Strategies for Sprinkling Spice on an Elementary Physical Education Program: Thematic Instruction Comes to the Gym!

Kristine Lee Whitcher

University of Northern Iowa

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Strategies for Sprinkling Spice on an Elementary Physical Education Program: Thematic Instruction Comes to the Gym!

Abstract
The purpose of this project was to identify curriculum design strategies that would assist elementary physical education teachers in producing thematic units for elementary physical education classes. Strategies for integrating curriculum were identified in the literature then used to create and implement a thematic physical education project. Specific strategies were explained in detail through examples associated with the project. The strategies demonstrate that thematic instruction can successfully meet the needs of many children, invite new learning, and will assist teachers in coordinating themes with elementary physical education classes. A school-wide Olympic Fest was the culminating event of this project. There were 380 sixth graders involved within a Midwest community school district. The competition was designed to foster a spirit of cooperation and collaboration among students from the seven elementary schools within the district. This project integrated all areas of the curriculum through the combined effort of classroom teachers and the elementary physical education teachers within the school district. The project provided a basis for the continuation of planning and developing an Olympic theme on a yearly basis. Themes definitely add spice to the physical education curriculum! The process of developing this integrated curriculum and its results indicate that thematic units for elementary physical education classes provide curricular connections for students and encourage collaboration among teachers. This project enhances teachers’ abilities to develop physical education curricula with themes, to engage in teacher collaboration, and to motivate students.

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STRATEGIES FOR SPRINKLING SPICE ON AN ELEMENTARY PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM: THEMATIC INSTRUCTION COMES TO THE GYM!

A Graduate Project
Submitted to the
Division of Elementary Education
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
in Partial Completion
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Education
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

by
Kristine Lee Whitcher
June 1997
This Project by: Kristine Lee Whitcher

Entitled: Strategies For Sprinkling Spice on an Elementary Physical Education Program: Thematic Instruction Comes to the Gym!

has been approved as meeting the research requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts in Education.

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This paper is dedicated to my family and my parents, whose encouragement and support were my inspiration. I would also like to acknowledge the Master's Cohort Group with whom I traveled this journey. The support and encouragement from this group was deeply appreciated.
Abstract

The purpose of this project was to identify curriculum design strategies that would assist elementary physical education teachers in producing thematic units for elementary physical education classes.

Strategies for integrating curriculum were identified in the literature then used to create and implement a thematic physical education project. Specific strategies were explained in detail through examples associated with the project. The strategies demonstrate that thematic instruction can successfully meet the needs of many children, invite new learning, and will assist teachers in coordinating themes with elementary physical education classes.

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Themes definitely add spice to the physical education curriculum! The process of developing this integrated curriculum and its results indicate that thematic units for elementary physical education classes provide curricular connections for students and encourage collaboration among teachers. This project enhances teachers' abilities to develop physical education curricula with themes, to engage in teacher collaboration, and to motivate students.
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Advocates of teaching thematic units claim that the "use of themes will help overcome problems with fragmentation in the curriculum, help students see the interrelationships among various ways of knowing, and provide meaningful and experientially rich explorations" (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1993, p. 106). The paradigm seems to be shifting away from thinking of schools as "teaching organizations to thinking of schools as learning organizations" (Freeman and Sokoloff, 1994, p. 23). This shift includes the concept of thematic units. Freeman and Sokoloff (1994) suggest that by enabling teachers to move from teaching as a technical activity to teaching as a deeply personal and intellectual activity, students can experience learning that is deeply inclusive. It is through the exploration of themes that teachers and students alike are able to transform their experiences into a rich learning process.

Problem Statement

A well-crafted thematic unit can energize the classroom and provide incredible learning opportunities throughout the school day or year (Rothlein, 1996). Strategies for implementing thematic units are frequently lacking in physical education curriculums. Many elementary physical education programs have a specific skills oriented curriculum. However, subject matter can become more meaningful to students when skills are related to themes.
Research Question

What curriculum design strategies will assist elementary physical education teachers in producing thematic units for elementary physical education classes?

Rationale of the Project

"Thematic based units are one of the many valuable and powerful ways of integrating curriculum" (Freeman and Sokoloff, 1994, p. 7). It appears that the more physical education teachers engage in integrative activities with other subject area teachers, the more the physical education program is enhanced. More and more physical educators are engaging in integrative activities with teachers of other subjects and the advantages are immense (Rauschenback, 1996). Armstrong (1994) stated that the benefits are two-fold, that physical learning can be the province of physical education and integrated learning can be very important to increase retention and understanding.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to outline strategies for integrating a thematic unit into the elementary physical education curriculum and provide a sample thematic unit. Many innovative teachers are trying thematic units as one approach to Bruner's "higher ground" (as cited in Freeman & Sokoloff, 1994) by creating learning environments and activities that truly engage students in meaningful exploration. Bruner admits that it is not always easy to know how to go beyond standard or traditional practice.
Thematic Instruction 5

Consistent with emerging research on thematic and integrated instruction, thematic units are based on a constructivist approach to learning (Perkins and Blythe, 1994, as cited in Freeman & Sokoloff, 1994). These authors suggest that learners best understand those meanings of a concept that they create for themselves from the data of past and present experiences with appropriate guidance from knowledgeable teachers.

The thematic, interdisciplinary project developed and implemented was an Olympic theme celebration. This project was intended to build school spirit, to improve interpersonal relations among students and teachers, and to enhance school morale and sense of community through a culminating event. This project demonstrated that the students and teachers enjoyed the opportunity for "real learning" about the Olympics. The motivation and success of the event was apparent to the teachers and parents who attended the gala event. School climate benefited from the camaraderie of the teams competing together along with the integration of the Olympic music, oath, and the representation of the countries.
Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this paper and project, the following definitions are used:

**Authentic Learning:** Learning occurs when students encounter and master situations that resemble real life. Students apply inquiry to construct meaning, solve problems, and reach conclusions. Authentic learning occurs in thematic teaching.

**Hands-On Learning:** Students can acquire knowledge by actually performing tasks, rather than just reading textbooks. The project integrating the Olympic theme with its culminating Olympic Fest demonstrates hands-on learning.

**Integrative activities:** An integrative activity should be seen as a process of “topic sharing” among different subjects. Themes allow learners to integrate the information involved and make connections between subject areas, (National Education Association [NEA], 1996, p. 74).

**Integrated Thematic Teaching:** When themes are used to teach across disciplines, students see learning as a whole, not as separate pieces.

**Interdisciplinary Teaching:** The regular curriculum is taught in such a way that there is a natural overlap between subject areas. Students see the relevance and inter-relatedness of their disciplines.
Learning styles: Learning styles are the ways that individuals process new information (DeCecco, 1968). Greater learning gains can be achieved by accommodating an individual's learning style. By recognizing the different modalities through which students prefer to learn, teachers can make more informed decisions regarding alternative instructional approaches.

Multidisciplinary Curriculum: This is often referred to as interdisciplinary curriculum. In this situation, several teachers from the same team offer to work on an activity related to a central theme or topic, but they do it in their separate classrooms.

Multiple Intelligences: This learning theory, proposed by Howard Gardner, states that students often exhibit their intelligence in different ways. Thematic teaching can enhance several of the multiple intelligences.

Subject integration: This includes integrating a theme across several subject areas to enhance the various learning styles of the individual learner.

Team teaching: A group of teachers can work together to design and foster the growth of the school as a learning community. Team teaching is often used in multi-age classrooms where two or more teachers join together to teach one group of students.

Thematic instruction: This is a strategy which helps to unify the disciplines in a richer and more meaningful manner while promoting students' critical
thinking skills. Thus, it is practical in that it allows more time to be devoted to a specific concept.

**Themes:** Themes begin when students and teachers agree on a choice of a concept around which to organize learning experiences. When the focus becomes an integrated, relevant, and connected learning experience for the teacher and the students, they have created a theme (Davies, 1993). Therefore, a theme is a universal concept that should help to integrate various topics of study. Other terms used interchangeably with “theme” for purposes of this paper and project include: unit, topic, essential concept, and issue.

**Thematic teaching:** Thematic teaching revolves around a theme. This teaching is a perfect way to bring teachers together to organize for a unit. This not only lessens the work load on individual teachers but it allows for each individual teacher to contribute ideas.

**Thematic units:** Thematic units often explore big concepts and large issues that encourage students to develop higher level thinking skills. Themes can allow learners to integrate the information and topic within a context, and allow a full range of human experience.
LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review will examine the purpose and potential of thematic instruction in physical education. The review provides examples of strategies that simplify the implementation of theme usage. The review also demonstrates how thematic teaching allows students to integrate information from a topic and connect the topic with a full range of experiences from the classrooms as well as from physical education. The following literature review is organized by the strategies that can be used to implement thematic teaching with an elementary physical education curriculum.

When some authors talk about thematic units, they use the terms “unit,” “theme,” “topic,” “essential concept,” and “issue” almost interchangeably (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 1993, p. 4). The literature also talks about the importance of integration across subject areas. Thematic units are a common form of curriculum integration (Fogarty, 1995). Themes can range from topics for primary grades to themes that appeal to older groups. Themes provide highly visible organizers for curriculum design, making it easy for teachers and teacher teams to coordinate curricular content. The most exciting aspect of themes is that they ignite learning for students.

Educators across America promote thematic teaching. Jacobs’ (1990) design options for interdisciplinary curriculum feature variations that support the use of themes. Lounsbury (1992) intertwines the development of interdisciplinary instruction with the idea of teaming. He discusses how the word “team” stands for “together everyone achieves more” (p. 89). Vars (1987), another promoter of themes, believes that thematic units can be targeted
through the core curriculum and reflect student issues and concerns. Curriculum themes, according to Vars, incorporate content, skills, and concepts as well as personal and social concerns.

The following strategies can be used to implement themes in the physical education curriculum. There are numerous strategies that can be used but this project selects strategies that provide starting points for developing themes.

**Strategy One: Subject Integration**

More and more physical educators are engaging in integrative activities with teachers of other content areas. An integrative activity should enhance the effectiveness of all teachers involved and improve student performance in each of the integrated subject areas (Rauschenbach, 1996). Integrative activities are a current strategy for increasing teacher collaboration and student motivation. These activities enhance learning in all subject areas involved and uncover relationships that exist among diverse subject areas.

The goal of successful integration is that student learning be maximized in all the integrated areas. An integrative activity should be seen as a process of “topic sharing” among different subjects. For example, “students can identify different classes of levers in the human body in science class and then explore the advantages and disadvantages of each class of lever in a physical education tumbling and apparatus unit” (Rauschenbach, 1996, p. 49) This new understanding would enable students to improve their performance in tumbling and apparatus activities. Another example could take place in a bowling unit. Physical educators could teach skill techniques while classroom teachers teach scoring and handicapping. Students could even publish the results in the
school newsletter. All students could write about their experiences in their journals as an additional language arts connection.

Integration of subjects is often natural. Themes offer a way to erase the lines that schools have created within and among subjects. Learning is easier when we see patterns and relationships between what we know and what we seek to understand (Davies, 1995). People learn by making connections and our ability to connect is enhanced when we see the larger context for what is being learned.

There are a variety of ways to integrate activities with physical education. Placek & O'Sullivan (1997) suggest that topics from language arts, math, science, geography, history, social studies, art, health, music, and more can be taught in physical education classes. Many concepts from other subjects can be applied to a traditional physical education curriculum. Some additional examples provided by Placek & O'Sullivan include:

*a Native American unit to teach students a native American dance while they learn about the culture in the classroom

*a muscular and skeletal system unit is studied where muscles and exercises that strengthen and stretch muscles are performed while the classroom teacher covers these topics in health

*a measurement unit where classroom teachers could help students determine their lap times for the mile to help students understand pace and apply math skills.

*integrate the “100th day” theme with physical education by dressing up as a 100-year-old physical education teacher and teaching slow movement exercises for the elderly.
Another integrated activity that can be used on school playgrounds incorporates a map of the United States (Rauschenbach, 1996). The states are painted on the playground and questions lead the students to particular states where they perform exercises and receive a new question to answer. The students will improve their fitness levels by completing the 50-state par course while studying the states in an active manner.

Students who are normally unenthusiastic about physical education could be motivated by integrative activities that allow them a measure of cognitive as well as physical success. Students who shine in physical education class but experience frustration in other subject areas might be better able to understand a concept, memorize a series of labels, or master a series of basic processes if they encounter these challenges in a physical activity context. At their best, integrative activities highlight the most unique aspects of each subject area and blend them, so that they reveal relationships among the subject areas that would not have been understood had each subject been studied in isolation (NEA, 1996).

The integration theme for the attached project incorporates the Olympic theme. I selected this theme because of my interest in the topic and because this particular year was an Olympic year. This project helped classroom teachers meet their objectives by using students' love of movement to motivate them to learn. By orchestrating the running of the torch and the Olympic festival, art, music, and classroom teachers were able to integrate the Olympic theme.

Strategy Two: Interdisciplinary Instruction

Physical education is becoming integral to the interdisciplinary core of the curriculum. Morrisey (1992) states that to actively transport physical
education to the curricular core, program content must be connected to content in the other academic areas. This will continue to make physical education programs more viable. Physical fitness and academic achievement go hand in hand. When students are fit they tend to have higher energy levels which makes them more alert. This may enhance students' abilities to concentrate on academic studies. In reciprocation, if students are reading more about physical education activities, the students are more likely to participate in those activities (Van Oteghen, 1995).

Grady's (1992) approach as stated in Fogarty and Stoehr (1996) discusses interdisciplinary curriculum by using themes as umbrella ideas to connect the disciplines. Her work in Colorado uses the ideas of developing "chunks" of integrated curriculum with the driving force of critical content. In this strategy, the regular curriculum is taught in such a way that there is a natural overlap between subject areas. Students can see the relevance and interrelatedness of their disciplines.

The Olympic theme explored for this project can provide excellent opportunities for an interdisciplinary study. The history of the Olympics, the five continents, the participating countries and their flags, the art and music of the games, as well as the sporting events, can be explored throughout the school year. The project developed contains interdisciplinary suggestions for classroom and special area teachers, and a plan for a culminating Olympic Fest for the entire school.

Kane (1995) suggests another example of integration with an experience that combines gymnastics and the Amazon Rain Forrest. Many students study endangered species and are educated about the rain forest and the environment. Physical educators can plan an interdisciplinary project that
incorporates the rain forest. Physical education teachers may want to work with one teacher or be part of a school-wide project in which each classroom studies a different animal. In physical education, students can become acquainted with the spider monkey, for example, and learn gymnastic skills in the context of the rain forest, the monkey's disappearing habitat. Here, physical educators can present gymnastic skills and the rain forest concepts together.

Interdisciplinary approaches are also supported by a sizable amount of research. It is reassuring to know that fifty years of research and more than eighty studies reveal that students in interdisciplinary programs do as well, and often better, on standardized tests when compared with those in the usual separate subjects programs (Vars, 1993).

Themes can integrate as many disciplines as possible around one topic. An interdisciplinary theme integrates information from a variety of subject areas to provide a meaningful, broad-based learning experience. While interdisciplinary instruction and teaching is motivating to students of all ages, it is especially appropriate for preschool and primary grade children (Kane, 1995).

Strategy Three: Teacher Collaboration

Physical education can become more widely recognized as an integral part of the school curriculum through collaboration with teachers of other subjects. Physical education teachers, other subject area specialists, and classroom teachers may gain new respect for another's subject area by showing interest and expanding communication. Themes are a chance for physical education to become a vital contribution to the core curriculum (Placek & O'Sullivan, 1997).
During the process of collaborative planning, teams will confront many issues including the need to develop a shared theory of teaching, learning, and interdisciplinary studies. The overall collaborative and cooperative approach is designed to foster the growth of the school as a learning community. Sergiovanni (1994) identifies a school that is a true community as one “in which a group of individuals have learned to communicate honestly with one another; have built relationships that go deeper than their composes; and have developed some significant commitment to rejoice together, mourn together, delight in each other, and make others’ conditions their own” (p. 32).

To increase the likelihood of collaboration, physical educators should volunteer to serve on curriculum committees to find out about current themes being used in the core curriculum. They also need to develop ideas to suggest how physical education subject matter could enhance themes for students in the classroom (Placek, 1997). Open and frequent communication with classroom teachers is essential to the well-being of a physical educator’s program.

One reason for this is that classroom teachers have daily contact with students, and are therefore more likely to have regular communication with parents. It is important to make sure that each of these links; classroom teachers, students, and parents; are firmly attached to physical education. If a solid working relationship can be established with classroom teachers the possibility exists to integrate activities across disciplines (Boyce, 1995). When we invite, include, and inform others such as parents, students, administrators, and colleagues, we can gain support and enrich our practice (NEA, 1996).

“Technology can also facilitate teacher collaboration” (Smith & Cestaro, 1996, p. 59). For example, physical education teachers can use the internet to
Thematic Instruction

remain updated on classroom curriculum; they can in turn keep classroom teachers informed of the latest physical education developments by posting information on the school computer network. Articles can be copied and placed in teachers' mailboxes or demonstrations can be given at faculty meetings. Classroom teachers often enjoy learning more about physical education. They may even notice a difference in students' enthusiasm levels when classroom and physical education activities are linked together.

**Strategy Four: Accommodating Students' Learning Styles**

One of a teacher's goals is to make the learning process as efficient as possible. To accomplish this, individual learning styles must be recognized. Learning styles are the ways that individuals process new information (Dececco, 1968).

According to Susan Kovalik's "Integrated Thematic Instruction Model" (1993, p. 81) eight elements are needed to provide a brain compatible learning environment where the human brain can operate as it does naturally and thus, most powerfully. These include absence of threat, enriched environment, meaningful content, collaboration, choices, immediate feedback, adequate time, and master application. Based on brain research, teaching strategies, and curriculum development, Kovalik's (1993) model suggests using a year long theme as the heart and soul of the classroom. She illustrates ways to evaluate a theme, identify key points, and find multiple resources.

Blooms' taxonomy is also applicable to integrated thematic instruction. Level one is knowledge. This is where the student recognizes or recalls the information: defines, memorizes, and reports. Level two is comprehension. In this level the student changes the information into a different symbolic form such
Thematic Instruction

as describing, reporting, discussing, or reviewing. Level three is the application level where the student solves a problem using the knowledge and appropriate generalizations. Level four is the analysis stage that separates the information into component parts. The last two stages are the evaluation and synthesis levels. The evaluation level requires the student to compare and choose desirable elements and the synthesis level involves putting together information in a creative manner.

The concept of multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1993) is also used to build thematic units. Multiple intelligence schools foster students’ deep understanding in several core disciplines. Using multiple intelligences will encourage students to combine knowledge from individual disciplines to solve problems and complete the tasks that they may confront. At the same time, the school seeks to encourage the unique blend of intelligences in each of its students by regularly assessing their development. Each intelligence can be applied to a thematic topic. In the physical education component, the intelligence most utilized in this project was the bodily-kinesthetic because students were able to demonstrate their skills at a track meet. Other intelligences included the incorporation of the musical intelligence when the students sang the Olympic song at the event. The linguistic intelligence was applied when the students reported on an Olympian to the class. The interpersonal intelligence was utilized with the combination of teamwork by the physical education, music, art, and classroom teachers and the intrapersonal was shown by the students creating their own representation of their countries on their shirts. By incorporating some of the different multiple intelligences, this project met diversified needs of a group of students.
Strategy Five: Connections to Student Learning Processes

A thematic approach finds ways to engage learners in life experiences. In constructing lessons that optimize student participation and learning, expert teachers make effective and creative use of their environment (Manross, 1997). The teacher’s challenge of focusing on individual student performance is crucial for promoting student learning. Expert teachers have the ability to attend to individual student performance in class (Housner & Griffey, 1985). They try to meet the needs of every student because students have different needs and abilities.

Making education richer and more meaningful is not an easy task. Educators constantly hear about the need to challenge students, to encourage higher level thinking skills, and to make learning a worth-while experience for the kids. Exploring themes gives teachers and students a framework for understanding interrelationships among different levels of ideas and abstractions (Freeman & Sokoloff, 1994). Integrated thematic instruction is a strategy which helps to unify the disciplines in a richer and more meaningful manner while promoting the critical thinking skills teachers want their students to develop. It is a practical method of teaching and allows more time for exploration of specific concepts. A thematic approach allows students to develop higher level thinking skills and to become critical thinkers (NEA, 1996).

Strategy Six: Spicing up your curriculum

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I...I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference.

(Robert Frost, 1939, p. 131.)
All too often teachers and others follow predictable patterns and stay attached to routines and familiar ways of doing things. Change can be uplifting, exciting, and beneficial. Be daring. Take the road less traveled. One may discover that it's sometimes valuable to break routines, get away from responsibilities, and experience the joy and fulfillment in expressing innate creativity. Use imagination as a gift to share with students and encourage them to do the same thing (Carlson, 1995). One can improve the psychological atmosphere of physical education classes with new activities and ideas (Budris, 1993). Themes are a great way to try a new approach.

Research has shown that effective teachers, whether classroom or physical education teachers, share similar behaviors. Effective teachers present meaningful and challenging tasks where students are highly successful. Another characteristic of effective teachers is to communicate warmth through clear, enthusiastic presentations (Cusimano, Darst & Mars, 1993).

Building themes that integrate physical education into other curricular areas provides an opportunity to demonstrate that physical educators are willing to go the extra step for the students' benefits. For example, the Olympic event was a positive promotional event for my elementary physical education program. Parents, teachers, administrators, board members, and students actively worked together to create a successful event. This opportunity provided an excellent opportunity to promote physical education within the school and community. Widespread respect for the teachers and the students along with support of the entire school community was gained.

To continue to add a twist of spice to your curriculum, keep ties with the community as a high priority. With budget cutbacks and the current practice of
school-based management, support from friends at home and in the community may make the difference between a strong physical education program or no program at all (Morrisey, 1992).

The Olympic theme in this project provided an excellent opportunity for an interdisciplinary study. The history of the Olympics, the five continents, the participating countries and their flags, the art and music of the games, as well as the sporting events, can be utilized throughout the school. This theme provides a blend of cognitive and affective education. The culminating event concludes the theme with an Olympic Fest.

The culmination of the theme, the celebration, can be the spice! Although opportunities for children to have fun occur throughout the course of a theme, one favorite way to end a theme unit is by having some kind of celebration that gives children the opportunity to share learning.

Learning is more likely to be retained if it is connected to pleasurable experiences (Rauschenbach, 1996). Of course, the celebration selected needs to be matched with an appropriate audience. The celebration in this project was the Olympic Fest and the audience was the sixth graders from the seven elementary schools. The Olympic Fest energized those involved through celebration.
METHODOLOGY

Procedures of the Project

Physical education can make a substantial contribution to the overall curriculum and goals of the school, however, few school curriculum guides in physical education demonstrate ways themes can be implemented. Therefore, this curriculum development project reviews several strategies for implementing themes in physical education classes.

This project was developed for the primary purpose of using a theme to promote learning about the Olympics. The students, teachers, and myself all had an interest in the Olympic theme because it was an Olympic year. A meeting was arranged with the curriculum director of the district followed by individual building principal meetings. During the district wide elementary planning time, meetings were held with all sixth grade teachers involved with the Olympics. From these meetings, activities and objectives were developed. The next step included collaborative development of a visual representation of ideas and facts related to the topic by using a web, identifying needed materials, and designing curriculum activities to meet the objectives of the theme (Pigdon and Wooley, 1993, as cited in Freeman & Sokoloff). The ideas were then returned to all the classroom teachers for integration throughout the school. The project included a team effort across the district with all the elementary schools involved in a culminating event wherein students could demonstrate their knowledge of a track unit and apply it in an Olympic Fest context. Brainstorming was necessary with other teachers to plan and complete the culminating event and integrate the Olympic theme into the year-long curriculum.
A literature search was also conducted for the project. It included the understanding and reasoning for integration and thematic instruction, along with the history of the Olympics. My plan, along with my project, was completed in a three month time-span.

Participants

This individual project was implemented for 380 sixth graders within a Midwestern school district. It was a collaborative effort among the seven elementary physical education teachers and myself. Students were organized into ten countries chosen to represent the ethnic heritage of the community. An Olympic Fest was held at the high school track as a culminating event for the Olympic thematic unit. The resulting competition was designed to foster a spirit of cooperation and to introduce students from the seven elementary schools. This project integrated all areas of the curriculum through the combined effort of sixth grade classroom teachers and the seven elementary physical education teachers.
CHAPTER THREE

PROJECT

Thematic Instruction
Implementing Olympic Theme

Kris Whitcher
Enthusiasm is contagious...
Like the Olympic torch...
you can't be burnt out if you were never on fire!
Get Fired up!
Olympic Theme
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Design an Olympic Medal

**Directions:** Make three copies of the medal pattern on this page. Cut out and create a design for gold, silver, and bronze medals. Then cut out cardboard pieces that are the same size as the pattern pieces. Glue each side to a piece of the cardboard and then glue the two pieces together. Color them and finally add a ribbon to make them complete.
Olympic Theme Rationale
Olympic Rationale

Celebrating the Olympic Spirit--bring the spirit alive for myself and my students!

With the Olympic celebration only months away, I am promoting the Olympic theme to my students and colleagues. By integrating the curriculum in coordination of the Olympic-theme, I hope to impact the entire school with physical education and sport as the central points of attention.

My rationale to integrate this theme is perfect timing. The XXVI Olympics will be celebrated in Atlanta, Ga., beginning July 19 through August 4, 1996. The television audience is projected to be two-thirds of the world’s population. I hope to project the excitement to my students, so when they leave this school year, they can better appreciate the Games on television.

Research indicates the advantages of thematic teaching lie not only with the teacher, but with the student. The connection can exist between subjects, and learning can be demonstrated throughout the subjects. The Olympic theme will emphasize cooperation and the sportsmanship with some competition. Along with my students, I will engage as a learner in the development and implementation of this thematic unit. The advantages for my students are to enhance their knowledge and appreciation for the upcoming Olympics.

The Olympic theme can provide excellent opportunities for interdisciplinary study. The history of the Olympics, the five continents, the participating countries and their flags, the art and music of the games, as well as the sport events, can be utilized throughout the school. I will create a plan of interdisciplinary study for the teachers and also plan culminating Olympic tests for the school.

I would like to introduce the Olympic oath and creed to my students, and celebrate the spirit of these messages throughout the year. Let me share them with you:

The oath and creed were composed by Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern games. Both contain good advice to use in teaching. The words are motivational and
can inspire all students. The oath is read by an athlete from the home country.

OATH:--(Students will repeat at the Olympicfest)

In the name of all competitors I promise that we will take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, in the true spirit of sportsmanship for the glory of sport and the honor of our teams.

CREED:

The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well.

In conclusion, my rationale is that I hope to build school spirit, improve interpersonal relations among students and teachers, and enhance school morale, with my culminating event. I think my culminating event will be a gala event and a great way to conclude the year with enthusiasm. Interdisciplinary approaches also are supported by a sizable amount of research. It is reassuring to know that fifty years of research and more than eighty studies reveal that students in interdisciplinary programs do as well, and often better, on standardized tests when compared with those in the usual separate subjects programs (Vars, 1991). I hope that my students and teachers will enjoy an opportunity for real learning about the Olympics. I think a healthy school climate builds an effective school. I hope that learning skills are applied in carrying out real projects in the different classrooms by my provided web of activities. I hope the motivation and success will be demonstrated to the teachers and parents who attend the gala events.
Implementing Olympic Theme
Tips on Implementing a Theme:

1. Decide on grade level or group.
   *Olympicfest would target the sixth grade along with Art and Music.

2. Choose a theme.
   *Olympics

3. Establish goals and issues to cover.
   *Objectives
   *Scope and Sequence
   *Timeline for event

4. Plan.
   *Organize event

5. Locate resources and materials and create instructional aids.

   *Incorporate with other teachers
   *Olympicfest meetings with P.E. teachers

7. Determine the timeline.
   *Olympicfest will last one day but the incorporation will approximately one month before the event.

8. Evaluate.
   *Measure the effectiveness of the project.
   *Share results.

Note: The above steps were used in implementing my Olympic theme.
Olympic Theme
Objectives
FORMAT OF INSTRUCTION

Theme: Olympics

Title: Celebrate Cooperative Olympics--Keep the spirit alive

The hope for peace is renewed at the Olympic Games. When the Olympic flag is flying and the Olympic flame is burning, we think of world peace and cooperation. As we watch the ceremonies and competitions, we appreciate and respect the talents of individual athletes. Differences in nationalities fade as similarities in human spirit emerge.

Outcomes:

- Provide information and activities to familiarize students with the Olympic Games
- Plan and student participation in culminating events--celebrate diversity
- Encompass many skills throughout the curriculum of track and field
- Provide teacher resources and folder on Olympicfest
- Utilize several multiple intelligences with the Olympic theme integration
- Integrate this theme specifically with Art, Music, and Sixth grade classes
- Continue the spirit throughout the remaining of the year!

Activity:

- Culminating event for district with the sixth graders participating in a track Olympics.
Planning Olympic Event
The Elementary P.E. teachers met in the fall and discussed the possibility of hosting an Olympic event for all the sixth graders in the district. It was a unanimous vote to host the event with everyone assist with the planning.

The beginning planning stages were to form committee's. These includes:
- availability of high school track
- UNI contacts for additional help
- Involve Art and Music teachers in the project
- Parent Letter
  - Principal and Sixth grade Letter
- PTA Newsletter
- Certificates
- Torch
- Sign-up Sheet of Events
- Arrange for a nurse
- Parade
- Music
- Publicity
  (Hog radio, KWLO, Courier, and KWWL)

Kris:
Parent letter, teacher and principal letter, award certificates, assist with torch, do flag handout for Art teachers, assist with Oath.

Joyce and Mary:
Plan parade, music contact, publicity, find meet starter, announcer, and find torch runner

Jim and Nancy:
Coordinate with UNI, sign-up sheet

Nancy:
Follow-up with sign-up sheet and continue to type everyone’s result.

Karen:
Follow-up on committee work, coordinate with rip, order bus, talk to cafeteria about sack lunches, contact with Dr. Ott.--district curriculum coordinator.

Cadet Teacher:
Kris will get video and camera for cadet to film the event.

After establishing responsibilities, we met on a one, or two week time span to report on
the progress.

**Things we discussed at the meetings:**
- College students help
- Equipment needed: tape measures, rakes, medical kits, batons, stop watches, and starting blocks
- High jump equipment
- Running events at the same time, each side of track
- Announcer needed—with P.A. available
- Order of events posted and made available
- Lane assignments by country
- Starter needed
- Clerk of course—find staggers for running events
- Finish line pickers
- Parent letter home
- T-shirts for teachers, students, and college helpers
- Principal and teacher letters
- Bathroom availability and supervision

**Month before:**
The month of the event, we had the students sign-up for their events. The contact letters were sent out about three weeks in advance. Also at this time, the bus arrangements had been made, along with the sack lunches ordered.

By this time, we met with UNI instructors to give them the information needed to get their classes to assist with the events. We decided to have the college students wear a UNI t-shirt to be easily identified.

The students were placed in ten countries according to ability levels and the events they chose. These were compiled together to make a Master sheet of all the participants for each country. The students were given notice to bring an old white t-shirt for the Art project. The Art teachers were told about the T-shirt project by the first of April. Most schools plan to do the project the week of April 15.

The music teacher is working on a theme song to be sung at the event.

Olympic T-shirts were ordered for the P.E. teachers, sixth grade teachers, and principals.

Medical help was arranged and the high school nurse will be at the event.
Week Before:

Final Preparations:

1. UNI Teachers were present. We gave assignments to them for their students. Approximately 35 will be present to help. These students will manage the field events, timers, and exchange zone judges. (We will provide stopwatches and equipment for them.)

2. Discussed the flow of events. Separated mile and 400 from each other as nine students were doing both events.

3. It was reported that we have two official starters.

4. A decision was made that Mr. Zimmer will be the Clerk of Course.

5. Student expectations were discussed.

6. Field events would be given two attempts. The high jump will begin at three feet and move at two inch increments.

7. Ron Steele from KWWL, will be the official torch carrier. The student council presidents from each school will follow. These leaders are to see Mary S. upon arrival to the high school.

8. Kris nominated her cadet teachers to hold the string and video tape the event.

9. The event numbers are as follows:
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Heats</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 meter</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>boy/girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 meter</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td>boy/girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mile</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td>boy/girl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4x100</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td>all lanes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shuttle</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Nancy will bring two bull-horns from Hansen. Other equipment was decided for each school to bring. (I was in charge of two stopwatches, two 200 foot tape measures, the video camera, pocket camera, boom box and tape, and torch.) Other equipment: 16 stopwatches--mark with name and school, 8 batons, string, tape measures, wind nails, rakes, koosh balls, world balls, video camera, boom box and tape.

11. A can of pop from Hy-Vee will be given at the closure along with the certificates.
Bus Order
Transportation Request for Field Trips

School Requesting: [Redacted]
Teacher/Coach: Karen Needham
Date of Trip: April 26, 1996
Day of the Week: Friday
To: Senior High School
Event: Olympic Field Day
# of Students: 45 plus 4 adults
Leave School By: 11:45 a.m.
Arrive Back at School: 2:30 p.m.

FOR BUS DRIVER ONLY
Driver's Name: ___________________
Miles Out: ___________________
Time Out: ___________________
Miles In: ___________________
Time In: ___________________
Total Miles Driven: __________

Principal: [Signature]
Director of Elementary Education or
Director of Secondary Education: [Signature]
Parent Letter
Dear Principals and Sixth Grade Teachers:

On behalf of the elementary Cedar Falls Physical Education Teachers, we would like to invite you to celebrate the Olympics with us. All sixth grade students in the district will represent a country and participate in events for their country. The team scores for each country will not be kept to promote the true spirit of sportsmanship of the Olympics.

This celebration will be held on Friday, April 25 (rain date May 2), at the Cedar Falls High School Track. The event begins at 12:00 and ends at 2:30. Sack lunches will be available at your school before the bus departure time of 11:45. Expect your students to be back in your building by 3:00 p.m.

Plan to attend and enjoy this celebration with us. No passport is needed, your admission to the games will be free. Hope you can join us!

Sincerely,

Cedar Falls Elementary Physical Education Department:

Joyce Cawelti  Valley Park
Karen Needham  Cedar Heights
Nancy Schrieber  Hansen
Mary Shoup  Orchard Hill
Kris Whitcher  North Cedar
Jim Zimmer  Lincoln
Dear Parents,

On behalf of the elementary Cedar Falls Physical Education Teachers, we would like to invite you to celebrate the Olympics with us. All sixth grade students in the district will represent a country and participate in events for their country. The team scores for each country will not be kept to promote the true spirit of sportsmanship of the Olympics.

This celebration will be held on Friday, April 26 (rain date May 3), at the Cedar Falls High School Track. The event begins at 12:00 and ends at 2:30.

Please feel free to come and enjoy this celebration with us. No passport is needed, as your admission to the games will be free. Hope you can join us!

Sincerely,

Cedar Falls Elementary Physical Education Department:

Joyce Cawelti        Valley Park
Karen Needham       Cedar Heights
Judy Samek           Southdale
Nancy Schrieber     Hansen
Mary Shoup           Orchard Hill
Kris Whitcher       North Cedar
Jim Zimmer          Lincoln
Sequence of Events for Olympic Fest
Sequence of Olympicfest.

1. Sack lunches to be delivered at 11:15 to the elementary schools.

2. Bus departure by 11:40. Arrival to High School by 11:45 - 12:00.

3. Assemble in 10 countries at Sr. High by 12:00. Two Sixth grade teachers with each country. Flag bearer designated for each country.

4. Parade--walk around the track one time and stop by West bleachers. Include music and oath. (Music: Chariots of Fire)
   (The students will know their countries by t-shirts.)
   Torch bearers--student council leaders from each school and Ron Steel from KWWL.

5. Students sing theme song--"For Thee We Sing"

6. All Say the Olympic Oath. Torch bearer runs up and posts Olympic flame.

7. The announcer will say "Let the Games begin!"
   Track events begin at 12:15 and must finish by 2:30 P.M.
   (Students must arrive back at school by 3:00)

8. Event Sign-up sheet including following events--
   (Students must choose two events to be in.)
   400 meter --12:15 (can run on each side of track)
   100 meter --12:30 (boy/girl heats)
   Shuttle -- 1:00 (Two starters)
   Wheelchair-- 1:20
   4 X 100 -- 1:30
   Mile -- 2:00

   Long jump, high jump, and koosh throw can go on at the same time the running events are going.

9. With remaining time, do cooperative events.
   1. Two-Level Pyramid
   2. Olympic Volley
10. College students:
   Field events
   timers
   finish line
   exchange zones
   lane assignments

(Rip Marsten's class will help at 12:00 and Mrs. Bucknam's from 1:00 - 1:50.

11. The students will sit in the bleachers with their country. The sixth grade teachers
    will supervise the bleachers.
    (Note: No one should be on the field except the judges, pickers, and the
    participants in the specific event.)

12. A school nurse will be available for medical assistance.

13. All events will be announced. Relay teams will be decided and grouped at the
    event. Field events will go until finished.

14. The clerk of course will get students lined up for heats.

15. Note: All events will be timed and measured, but no winners will be declared.

16. A map is available to show where events begin and finish.

17. Note: Students are not allowed in the high school unless emergency bathroom
    use is necessary--with supervision.

Reminders:
   Remember to wear t-shirts.
   Remind participants to be good listeners, respect others, and be good sports.
Scope and Sequence of Track Events
Scope and Sequence
For the Sixth Grade Olympics

Skill 1: Sprints
1. Sprint Start
2. Block Spacing and Placement--Optional to use blocks
3. Taking Position in the Blocks
4. Set Position
5. The starting Action
6. Stride Length
7. Stride Cadence
8. Body Position
9. Knee Action
10. Foot Strike
11. Arm Action

Skill 2: Distance Running
1. Standing Start
2. Running Form
3. Pacing
4. Strategy--for Mile Run

Skill 3: Relays
1. Baton Passing - left to right
2. Exchange Zones
3. Shuttle Relay - pass batons

Skill 4: Long Jump
1. Approach
2. Take-off
3. Landing
4. Check point
5. Scratch
6. Measurement
Skill 5: High Jump

1. Scissors
2. Approach
3. Takeoff
4. Landing
5. Straddle Roll
6. Approach
7. Gather
8. Kick
9. Arm Movement
10. Back Leg Clearance

Skill 6: Koosh Throw

1. Overhand Throw Techniques
2. Release
3. Follow-Through

Basically, in sixth grade there is refinement of skills from fifth grade. Also, the distance and speed are increased. The skill development often depends upon the students potential and the amount of previous training.

Proper stretching and warm-up techniques are used before practicing these events.
Teaching Track and Field Unit
A. Resources available:
1. Physical Education Handbook - Elementary

B. Equipment:
1. Track Area
2. High jump equipment
3. Sand pits or landing pad
4. Rake
5. Tape measures
6. Stop watches
7. Cones
8. Hurdles
9. Shot Put
10. Discus
11. Batons

Teaching and Learning Activities

A. Skills

1. Standing start - The feet, in the standing start, should be in a comfortable half-stride position. Avoid an extremely long stride position. The body leans forward, so the body center of gravity is forward. The weight is on the toes, and the knees are slightly flexed. The arms be down or hanging slightly back.

2. Sprinter's start - To take the "on the mark" position the toe of the front foot is placed from 4 to 12 inches behind the starting line. The thumb and first finger are placed just behind the line, with the other fingers adding support. The knee of the rear leg is placed just opposite the front foot or ankle.

For the "get set" position, the seat is raised so it is slightly higher than the shoulders, the knee of the rear leg is raised off the ground, and the shoulders are moved forward over the hands. The weight is evenly distributed over the hands and feet.

On the "go" signal, push sharply off with both feet, with the front leg straightening, as the back leg comes forward for a step. The body should rise gradually and not pop up suddenly.

3. Sprinting form - The body leans forward, with the arms swinging in opposition to the legs. The arms are bent at the elbows and swing from the shoulders in a forward and backward plane, not across the body. Forceful arm action aids sprinting action. The knees are lifted sharply forward and upward and brought down with a vigorous pushing motion, with a forceful push by the toes. Sprinting should be a driving and striding motion as opposed to the inefficient pulling action shown by some runners.
In running, concentrate on the following: The quality of lightness and ease, the quality of relaxation and looseness, good striding action, and slight body lean and good head position.

How the foot meets the ground generally takes care of itself. Some children like to run up on their toes; others use more of the foot.

5. Baton passing - The runner exchanges the baton from his or her left hand to the right hand of the runner ahead. The runner should carry the baton like a candle when passing. The receiver reaches back with his or her right hand, with the fingers pointed down and the thumb to the inside, and begins to move ahead when the coming runner is 3 to 5 yards back of him or her. The receiver grasps the baton and immediately shifts it to the left hand while moving. The exchange to the next runner should be made on the move, with the front runner timing his or her start and increase of speed to the pace of the runner coming in. If the baton is dropped, it must be picked up or the team is disqualified. An alternate way of receiving the baton is to reach back with the hand facing up. The first method is considered more suitable for sprint relays.

With either method, the initial runner has the baton in his left hand as he or she starts the race.

6. Standing long jump - In both the standing and running long jump, the measurement is made from the takeoff board or line to the nearest point on the ground touched by the jumper. It is important for the children not to fall or step backward after making the jump. In the standing long jump, the performer toes the line with the feet flat on the ground and fairly close together. His or her arms are brought forward in a preliminary swing and then swung down and back. The jump is made with both feet as the arms are swung forcibly forward to assist in lifting the body upward and forward. While in the air, the knees should be brought upward and forward with the arms forward to sustain balance.

7. Long jump - A short run is needed and should be planned so that the toes of the jumping foot contact the board in a natural stride. The jumper takes off with one foot and should strive for height. The landing is made on both feet after the knees have been brought forward. The landing should be made in a forward direction, not sideward.

More efficient jumping is done when a check point is used. The check point can be established about halfway down the run. Competitors can help each other by marking the check point for a jumper during the run prior to the jump. Each jumper should know how many steps back from the takeoff board his or her check point is located. On the run for the jump he or she hits the mark with the appropriate foot (right or left), so he or she reaches the board with the correct foot in normal stride for the jump.
should be relaxed and ready to move. The last stride can be shortened somewhat.

A fair jump is made back of the scratch line. A foul (scratch) jump is called if the jumping step is beyond the scratch line or the jumper runs into or through the pit. Each contestant is given a certain number of trials (jumps). If a jumper runs into the pit or steps over the scratch line while jumping, this counts as one of the trials. Measurement is from the scratch line to the nearest point of touch.

8. **High jump (Scissors)** - The high jump bar is approached from a slight angle. The takeoff is by the outside leg (the one farthest from the bar). The near leg is lifted and goes over first, followed quickly by the rear leg in a looping movement. There should be a good upward kick with the front leg, together with an upward thrust of the arms. The knees should be straightened at the highest point of the jump. The landing is made on the lead foot followed by the rear foot.

9. **High jump (Straddle Roll)** - Approach should be made from the left side at an angle of no more than 45 degrees. There are four parts to the jump, with respect to coaching.

a. The Gather: The last three steps must be fast and vigorous, with the body leaning back a bit. The takeoff is on the left foot.

b. The Kick: The right leg is kicked vigorously, as the plant with the jumping foot is made.

c. Arm Movement: An abrupt lift with both arms is made, with the left arm reaching over the bar and the right moving straight up. This puts the jumper in straddle position as he or she goes over.

d. The Back Leg Clearance: This accomplished by straightening the body, rolling the hips to the right (over the bar), or dropping the right shoulder.
10. Hurdles - When the runner is approximately 5 to 7 feet away from the hurdle, she lifts her head leg and extends it forward. The opposite arm to this leg should also be extended forward. She continues to move her lead leg forward and upward until it clears the hurdle. The rear leg then starts forward, with the toes turned up. Note the important forward body lean as the runner prepares for the next stage. She draws her lead leg down and thrusts her trailing leg forward. Note throughout this whole movement, that the shoulders should be parallel to the finish line.

Teaching Suggestions:

a. The takeoff must be between five and seven feet from the hurdle. The actual distance will depend upon the child's size and strength. This seems like a long way when you stand and look at it, but it is very easy to negotiate the hurdle from this distance when in motion.
b. Bring the knee of the lead leg up quickly toward the hurdle.
c. Lean forward into the hurdle to acquire good balance.
d. Bring the lead leg down quickly.
e. Snap the trailing leg through quickly into the next running stride.
f. Always lean forward on the hurdle, never backward.

Children should recognize that hurdling is akin to sprinting and that speed is essential. The child should go over the hurdle with the same leading foot each time.

11. Discus - The performer should stand with his or her back towards the front of the circle. He or she will complete one and one-half rotations, starting with the right foot leading. The discus is gripped with the first joint of fingers, hands spread and palm down. At the end of the rotation the discus is released in the direction of throw with the performers body completing our rotation.

12. Shot Put - The performer should stand near the back of the circle with his weight on his right leg. He holds the shot in a "cradled" position on the side of his neck. He extends his left arm upward for balance. He then lowers his trunk over his right leg and raises his left leg upward and toward the front of the circle. In a simultaneous action, he drives his right leg toward the front of the circle and shifts his left leg in the same direction. Throughout this shifting movement, the body should be kept low. At the end of this shifting movement, he begins to extend his right leg upward, rotates his trunk toward the front, and extends his right arm forward and upward. The shot is released with a final push off the fingertips. The body continues to move around to the left side.
To construct a throwing area for shot putting, take a piece of rope approximately five feet long and tape the ends. Drive two nails through the rope exactly 3-1/2 feet apart. Hold one nail stationary and scribe an arc with the other end.

B. Knowledges

1. **Long jump** - A fair jump is made back of the scratch line.
2. **High jump** - Take-off must be from one foot.
3. **False start** - A runner is disqualified if movement occurs after "get set," and before the signal "go."
4. Lane positions must be maintained in dashes.
5. Three attempts are usually allowed in the long jump and at each height in the high jump.
6. The runners must be in the passing zone when the baton is passed.

C. Drills and Activities

1. **Single-activity stations** - A different skill is practiced at each station.
2. **Multiple activity stations** - Two stations may be assigned to one group. Or, several skills could be practiced at each station.
3. **Individualized or contract instruction** - Each student selects the skills they desire to practice.
Integration Olympic Theme with Art

1. Olympic T-shirt notice was given to the students prior to the Art integration.

2. The Art teachers were given the flag handout representing the countries.

3. Each student put their name, country, and events on their t-shirt.

4. The students were given a six inch square piece of typing paper and could color a design with hard fabric crayon (wax crayon). If any writing was done, the students needed to write backwards--this proved to be a challenge for some! The wax crayon colors transfer to the shirt and lasts through many washings.

5. The Art teacher can provide examples of Olympic symbols and events--(handouts given to her follow).

6. The associates at each building will iron the design on the t-shirts and give them back to the Physical Education teacher until the day of the event.

7. Thank you's were sent to the Art teachers from the P.E. Dept.
To: All sixth grade Students

Please remember to bring a used, or new, plain white T-shirt to school for our upcoming Olympics.

Thank you,

Mrs. Whitcher
Physical Education
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Capital</th>
<th>Languages</th>
<th>Geography</th>
<th>Religions</th>
<th>National Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>17,233,000</td>
<td>Canberra</td>
<td>English, aboriginal languages</td>
<td>Area: 2,966,200 Sq. Miles (almost as large as the continental United States)</td>
<td>Anglican, Protestant, Roman Catholic</td>
<td>January 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>26,527,000</td>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>English, French</td>
<td>Area: 3,558,096 Sq. Miles (second largest country in land size)</td>
<td>Roman Catholic, Protestant</td>
<td>July 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1,130,065,000</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>Mandarin Chinese, Yue, Wu Minbei, Minnan, Xiang, Gan</td>
<td>Area: 3,705,390 Sq. Miles (slightly larger than the conterminous U.S.)</td>
<td>Atheist, Confucianist, Buddhist, Taoist</td>
<td>October 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>5,134,000</td>
<td>Copenhagen</td>
<td>Danish &amp; German</td>
<td>Area: 16,633 Sq. Miles (about the size of Massachusetts and New Hampshire combined)</td>
<td>Evangelical Lutheran</td>
<td>April 16, June 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Population: 79,548,000
Capital: Berlin
Language: German
Geography: Area: 137,838 sq. mi.
Religions: Protestant, Roman Catholic

INDIA
Population: 866,352,000
Capital: New Delhi
Languages: Hindi, English, and 15 Indian languages
Geography: Area: 1,266,595 Sq. Miles (one-third the size of the United States)
Religions: Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh
National Days: January 26, August 15

JAPAN
Population: 123,778,000
Capital: Tokyo
Language: Japanese
Geography: Area: 145,856 Sq. Miles (slightly smaller than California)
Religions: Buddhist, Shintoist
National Days: May 3, December 23

MEXICO
Population: 79,548,000
Capital: Mexico City
Languages: Spanish, Indian languages, Amerindian
Geography: Area: 761,604 Sq. Miles (three times the size of Texas)
Religion: Roman Catholic
National Day: September 16

SPAIN
Population: 39,623,000
Capital: Madrid
Languages: Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque
Geography: Area: 194,896 Sq. Miles (the size of Arizona and Utah combined)
Religion: Roman Catholic
National Days: June 24, October 12

SOUTH AFRICA
Population: 39,550,000
Capital: Pretoria Cape Town
Languages: English, Afrikaans, Nguni, Tsonga, Sotho and Venda language groups
Geography: Area: 472,359 Sq. Miles (about twice the size of Texas)
Religions: Christian, Hindu, Muslim
National Day: May 31
Sixth Grade
Integration of
Olympic Theme

USA
Integration of Olympic Theme with Sixth Grade

1. Sixth Grade Teacher Letter

2. Map of the track

3. Direction Sheet

4. Event Sign-up sheet (This was done in Physical Education.)

5. North Cedar Students--Countries--Events

6. All ten countries--students--events

7. Olympic Oath Activity
   - folders
   - discussion of oath
   - wrote responses to oath
   - planned school oath

8. Olympic torch relay map (given to sixth grade teachers to follow)

9. The teachers were asked to review the information given to them in advance about rules, and sportsmanship.
To: Sixth Grade Teachers  
From: Kris Whitcher, P.E.  
Subject: Olympics

Attached are important sheets you will need to keep available for the Olympics on April 25th. The agenda, map, and a copy of the students in your country will be helpful for you to bring along to the event. I hope you will enjoy the day as much as I'm looking forward to it! Last year it was very windy, so don't put the winter coat away yet!

As you will notice, the P.E. teachers are asking for your supervision with a country. Please sit with your country after the parade—which you will walk with your country. Please ask your students to sit on the bleachers when not participating. This supervision will take place in the bleachers.

Lastly, I need to ask of you a classroom favor. Enclosed are a package of pins and white paper. Your students will need to pin the paper on the back of their shirt, or coat, the day of the event. (The number will NOT show.) Please have them PRINT, in marker, and block style—BIG, the name of their country on the white side of the paper. Then pin the sheets on their back.

I will be giving you name tags—computer labels. Please have each student PRINT their name on the tag—first and last, and North Cedar. Please wear the name tags on front, and country identification on their back the day of the event.

I would appreciate you reminding your students about appropriate behavior, sportsmanship, and cooperation at the Olympics. They will need to participate in the oath, and song “My Country Tis of Thee”, appropriately. Please have students use the bathroom before leaving the school.

Thanks for your help!—Any questions?—Kris Whitcher, P.E.—I will see you at the track as I am driving over myself for set-up.

(P.S.—I need a final lunch count on Monday of how many want a sack lunch provided by the school for Friday. Could you send that number to me on Monday. If teachers want one let my know.)
CELEBRATING THE OLYMPICS

1. Eat sack lunch at school at 11:15 a.m. Have students put name tags on & pin country name tags on before leaving school.
2. Buses pick students up at 11:45 a.m.
3. Assemble in 10 countries at Sr. High - 12:00 p.m. TWO 6TH grade teachers assigned to each country. (Assignments below.) Time permitting, try to have students meet others in the group as they arrive.
4. Flag bearer designated for each country
5. Steve Harding is the P.A. announcer
6. Enter in countries and parade around to the West bleachers
7. Torch Bearers - Student council leaders, Dr. Smith, & Dr. Ott will carry the torch around the track & up the bleachers
8. Patriotic song, “My Country Tis of Thee”
9. All say Olympic Oath & P.A. announces “Let The Games Begin”
10. Track events begin at 12:15 & end at 2:30 p.m.
11. ORDER OF EVENTS, Boys & Girls compete in separate heats
   
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A) 12:15</th>
<th>400 Meters</th>
<th>B) 12:30</th>
<th>100 Meters</th>
<th>C) 1:00</th>
<th>100 M Shuttle</th>
<th>D) 1:20</th>
<th>200 Meters</th>
<th>E) 1:30</th>
<th>4 X 100 Meters</th>
<th>F) 2:00</th>
<th>Mile Run</th>
<th>G) Long Jump</th>
<th>H) High Jump</th>
<th>I) Koosh Throw</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12. Field events will start at 12:15 and continue until finished. Students will need to leave when their running event is called and return afterwards to finish their field event.
13. UNI students from Rip Marston’s & Cindy Buckman’s classes will help run the events.
14. All running events will be on the track in front of the west bleachers. The Shuttle Relay may need to be run on both the east and west side of the track. Field events will be on the football field.
15. Clerk of Course will get students lined up for running events.
16. Students will be timed & measured, BUT no winners will be declared.
17. Relay teams will be grouped at the time of the event.
18. Students not involved in an event will sit in the West bleachers with their countries.
   
   Teachers assigned to each country will be responsible for sitting with students.
19. After all events, ALL students will participate in cooperative activities, if time permits. P.A will invite students to join their countries (find the banner for your country) on the football field and UNI students will lead them in an Olympic Volley & Spirals.
20. Ann Van Wig, school nurse will be available if needed for medical assistance.
21. A map will be available to show where events start & finish.
22. Students will NOT be allowed to go into the high school except for an emergency bathroom use.
23. Students will wear name tags indicating name & country on the front, and will design a country name tag on their back depicting the name of their country.
24. Remind your students to be GOOD LISTENERS, RESPECT OTHERS, & BE GOOD SPORTS. Cheer for all those involved.
25. All teachers are supervisors of all students, but specifically responsible for students from the country listed below. Please remind all students to stay in the bleachers until their event is called.
26. We would appreciate any ideas, criticisms, or suggestions concerning the activities & procedures.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Australia: York & Dieter
China: Bonwell & Egli
Germany: Groote & Cross
Japan: Jaeger & Jacobsen
S. Africa: Bewyer

Canada: Steiner & Bohr
Denmark: Witzel & Noonan
India: Hamilton & Rogers
Mexico: Hokomoto & Teig
Spain: Williamson & Graf
CELEBRATING THE OLYMPICS

NAME_____________________________________________________

SCHOOL___________________________________________________

PUT A 1 BY THE EVENT THAT IS YOUR FIRST CHOICE;
A 2 BY YOUR SECOND CHOICE;
A 3 BY YOUR THIRD CHOICE; AND
A 4 BY YOUR FOURTH CHOICE.

EACH STUDENT WILL BE PARTICIPATING IN 2 EVENTS.

RUNNING EVENTS
100 METER DASH ________
400 METER RUN ________
MILE RUN ________

RELAYS
4 X 100 METERS ________
SHUTTLE ________

FIELD EVENTS
LONG JUMP ________
HIGH JUMP ________
KOOSH THROW ________
Sixth Grade Students
Countries and Events
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Event 1</th>
<th>Event 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April Merton</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitch Hoeppner</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Long jump</td>
<td>High jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jay Jenny</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Shuttle</td>
<td>Koosh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josh Wheelock</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Long jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tammy Wahner</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Koosh</td>
<td>Shuttle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke Snathorst</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>Mile</td>
<td>4x100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber Everman</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Shuttle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leah Borja</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Koosh</td>
<td>Long jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corey King</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Long jump</td>
<td>4x100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke Engel</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>4x100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica Slick</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>Long jump</td>
<td>4x100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeremy Dunsmoor</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>4x100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brenda Allen</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4x100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doug Smith</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Mile</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob Linkemann</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>Koosh</td>
<td>Shuttle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zack Wayne</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martha Ashton</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>4x100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Warnke</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Koosh</td>
<td>Shuttle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Zook</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>High jump</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurt Heath</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>Long jump</td>
<td>High jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brittany Buchholz</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>High jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Hoover</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4x100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mike Thammavong</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Shuttle</td>
<td>4x100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Edwards</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Koosh</td>
<td>Shuttle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooke Olmstead</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>S Africa</td>
<td>Long jump</td>
<td>4x100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krystal Anderson</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>S Africa</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Shuttle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leilani Larson</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>S Africa</td>
<td>Koosh</td>
<td>Long jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tish Campbell</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>4x100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Barrett</td>
<td>N Cedar</td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>Long jump</td>
<td>High jump</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Olympic Oath
Integration
To: Mary and Vicki
From: Kris Whitcher

Favor Time--

I'm needing some integration of the Olympics in your classroom. With the upcoming Olympic fest approaching--my project at college is the integration of a theme--specifically the Olympics. I'm already integrating the project in Art and Music, but I would like to offer you the opportunity to integrate an Olympic activity in your classroom.

I have several ideas for you to choose from, or you can do your own. I would appreciate a sampling of your experience.

Thank you sooooooo much!
The Olympic Oath

In the name of all competitors, I promise that we shall take part in the Olympic Games, respecting and abiding by the rules which govern them, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honor of our teams.
The Olympic Oath

Since 1920, a representative of the host country has led the athletes in taking the Olympic oath. The Olympic oath is a promise to compete fairly. The language may vary from Olympic Games to Olympic Games, but the spirit remains the same.

Here are the words of the oath:

In the name of all competitors, I promise that we shall take part in these Olympic Games, respecting and abide by the rules which govern them, in the true spirit of sportsmanship, for the glory of sport and the honor of our teams.

1. Why is it important to follow the rules of a sport?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

2. What is the “true spirit of sportsmanship”?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

3. What are the goals of Olympic competition, according to the oath? What do the goals mean?

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

4. Work in small groups to write a new “Olympic oath” for your class to use when competing in sporting events.

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
Student Evaluation

1. Did you feel your teammates displayed proper sportsmanship?
   Yes ________  No ________ Why?

2. Did you understand how to do your event?
   Yes ________  No ________ Why?

3. What was the best part of the Olympifeest? (check as many as you want)
   fun events _______ meeting other students ________
   parade ________ learning the oath ________
   relays ________ cooperative activities ________
   long jump ________ high jump ________
   koosh ball ________ mile run ________
   t-shirts ________ other ideas ________

4. Which part of the Olympifeest could have been done better and why?

5. How much do you plan on watching the Olympic Games this summer?
   All ________  None ________ Some ________

Additional Comments:

Teacher Evaluation

(Please return this questionnaire in school mail immediately following this event... or give directly to:

KRIS WHITCOMB  North Cedar School  Thank you)

1. Did you feel this event was worthwhile?
   yes ________  no ________ -WHY?

2. Did you feel activities were appropriate?
   yes ________  no ________ -WHY?

3. Were directions given to you explicit?
   yes ________  no ________ -WHY?

4. Did you feel your students and country displayed enthusiasm and motivation?
   yes ________  no ________ -WHY?

5. What suggestions or comments do you have for improvement with this event?

(Th e Physical Education Department would like to thank you for your patience, assistance, and time involved in making this event happen.)

THANK YOU!
Student Certificate for Olympicfest
CEDAR FALLS
6TH GRADE

CELEBRATING THE OLYMPICS

Mrs. Kris Whitcher

Student

Physical Education Instructor
SIXTH GRADE
OLYMPIC GAMES
CEDAR FALLS

LINCOLN
CEDAR HTS.
NORTH CEDAR
ORCHARD HILL

STUDENT

P.E. TEACHER
Pictures/Letters of Olympicfest
Monday, April 29, 1996

Dear Kris,

I was fortunate to attend the 1996 Cedar Falls 6th grade Olympics games last Friday at CFHS. The students were engaged in a variety of track and field events. I observed students having fun as spectators cheering for classmates, warming up for their track and field events, and being active participants in this special athletic event.

Thank you for making the extra effort to create, organize, and implement such a wonderful experience for our students. It was clear that your efforts to plan out each aspect of this event were carefully considered. The cooperative efforts that involved volunteers, staff members, students together helped to lead to the overall success of this event.

The Olympics were successful at many levels. Our students shared positive comments about their Olympic experiences. This experience helped students develop a new appreciation for the physical and mental discipline required to participate athletic events. Our staff was pleased with the participation and the sportsmanship students demonstrated. The emphasis on countries of the world and cooperation helped establish the true Olympic spirit!

Thanks again for your work in providing this learning experience for the Cedar Falls students. This will be a event they will remember for a long time! I commend you for your efforts.

Sincerely,

Deb Beving

THE FUTURE BELONGS TO THOSE WHO PREPARE FOR IT.
Olympic Parade
April 26, 1996

Ron Steele, KWWL
Official torch carrier

Student Council leaders
with torch carrier, Ron
Steele. (All students
standing in their
countries in the
background.)
Field Event: Longjump

Relays
Ready to "GO"

Wheelchair Race
"India" demonstrating double pyramid

Countries gather for Culminating Activities.

"Spain" together one last time.
SIXTH GRADE TEACHERS

We would like to extend our thanks to all of you for being involved in the Sixth Grade Olympics. We hope to make it an annual event so we appreciate your suggestions and comments.

Suggestions already mentioned will be considerations in planning for next year. We understand the signing of T-shirts caused some problems so we are planning to have a designated time at the end for signing shirts. Hopefully, the P.A. system will be new next year. There were several problems with the sound and students could not hear events called. We know many students finished their two events and then had to just sit the rest of the time. We hope to make it optional for students to sign up for a third event.

We feel your enthusiasm was a major part in the success of the Olympics. We appreciate your helpfulness in dealing with the T-shirts, sack lunches, and other situations in the classroom as well as during the bus ride and supervising in the stands. Next year we will all know more what to expect and will be able to better prepare students in advance.

We will definitely hope for better weather. Maybe we should put in our request now!

Thank you again,

The Elementary Physical Education Staff
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! FOR A GREAT JOB I'VE HEARD NOTHING BUT GOOD THINGS ABOUT THE OLYMPICS. EVERYONE THOUGHT IT WAS ORGANIZED VERY WELL, AND THE KIDS WERE HAVING A GREAT TIME. THANK YOU STEVE FOR THE GREAT ANNOUNCING. WOW! THE HEAD PHONES WAS A GREAT IDEA. ZIM
Thank you for the wonderful day at Cedar Falls High School on Friday, April 25. From the organization to the weather, everything was perfect. Our North Cedar sixth graders had a great time. They met new friends and had a chance to participate in events that they felt confident. The Olympic spirit was there. The volunteers were great, too. The Elementary P.E. department deserves a big hand.
Good Morning Everyone!

Please accept my congratulations on the fantastic work you've done to organize and facilitate the 6th grade Olympics! This is a very special event for our students and it provides a great forum for learning not only the importance of fitness, but that of sportmanship and cooperation. I speak for our 6th grade teaching team, students, and parents in expressing appreciation for the time, energy, efforts, and creativity you all have contributed in making this event the success it is. Please know that you are making a big difference in the lives of our students. In returning to school Friday after having been a spectator at this year's Olympic Celebration- I could only think about what a marvelous spirit of community you've helped to create among our students, staff, and parents.

Thanks again for your many efforts!!

deb beving
Reflection of Olympic Theme
Reflection

In a sense, Baron Pierre de Coubertin's view of what the Olympics truly represent was the cornerstone of this curriculum project. This French nobleman had a vision in the late 1800's that he managed to bring into being. This man once said, "The important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, not to have conquered but to have fought well." I believe that the opportunity given to my students was organized in a way that represented the Olympic oath. The emphasis placed on participation and cooperation truly made the Olympicfest a gala one to remember.

In referring to Ralph Tyler's questions when developing curriculum, I reflect back to my outcome objectives. My educational purpose was met by providing information and activities to familiarize students with the Olympic Games. I further encompassed many skills throughout the curriculum of track and field. The sixth grade teachers were happy to receive resources and a folder about the Olympicfest for expanding their knowledge. Higher level thinking skills were integrated by the multiple intelligences involved with the integration with different subject areas. My scope and sequence, time line, and goals were followed.

The educational experience was beneficial to my students with the Olympicfest. The students enjoyed meeting others from the different schools and felt it was a good transition for Junior High School. The shirt signing was a bonding experience for the students in their countries. It was suggested that we have a few ice breakers to begin the event so the students can get to know each other a bit before hand. However, we did have them introduce themselves to each other before participating in the events.

The organization of this project required much planning and additional time and commitment from the Elementary Physical Education staff. The beginning stages and committee's were formed in the Fall. From that time on we met once a month to give our committee reports to the group. The last month we met several times to finalize plans. With the integration of other subject areas and classrooms, the positive support was extremely evident. Each teacher did request that the groundwork should be established for them. We provided folders to the Art, Music, sixth grade teachers,
along with our administration, including the director of elementary education. We felt with the sound base already established, future events will be much easier to develop.

From my student and teacher evaluation sheets, a compiled list of comments were made to change or make the event better. I will generalize about the comments.

The main problem not anticipated was the P.A. system. We had it ready to go until the radio announcer plugged in his equipment and we lost power. We did get things up and going again, but speakers were only working on the opposite side of the field. Unfortunately, this happened during the parade and the music was softer than we had planned. We had also hoped to use the music for this year’s Olympics, but that was unavailable to us at the time. We went ahead and used music from *Chariots of Fire*.

The nurse suggested about water availability. The day of our event was rather cool, which was to our advantage, because the students did not have to use the bathroom or need much water. If the conditions were different, this could have been a problem. Water was not available on the track. The possibility of water bottles was discussed. Also, the nurse available for the Olympicfest suggested that teachers needed to bring along their students inhalers because of asthma conditions. It was also mentioned to stress eating a good lunch and breakfast. I did discuss this with my students and especially gave examples of healthy things to bring for those wanting to do their own cold lunch.

With the student shirts all being the same color, it was difficult to distinguish the countries. We discussed changing each country to a different color. It would then be easier for the teacher to manage that country in the bleachers. We decided to discuss this with the Art teachers and what would work, or if tie-dye would be a possibility.

All teachers thanked us and were grateful for the information and handout provided. We discussed the importance of establishing exactly what the teachers need to do for this event. The teachers felt that some guidelines for behavior needed to be established for the stands. One benefit would be to section off the countries by ropes to keep the students in their specific seats. The teachers appreciated that there were no announced winners or medals. The students all thought they were winners as each
country was encouraged to cheer for everyone. The administration present were also very complimentary. Letters and evaluation forms were returned to us from these specific people. We were happy that our Director of Elementary Education was present for the entire activity.

The students evaluations were also favorable to the event. Many of my students thanked me for my work involved. The students did comment about wanting to be able to participate in more events than two. We kept it limited for our first time, because we were unsure of the time involved. We could add additional relays and more events in the future. More time was needed to sign shirts which another year could be incorporated into the planning of the event. Some mentioned that they would have liked to compete against other schools and not countries. Our goal was not as much competitive in nature, but stressed cooperation and the celebration of diversity. Some students would have liked to do running events, but had already chose to do two field events first. A reminder would need to be given that the top two choices selected would probably be what they would do. We did honor everyone's first choice selected. It may have also helped to post a map for the U.N.I. students and the kids to be able to see where the events would take place. The teachers were the only ones to have a map.

The counselors suggested that it would have been nice for the students to meet each other within their country beforehand. We did not allow for group introductions because of the time commitment we were under. This could have been done nicely by the utilization of our E-mail system within the different buildings. It was suggested that since the students had sack lunches, maybe they could eat them with their country. We stressed that they eat a before bus departure, to digest the food before the running events began.

In conclusion, I felt this event went extremely well and was well-organized. Our staff became closer by this experience. Several meetings developed into supper dates, which included our spouses. We have always been friends, but now feel more united. The students did grasp the big picture of the Olympics as it was reinforced throughout the curriculum. The teacher evaluations requested that this become an annual event. I also noticed that my students were more inspired to do our physical fitness testing
this year because their purpose was to train for the Olympicfest. The track events involved introduced them to procedures done at a track meet.

Research also supports that students learn best through active learning and our Olympicfest was a vehicle for generating this experience. In the Olympic theme, the connections involved with the different classes and subject matter, enhanced the intelligences. The students participation in a realistic opportunity and a multi-cultural event was a celebration of diversity. Because of the integration of the Olympics, Physical Education will become more widely recognized as an integral part of the school curriculum. Physical learning can be the province of P.E., but integrated learning can be very important to increasing retention and understanding. A project such as this, involving the students, staff, and the community, demonstrates much connectedness and valuable learning experiences. This theme integration was successful because of its relevancy, connectedness, and enjoyment.
Appendix
Teacher Bibliography


Cross-Curricular ideas for Olympic
Cross-Curricular Activities

Instructional ideas by subject area to integrate the Olympic theme.
Note: These ideas can be modified for different grade levels.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION:
- celebrate the spirit and host a culminating event at the end of the year
- units of study presented as Olympic events
- scoring rubrics created to represent gold, silver and bronze skill development
- fitness goals based on motto: Swifter, higher, stronger
- Skill and fitness based on individual improvement
- study of fitness, bones, muscles, heart—related to health and training of the athlete for specific sports/events
- ideas for the rest of the curriculum can be incorporated into the physical education curriculum when practical
- A.C.E.S. (All Children Exercising Simultaneously), first Wednesday of May at 10 A.M., can be a school-wide torch passing event
- Exciting and motivational bulletin boards with the Olympic theme

SCIENCE:
- aspects of human performance; muscles, strength, endurance, flexibility, heart and cardiorespiratory system

MATH:
- metric system and measurement of the running and jumping events
- scoring and records of past performers
- comparisons, projections and graphs of performances

LANGUAGE ARTS:
- read biographies about competitors and find out what motivates Olympic athletes to "go for the gold"
- challenge students to write a five-word sentence on the Olympic Five-rings
- write: My Day at the Olympic Games
- reading, spelling and writing about the history and tradition
- writing to an embassy for information about a country
- learn a foreign language
be a “pen-pal”

A pen-pal network is being created between classrooms in Australia and the world. If you are interested in signing onto this network with an elementary class, please contact: Pat Henry, Chair of the Education Committee, Athletic Dept., Harvard University, 60 John F. Kennedy Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138.

SOCIAL STUDIES:

-the motto, glad, and flame are three symbols of the Olympics which provide intriguing material for study.

Motto:
SWIFTER, HIGHER, STRONGER. --a great motivational slogan--encourages all who participate in the Olympic movement to excel in their quest to reach the upper limits of human performance in accord with the Olympic spirit.

Children can cut out pictures from old magazines or calendars and paste them on paper in a design depicting these words. Discuss the spirit of “striving for the best” that speaks beyond the words themselves. Display the motto in Latin for children who wish to label their work in both languages. Have children write the motto on their montage with black marker.

Flame:
Symbolizes the continuity between the ancient and modern games.

Symbol:
The five interlocking rings—red, blue, black, green and yellow, representing the five geographic areas and sporting friendship of all peoples.

Flag:
The symbol of the five rings on a white background.

-write a newspaper chronicling the events of the Olympic Games in ancient Greece.
Include: personal profiles, cartoons, play-by-play accounts, cartoons, interesting trivia, and information about the country and culture of Greece.
-study of participating countries, cultures, language and traditions
-ancient Olympic history
-mapping skills---
Map out the route of the Olympic Torch Relay which begins April 27 in Los Angeles and concludes July 19 at the Opening Ceremonies in Atlanta. Free U.S. torch relay maps are available by calling 1-800-496-COKE.--(I did!)

MEDIA CENTER:

-research an Ancient Olympia and compare to Modern Olympia
-Computer search on records and Olympic Champions
-Autobiographies and biographies of Olympic Athletes
-study the special Olympics, paralympics and the senior Olympics
-trace the role of women in the Olympics--
(Note: the more than 3600 women scheduled to participate in the 1996 Atlanta Centennial Games represent the largest number ever to compete in Olympic medal
competition -- over 600 more than the number of women who competed in the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona.

ART:

-make fold-and-fly doves to hang on mobiles or release in a bouquet of flight at the Olympicfest
-create an Olympic flag as a class project
-individual projects of the flags of various countries
-create an Olympic quilt as a school wide project
-build models of the Olympic torch
-study Ancient Greek sculptors such as Foods

MUSIC:

-band and chorus learn the Olympic hymn
-study and learn the music of the various countries including the national anthem
-find other music associated with the Olympics
-play the "Friendship March" from We All Live Together, Vol. 1 by Greg and Steve. Have students march to the beat and clap their hands as if they are Olympic athletes entering the stadium in the opening ceremony. Sing along with Greg and Steve.
-Sing to the tune--He's Got the Whole World in His Hands--He's Got the Whole World at the Games

CREATIVE DRAMA:

-Charades--pantomime ideas such as:
  skate on ice, toss the discus, light the torch, jump the hurdle, ski down the mountain, dive in the pool, row the boat, and balance on the beam.
-mock trial: Read Jim Thorpe: Olympic Champion and discuss the reasons why Jim had to give up his Olympic medals. Choose a judge, lawyers, a defendant, and plaintiff to stage a mock trial with the class as the jury. After closing arguments, let the jury vote on his innocence or guilt.
-Design a creative drama lesson using the Olympic theme and movement (Contact person is Sally Pressley--at UNI)

Other Ideas to follow:
-Amerca Online information from North Cedar Sixth Grade Teacher
-Weekly Reader Activities
-The Thinking Olympics taken from the Good Apple Newspaper.
Cooking

Try these tasty Olympic treats!

Pizza Discus

Ingredients
- plain bagels or English muffins
- pizza sauce
- shredded mozzarella cheese
- grated Parmesan cheese

1. Set oven to 350°F.
2. Split bagel into halves.
3. Place on cookie sheet.
4. Spread pizza sauce on each half.
5. Sprinkle mozzarella cheese on top.
6. Add a few more drops of sauce.
7. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.
8. Heat in oven until cheese is melted.

Ants on a Luge

Ingredients
- celery sticks
- peanut butter or cream cheese
- raisins

1. Wash and dry celery sticks.
2. Cut off ends and save the part shaped like a luge or toboggan.
3. Fill the center with peanut butter or cream cheese.
4. Dot raisins on the filling.
Appendix
Student Bibliography
Reference Selections:

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Macmillan

Glubok, Shirley, and Alfred Tamarin  
*Olympic Games in Ancient Greece*  
Harper

Greenberg, Stan  
*The Guinness Book of Olympic Facts and Feats*  
Guinness

Hale, William Harlan  
*The Horizon Book of Ancient Greece*  
American

Knight, Theodore  
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Lucent

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*Field Athletics (Olympic Sports)*  
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Schutz, Ron  
*Looking Inside Sports Aerodynamics*  
John Muir

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Usborne
Famous
Gold Metal
Olympic Stars
Famous United States Olympian Gold Medal Stars

Jesse Owens, Track and Field
Carl Lewis, Track and Field
Babe Didrikson, Track and Field
Bob Mathias, Decathlon
Bruce Jenner, Decathlon
Johnny Weissmuller, Swimming
Patricia McCormick, Diving
Greg Louganis, Diving
Mark Spitz, Swimming
Eddie Eagan, Boxing and Bobsledding
Eric Heiden, Speed Skater
Bonnie Blair, Speed skater

Figure Skating:
Tenley Albright, Carol Heiss, Peggy Fleming, Dorothy Hamill, and Kristi Yamaguchi, Dick Button, Alan Hayes Jenkins, David Hayes Jenkins, Scott Hamilton, and Brian Boitano.

Floyd Patterson, Boxing
George Foreman, Boxing
Cassius Clay, (Muhammad Ali), Boxing
Andrea Mead Lawrence, Alpine Skiing

Harrison Dillard, Track--hurdles
Al Oerter, Track--Discus
Famous Olympians
Foreign Stars

Leonidas of Rhodes, Track

Paavo Nurmi, (Finland), Track

Daley Thompson, (Great Britain), Decathlon

Dawn Fraser, (Australia), Freestyle Swimmer

Sonja Henie, (Norway), Figure Skating

Anton Sailer, (Austria), Alpine Skier

Jean-Claude Killy, (France), Alpine Skier

Rosi Mettermaier, (West Germany), Alpine Skier

Nadia Comaneci, (Romania), Gymnastics

Abebe, Bikila, (Africa), Marathon Running

Kipchoge Keino, (Kenya), Running
Literature Selections for the Olympic theme:

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- Fox, Mem *Koala Lou* Harcourt Brace
- Isenbert, Barbara, and Marjorie Jaffe *Albert the Running Bear's Exercise Book* Clarion
- Kaminski, Robert and Judy Sierra *Multicultural Folktales* Orxy Press
- Marzollo, Jean *Red Ribbon Rosie* Random House
- Sanchez, Isidro *City Sports* Barron
- Van Steenwyk, Elizabeth *Rivals on Ice* Albert Whitman
- Yolen, Jane (Editor) *Favorite Folktales from Around the World* Pantheon
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>Aaseng, Nathan</td>
<td><em>Carl Lewis: Legend Chaser</em></td>
<td>Lerner</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Arnold, Caroline</td>
<td><em>The Olympic Summer Games</em></td>
<td>Franklin Watts</td>
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<td>Dickmeyer, Lowell A.</td>
<td><em>Swimming Is for Me</em></td>
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<td>Dickmeyer, Lowell A.</td>
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<td>Donovan, Pete</td>
<td><em>Carol Johnston: The One-Armed Gymnast</em></td>
<td>Childrens Press</td>
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<td>Duder, Tessa</td>
<td><em>Journey to Olympia</em></td>
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Poetry

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*American Sports Poems*  
Orchard

Morrison, Lillian (editor)  
*Sprints and Distances: Sports in Poetry and the Poetry in Sport*  
Crowell

Cassettes (Audio and Video)

The Olympic Challenge: The Energy to Go Further  
Cappy Productions

16 Days of Glory: The 1984 Summer Olympics  
Paramount

Greg and Steve--We All Live Together, Vol. 1  
Youngheart Music
More Olympic Information
HOST CITIES

Summer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year-City/Country</th>
<th>Year-City/Country</th>
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<tr>
<td>1896 Athens, Greece</td>
<td>1952 Helsinki, Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900 Paris, France</td>
<td>1956 Melbourne, Australia</td>
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<tr>
<td>1904 St. Louis, Missouri, USA</td>
<td>1960 Rome, Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td>1908 London, England</td>
<td>1964 Tokyo, Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>1912 Stockholm, Sweden</td>
<td>1968 Mexico City, Mexico</td>
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<tr>
<td>1916 Not Held (World War I)</td>
<td>1972 Munich, West Germany</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920 Antwerp, Belgium</td>
<td>1976 Montreal, Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>1924 Paris, France</td>
<td>1980 Moscow, USSR</td>
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<td>1928 Amsterdam, The Netherlands</td>
<td>1984 Los Angeles, California, USA</td>
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<td>1932 Los Angeles, California, USA</td>
<td>1899 Seoul, Korea</td>
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<td>1936 Berlin, Germany</td>
<td>1992 Barcelona, Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940 Not Held (World War II)</td>
<td>1996 Atlanta, Georgia, USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>1944 Not Held (World War II)</td>
<td>2000 Sydney, Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948 London, England</td>
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HOST CITIES

WINTER

1924 Chamonix, France
1932 St. Moritz, Switzerland
1936 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany
1940 Not Held (World War II)
1944 Not Held (World War II)
1948 St. Moritz, Switzerland
1952 Oslo, Norway
1956 Cortina, Italy
1960 Squaw Valley, California, USA
1964 Innsbruck, Austria
1968 Grenoble, France
1972 Sapporo, Japan
1976 Innsbruck, Austria
1980 Lake Placid, New York, USA
1984 Sarajevo, Yugoslavia
1988 Calgary, Canada
1992 Albertville, France
1994 Lillehammer, Norway
1998 Nagano, Japan
THE OLYMPIC SYMBOL

The five rings, the familiar symbol of the Olympic Games, were discovered by archaeologists. They found them engraved on an altar uncovered during the excavation at Delphi, Greece. It has been suggested that they were used as a symbol of the Olympic Games, the rings on either end indicating the year of the Games and the three rings in the middle representing the years in between. This seems a bit confusing, but Greeks used both the solar and lunar calendars and were aware of some extra time between years. It was possibly similar to our leap year.

Baron de Coubertin, who helped initiate the modern Olympic Games, used the rings to symbolize the five continents of the world. These included North and South America (counted as one), Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. He chose the colors blue, yellow, black, green, and red because the flag of each competing nation has at least one of these colors.

The colored rings placed on a background of white became the design for the Olympic flag. Although displayed at Paris, France, a few years before, it was first flown at the Olympic Games in Antwerp, Belgium, in 1920. Since then it has been raised at the Opening Ceremonies of each successive Olympic Games.
OPENING CEREMONIES

In ancient Greece the first day of Olympic competition opened with judges in royal purple robes, a heralder, and a trumpeter entering the Hippodrome, the oval track used for the races. The judges took their stand and the competitors, in chariots drawn by four prancing horses, paraded past them. The herald called out each competitor’s name, the name of his father, and his city. Then the herald declared the Games officially open.

More than 2,500 years later, on a cool afternoon in 1896, another opening ceremony took place. Parading into the stadium in Athens, Greece, were 258 athletes from 13 different countries. Along with the 70,000 spectators in the stands, they heard the King of Greece declare the Games of the first modern Olympiad officially open.

The Opening Ceremonies have continued as a grand highlight of the Games. With television carrying its imagery around the world, the pageantry has grown. Each host city stages a spectacular performance of music, dance, and special effects. Local citizens, young and old, perform together to welcome the world to their city.

Athletes from each participating country parade into the stadium, following their national flag. Each flag is carried by the athlete chosen by his or her teammates to lead the delegation. As each team passes the reviewing stand, the flag bearer dips the flag in honor of the head of state of the host country. However, you may note that the flag of the United States is never lowered. This practice goes back to the London Games of 1908. In decorating the stadium for the Games, the organizers forgot to display the flags of some of the participating nations, including the United States. One country withdrew its team from the Olympic Games in protest. The United States decided to stay and compete. Yet, they did not allow the slight to go unnoticed. At the Opening Ceremonies, the flag bearer held the banner high as the team passed in front of the King of England. Since that time, flag bearers of the United States do not lower the flag for any head of state. Athletes from Greece are always given the honor of entering the stadium first. They are followed in alphabetical order by athletes of the other countries. The host country’s team enters last.

A national leader of the host country welcomes the athletes and declares the Games officially open. An athlete and one official then recite the Olympic oath. A flock of doves—the birds symbolic of peace—are usually released, and the Olympic flame is lit. The ceremonies usually conclude with an explosion of breathtaking fireworks.
Closing Ceremonies

After sixteen days of intense athletic competition, the setting of world records, and the winning of medal from the world's best athletes, the Olympic playing fields fall silent. As in the beginning, these Olympic athletes gather for a ceremonial goodbye. This spectacular event is the Closing Ceremony of the Olympic Games. The athletes enter the stadium one last time to say goodbye to their fans, congratulate the winners, and celebrate the Olympic experience. The athletes are seen entering the stadium walking side by side, celebrating their new friendships, many times with competitors from other countries.

As the athletes gather together, representatives from the host country share parting thoughts of the games. The flag from the country hosting the next Olympic Games is raised, and representatives from that country are invited to the podium, where they invite the world to their country in four years for the next Games. Finally, the Games are declared officially closed, the Olympic flame is extinguished, and the Olympic flag is lowered. Following this emotional ceremony, there is a variety of entertainment, and once again the night sky explodes with fireworks.
CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusions

This project provided teachers with ways to make a theme fun, inviting, and feasible. Thematic teaching can make learning exciting for the students and the teachers. Themes can also help teachers organize content and connect ideas.

This project has helped to resolve the original problem of how to implement thematic curriculum with physical education. The curriculum design strategies will assist teachers in producing themes for use with elementary physical education classes. The primary purpose is to implement themes to promote learning; successful themes can meet the needs of many children and invite new learning.

When asking what kinds of themes work best, one realizes that successful themes share many qualities. They are relevant, connected, fun, purposeful, provide for choice, and integrate different subjects. Themes work best when one considers the total needs of children and uses the themes to invite new learning.

Relevance is necessary because all people learn when something has meaning for them. The Olympic theme was very relevant to students because it was implemented during an Olympic year and the track skills were taught during the Spring quarter. Themes are relevant when they give teachers ways to organize learning experiences based on their children’s interests, needs, and abilities. Themes increase in relevance when children are given the opportunity to present their acquired knowledge in a variety of ways.

Connections are also important because learning is more lasting and significant when we can integrate what we are learning with what we already
Fun is fundamental but when learning is joyful, people think of it with pleasure and want to learn more and more. We learn when we know there is a real purpose to what we are doing and when it is enjoyable.

Recommendations

As a result of what I learned with this project, I will continue to use themes in my teaching to increase my collaboration with other teachers and to increase student motivation. Themes enhance and promote curriculum which is an important tool for an elementary physical education specialist.

The individual project provided a framework for building themes in physical education. The educational purpose was met by providing information and activities to familiarize students with the Olympic Games. The teachers were delighted to receive resources about the Olympics for expanding their knowledge. Higher level thinking skills were integrated with the multiple intelligence activities. Integration with different subject areas promoted student learning and teacher collaboration. The culminating Olympic Fest was a vehicle for providing closure to this experience.

Physical educators at an elementary school can create a variety of opportunities for students to learn, both in and out of class (Smith and Cestaro, 1996). The importance of physical education in a comprehensive, integrated educational model has been well documented “and we must actively pursue strategies for integration if we are to dispel common perceptions, survive as a discipline, and continue to have a positive impact on students” (Heitmann & Kneer, 1976; Humphrey, 1990, p. 11).

As a result of implementing the suggested strategies into my own practice, I no longer feel isolated in the gym. I have come to know many
colleagues whom I feel I can rely on for support. Having the opportunity to work with my colleagues on the Olympic project was very refreshing and lessened my work load. Teacher collaboration was a necessary component of my project; it was beneficial to see things from other points of view. Collaboration has the potential to dramatically improve and maintain the instructional skills of practicing teachers (Sharpe, 1994).

The research directly affected my teaching as I explored theme usage throughout the year. The results of this research can also be used by other physical educators as an aide to the initiation of thematic teaching. The process of integrating themes across the curriculum could be presented to other school systems to encourage involvement with the implementation of themes. Along with theme choices, this specific theme curriculum could be shared with other colleagues as a useful example. This project will be an invaluable resource for the yearly Olympic Fest.

Curriculum change is not for the timid. Those who develop and implement curriculum have to be risk-takers and not content accepting the status quo. Physical educators can enhance their own and the total school's curriculum by getting involved with the learning and integration of themes. The strategies provided in this paper can be tools for incorporating themes in practice.

In conclusion, the insight gained from this project is that by implementing theme strategies, one can better organize the physical education curriculum and effectively integrate interdisciplinary learning experiences. The interest stimulated by a theme can provide real purposes for doing and for learning. Add some spice to your curriculum; the results will be meaningful!
Thematic Instruction 26

References


