

2004 2005

THE EDUCATION FUND'S

Ideas With Impact

MDCPS TEACHERS SHARE
EASY-TO-USE PROJECTS



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The Ultimate Teacher Conference

- FCAT lessons students love!
- \$\$\$ for your classroom!
- Win prizes - look inside!



FOR EXCELLENCE IN MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



FOR EXCELLENCE IN MIAMI-DADE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Education Fund (The Ed Fund) is an independent non-profit organization established in 1985 with a one-time seed grant from the Ford Foundation. Our mission is to design and implement initiatives that involve the private sector in improving our schools and bringing excellence to public education. The Education Fund's first program awarded mini-grants to classroom teachers. Today, The Education Fund's 14 programs reach 300+ schools and 19,000+ teachers in Miami-Dade County and have attracted the support of local and national companies and foundations.



For more information, logon to our Web site: www.educationfund.org.

The Education Fund also raises funds for projects in the public schools, acts as a fiscal agent, and is interested in new projects and ideas that help our public schools educate all of our children.

The Education Fund currently offers support for Miami-Dade County Public Schools in the following areas:

TRAINING & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

IMPACT II

Gives teachers the resources and the network to share successful classroom-tested projects with other teachers through the Ideas With IMPACT catalog, distributed to 20,000+ teachers and administrators in Miami-Dade public schools, and at the Idea EXPO - The Teacher Conference, one of the largest local teacher conferences.

New Teacher Mentoring Program

A program that pairs veteran retired teachers with new teachers for their first year of school. This mentoring initiative aims to increase professional development opportunities and improve teacher retention.

Superintendent's Urban Principal Initiative

In this pilot initiative, The Education Fund and MDCPS will launch an innovative internship program for aspiring urban high school administrators. The intensive program features an 11-week shadowing experience with an urban high school principal, subsequent multi-day shadowing at other urban schools and district offices, and additional leadership training and research. The objective is to place a cadre of highly-trained, confident leaders as principals in 14 selected urban high schools.

Teachers Network Policy Institute (TNPI)

Enables the teacher's voice to be a factor in educational policy-making by training teachers to undertake school-based action research projects and then to disseminate the research implications to policy-makers.

CLASSROOM SUPPORT

Citibank Success Fund

Awards mini-grants for teaching projects that encourage at-risk students to stay in school. More than 155,000 students have benefited from Success Fund grants, totaling more than \$1/2 million.

Citigroup Team Mentor Grants

Grants that encourage collaboration between veteran teachers (with more than 5 years of teaching experience) and beginning teachers (with less than 3 years of teaching experience). This collaboration centers on student learning projects that provide common ground for veteran and beginning teachers to work together. The goal is to encourage peer-to-peer learning opportunities and ongoing dialogue among teachers.

Ocean Bank Center for Educational Materials

Collects surplus inventory and supplies from the business community and makes them available for

free to public school teachers throughout Miami-Dade County. The Ocean Bank center has made more than \$5 million in donated goods available to teachers, benefiting 390,985 students and thousands of classrooms.

Teacher Mini-Grants

Awards small cash grants to teachers who want to try something new in the classroom to stimulate learning. More than 1,000 outstanding projects have been developed with these grants.

READING & LIBRARY PROGRAMS

AmeriCorps Dade READS!

Places 34 AmeriCorps members as full-time one-on-one reading tutors in up to eight elementary schools to raise the reading levels of children in low-income families.

COMMUNITY & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Community/Town Hall Meetings

As part of an ongoing effort to facilitate community discussion around public education issues, The Education Fund is committed to holding a series of community meetings. The first of these meetings was a well-received live broadcast on CBS4, which garnered more than 10.4 million audience impressions. The Town Hall Meeting teacher recruitment and retention focused on teacher recruitment and retention.

Parent Resource Guide

The Education Fund's Parent Resource Guide provides parents with everything they need to know about navigating the public school system. This trilingual Guide was distributed to more than 1/2 million households in Miami-Dade County through The Miami Herald/El Nuevo Herald.

Washington Mutual Parent Resource Centers

One of the cornerstone pieces of a large school improvement effort, this program creates and supports family centers in the Miami Central feeder pattern schools to encourage leadership in parents.

TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES

AT&T TeachNet

Encourages teachers to become technology leaders through a peer-to-peer training network. This program is part of a national effort taking place in six cities.

Citibank FamilyTech

Opens the world of computer technology to more than 5,000 low-income students and their families by placing donated Internet-ready computers in their homes and training parents and teachers to use the computers and supervise their children's work.

How you can help The Education Fund

- 1** Buy an Education License Plate! The Education Fund receives \$20 from the sale of each education license plate sold in Miami-Dade County - and from renewals each year! (See page 15 of the insert pages in this catalog.)
- 2** Designate The Education Fund as the recipient of your United Way contribution (see page 2 of the insert pages in this catalog).
- 3** Honor a loved one by making a donation in their name.
- 4** Designate The Education Fund as a beneficiary in your will.
- 5** Give donations of stock or property.
- 6** Make a cash donation or use your credit card on our Web site: www.educationfund.org and click "Donate now!"

Call The Education Fund (305-892-5099, ext. 21) to find out how you can make charitable giving part of your portfolio.

TO CONTACT US. . .

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WE HAVE WHAT YOU NEED!

Mark these dates on your calendar!*

AUGUST

Coming your way... *The Education Fund's Ideas With IMPACT* catalog – chock full of proven teaching strategies to pump life into your classroom. This catalog also contains many grant applications. Read it carefully!!

\$\$\$ for your classroom! Look for your Teacher Mini-Grants application – in schools this month.



Free supplies!! The Education Fund's Ocean Bank Center re-opens this month. Go to www.educationfund.org/obcompass.html to sign up for a pass.

SEPTEMBER

New to teaching this year? Ask us about our New Teacher Mentoring Program. For information, logon to www.educationfund.org/ntmp.html.

OCTOBER

The largest local teacher conference by teachers for teachers is here!! The Education Fund's IMPACT II Idea EXPO – The Teacher Conference will be held October 9, 2004 – preregister before October 1st! Look for the application in the insert pages of this catalog or apply online at www.educationfund.org/expo.html

\$\$\$ Remember that \$\$\$?? Teacher Mini-Grants applications are due October 12, 2004. Applications are online at www.educationfund.org/apply.html.

\$\$\$ Art teachers, you can win \$\$\$ for your classroom! This month, art teachers can obtain a special pass to visit The Education Fund's Ocean Bank Center for Educational Materials to pick up supplies to enter the Art Exhibition. Visit www.educationfund.org/ocean.html for more information or look for news in INK.

NOVEMBER

\$\$\$ Need \$\$\$and a great idea? Apply for The Education Fund's IMPACT II Adapter Grant -- applications are due November 4, 2004. You'll find an application form in the insert pages of this catalog.

\$\$\$ Art teachers, you can win \$\$\$ for your classroom! This month, art teachers can obtain a special pass to visit The Education Fund's Ocean Bank Center for Educational Materials to pick up supplies to enter the Art Exhibition. Visit www.educationfund.org/ocean.html for more information or look for news in INK.

DECEMBER

\$\$\$ We give \$\$\$ for great, proven teaching ideas. Apply for The Education Fund's IMPACT II Disseminator Grant – applications are due December 1, 2004. You'll find an application form in the insert pages of this catalog.

JANUARY

\$\$\$ Calling all art teachers... The Education Fund's Ocean Bank Center Art Exhibition submissions are due this month! Win money for your classroom!

MARCH/APRIL

\$\$\$ The Education Fund's Ocean Bank Center Silent Art Auction raises funds for arts education in MDCPS. To find out more, logon to www.educationfund.org/artbookwrk2004.pdf.

\$\$\$ Got a drop-out prevention idea? Apply for The Education Fund's Citibank Success Fund grant and get it going in your classroom! Applications are available in schools this month or you can apply online at www.educationfund.org/apply.html.

JUNE/JULY

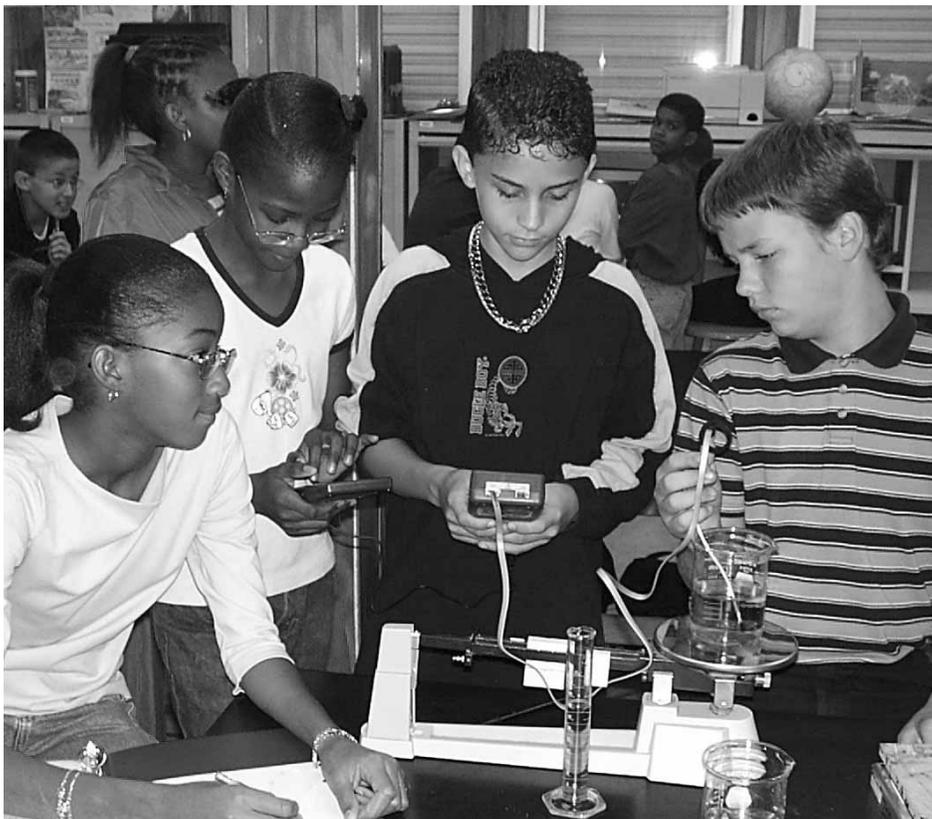
\$\$\$ Don't forget... The Education Fund's Citibank Success Fund applications are due June 1, 2005. Applications are online at www.educationfund.org/apply.html.

Visit www.educationfund.org today to find out what we can do for you!!

*Dates are subject to change

The Education Fund's IMPACT

IMPACT II is a program of The Education Fund that focuses on strengthening curriculum, student achievement and leadership in Miami-Dade County Public Schools by identifying and connecting teachers who exemplify professionalism and creativity in their classrooms. Teachers who have developed successful classroom teaching methods are given grants to package and market their proven projects through the Ideas With IMPACT catalog, the Idea EXPO - The Teacher Conference and Idea Packets that contain curriculum materials such as lesson plans, worksheets and resource lists. Adapter grants are also available to help teachers incorporate IMPACT II ideas into their classroom.



IMPACT II Disseminator & Adapter Grants - Teachers Sharing Proven Practices

Disseminator grants are available to teachers to further develop and disseminate exemplary programs that they have used in their classrooms. Grant award winners are recognized at award ceremonies and publication parties; provided with support to prepare materials for dissemination; published in print catalogs and on a national Web site; supported in learning presentation skills and leading workshops; and networked with like-minded professionals.

Adapter grants are awarded to teachers to purchase materials to adapt Disseminators' programs to fit their own classrooms. Applications and more information on these programs are available online at www.educationfund.org.

The Ideas With IMPACT Catalog - Explore New Teaching Ideas

The teaching ideas found in this catalog were developed and used successfully by teachers who applied for and received a Disseminator grant. These projects can be used exactly as they are, or they can be modified to meet a classroom's special needs. The Ideas With IMPACT catalog is a great resource for ideas and an excellent reference tool throughout the year.

ACT II: A Network of Ideas



The IMPACT II Idea EXPO – The Teacher Conference

Get New Ideas, Make Connections & Win Prizes

With more than 70 workshops to choose from, the Idea EXPO – The Teacher Conference addresses all subject areas for k-12 teachers who are committed to improving student achievement. The IMPACT II Idea EXPO – The Teacher Conference features grant-winning workshops, free curriculum packets, gift bags, exciting door prizes, a luncheon, and a display exhibition that provides teachers



with the opportunity to interact with Disseminators at the visual displays of their projects. Call 305-892-5099, ext. 18 for a registration form or see the insert pages in this catalog.

HOW IMPACT II CAN WORK FOR YOU

ATTEND the IMPACT II Idea EXPO – The Teacher Conference. A registration form can be found on pages 7-10 of the insert pages in this catalog. You may also logon to www.educationfund.org or call 305-892-5099, ext. 18 to have the form mailed or faxed to you.

BECOME an IMPACT II Disseminator and be featured in next year's catalog. IMPACT II awards \$750 Disseminator Grants to educators willing to share the successful teaching strategies that they designed and have implemented in their classrooms for at least two years. Any Miami-Dade public school educator may apply to be a Disseminator and become a member of the IMPACT II local and national network by using the application found on The Education Fund's Web site at www.educationfund.org.

APPLY for an IMPACT II Adapter Grant! To purchase materials to adapt one of the ideas featured in this catalog or past years' catalogs*, you can apply for an Adapter Grant.

Here's how to qualify:

- 1 Select an idea from the IMPACT II catalog (past or current).
- 2 Request an Idea Packet and discuss your ideas for implementing the project with the Disseminator.
- 3 Complete the Adapter application found online at www.educationfund.org, in the back of the Idea Packet or on page 5 of the insert pages in this catalog.
- 4 Submit the application to The Education Fund, 900 NE 125th St., Suite 110, North Miami, FL 33161

You may also informally adapt the projects on your own without applying for funding. If you use a project on your own, please notify The Education Fund so you can be added to the IMPACT II network.

*For information on the past 14 years of projects, visit The Education Fund's Web site, www.educationfund.org, or call The Education Fund at 305-892-5099, ext. 18.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

AT&T TEACHNET PROJECTS

- 6 Sponsored by AT&T
- 7 iread, iwrite, imovie2
Rosa Duarte
- 8 Jewels of the Sea
Carol Langford
- 9 Through the Looking Glass... Life in Colonial Times
Miriam Gomez

LANGUAGE ARTS PROJECTS

- 10 Animal Story Time Song
Janet Duguay Kirsten
- 11 Graham Crackers and Books
Beth Reis & Carole Slonin
- 12 Mission to M.A.R.S. – Making Accelerated Reader Succeed
Silvia P. Lopez
- 13 Plentiful Penguins
Sylvia A. McCabe
- 14 Text Patterns Made Easy – Fear the FCAT no Longer!
Yvette M. Calleiro

INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECTS

- 15 FUN = Fantastic Units
Marlene Figueroa & Josefina P. Novoa
- 16 Reflections of Myself: Portfolios as Exploration
Linda Townley

MATHEMATICS PROJECTS

- 17 M and M Buddies (Math and Mentors)
Minerva Santerre
- 18 Related Rates Come to Life
Mary Garrastazu
- 19 What's My Line?
Lillian V. Bez

Did you know? You can designate The Education Fund as the recipient of your United Way donation! Please refer to page 2 in the insert pages of this catalog for more information.

SCIENCE PROJECTS

- 20 Building an Aquatic Think-Tank
Sherian Demetrius
- 21 Density, the Dynamic Duo of Mass and Volume
Barbara Zeiler
- 22 FCAT Through the Lens of a Magnifying Glass
Latha R. Murali & Teresa Acosta
- 23 Our Ancient Fossilized Rock Reef: An Exploration!
Don Derez
- 24 Super Science Sleuths
Beth Rosenthal Davis

SOCIAL STUDIES PROJECTS

- 25 Romancing the Renaissance
Michael Flaum
- 26 The Price is Right
Regina Stuck

TOLERANCE PROJECTS

- 27 Drumming from the Heart
Michael F. Canciglia
- 28 Entombed, a Holocaust Remembrance
Deedee Toner
- 29 Teacher Feature
Stephanie Sheir

SPECIAL FEATURES

- 30 Champions of Active Learning Grants
- 31 Teachers Network Policy Institute Action Research
- IBC What The Education Fund Offers Teachers

INSERT PAGES

- 2 How to help The Education Fund
- 3 Survey
- 5 Adapter Grant Application
- 7 IMPACT II Idea EXPO Registration
- 11 Disseminator Grant Application
- 15 Education License Plate
- 16 Galaxy of Supporters

Win Airline Tickets from



Register today for
The Education Fund's
15th Annual
IMPACT II Idea EXPO -
The Teacher Conference

See page 7 of the insert pages
or register online at
www.educationfund.org/expo.html

ATTENTION TEACHERS!

Win a Prize*!! Please help us help you by filling out the survey located on page 3 of the insert pages in the center of this catalog!

The Education Fund's IDEAS WITH IMPACT

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* You can designate The Education Fund as the recipient of your United Way donation! Just fill out your United Way contribution card and write in The Education Fund as your donation recipient. Then, send an e-mail to mpink@educationfund.org or call 305-892-5099, ext. 21 so we can add your name to this list. It's that simple!

** If you designated The Education Fund during the campaign that took place in the fall of 2003 and your name does not appear on this list, please call Mimi Pink at 305-892-5099, ext. 21. Thank you!

AT&T TEACHNET PROJECTS

Technology has changed teaching and learning forever. Educational reform, technological advancement and the information age have thrust teachers into a whirlwind of change. Teachers are required to keep up with these changes, yet many have not had adequate training or access to new technology.

The AT&T TeachNet Project in Miami supports the “new” classroom by supporting the “new” teacher. The project empowers teachers where they teach. By making them technology leaders, it creates an environment of learning and growing among teachers.

The AT&T TeachNet Project in Miami is one of six sites nationally and is part of AT&T’s efforts to help families, schools and communities use technology to improve teaching and learning.

For more information about AT&T’s support for education, visit the AT&T Foundation Web site: www.att.com/foundation



iREAD, iWRITE, iMOVIE 2

This project is a fun and easy way to introduce technology to teachers and their students.

The first step is for students to write summaries of a book they have read in class. The best rendition is then turned into a script. Using a center approach, teams work on various aspects of the production, filming and editing of the movie. In addition, art classes work on backdrops and music classes write and perform original songs. For instance, from *The Greedy Triangle*, a book about shapes, students made huge cardboard costumes of shapes and wrote and sang songs about shapes to make a unique and funny movie. A school-wide premiere of the movie is held – complete with popcorn and a special Academy Awards presentation for parents and students.

Students

This can be an individual classroom or a school-wide project. It is designed for third- through eighth-grade students for a nine-week period. Low performing students benefit the most from working in collaborative groups where everyone has an equally important role.

Sponsored by:



Staff

Rosa Duarte has taught in MDCPS for 28 years. She holds a master's degree in ESE, specializing in autism. She also is an Educational Specialist in Computer Applications and has been a technology coordinator and webmaster since 1996. She teaches a journalism class that publishes the *Southside Express*. Ms. Duarte participates in The Education Fund's Citibank FamilyTech and AT&T TeachNet programs. In addition, she has received IMPACT II Disseminator and Citibank Success Fund grants from The Education Fund.

Materials and Resources

Students need access to a digital video camera, movie editing software, a projector, and the Internet.

With technology as its vehicle, this interdisciplinary project uses project-based learning to create authentic products. Students work as a team on hands-on, self-motivating activities using decision-making and critical thinking skills.

Contact

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Principal: Maria S. Gonzalez

JEWELS OF THE SEA

This lively exploration of seashells and their diverse marine habitats around the world involves hands-on activities that incorporate the five senses as students examine and investigate seashells. Writing is infused into this unit as students create posters and write stories. Technology is integrated through Internet investigation, publishing stories and poems online, visiting Web sites to gather and organize shell data and using “ask an expert” Web sites. Students use science skills to identify and classify various shells as well as recognize and describe their natural marine habitats. Environmental awareness is increased as they compare and contrast habitats of the Indian, Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and the Mediterranean, Bering and Caribbean Seas. To display their learning at the end of the unit, students set up a classroom display of shells and create a Kid Pix slide show.



Staff

Carol Langford has served as a peer mentor and school leader for most of her 20-year career. Her accomplishments include numerous awards for her teaching abilities as well as developing and writing curriculum for the district-wide Gifted program and authoring many grants to provide state-of-the-art science and computer labs for Avocado Elementary.

From one common natural item, students find out how vast, intricate and varied nature can be. During their exploration, they also improve reading, writing, and science skills as well as word processing and research abilities using classroom resources and the Internet.

Students

First- and second-grade gifted students participated daily in science, language arts and technology sessions for nine weeks.

Sponsored by:



Materials and Resources

No-cost videos and films are available through MDCPS Media Division. Students can view a vast array of seashells at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Biscayne Nature Center on Key Biscayne. The interactive Web sites of Sea World, Seashells.org and Yahoo!igans-Seashells are excellent sources.

Contact

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Principal: Dr. Grace Nebb

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS- LIFE IN COLONIAL TIMES

The intent of this project is to develop historical awareness while providing useful lessons across discipline areas that allow students to understand the social, political and economic development of colonial life in America. Through the integration of software and use of the Internet, the lessons incorporate several subject areas. Students place themselves onboard a Conestoga Wagon writing an expository letter to a friend that details the events taking place during the trip. They take virtual tours of Colonial homes and compare them to modern homes, create a bar graph that shows occupations in Colonial times, and make a whizzing whirligig, a homemade toy of the colonists. As a culminating activity for the unit, collaborative groups develop a sense of historical empathy while conducting research and creating a comprehensive "13 Originals" multimedia presentation.

Students

This project is suitable for intermediate grades in elementary school. The lessons support a variety of learning activities individually or in collaborative groups.

Sponsored by:



Staff

Miriam Gomez is a media specialist who has been teaching for 12 years. She holds a master's degree in ESOL. She taught an after school advanced Academic Excellence program for seven years and currently is the academic activities sponsor at her school site. Ms. Gomez has been an active participant in the following programs of The Education Fund: Citibank FamilyTech, AT&T TeachNet and Library Quest.

Materials and Resources

Access to the Internet, a word processing program, and HyperStudio or PowerPoint. A projector and a screen or SmartBoard are needed for the presentation. Two videos: The Mayflower Voyagers and Sarah Morton's Day are used as well as a selection of non-fiction and fiction books listed in the Idea

Packet. Software by Visions, Life & Times of Colonial America, is also used.

The use of up-to-date technology to learn about the past – by comparing and contrasting modern life with Colonial America – keeps students interested in historical events and their connection to our world today.

Contact

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Principal: Mattye Jones



ANIMAL STORY TIME SONG

This innovative approach to reading links reading with music and drama curriculum to encourage students to be more attentive and focused during reading activities. Books with bright, colorful and interesting drawings are read with flourish to capture the children's attention. An animal puppet is used to act out a staged role in the story at the appropriate time. After reading the book, the teacher demonstrates a related song through careful singing and/or with a recorder. Once the students learn the song, they can incorporate the puppet into the performance to reinforce retention of the story.



Students

Thirty first-grade students met once a week during a 30-minute music class. It is suitable for any primary grade level.

Staff

Janet Duguay Kirsten is a National Board Certified Teacher who has been teaching for 13 years. She holds a master's degree from the University of Miami School of Music and is presently a doctoral candidate. Ms. Duguay Kirsten has used this project for four years. She employs the help of interns to manipulate puppets, turn pages or provide musical accompaniment.

Music makes stories memorable through rhythm, rhyme and melody. It sparks students' imagination, strengthens their memory and improves their reading skills.

Materials and Resources

Necessary materials: books, puppets, keyboard, recorder or guitar. Established contacts: Education division of local playhouse and art establishments. A comfortable open area is best where the students can view the book and use the puppets.

Contact

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Sponsored by:



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GRAHAM CRACKERS AND BOOKS

Originally a Citibank Success Fund grant

In this service learning project, intermediate elementary students read one-on-one with kindergarten or pre-k students at a monthly evening gathering in the media center while the parents attend discussion sessions with a variety of educational specialists including the reading leader, math leader and school psychologist. The goal is to educate parents on the importance and lifelong benefits of early childhood education – especially the role reading plays. For the students, the buddy system is used so the older students can serve as role models and promote reading in a positive atmosphere. After each session, the book that was read is given to the younger student. By the end of the program, they have accumulated a beginning library.



Students

All students – particularly low achieving students – benefit from this early intervention program. Thirty to 35 primary and 35 intermediate, middle or high school students can participate.

Sponsored by:

Florida Matching Grants Program

Staff

Beth Reis and Carole Slonin are gifted facilitators at Bob Graham Education Center. Both have taught for 28 years and have received The Education Fund's Disseminator and Adapter grants, Teacher Mini-Grants and Citibank Success Fund grants. In addition, Ms. Reis was a Teacher of the Year Region Semi-Finalist in 1990 and has received a Retrofit grant and a Dade Reading Council grant.

Materials and Resources

Ownership of books for the beginning reader is an integral aspect of the program. Being resourceful in obtaining inexpensive, quality books is an asset. Books may be obtained free with points accumulated from Book Clubs, purchased inexpensively from Scholastic Warehouse sales, and from soliciting book stores to buy books before they are put out for the "last call sales." To extend the service

learning aspect, the intermediate students can also solicit books through a school book or penny drive. Contributions from a local grocery store for graham crackers and milk cut costs considerably.

Learning is easier if the early years of life are enriched. Through service learning, the older students promote reading to the youngest in their community and their parents.

Contact

Beth Reis & Carole Slonin

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Principal: Dr. Dawn Hurns

MISSION TO M.A.R.S. - MAKING ACCELERATED READER SUCCEED

Students embark on a Mission to M.A.R.S., receiving recognition as they accumulate Accelerated Reader points on their way to their goal, the Red Planet. M.A.R.S. objectives are threefold: to improve reading comprehension, familiarize students with electronic test-taking and promote reading as a pleasurable and rewarding activity. Goals are based on each student's reading ability. Media center and classroom displays highlight students as they reach percentages of their goals: Pathfinders (25%) Surveyors (50%) and Red Planet Readers (100%). Small prizes and recognition during televised morning announcements also serve as positive reinforcement. Teachers and media specialists can promote the program with read-alouds, book talks and charts showing collective goals or point challenges.

Students

All students in grades two to five enrolled in regular, ESE, ESOL, and gifted language arts classes participate all year, with the first grade and kindergarten students joining in as they begin to demonstrate emerging literacy. Since Accelerated Reader quizzes are available for books through adult level, the program is adaptable to middle and

high schools. Because the goals are individualized, M.A.R.S. may be applied to any size group.

Staff

Ms. Lopez has been an educator for 27 years – 24 of which have been as a media specialist. She holds a bachelor's degree in English, master's degree in Library Science and an Educational Specialist degree in Technology Applications. In 1998, she was chosen as Technology Teacher of the Year by the Florida Association for Computers in Education. More recently, she obtained a Teacher Mini-Grant from The Education Fund for "Super Sunshine Readers," which used Accelerated Reader to promote a DOE program. A part-time library paraprofessional and usually one or two parent volunteers assist with the program. This project has been implemented with variations on the theme for the past four years.



Materials and Resources

The program may be implemented school-wide on a computerized network or by individual classrooms. Both the Accelerated Reader and the STAR testing program, which serve to establish each student's reading ability, were purchased for countywide use several years ago and should be available at school sites. Books are identified as Accelerated Readers by the use of stickers or labels, and reading levels are placed inside book covers. Corresponding quizzes are purchased from the Renaissance Learning Company. Supplies and incentives may be purchased from Get Smart, Oriental Trading Co., etc. The school Web site may list the titles of available AR books and quizzes.

Mission to M.A.R.S. increased reading comprehension scores, but more importantly, students were eager to take ownership of their book selection. This program also helps facilitate collaborative planning between teachers and the media specialist.

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PLENTIFUL PENGUINS

As part of a larger unit on Antarctica, students participate in an in-depth study of penguins. Through many activities, students listen, read and write about penguins and publish their findings. They make connections between the penguin families and their own families' habits of caretaking. Students' home learning reports were shared with their classmates, which helped to solidify what they had learned.

Students use KidWorks2 Paint program to replicate their hand drawings of the penguin and keyboarding skills to write a fact about the penguin. Virtual field trips on the Internet were an exciting way to learn about penguins and their habitat. These technology tools facilitate the writing process and develop creativity. Using multiple paths to learning – such as the use of drawing, writing, computer-aided drawing and other tools – students develop the literacy skills that are critical to success in later years.

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Students

Twenty kindergarten students of varied achievement levels met every day. It can be adapted for use with elementary age students in small and large groupings.

Staff

Sylvia McCabe has been teaching for 13 years and is a National Board Certified Teacher. She was selected 2002 Teacher of the Year at her school. This project was published in the textbook, *Early Childhood Today, Sixth Edition*, Prentice Hall. Ms. McCabe has presented at the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) annual meeting and at district-wide workshops.

Materials and Resources

Computers with Internet access, drawing materials and the books, *Penguin Pete*

and *Penguin Pete Ahoy* by Marcus Pfister, are used in the project. More books are available at http://ali.apple.com/ali_sites/deliexhibits/1000140/. Parents helped with home learning projects and volunteered to read to students in class about the featured topic.

This project stimulates learning, develops critical thinking skills and provides motivation for learning.

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Principal: Adrienne Wright

TEXT PATTERNS MADE EASY - FEAR THE FCAT NO LONGER!

Understanding text patterns is essential for students to easily comprehend a passage, whether it is on the FCAT or in a textbook. This project enhances students' abilities to comprehend difficult text by helping them identify the text pattern or style being used. Once a student can recognize patterns, they will also be able to pull out the important information using graphic organizers associated with each pattern. Through this process of active learning, they improve their reading skills and their ability to identify key, relevant information in a text needed to answer higher order thinking questions. This is also a great tool to help non-readers as they begin the process of reading.

Students

This project was used with 40 secondary level students with learning disabilities who met for one hour every day. It has been successful with more than 160 students. It can be easily adapted to any age or achievement level.

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Grants Program**

Staff

Yvette M. Calleiro, a National Board Certified Teacher, has been teaching for eight years. She was the 1997 CEC Rookie Teacher of the Year and a Miami-Dade County finalist for the Sallie Mae Outstanding First Year Teacher Award. She holds a master's degree in both Special Education and Reading Education. She began this project in 2001 and has continued to implement it over the past four years.

Materials and Resources

The Idea Packet includes the lessons for the four most popular text patterns. Any book can be used to identify text patterns, although the teacher should first identify good examples in the book before using it for this purpose. A large flip chart and Post-it® notes are the only materials used in this project.

Students of all ages and abilities are capable of improving their reading and writing abilities when given strategies. Teaching text patterns reaches students with varying intelligences and has proven effective with struggling readers.

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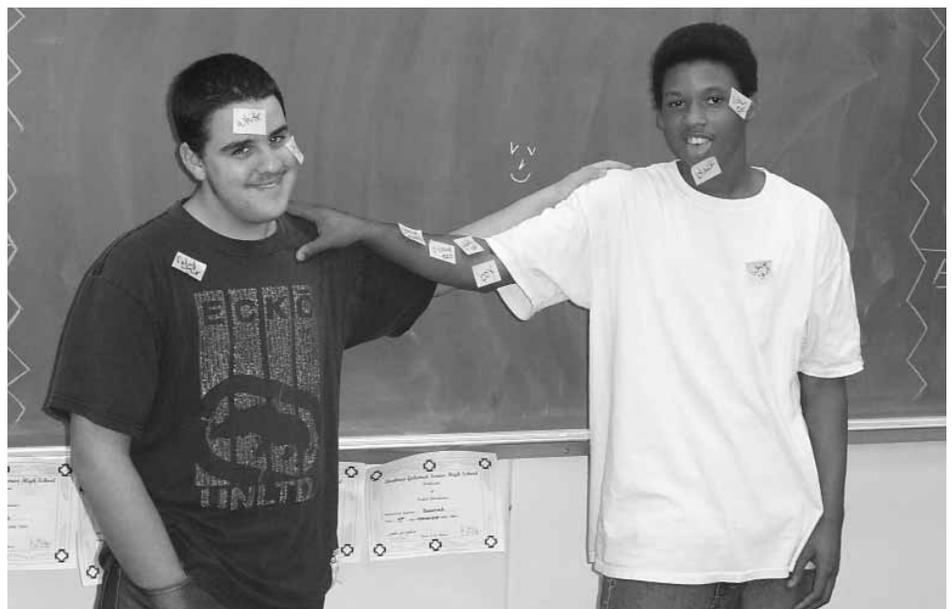
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Principal: Marcos M. Moran



FUN = Fantastic UNits

Fun Units is a school-to-home connection that enhances and reviews all of the objectives and curriculum presented in class. Parents are excited about being involved in and aware of their child's classroom experiences. With this project, parents find a connection to their child's work and study habits. The units address all content areas and are packaged in durable plastic boxes with materials that enhance students' learning experiences and review the information presented in class. The units are checked out and a log is kept of each child's progress. As a culminating activity, each unit has a project that the student and their parents complete together and the student presents to the class.



Students

Forty fourth-grade students in a bilingual, gifted program participated in this project.

Staff

Marlene Figueroa, a National Board Certified Teacher, has taught for 13 years. Ms. Figueroa has received two Teacher

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Tina Rosenberg
Foundation**

Mini-Grants from The Education Fund and a grant from the Dade Reading Council. She is working on her master's degree at FIU in TESOL.

Josefina P. Novoa has been a National Board Certified Teacher since 2000 and has taught for 18 years – 13 of them in the gifted program. She has a master's and specialist's degree in reading. Ms. Novoa is the Gifted Chairperson and grade-level chair.

Materials and Resources

The school media specialist can help set up and categorize the units and help with the check-out procedure. Materials include clear plastic boxes with lids, cubby hole furniture to display and store the boxes, math manipulatives, novels, games, puzzles, index cards, labels, card stock, and paper.

Fun Units connects home and school and helps the cognitive as well as the affective parts of a student's academic achievement. It relieves the teacher of the heavy task of review, as students review while they "play" at home.

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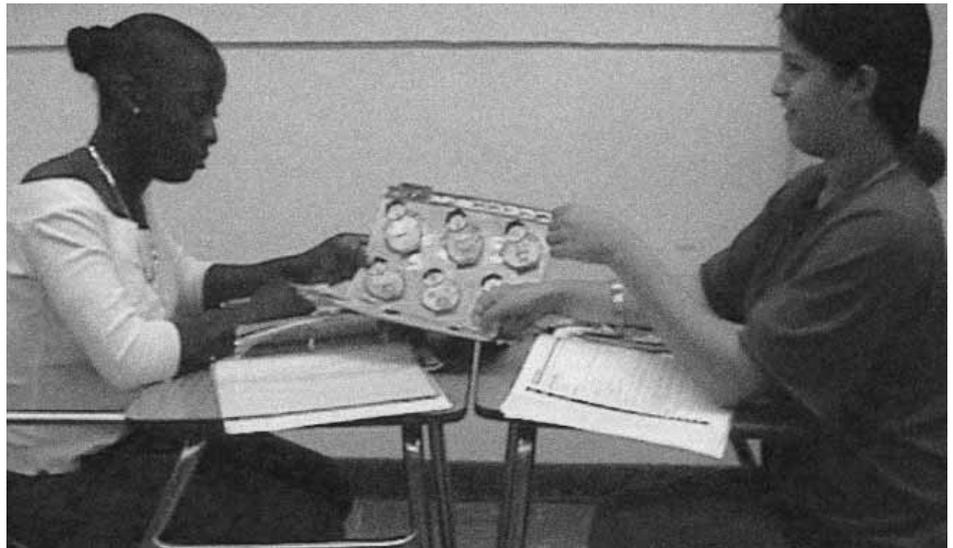
REFLECTIONS OF MYSELF: PORTFOLIOS AS EXPLORATION

Teachers of all disciplines can use student portfolios to learn about a student's background and interests to better tailor lessons to reach that student. It helps the teacher provide the connections needed for the student to go from where they are now to where they want to be. One student may excel in writing, another in art. No matter what the interest is, portfolios can provide a bridge to the traditional classroom. Usually teachers teach in isolation, but when teachers collaborate on portfolios, each can add information on students to understand their strengths, to build upon them, and their weaknesses, to help overcome them. A group of teachers may elect to have one portfolio per student in a central location in which they place materials that illustrate the student's level and growth or they may choose to keep portfolios on their own and only occasionally explore each other's portfolios of students. Either way, the portfolio provides insights into what the student wants to achieve.

This project also provides step-by-step procedures for a student to compile their own portfolio at the teacher's direction. Student portfolios can explore their roots, career choices or be used to compare past projects with future ones to determine growth.

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Students

This has been implemented with 9th- to 12th-grade students in all curriculum areas. It is also easily adapted to middle and elementary students. This is especially useful for tracking and helping low performing students.

Staff

Linda Townley has been teaching at South Dade Senior High for 11 years. She received her master's in education from Florida International University. Paraprofessionals and volunteers are helpful but not essential in implementing the project.

Materials and Resources

Art supplies, including glue, scissors, markers, and specialty papers, can be

used in decorating the portfolio. Lesson plans are included in the Idea Packet, which serves as an introduction for implementing a portfolio program.

For the student, a portfolio is an opportunity for self-exploration. For the teacher, it provides information on different facets of a student to better address their needs and goals.

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Principal: Thomas Halfaker

M AND M BUDDIES (MATH AND MENTORS)

Originally a Teacher Mini-Grant

Mand M Buddies builds a bridge between older students and younger students as they explore the world of mathematics throughout the entire school year. Through this partnership, knowledge of math, self-esteem, and integration of communication are heightened. All stakeholders work together to build a math community in which math ideas are communicated and investigated and put into action in their everyday world. The mentors participate in "getting to know you" interview simulations to prepare them for building strong working relationships with the younger students. Mentors also research and create hands-on lesson plans that ensure fruitful sessions are conducted with the mentees. This cross curricula approach using language arts, math and art skills develops content strand proficiencies, providing rich and full experiences for all learners.

Students

This project is designed for fourth- and fifth-grade students to be teamed up with kindergarten students. It can also be adapted successfully to other groupings.

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LLC**

Staff

Mickey Santerre is in her 24th year of teaching, both in private and public schools in Miami-Dade County. She is a National Board Certified Teacher and holds a master's degree in science education and is currently working on her doctorate in science education. She is a recipient of The Education Fund's Teacher Mini-Grants and IMPACT II Adapter grants.

Materials and Resources

Literature books are a wonderful avenue for students to obtain language, math and cultural concepts to use in developing their lesson plans. Internet sites are also helpful: <http://www.proteacher.com>; <http://www.mathgoodies.com> and a math forum at <http://forum.swathmore.edu>.

The mentor students produce authentic lesson plans and projects that enhance critical and creative thinking for their mentees as well as themselves.

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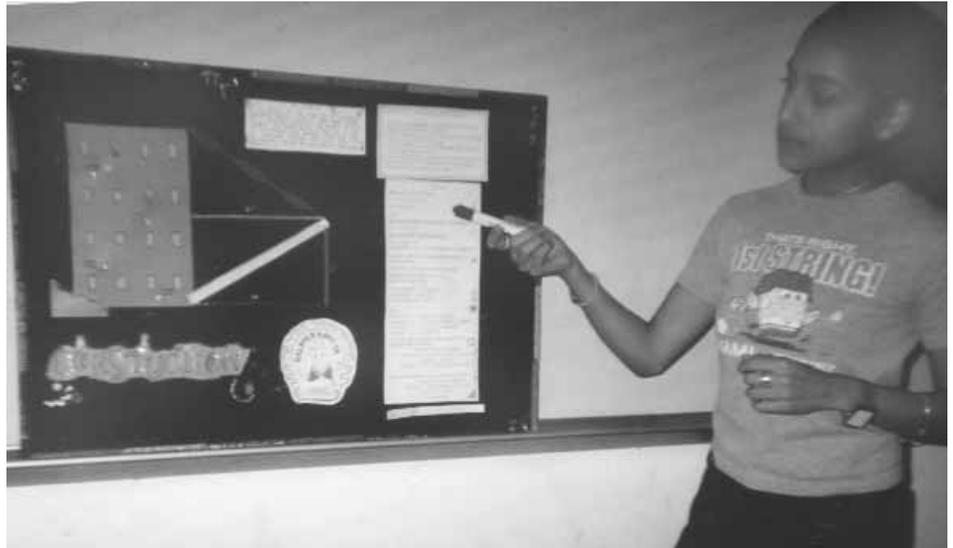
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RELATED RATES COME TO LIFE

To make a very challenging concept in calculus more user friendly, this project has students solve real world problems involving related rates of change. Student pairs begin by choosing a work-related problem involving related rates found in building construction, machine design or another field. They identify an equation that relates two or more of the variables in the problem that are changing with respect to time. (For example, a problem could be as air is pumped into a spherical balloon at a rate of 4 cubic inches per minute, what would be the rate of change of the radius when the radius is exactly 2 inches.) They then spend 3-4 days collaborating on a solution and working on a presentation that includes a visual component such as PowerPoint, a physical model, a graphing calculator activity or a poster board display. By teaching their peers, students are motivated to achieve a thorough understanding of the topic. In addition, this exposure to a variety of creative presentations is also a unique opportunity for all types of learners to reinforce and enhance their comprehension of related rates.



Students

Sixty 11th- and 12th-grade students enrolled in AP calculus class participate. Other advanced topics, such as optimization and particle motion, are appropriate for this activity.

Staff

Mary Garrastazu has been teaching mathematics for 14 years in MDCPS. She has taught all levels of math from algebra I to AP calculus. She is completing her master's degree in Educational Leadership. Ms. Garrastazu is currently co-chair of the mathematics department and a member of EESAC for Barbara Goleman Senior High.

Materials and Resources

Computer, graphing calculators, overhead projector, dry erase white board, and

markers are needed. Any calculus textbook may be used for a selection of related rate problems. A list of problems will also be provided in the Idea Packet.

By collaborating with their peers, students enjoy the challenges of problem solving while experiencing the art of teaching. It also provides a valuable lesson in communication skills.

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WHAT'S MY LINE?

Formerly a Nextira Teacher Mini-Grant

In groups of three or four, students research a career in a mathematical or technological field (architecture, engineering, computer networks, etc.) and prepare a presentation on the chosen career. Their research includes not only the technical requirements of the job but also the nature of the work, the working environment, the type of tasks and the amount of time spent on them each day, security issues, job demand, average number of hours worked, flexibility in the work schedule, beginning and potential salary and employee benefits such as vacation, sick leave, and health insurance. This information is compiled through visiting job sites, conducting and videotaping interviews with employees, and reviewing job postings and applications. During the Career Fair, excitement builds when each student represents an occupation and, following the format for the 1960's What's My Line? TV show, is peppered with questions by their fellow students in an effort to guess what job they are describing.



Students

Precalculus/analysis of functions 11th- and 12th-grade students in classes of 30-48 students participated. This project is adaptable to other age groups and subject areas.

Students are sold on the value of mathematics outside the classroom as they find out first hand about professions that rely on knowledge of mathematics.

Staff

Lilliam Bez has taught for 32 years. She has used this project successfully for four years. Parents and friends of the students volunteer to share their career experiences that relate to mathematics or technology.

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Materials and Resources

Students use the Internet, school and public library, and community job fairs to gain information on pertinent careers.

BUILDING AN AQUATIC THINK-TANK

Originally a Galaxy of Supporters Teacher Mini-Grant

This aquatic think-tank fosters thinking and problem solving skills as students set up and maintain an aquarium. The interdisciplinary approach used in this project integrates mathematics, science, reading, and writing with hands-on activities and discovery learning. Students learn by experience in an authentic context as they care for marine life and help it survive in a tank. Depending on the grade level, the think tank tackles the issues of water pollution, dumping of industrial waste and overfishing. Students are versed in the importance of marine conservation and learn that they can all play a part in protecting marine life and conserving ocean habitats.

Elementary Education and a master's degree in Varying Exceptionalities. She is currently seeking National Board Certification as a Middle Childhood Generalist. Ms. Demetrius has been recognized for her contributions to education. In 2002, she received the CBS-4 Golden Apple Award for the month of May and in 2003 was the North Glade Teacher of the Year.

The classroom aquarium serves not only a school of fish, but also as a school of thought that promotes every child as a scientist as well as a vital and integral member of a vibrant learning community.

Materials and Resources

The implementation of this project takes place in the classroom and in the art room. Equipment needs consist of a 20-gallon fish tank, fish, aquatic frog, air pump, gravel, fish food, and a collection of books based on aquatic life including stories with fish as characters and ones that encourage marine conservation.

Contact

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Students

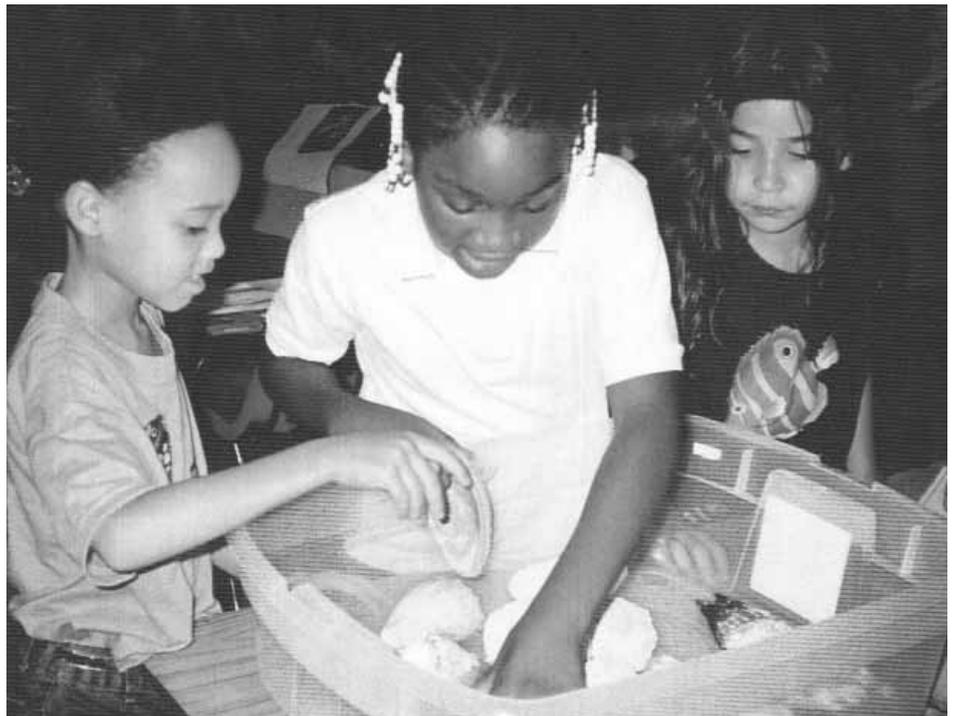
This project was used with first- and second-grade students, but can be easily adapted to any grade level with a slight change to the think-tank library.

Staff

Sherian Demetrius is in her sixth year of teaching in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. She holds a bachelor's degree in

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Miami Billfish
Tournament**



DENSITY: THE DYNAMIC DUO OF MASS AND VOLUME

Density is introduced to students in an ancient story about a Greek king, a gold crown and a scientist named Archimedes. From this story, students begin a series of activities to determine whether or not the king's crown was solid gold. In another story, Dastardly Density, the mystery of who-dun-it is unraveled by discovering the densities of various liquids. Density is further explored through demonstrations of feuding foams, a comparison of aerosol shaving creams to foams generated from shampoo and detergents, dancing raisins in club soda and erupting underwater volcanos. From these observations, students use their data to understand the relationship between the mass and volume of the materials and calculate their density.

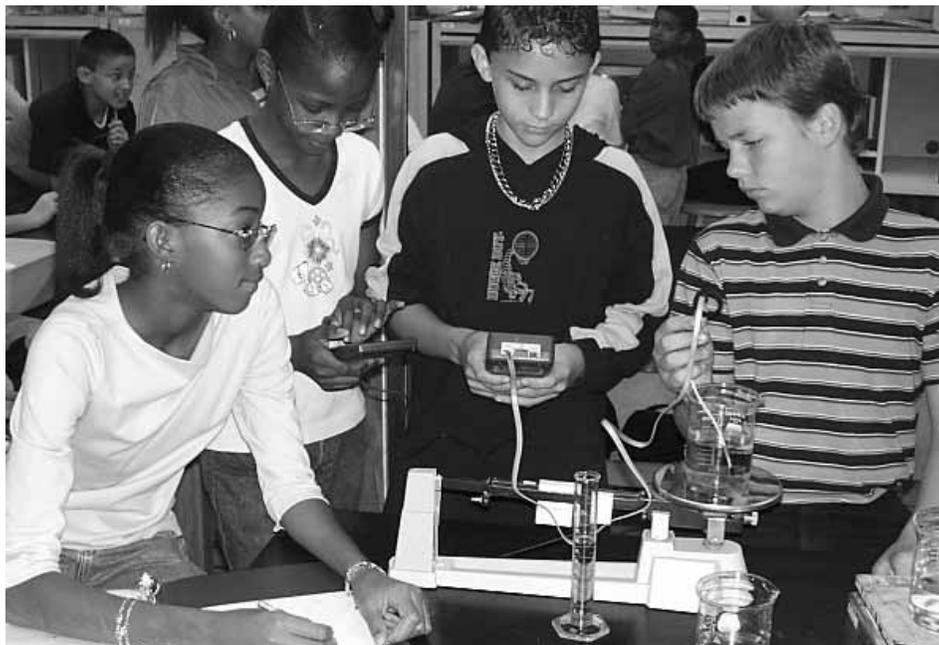
Students

Students in grades six through 12 participated in groups of 40 to 180. It can be adapted to any grade, curriculum and class size.

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Staff

Barbara Zeiler has been a teacher for 29 years and for the last four years has served as a Secondary Science Curriculum Support Specialist. She is a recipient of several grants from The Education Fund: IMPACT II, Teacher Mini-Grants and Citibank Success Fund.

Materials and Resources

Biology, chemistry, physical science and physics textbooks all have sections on density pertaining to their particular subject area. Items for the project include

graduated and density cylinders, balances, metric ruler, common household liquids, food coloring, sugar, salt, potatoes, shaving cream, hair dryers, beakers, hot plate, diet, regular and club soda, raisins, water, and ice cubes.

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In order to be literate citizens within our society, students must be able to comprehend general concepts in science. These activities were developed to meet the criteria in the Florida Sunshine State Standards Science Benchmarks in an entertaining and memorable format.

FCAT THROUGH THE LENS OF A MAGNIFYING GLASS

Originally a Catherine Scripps Rodriguez Teacher Mini-Grant

This project engages students in the process of scientific inquiry – they develop the ability to ask questions, investigate the world around them, and use their observations to create reasonable answers to their questions. As students experiment, they design questions to describe the cause or effect of the action or event. Included in this science series is the segment “All About Properties” in which children investigate the physical world around them using common objects. To make sense of their physical world, children develop the capacity to classify and sort. In “All Gassed Up” students work in teams to experiment with baking soda and vinegar as they learn about force and movement. They write about the events that caused the cork to pop on the mixture. They wonder what would happen if the amounts are varied. As they estimate, measure, and weigh the materials, students also put into practice valuable mathematical process skills. The project enables teachers to implement hands-on, standards based learning activities, which provides students with multiple opportunities to improve their reading, writing, and math skills.

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Students

This project was piloted with kindergarten students at two school locations. The activities can be modified and adapted for students at any age or achievement level. Low performing students benefit greatly from this early emphasis on scientific and critical thinking.

Staff

Both Latha Murali and Teresa Acosta are National Board Certified Early Childhood Generalist Teachers who have been teaching in Miami-Dade County for more than 10 years. Ms. Murali and Ms. Acosta each hold a master's degree in Early Childhood Education and are active members of the community. They have received numerous grants and they frequently present at state and local education conferences.



Materials and Resources

The Idea Packet contains easy experiments that begin by asking a question, followed by the materials list, a step-by-step procedure and the expected results. At the end of each experiment, suggestions for further studies broaden the scope of the experiment.

Creating an environment that allows children to actively engage in scientific discussions, explore, investigate and draw conclusions is essential in developing the habits of mind necessary for scientific inquiry.

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OUR ANCIENT FOSSILIZED ROCK REEF: AN EXPLORATION!

This project is a classroom and field study of marine organisms living on a special habitat of petrified mangrove tree roots that is found in only one place in the world – South Florida. A virtual presentation tells how marine animals survive this inhospitable habitat of high and low tides and harsh wave action by developing special adaptations of glue-like chemicals, hold-fast mechanisms and clam-up features. Students then work on “The Wave” activity – employing engineering skills to create a model of an imaginary and creative Rock Reef type of animal that is tested with a simulated wave. The project culminates with students noninvasively investigating the Rock Reef on Key Biscayne.

Students

Any class of third- through eighth-grade students can participate in this project. The independent structure of “The Wave” activity provides the students with opportunities to experience the skills necessary to complete the FCAT successfully.

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Staff

Don Deresz is a National Board Certified Early Adolescent Science teacher who has taught in MDCPS for more than 29 years. More about Don can be found at: <http://teachers.dadeschools.net/dderesz>

Materials and Resources

Teachers can download thumbnail pictures and information on the organisms of the Rock Reef habitat for class exhibition. “The Wave” activity requires a class supply of card stock paper, tape, bird seed and a pillow case. This project is a perfect precursor for an Adapter grant that would enable students to visit the actual ancient fossilized Rock Reef in Crandon Park on Key Biscayne as escorted by naturalists from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Biscayne Nature Center, Inc.

Students apply their study of a fossilized Rock Reef and marine animal adaptations to the real world of engineering. Students may use the media center resources to explore the ecology of mangroves, the process of fossilization, and research patterns and adaptations of specific marine invertebrates.

Contact

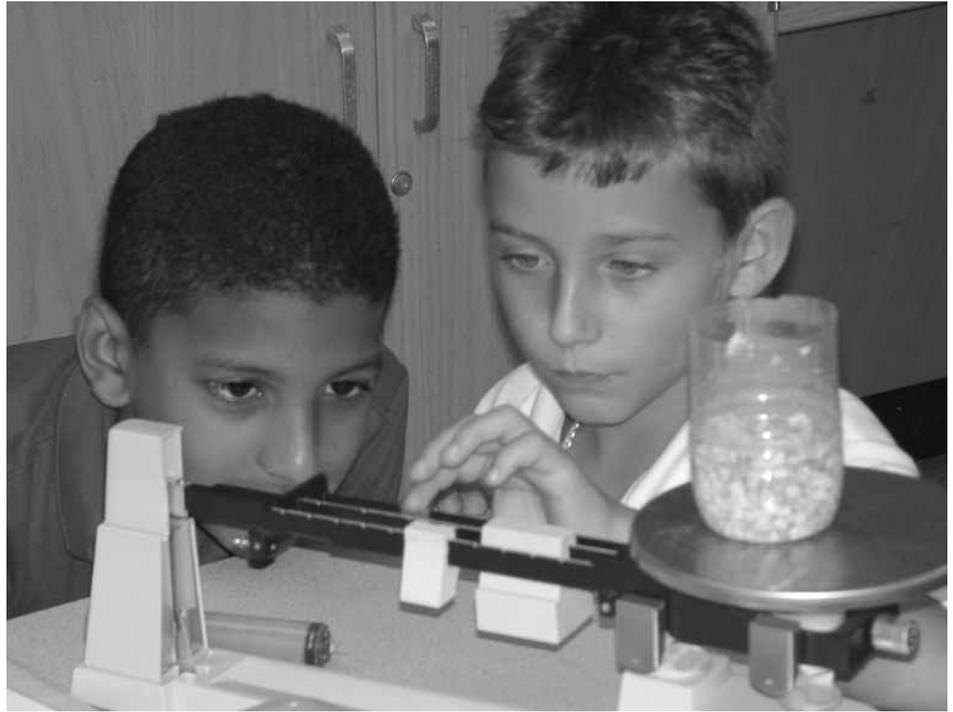
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SUPER SCIENCE SLEUTHS

Super Science Sleuths is a way for students to solve real life problems, such as acid rain or erosion, as they follow the scientific method. Students take turns being the project director, assistant director, materials manager, and team member. Each learns that their role in the team is important to solving the science related problem of the day. As they explore, they are addressing the Sunshine State Standards in science, language arts and math. Students learn about simple machines, buoyancy, magnetic fields, sound waves, and much more using hands-on experimental activities – with the results recorded and graphed.



Students

1,450 students in grades two through five attend the school science lab once every other week for a one-hour period.

Staff

Beth Davis is a National Board Certified Teacher and a member of the Florida League of Teachers. She has been

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teaching for 15 years and has been the science lab teacher at Jack Gordon Elementary for the past eight years. Mrs. Davis is also the founder of Kids 4 Kids, a non-profit organization that teaches young children that they can change the world one good deed at a time through their acts of kindness toward others.

Materials and Resources

The Idea Packet contains 200+ hands-on elementary activities that have been field-tested with students in grades two to six. The lab sheets are available on a CD so they can be customized to meet the needs of any classroom. Fieldtrips to Miami Metrozoo, Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden and Miami Museum of Science & Planetarium offer a wealth of information.

By making science a fun, hands-on adventure, students' attendance, achievement and interest in scientific careers increase.

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Principal: Maria Pabellon

ROMANCING THE RENAISSANCE

This study of the Renaissance combines art and social studies to make history more vital and meaningful by comparing its everyday life and culture to modern times. A series of interactive activities integrate the history of High Renaissance artists to modern artists, which also works to make the past more engaging and relevant to students. For instance, to start the study of Leonardo da Vinci, students learn about the pervasive presence of the Mona Lisa in the contemporary world. Students then create their own versions of the Mona Lisa, which are combined into a Mona Madness Mural. Then, students make a modern Andy Warhol style Mona Lisa using his technique of multiple copies, each with different embellishments. In another project, Michelangelo's paintings and sculptures are studied and the students work with plaster to experience the three-dimensional qualities of sculpture. To make a connection to the present, students create a paper batik on the style of a modern local artist, Romero Britto, who also creates murals, paintings and sculptures that are on display throughout Miami.

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A drawing tour of Vizcaya's palace and gardens as a culmination of the studies is an exciting, first-hand reference for students to view and sketch Renaissance artifacts and architecture that can later be incorporated into their own artwork.

Students

Fifth-grade students preparing for art magnet schools participated. Parts of the project can be used with regular intermediate elementary art classes.

Staff

Michael Flaum has been an MDCPS educator for 20 years as an art teacher, art coordinator and assistant principal. He is now teaching art at Jack Gordon Elementary.

Materials and Resources

Research materials are used from textbooks and Internet searches. A tour of Vizcaya to see artifacts first-hand and to understand life in the palace and gardens is indispensable.

Excite and inspire students to love the history of art – comparing and contrasting the artists and art movements of the past and present by replicating their art and learning how they lived.

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THE PRICE IS RIGHT

Originally a Catherine Scripps Rodriguez Teacher Mini-Grant

Students examine prices from the past and compare them to prices of today using primary sources such as old catalogs and newspapers, and current flyers and the Internet to see how prices change over time. Using math in a social studies classroom shows students that math is used daily in all walks of life. This project reinforces skills that are needed for and tested by the FCAT.

A small group of students is assigned a specific decade. They examine prices for a specific item in previous years, convert those prices to today's dollars, and then compare it to the price of that item today. Students will see that even though the price seemed "cheap" it may actually have been quite high. They then rotate to another decade. Students could also track one item's price changes over a span of time. Wages can also be examined in a similar manner. Using the inflation calculator on the Web, students are able to track monetary changes. Viewing fashions and household items from the last two centuries is also a study in Americana and offers endless learning experiences.

Sponsored by:



Students

One hundred seventy-five eighth-grade students with a wide range of abilities participated in this project in classes of 35 students at a time. This activity is suitable for upper elementary, middle and senior high school students.

Staff

Regina Stuck has taught social studies for 10 years. She has participated in numerous summer institutes and has presented a variety of social studies workshops at the state and local level. In addition, she has received grants from The Education Fund, Teaching Tolerance and the Robert E. Lee Memorial Foundation. Ms. Stuck is the 2004 Teacher of the Year at Homestead Middle and was a 2003 finalist for Social Studies Teacher of the Year for the county.



Materials and Resources

Reproductions of old catalogs can be purchased, current flyers, magazines, and older magazines can be found at thrift stores. Computer with Internet access.

Were "the good old days" really so good? Were things as cheap as they seem? Using old advertisements and catalogs, students examine prices and compare them to prices of today. The project shows students that the value of money changes over time. Students learn about culture, money, inflation and other economic principles by shopping!

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DRUMMING FROM THE HEART

This program exposes students to an African and Caribbean drumming curriculum through performing arts and music. Through a team effort, the music and academic teachers introduce the historical context and the impact that African and Caribbean cultures have on the world. Students direct, choreograph and develop a performance that will be viewed by fellow peers, faculty and parents. A multicultural thematic unit includes African and Caribbean literature as well as activities that correspond to the music curriculum. Students will engage in hands-on drumming activities using the correct technique for playing all the instruments used in the World Drumming curriculum. Students are taught how to play and listen to one another. They learn that drumming is a physical expression of what it means to be together as a group.

Students

Third- through fifth-grade students participated in the drumming. In a class, each student has an instrument to play and is expected to play as part of an ensemble.

Sponsored by:



Sponsored by the individuals who purchased the "Education" license plate. To find out how you can purchase one, see page 15 of the insert in this catalog.

Staff

Michael Canciglia is a graduate of the University of Miami School of Music & Jazz Performance and has been a professional musician for 21 years. He began teaching in 1996 in Broward County. He is a member of the National Association of Music Educators and the Master Chorale. He has received grants from The Education Fund and Arts for Learning. He was a consultant on a curriculum kit entitled, "Dancing and Drumming in the African Diaspora."

Students develop leadership skills, enrich their music skills and become more culturally aware learning the characteristics of music and literature of Africa and the Caribbean.

Materials and Resources

Practical items needed to begin include: World Music Drumming, a Cross-Cultural Curriculum by Will Schmid Classroom Kits, and modern tunable drums based on traditional African instruments made by Remo World Percussion. Items may be purchased at Interstate Music, www.interstatmusic.com and West Music, www.westmusic.com.

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ENTOMBED, A HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE

Originally a JPMorgan Private Bank Teacher Mini-Grant

Studying the Holocaust through a first person account is one of the best ways for students to learn of the atrocities and horror of the Holocaust. Included in this study of the Holocaust are the personal memoirs of a holocaust survivor in his book, *Entombed*, an account of how he and 45 other Jews lived underground to survive the Holocaust. An audio CD of his book brings the story to life and creates a “you are there” experience for the students. This successful strategy holds the students’ attention and interest better than silent reading or reading aloud in class. Coupling the written word with an audio recording is a powerful and effective teaching tool that encompasses two learning styles that greatly increases the chances that students will understand and remember what they have heard and read. Once the book is read, the author or another Holocaust survivor can appear as a guest speaker to further impress upon the students the realities of the Holocaust and the lessons learned.



Students

Students in reading and English classes in grades nine through 12 participated. Ideally, a class set of books and the audio recording could be housed in the media center for teachers’ use at a school.

Staff

Deedee Toner has been a library media specialist for four years and a social studies teacher for six years. She was a fellow of the Justice Teaching Institute sponsored by the Florida Supreme Court. She also participated in the Dade Academy of the Teaching Arts, creating the ACE project. Ms. Toner has received IMPACT II and Teacher Mini-Grants from The Education Fund.

Materials and Resources

Bernard Mayer, author of *Entombed*, is available for school presentations. The audio CD of his book is included in the Idea Packet. Dr. Miriam Kassenoff, Director of Holocaust Education, MDCPS and Merle Safferstein of the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center can provide Holocaust information and guest speakers. A visit to the Holocaust Memorial (www.holocaustmmb.org) on Miami Beach provides a powerful lesson on the Holocaust.

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Sponsored by:

**Robert Russell
Memorial Foundation**

TEACHER FEATURE

The purpose of this writing project is for every child to understand that everyone is a unique individual and to respect the differences that make each person special. It addresses FCAT writing skills as students learn to express to their classmates what they like about them by writing detailed sentences. Every Friday morning, a child's name is put on the board. Then the class is encouraged to write down what they like about this child – possibly elaborating about a particular time when this child helped them in some way, such as sharing their lunch or lending a pencil. These ideas are put together in a friendly letter that is illustrated with crayons and markers. Each letter, along with a letter from the teacher, is presented to the child in a booklet form. This activity spreads goodwill in the classroom as students learn to look for positive attributes in classmates. They soon realize that a small deed can have an impact on one or more of their classmates. It further benefits those with a poor self image as they may learn that they have certain likable qualities they did not know they possessed. Children are often surprised to find that they are respected and liked by their peers.

Sponsored by:

**Florida Matching
Grants Program**

Students

Thirty-six second-grade students participated in this project weekly. It can be adapted to other ages or achievement levels and can be used with larger or smaller groups.

Staff

Stephanie Sheir has been teaching for 26 years and has used this project for 5 years. She received several IMPACT II Adaptor grants and a Disseminator grant for creating a classroom newspaper. She received the Golden Poet Award and was published in *Celebrate! Poets Speak Out*. In addition, 12 of her second-grade students were published in an anthology of children's poetry.

Materials and Resources

The materials needed are notebook paper, pencils, crayons, colored pencils or markers, construction paper and stickers. A digital

camera provides photos of each child for their booklet. Counselors as guest speakers could address the topics of self-concept and feelings. A program called "Thumbbody," in which children learn the uniqueness of the thumbprint and use it to illustrate a story, may also be introduced.

Not only does this project have a positive impact on the students, but it also elicits delightful responses from parents. This one activity can definitely make a memorable difference in the life of a child.

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CHAMPIONS OF ACTIVE LEARNING (CAL)

A program of The Education Fund

The Champions of Active Learning program, funded by The J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation, is a national initiative that encourages and supports innovative instructional programs that result in improved achievement for middle grade students. The goal of the program is to help middle school teachers and students create engaging, interdisciplinary projects that link schoolwork to real life. Grant funds enable teachers across the country to implement hands-on, standards-based learning activities that produce high levels of student achievement, foster collaboration between teachers, and provide opportunities for local education funds, parents and community members to support public schools.

Applications for the \$5,000 grant award for the 2005-2006 school year will be due in April 2005.

For more information, logon to www.educationfund.org

CAL GRANTS FOR 2004-2005

Getting to Know my Miami

Students explore the unique ecosystem of the Everglades and its history through experiential learning in an integrated program of the academic core subjects. Through the program, students will identify and report on local environmental issues involving land and water management, waste management and air pollution. During field studies to the Newfound Harbor Marine Institute and Everglades National Park, students will perform GLOBE atmosphere, land and water protocols including measurement and data analysis that they report online to scientists.

Sonya Gaiter,
Gwen Schoolar,
Kim Morgan &
Marshall Ruffo
Centennial Middle

Reading Your Palm

This project is a unique collaborative approach that encourages students to explore their cultural heritage and its impact on the South Florida community. Students partner with a varying exceptional student of the same heritage and together present a PowerPoint slide show of their culture. Using handheld computers to complete research on the Internet, record interviews with their family and capture pictures of cultural memorabilia, they learn of the contributions their culture has made to the community. By students learning from and with their peers, they achieve increased academic and social integration and provide a positive proactive learning environment for all.

Margaret W. Bastida
Cutler Ridge Middle

The Human Body Book

Students will use science lab equipment to investigate the seven major systems in the human body. They will collect data about themselves – such as tracking their vital signs – analyze the data, and design a fitness routine to help them make healthy life choices. Students will also learn about job opportunities in various health fields. The culminating activity will be to make a book that contains all of their experiences.

Sandy Witt, Eugene Clapp &
Andrea Walker
Miami Springs Middle

Building a Mathematics Culture Through the Language of Experiences

This project will serve as a catalyst for motivating students to learn the five major strands covered by the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) for mathematics. Students will demonstrate knowledge of these strands in a competitive format as they engage in mental and physical challenges and a variety of hands-on activities. By collaborating with the district's Division of Math and Science, involved teachers will benefit from additional support, training and resources, such as SECME (Science Engineering Communication Mathematics Enhancement) programs. Students' final projects will be displayed throughout the school.

Valerie Morris
Campbell Drive Middle

TEACHERS NETWORK POLICY INSTITUTE

An Action Research project of The Education Fund

The Teachers Network Policy Institute (TNPI) is an action research initiative of more than 100 teachers from 10 nationwide affiliates that connects education policy with actual classroom practice to improve student achievement. This mechanism ensures that education policy-making is informed by the realities of schools and classrooms.

TNPI empowers teachers as it trains them to utilize ongoing research to improve instruction and influence educational decisions. Full-time classroom teachers research policy issues and develop recommendations, document their work in papers and publications, and disseminate their work locally and nationally. To get the word out, teachers give presentations to schools districts and school boards, participate in major conferences, and join influential task forces and advisory boards. As a major part of their work, the teachers also conduct action research studies addressing the direct link between policy-making and its effects on student achievement. Additional research summaries – including an online video – can be found at www.teachersnetwork.org/tnpi.

In 2003-2004, The Education Fund worked with the National Board Certified Teachers of Miami-Dade to choose seven NBCT teachers to conduct action research. Dr. Jill Beloff Farrell, Director of Graduate Programs at Barry University, is the advisor for the program. This year's topics were:

- Service Learning
- Habits of Mind
- Social Studies Through Art
- Minorities and Science
- Critical Thinking in Mathematics
- Learning Communities
- Training Teachers in Hands-on Science

Summaries of these action research projects appear on pages 31-35. If you would like to explore conducting action research in your classroom – and receive a grant to do so – please contact The Education Fund at 305-892-5099, ext. 18 or visit our Web site at www.educationfund.org. To receive a complete copy of a teacher's action research, contact the teacher.

? Will teachers who collaborate with a science resource teacher in the use of hands-on science activities, increase their students' understanding of science content knowledge?

Are students getting more science (frequency) because of teacher collaboration and will increasing hands-on science frequency improve student science content knowledge?

Problem

Teachers do not put as much effort into teaching science as other subject areas due to many issues, predominantly anxiety over teaching science. Eighty percent of teachers

surveyed felt they were not properly trained in the area of science education and 70 percent felt they lacked the science content knowledge to teach science on the elementary level. Similarly, 70 percent of the teachers surveyed found the Florida Sunshine State Science Standards to be confusing. The challenge is to find ways for teachers to increase students' science content knowledge while using varied techniques of instruction.

Plan of Action

As the science resource teacher at Jack Gordon Elementary, I see students in grades 2-5 for one hour every other week in a fully equipped science lab. During that time, students participate in hands-on science activities, follow the scientific method, record and analyze data, and draw conclusions. The remainder of their science instruction is delivered by their classroom teacher. I initiated TLC (Teachers Learning and Collaborating) so that teachers could collaborate with me on activities to increase students' science content knowledge as well as learn varied techniques of instruction.

Methodology

Nine 45-minute collaborative sessions introduced teachers to science concepts and activities that they could use with their own students. Teachers were also encouraged to bring hands-on science into their classroom with a "green slip" requesting materials for experiments. Teachers were given Pre- and post-science attitude surveys and asked to reflect on each training session. Frequency of hands-on science by the teachers from last year to this year was compared. Student reflection essays were collected.

Results

Analysis of the data from the general student population showed gains of 25% on FCAT-type science content standards. Further analysis of the ESE students showed gains of 30%. Additionally, test data of the lowest performing students in our school showed average gains of 36%. Similarly, individual ESE students all showed gains – with an average gain of 42%. When analyzing the pre-/post-test data, it is clear that the greater the frequency of hands-on science instruction, the greater the science content knowledge will be. This is most evident

when you consider that the lowest performing students in the fifth-grade population surveyed showed the greatest gains in science content knowledge.

Policy Implications

Elementary teachers who collaborate with a science lab teacher will gain a better understanding and comfort level teaching hands-on science, thus increasing students' science content knowledge. Additionally, students should be given the opportunity whenever possible to take part in hands-on instruction to support their successful acquisition of science content knowledge. Labs should be set up in elementary settings to support hands-on instruction or equipment should be made available for teachers to use in their classrooms. Additionally, professional development must be offered to elementary teachers to give them a better understanding of science content knowledge as well as the use of manipulatives to teach hands-on science.

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? Will sharing professional articles and resources increase the quality of the school climate and teacher empowerment in a large urban high school?

Problem

It is challenging for educators to discuss issues of concern as they strive to pursue school reform. That need often goes unmet, particularly in large urban high schools. The only opportunity for teachers to meet regularly at my school is a bi-monthly faculty meeting that does not allow for teacher input. When educating a population comprised of diverse learners, the ability to work collaboratively is critically important.

Plan of Action

Using my experience with the Coalition of Essential Schools, critical friends groups, learning communities, and collaborative coaching, I initiated the creation of a learning community in my school. This involved scheduling professional discussions, to take place during lunchtime, centered on educational research articles. My goals were to help colleagues become better informed about the latest educational research, to improve communication amongst staff, and to form a learning community with a shared knowledge base, respect for one another, and a commitment to collaboration in the school.

Methodology

Copies of five articles on a variety of educational subjects were distributed to the whole faculty. Topics included school reform, student achievement, teacher evaluation, and teacher leadership. Bi-weekly lunchtime meetings were held in the faculty lounge and a different article was discussed each week. The final meeting included discussions on the efficacy of our work together and on continuing the community into the next school year. The "Humanistic Climate Scale" was used to determine if a change in the school climate had taken place.

Results

Five meetings were held, with increasingly greater attendance. The response to the final meeting's discussion echoed resounding support for continuing our work together. The results of both surveys were overwhelmingly positive and those teachers who attended the sessions felt they were productive and empowering experiences. Since there were more positive responses in surveys than participants in the sessions, it was clear that the effects reached beyond the original group. As a result, staff and administrators will be officially engaged in collaborative strategic planning for next year.

Policy Implications

My research confirmed that as teachers, we work better when we work collaboratively. A sense of community brings shared vision to our mission of educating children. Collegiality, permission to engage in experimentation, and high goals and expectations led to improved staff morale and enhanced teacher leadership. Structured opportunities to participate in learning communities should be made available in all school settings to improve the

work environment, strengthen professional capability, and foster a sense of empowerment.

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? What impact does an after-school science club have on the knowledge and dispositions of fifth-grade minority students?

Problem

Historically, minorities have not pursued careers in the fields of math and science. With the pressure of accountability under No Child Left Behind, science will soon be part of the assessment process. Students at our school lack a fundamental knowledge of their surrounding environment. Many of them have not had the exposure to the experiences or the knowledge-base that other students in our community receive.

Plan of Action

In order for individuals to become active and involved in their community, they must first possess a fundamental understanding of and appreciation for their local environment. As part of a project funded through Florida State University and the National Science Foundation, I was offered the opportunity to enhance the teaching and learning of earth/space science while giving students a connection to the real world. A weather station and computer were installed in my classroom to be used for the collection of data for Really Exploring and Learning Meteorology (REALM). This program would attempt to strengthen students' conceptual knowledge of the need to share information with the public and to become

informed citizens while developing their sense of belonging to a “broad” community.

Methodology

The program was implemented as an after-school club consisting of 13 fifth-grade students that met weekly. The students conducted atmospheric observations and submitted real-time data to the GLOBE Web site. These students also arrived at school early to research and present live weather reports for their morning school newscasts. Pre-tests, post-tests, and attitude surveys were all conducted. Homeroom teachers made observations and parents completed surveys addressing the project.

This project provided necessary equipment and supplies for the delivery of innovative instruction, and allowed students to collect real-time meteorological data through observation stations, designing and conducting scientific investigations, and the use of appropriate tools and techniques to gather, analyze and interpret data through field experience. Weekly activities incorporated math and problem solving strategies and lessons on historical connections to present issues. The students also taught their parents about weather during a Saturday event.

Results

This program resulted in increases in knowledge and attendance and a decrease in discipline problems. In addition to the weekly meeting, students now come on their own with ideas and projects to enhance the school environment and increase their learning. The ultimate goal of instruction is to have students become independent and critical thinkers who take ownership of their learning and who can share their knowledge with others while making connections to the world in which they live. Implementation of this project allowed for achievement of this goal as I facilitated the acquisition of new knowledge and experiences for the students involved.

Policy Implications

The benefits of student participation in an after-school science club such as this are far reaching. Promoting educational equity, increasing interest and participation in science activities, and significant cognitive gains are all associated benefits. If educators wish to increase meaningful minority interest in math and science, more students should be given the opportunity to learn science using technology in a real-world context.

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? What impact will participation in an environmental service-learning project have on the knowledge, skills and dispositions of at-risk students in an alternative education center?

Problem

Students at the School for Applied Technology have been identified as being at-risk by Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Traditionally, students in this school feel disconnected from both the schools and communities in which they live. This lack of connection frequently results in students' feeling a lack of responsibility for both the school and community. This results in students feeling little need to participate in either.

At-risk students also tend to have non-traditional learning styles, compounding their difficulties. With the recent emphasis on standardized testing and the “back to basics” approach, it is becoming increasingly difficult for students with non-traditional learning styles to find success. They see little correlation between what they are able to do, what they learn in school and the real world in which they must learn to live.

The challenge for these students is to create a learning environment that can reconnect them with school and community, while utilizing their learning strengths and highlighting direct connections between what they learn in school and the real world.

Plan of Action

In order to address the specific characteristics of my at-risk students and to try and reconnect students with their own community and its many resources, I decided to

implement an environmental service-learning project. Service learning also accommodates the various learning styles demonstrated by at-risk students while providing clear connections between the classroom and the world outside of school. Additionally, I hoped to improve students' achievement, develop new skills and improve attitudes toward the environment.

Methodology

Students were involved in the planning and implementation of an environmental service-learning project for the majority of the school year in 10th-grade biology class. The students were responsible for working to restore Virginia Key Beach while learning about the historical, environmental and ecological significance of the area. The project was woven into the course content, which was the primary mode of instruction for the students. Implementation of the project also involved utilization of and cooperation with numerous community resources including: Barry University, Florida International University, Metro-Dade Parks, Citizens for a Better South Florida, and the Miami Children's Museum.

I used FCAT science scores as a basis for measuring improvement in classroom performance and student demonstration projects. Assessment of skill development was done by collecting information from teacher observations, student surveys and student use of new skills while at the park. Student dispositions were analyzed through the use of student reflections, student journal entries, an environmental survey, and teacher observation.

Results

Substantial increases in student knowledge, skills and dispositions were seen as a result of participation in this project. Student gains on standardized test scores were in the top five of all high schools in the district, while demonstration projects showed an in-depth understanding of the science concepts addressed. The most significant changes, however, were in student attitudes toward school and the environment. Many students indicated that they had changed their attitudes toward the environment, as well as their behavior. Students frequently stated that they did not realize the impact that their behavior had on the environment and went on to change their own behavior after learning about its consequences.

Policy Implications

Participation in service-learning projects should count toward the community service requirement for graduation. Schools should actively encourage the development of service-learning projects in classes and schools. State and district education policy-makers should adopt a policy recognizing and encouraging the use of service-learning as a viable means of improving student achievement and developing higher order thinking skills. Identify service-learning as a viable means by which to improve student achievement.

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? How can an integrated/interdisciplinary approach to the study of Africa, with a focus on the study of African art forms, promote a deeper understanding of African social studies concepts in fifth-grade students?

Problem

Fifth-grade students lack opportunities for learning social studies content and developing social studies research and critical thinking skills. Reasons for this include students' lack of prior social studies experiences and a narrowing of curriculum due to statewide standardized testing. Arts educational research suggests that integrated interdisciplinary instruction "stresses connections and relationships rather than delineations within and across academic disciplines (Burns, 1995)". The research challenge is to determine whether this strategy can address the social studies curricular needs of elementary students.

Plan of Action

My task was to include social studies content, research and critical thinking skills development activities into art lessons that would extend into the regular classroom. Visual, oral and written informational resources needed to be made available to the participating teachers and students to serve as resources for student research on culture and geography. The goal of these assignments was to assess whether students recognized and applied skills and knowledge acquired from art education to social studies.

Methodology

I developed an interdisciplinary lesson plan on Africa, focusing on the African drum, and shared the plan with a fifth-grade classroom teacher. She adapted the plan to her class and selected activities and content that she was comfortable teaching. The teacher and I met weekly to coordinate our instructional strategies. The students progressed through a series of African content activities over a nine-week period, including oral and written inquiry into the students' prior knowledge of Africa, their curiosity about Africa, their awareness of research strategies, and their opinions regarding the effectiveness of the lessons. Students practiced identifying social studies concepts in different media including oral discussion, writing artifacts and visual art images.

Results

The integrated instructional environment influenced the students' motivation to participate in the learning process. Students actively participated in oral discussion and completed written and art artifacts. Limited student understanding of African culture was evident in the assessment of the students' prior knowledge. Students provided evidence of increased knowledge in creative writing assignments, artwork and oral discussion completed after instruction. Assessment showed variability in the evidence of the students' understanding. Upon further inquiry, some students were able to elaborate and reveal deeper evidence of their understanding.

Policy Implications

The differences between student participation in art and regular homework illustrate that frequency and duration of instruction affect students' motivation to learn. Teacher monitoring and questioning also influences students to complete assignments and give

evidence of their thinking. Teacher collaboration affects the level of students' motivation and their quality of learning. Art and classroom teachers need more planning time for collaboration in order to integrate their instructional strategies more effectively, thus increasing students' opportunities to forge meaningful interdisciplinary connections.

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? If high school students are given instruction in Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy and in posing questions at various levels, will this lead to richer mathematics content-related classroom discussions? If so, will students identify discussion as contributing to their mathematics learning?

Problem

Concerns about students' acquisition and application of higher level thinking skills have reached an all time high. Students must be taught to go beyond low level comprehension and mere regurgitation of facts and formulas. The classroom "discussion" in one of my mathematics classes generally consisted of my posing questions, students answering my questions, and me trying to elicit richer discussion by asking other students to agree with or refute these answers. Even when the students worked in groups there was little real discussion and the discussion that was generated was predominantly at Bloom's lowest cognitive levels.

Plan of Action

After analyzing audio recordings of two typical classroom sessions, my original hunch was confirmed that pre-existing class

discussions were low level. A pre-assessment survey was administered to determine the types of questions students would generate about a new topic introduced. The survey also checked for students' familiarity with Bloom's Taxonomy and the value students placed on discussion as a learning strategy in mathematics class.

Methodology

Over the next two months mathematics lessons frequently employed the reciprocal teaching strategy, which required students to summarize, visualize, question, predict, and clarify portions of a mathematics passage. On a day when many students were attending a field trip, the remaining class members conducted online research about Bloom's Taxonomy. The next day, these students presented their research to their peers and all students practiced posing questions at the various cognitive levels.

Following these lessons, reciprocal teaching was no longer used as an overt structure for mathematics lessons. Bloom's Taxonomy was mentioned occasionally by the students or me as we analyzed the difficulty of questions from various assignments, but was not "required" in any assignments. Audio recordings of additional class sessions were made and analyzed. A post-survey was also administered.

Results

Class discussion showed marked improvement in both quantity and critical thinking demonstrated. The cognitive levels of students' questions also increased. Some students indicated an increased appreciation for the value of discussion in mathematics. As students' verbal interactions improved, they improved in mathematics learning as well.

Policy Implications

Higher-level mathematics instruction is generally focused on the use of formulas to solve pre-determined mathematics problems. Mathematics teachers should be trained in the use of reciprocal teaching methods, discussion techniques and upper level inquiry methods. Instruction in Bloom's Cognitive Taxonomy as it pertains to mathematics should be incorporated into the mathematics curriculum.

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? Can participating in literature circles to learn Habits of Mind strategies help second graders learn about autonomy and responsibility?

Problem

Gifted students are usually self-directed learners, problem solvers, interested in a variety of topics, unusually committed to high cognitive concepts. However, almost three-fourths of my second-grade students were still not demonstrating these attitudes after three months of the school year. Exhibited in our classroom instead were limited listening skills, limited completion of assignments, and an extrinsic behavior management plan. This made me curious about what had shaped my young students' outlooks, values, and orientations toward schooling? I wondered if they could see that their days in school were not productive and if they wanted to change this.

Plan of Action

I planned to integrate and implement Habits of Mind (Costa, 2001), an intrinsic method of behavior education and management, into my curriculum. The goal was to empower my students and their families and to see if the 16 habits would help students' academic achievements. Erik Erikson claims that the resolution of crises young children face is dependant on the established quality of trust or mistrust, autonomy or doubt and shame, competence or inferiority that the children encounter. I wanted to provide such a positive classroom environment to maximize my students' potential.

Methodology

I administered parent surveys and did student interviews to gather baseline data regarding Habits of Mind strategies. Weekly Habits of Mind Literature Circles were held using Art Costa's methods. Student and teacher journals were kept and discussion lessons were held. I established a Habits of Mind library consisting of literature related to each habit. Student surveys and pre- and post-lesson observations were regularly held to track and maximize the effectiveness of the lessons. Sociograms were used to gauge the effects of

group and friendship dynamics on learning. Weekly feedback was sought from parents and both teacher and parent observations were recorded.

Results

"If I wanted to say something mean I would think about it, then think about something better to say." (8 years old).

"Habit number one, Persisting, was my favorite habit because usually I quit, so I'll try to not get mad and so I'll have friends. I want their friendship." (8 years old).

All of the students participating in the program used more than one of the 16 habits. "Thinking about Thinking" was the main one that students said helped them. Because students were internalizing the habits, they were using intrinsic reasons to act or behave in class. This definitely changed our experiences in the classroom and gave way to a more relaxed atmosphere. There were notable increases in focus on and completion of tasks.

Policy Implications

Families of elementary students want guidelines to promote positive behaviors to empower children to learn in school. Curricular time should be provided in the school day for all teachers to implement programs such as Habits of Mind. A school-wide commitment to such a program, stressing intelligent behaviors as a means for success, could be the key to achieving the goals of the Miami-Dade County Zero Tolerance School Policy.

Contact

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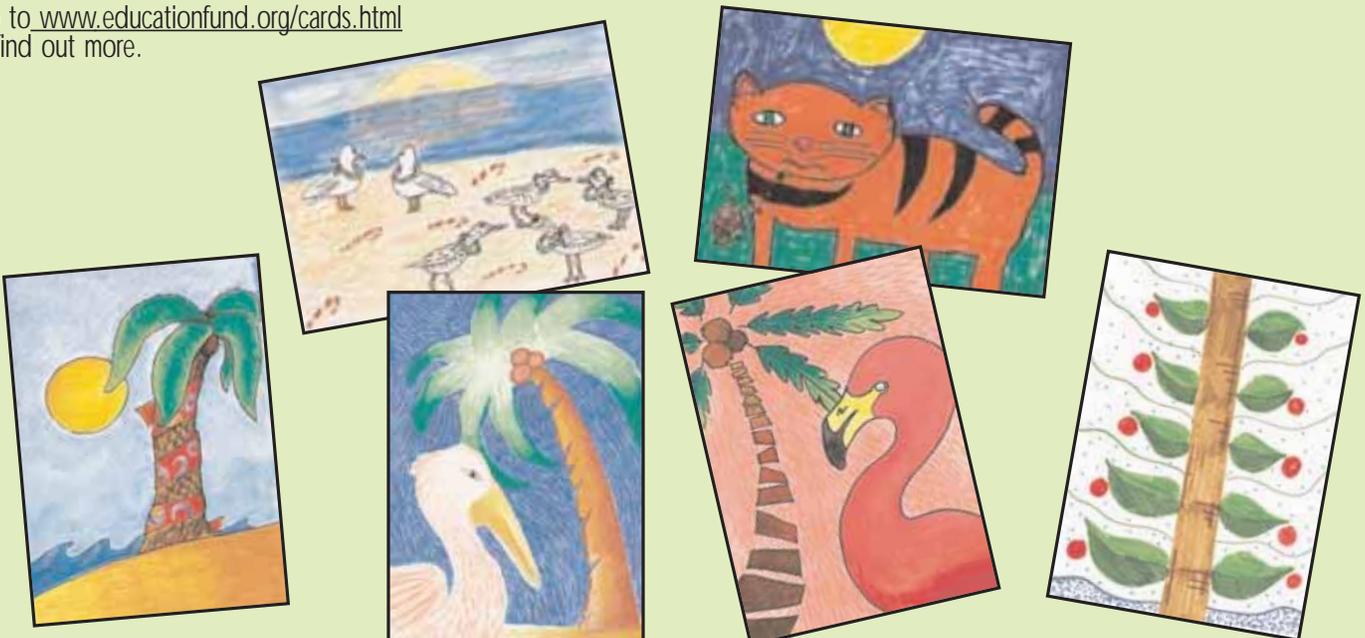
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