist Example

Is it a personal narrative?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title</th>
<th>Main Character</th>
<th>Uses &quot;I&quot; and &quot;we&quot;</th>
<th>Topic or Special Event</th>
<th>Story is told in order</th>
<th>Words used to know the story was in order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</table>
Personal Narrative Brainstorm Web

Special Times
In My Life
My Personal Narrative Topic

Topic Sentence:

First,

Next,

Then,

Finally,

Closing Sentence:
Large Pencil Rubric
Pencil Rubrics for Desks
Name: __________________________ First Person Narrative Presentation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speaks Clearly</td>
<td>Difficult to hear, very quiet</td>
<td>Speakers clearly, moderate voice</td>
<td>Very easy to hear, loud voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neat work</td>
<td>Sloppy work, messy handwriting, unorganized</td>
<td>Somewhat neat and organized. Some messy spots.</td>
<td>Neat and organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Time</td>
<td>Not ready to present</td>
<td>Ready to present but did not practice a lot</td>
<td>Ready to present and lots of practice time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful to Others</td>
<td>Did not listen respectfully to other presentations</td>
<td>Listened to some other presentations respectfully</td>
<td>Listened to all other presentations respectfully</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Name: __________________________ First Person Narrative Presentation

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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</table>
### House Purchase Planning Sheet

Draw Your House Here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>How Many?</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

Total:
## House Costs Poster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Picture</th>
<th>Price</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fence</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1 each stick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siding</td>
<td></td>
<td>$2 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bricks</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3 each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doors</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof</td>
<td></td>
<td>$3 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows</td>
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<td>$1 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flowers</td>
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<td>$1 for 5 flowers</td>
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</table>

**Glue one piece of each item into the blank space so that students can see the item if they can’t read the word**