Integrated Thematic Unit

Responsibility and Decision-Making

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Kestrel ITU – Planning the 8th Grade Class Trip

Unit Overview

This unit will be an interdisciplinary unit for a seventh grade team of one hundred students. The students will be planning their eighth grade trip. The trip will take place in May for four days and will be located within the United States. The students must begin planning, organizing, budgeting, and creating proposals to have their destination chosen as the place the whole eighth grade will travel to the following year. The theme of this project is responsibility and decision-making.

There are many goals for this unit. As a team we would like the students to work on working together in cooperative groups to complete a task. The students will focus on decision-making and time management skills. Another important goal that the students will be focusing on is using research to create a plan and presentation for a class trip. The students will have to create a step-by-step plan on why their destination should be chosen. They will have a certain requirements they must fulfill but the way they present their destination is up to the group. There will be many skills that are used along the four week unit but most important is that the groups learn to work together to accomplish something they are prove of.

The students will form groups and chose a location within the United States that they believe would be a wonderful fun educational place to visit. The students must present their location to the whole seventh grade team. The presentation must include a budget plan for all 100 students to be able to go on the trip. The location must have some cultural importance and the students must be able to perform or provide volunteer work or service while at the location. The students must take into account the climate of the area in May. The students will be allowed to attend one entertainment event so that must also be decided. The last thing the students will need to research will be the educational system in that location and compare and contrast this to their own school and town. For example, do all downtown shops close on Friday's at 5 because of a local football game, or does the students have a different calendar schedule due to the climate of the location. Throughout this whole process the students will be keeping a journal of the procedure and continue to record events and important information until they return from the trip.

The students must put all of this information into a presentation to present to their seventh grade team. The students will also present their projects to the parents, teachers, and principal of the school at a project fair night. After the presentations the students will vote on the location for their 8th grade trip.

Then as a team the students will break into groups to begin the true budget and plans for the next year in order make the dream a reality.

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Engaging Activity

The engaging activity for this ITU is the kick-off event for next year's class trip. The class trip is hopefully something the students have heard of from older brothers and sisters or classmates before they even began attending middle school and will be one of the main events of their eighth grade year. The principal and other administrators and parents will emphasize the importance of the trip and help build the excitement. Students from the current eighth grade class and some high school students from prior years will also help describe what is involved in planning and running the trip and build excitement for the seventh graders.

The principal will talk about the history of the class trip and what it has meant to students. He or she will talk about being away from home and family, perhaps for the first time, about the skills they will develop and the responsibility of planning a large event, and how it will strengthen friendships and give them something to remember long after they have graduated. He or she will also make reference to prior trips, highlighting interesting destinations and some of the highs and lows over the years.

Student presentations will come next. There will be presentations by high-school students who took trips in the last few years. These students will talk about where they went, the community services they performed, where they stayed and what they saw, what surprises occurred along the way, and what they learned about themselves and their classmates. The presentations will include information from their seventh grade presentations as well as pictures and video from their trips.

Next, members of the current eighth grade class will present two or three reports from the prior year and talk about all the work they did. They will talk about the selection process, some of the destinations that were not selected, and the work that remains to be done after a destination is selected. They will talk about what they liked and didn't like, what went well and what didn't, and provide a little advice to the seventh graders.

The seventh grade staff will then present the process and schedule for the unit. They will discuss the objectives, the various skills that will be learned, and what will be expected of the students. After answering questions about the process, the teachers will lead a brainstorming session to identify possible destinations and community service projects. As the brainstorming wraps up, the teachers will announce the teams and let the students know what they will be doing during the first week. The principal will end the meeting by again highlighting the opportunity and responsibility the students have in making their class trip special and pledging the support of the school and parents to help the students put together a memorable trip.

<u>Resources</u>

The kick-off meeting will need a large gathering space with audio-visual equipment for slideshows and videos. It would most likely be held in a school auditorium outside of school hours to make it easier for parents and presenting students to attend.

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Texts

Prior year presentations will be available to students either on the school's intranet or on DVD for the current class to look at. There will also be a consolidated list of destinations and which ones were selected as well as types of community services projects considered and performed.

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Week	English/Arts	Math & Technology	Science	Social Studies
Engaging Activity	Kick-off for project. Overview of class trip including presentations from last year's class and classes that have gone on trips. Review of unit goal, requirements, structure/schedule, and assessment.			
1 – Laying the Foundation	Read *Around the World in 80 days* Read *Out of the dust* and begin project journal Read and review travel brochures and guidebooks Travel agency field trip	Assess and strengthen web research skills, presentation and spreadsheet skills. Research initial destination choices and select group destination.	Learn about climate in the US and what causes variation.	Study cultural factors for our community. Study cultural factors for other US cultures. Learn about community service projects
2 – Research destination	Continue journal writing Begin work on persuasive essay.	Web quest for trip logistics: travel, lodging, meals, and activities. Develop spreadsheet for trip costs. Develop schedule for trip.	Research weather patterns and topology for destination and compare to home Identify weather-related trip requirements.	Research destination culture, activities, and community service projects Select three culturally significant sites. Develop oral report on destination.
3 – Develop presentation	Work on travel brochure Complete persuasive essay Continue work on journal	Complete budget for trip details. Complete plan for trip logistics.	Create presentation materials for trip.	Work on travel brochure and persuasive essay.
4 – Culminating event	Complete draft presentation Rehearse and tweak presentation Present final project to students, faculty, and parents Voting			

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English Subject Area

Purpose of Lessons

These lessons will focus on combining the knowledge the students have learned in all subjects to create a cumulating project. The students will be using something from each subject to complete the project.

Relationship to Curriculum

The students are learning skills in math, social studies science, art and English, so they have acquired an abundance of knowledge on this topic. Using all this knowledge, the students will be able to complete this activity.

Study Habit Instruction and Application

The students will need to use time management skills in order to have the project completed on time. The students will have to provide a detailed outline to their advisor before proceeding to final draft form. The students will use peer review as an informal dress rehearsal before the students perform in front of their parents/guardians.

Developmental Issues

The students will be placed into groups were the learning strategies of each child are different, but because each must contribute a specific amount of work for assessment the students are focused to work together. They are encouraged to use their own strengths to help the other students in their group. They also will be learning appropriate manners for a theater production and how you act when you are an audience member.

Summary

The students will be reading the *Around the World in Eighty Days.* The students will be creating journals as if they are traveling to whatever the location is they have chosen. They will be given a new topic on a weekly basis to write about. The topic will be the same for every student but because the locations all have such different climates, environments, and cultural backgrounds the answers or stories that relate to the topics will be very different.

The students will also have to write a persuasive essay on why the team should chose their location.

The students will also be creating a travel brochure in my class to include in their presentation. The brochure will focus on the cultural aspect of their location whether it is art, music, literature, or drama. They may also include any historical sites that they believe would be beneficial for the team to see.

As part of the unified arts the students will have to create a model that encompasses everything people should know about their location. The model must be 3-d and they can use any resources necessary to complete the project. The model will sit on display during their presentation.

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The students will be focusing on their writing skills, analytical skills, creative thinking, art skills, and organizational skills. The students will be working in groups so it would be important to for the students to set up roles and rules for the group.

Week One

The students will be reading *Around the World in Eighty Days* to kick off their unit on planning their eighth grade trip. We will use the book as a way to start discussing locations in the United States. I want the students to start to think about what place they think they would enjoy traveling to and why. After discussing the novel we would take dairy entries from *Out* of *the Dust* and read them so the students could experience reading a dairy. At the same time the students will begin writing in their own journals. The journals will stay with the students until after the take the class trip in the eighth grade. The journals will be a written scrapbook of their experiences. Students will also have a chance to look at past students journals to get a feel of what is expected from them. At first the students will be given prompts to begin their writing but after a week of daily journal entries the students will be using free in their journals. The students should be writing in their journals at least three times a week. Journals will be graded on number of entries not on content. On Friday of the first week the students will be taking a field trip to a local travel agency to look at travel brochures and guidebooks. The students will be focused on learning what goes into a good travel brochure. This will conclude week one of this unit.

Week Two

During week two the students will be continuing to write in their journals. The students will begin to create their own prompts for their writing. The students will be focusing on what they are going through in their groups, how they feel about the project, where the project is going, and this is also a place to express any concerns or questions about their lives in general. The students will also begin working on persuasive writing during this week. The students will learn how to write a five paragraph persuasive essay. The goal is for the students to learn to write a persuasive essay and then transfer those skills into writing a presentation to persuade students to choose their destination. This will take up four of the five days of the week. The students will be completing the writing process step by step with the teacher's guidance. On the fifth day the students will bring in materials to start creating their travel brochure for the presentation.

Week Three

During week three the students will finish their persuasive essays and pass in a final draft to be assessed for a grade by using a rubric. The students will have two days to complete their travel brochure. The travel brochure will be a visual used in their projects. The travel brochure will allow other people to see what the destination is and what makes it so great. The students will also begin to create their 3-D model of their destination in their art classes. Most of this will be done outside of school. The important piece of the 3-D model is to have it link with the travel brochure. It is just another way for people to see what their destination is all about.

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Week Four

Week four will be used as a wrap up to the whole unit. The students will finish their persuasive presentation speech. After their speech is complete the students will begin rehearsing in front of their classmates. They will finish a necessary work on their model and travel brochure. The last two days of the week will be used as a dress rehearsal before they must present in front of the whole team and then family and friends at night. During all of this the students will still be writing in their journals at least three times a week.

Resources

Hess, Karen. Out of the Dust. New York, Scholastic Paperbacks, 1999.

Verne, Jules. Around the World in Eighty Days. New York, Apple Paperbacks, 2000.

"Creating a Travel Brochure"
http://www.beth.k12.pa.us/schools/wwwclass/kgrammes/kgwebquest/kgwebquest.htm
18 April. 2005

"Out of the Dust" http://www.bcps.org/offices/lis/models/tips/bibform.html
18 April. 2005.

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Persuasive Essay Writing Template

Paragraph One

a. Hook
b. State Position
c. One sentence that contains three reasons

Paragraph Two

a. First Reason
b. Detail
c. Detail
d. Detail (could be a personal experience)

Paragraph Three

a. Second Reason
b. Detail
c. Detail
d. Detail (could be a personal experience)

Paragraph Four

a. Third and Strongest Reason
b. Detail
c. Detail
d. Detail (could be a personal experience)

Paragraph Five (conclusion paragraph)

a. Restate your position in different words
b. Restate three reason in one sentence in new words
c. Clincher

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Examples of Possible Journal Entry Prompts

1. What is going through your mind after seeing the introduction to this unit?

2. Explain how your group wants to approach choosing a destination.

3. What types of places have you been?

4. Where do you hope to travel to before you die?

5. How do we gain responsibility for our actions?

6. When my group is working together…

7. I feel (blank) about my groups decisions and why?

8. Sometimes I wish that...

9. I am excited about what when it comes to this project…

10. If I could go anywhere I would go where and with whom?

Requirements for Travel Brochure

- Must have location title in largest font
- There must be reference to both cultural and fun activity students would be participating while at that destination
- Must have pictures so that people can visual what the destination looks like
- Must have average climate in May
- Type of landscape
- Must be presented in a clear way
- Must have geographic location in comparison with their school
- Colorful
- Interesting
- Must have the overall cost of the trip per student that has been figured out from their budget

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Technology Subject Area

Week One

The main objectives for the technology unit will be to help students use technology to organize the project, to search the internet for logistics, demographics, and activity information, and to structure information in a presentable format. Skills taught or enhanced will include finding, validating, and comparing information on the web and using spreadsheets and presentations to plan a trip and capture and display trip information.

The technology-specific curriculum will be covered in the first two weeks of the unit as students are gathering data about their destinations. Once each group has pinned down its logistics, technology work will be folded into the work in other subject areas and the technology teacher will float around from class to class supporting the students as they develop their presentations.

The major project for the unit will be the final presentation that supports each group's destination choice, but there will be a number of mini-projects during the first couple of weeks.

- ❑ Web Treasure Hunt – As an initial assessment tool, the students will spend a class period searching the web to find a list of items and make a presentation of their searching and results. Some items will test students search abilities, others will require students to make choices between options after consulting multiple sources, and yet others will give the students data to start working on a spreadsheet using formulas. The activity will provide the technology teacher the opportunity to assess students' technology strengths on the Internet and in building presentations and to provide support where necessary.
- ❑ Destination Selection – Also during the first week, student groups will be given a series of criteria to help them select their decision. They will spent time researching the locations on their short list and will use demographic and cost data, along with information about attractions and community service projects, to pick one destination for their presentation. Second week activities in all subjects will depend on having a selection completed.

Week Two

- ❑ Order Spreadsheet – During the second week, students will build a spreadsheet using data from the treasure hunt that calculates the price of an order given the item price and quantity and the shipping and tax charges and graphs the results. The teacher will use some of the student travel data between Boston and Los Angeles to demonstrate how to create and copy formulas. Again, the goal of the activity is to assess student skills with technology and make sure they have the skills necessary for the larger project.

As part of these mini-projects, the technology teacher will also discuss the need to evaluate data found on the Internet and find additional sources to verify data. The Discover School website listed in texts will be key to this discussion.

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Texts

Most of the student work will be done using the Internet. The following sites will be among those used:

www.google.com, www.yahoo.com, www.yahooligans.com – Websites for searching.

www.mapquest.com – Used during the treasure hunt to find distances between cities.

www.walmart.com, www.playstation.com, www.sony.com, www.gamespot.com, www.pricegrabber.com – These are some possible websites used to find prices on playstations or where they can be purchased.

http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/eval.html - This website provides good information to help students evaluate websites they find and provides articles and sites to use to foster the discussion.

Skills and habits of mind

This unit will focus on students' ability to plan before acting, to organize and analyze data, and to draw conclusions and develop hypotheses from research data. They will need to develop good record-keeping skills to support analysis and development of the final project.

Support services or resources

The students will make extensive use of the computer lab during this unit. They will need access to the Internet and the use of presentation, word processing, and spreadsheet software. They will also need projection and copy equipment.

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Web Treasure Hunt Mini-Project Outline

Please look for the following items on the Internet. For each item, keep the following things in a presentation to by shown to the class.

- Document the steps you went through to find each item.
- Save the URL of the page where you found the item
- Copy the page with the item on it into your presentation.

Find the following items:

1. A picture of the Massachusetts State House.
2. A picture of flag on the moon.
3. Two US presidents shaking hands.
4. Two pictures of Pedro Martinez wearing different uniforms.
5. Create three travel plans to get from Boston to Los Angeles, stopping in three additional cities in each travel plan. Record the order of the cities and the distance between the cities you find on the Internet.
6. Find three places to buy a Sony Personal Playstation on-line and list them from least to most expensive, including shipping, handling, and taxes.
7. Find information on California's Velcro crop.
8. Find out the average size of an adult tree octopus.

Destination Selection Mini-Project Outline

During the kick-off meeting and as part of your first session, your group developed a list of potential locations for this project. Over the next couple of days, research your destinations using the Internet and other travel resources to get data to finalize a destination for your project. As part of your research, you should gather data on the following items, as well as any other data you feel would be interesting in making the choice.

- Travel logistics (methods of travel and duration, cost of travel, number of travel options)
- Lodging (choices of hotels or other arrangements. Find data on sharing rooms and group rates)
- Meals (explore the different restaurants that would be fun or inexpensive to visit. See what meal plans hotels offer)
- Activities and local attractions (location, duration, ticket availability and cost)
- Community Service Options (organizations, services provide, major events held each year)
- Climate (typical weather in May)

By the end of the first week, you will need to have your final and backup destination selected.

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Order Spreadsheet Mini-Project Outline

Using the data from your Web Treasure Hunt, construct a spreadsheet that calculates the cost of an order given for each of the websites where you found your Playstation. Include in the following variables in your spreadsheet:

- The price of the item
- The quantity purchased
- The shipping charge
- The tax rate.

Clearly label all these inputs and have sub-totals for:

- Total item cost
- Tax on the total item cost
- Shipping charge
- Total order cost.

Create a graph that shows the total item cost, tax, shipping, and total order cost for all three websites.

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Math Subject Area

For math, the first two weeks of the ITU will be focused on helping the students develop plans and budgets for the trip and helping them think about how they want to present data in their report.

Week One

The first week will start with a discussion of estimation. Students will talk about estimation by experience and estimation by order of magnitude and will work through a worksheet in groups estimating in various measures to get a feel for both styles of estimating. The students will also learn about planning from a budget (top-down) and based on a list of activities (bottom-up).

The second part of the week will be spent on planning. Groups will plan a party for the grade and will need to identify the activities at the party and the supplies they will need. The party will have a specific budget and the students will have to estimate budget for activities, location, and supplies prior to estimating. They will develop plans for the party including a schedule of events and lists of items and quantities needed. Once the lists are complete, they will use the Internet and store circulars to price the goods. The party will have a set budget, so the students will need to revise the plans and supplies to fit under the budget.

Week Two

In the second week, students will begin to break down the class trip project into pieces: travel logistics, lodging, meals, and activities. The students will spend time researching each piece on the Internet and put together a plan for each without estimating cost. Each plan must have at least three alternatives for each major item. The students will then estimate costs and see if their plans fit within the trip budget. If not, the students can eliminate pieces of their plan, work to reduce costs, or they can develop a fund-raising proposal to augment the school's budget for the trip. The various plans for the trip and all the budget information will be tracked in spreadsheets and word processing documents. Spreadsheets must be variable driven so that key variables can be changed. Students will keep track of the source of all information, either from websites or phone conversations with suppliers.

As part of the second week, the math teacher will discuss the concept of discounting and various other options for reducing trip costs. By the end of the second week, the students should have a general picture of each piece of the project, though they will still be working on the details and the total cost.

Week Three

As the third week progresses, students will fine-tune their plans, finalize their budgets, and develop the necessary slides for their presentations.

Texts

www.google.com, www.yahoo.com, www.yahooligans.com – Websites for finding general information about destinations and activities and for finding location-specific sites

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www.expedia.com, www.travelocity.com, www.orbitz.com, www.priceline.com – These websites will be used to find travel and lodging information

www.nationalservice.org, www.servenet.org – locate potential community services projects and potential funding

www.teenink.com/Community/ – read about teen community service projects

www.weather.com – information on local weather

Websites for specific travel and lodging merchants

Local bureaus of tourism

Skills and Habits of Mind

Asking Good Questions
Simplifying Questions and Problems
Being Attentive
Thinking Fluidly and Flexibly
Cooperating and Collaborating
Concepts
Planning
Budget versus actual
Optimality
Scheduling and logistics

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Estimation Worksheet

Complete the following estimates based on the information given and any personal knowledge you may have. Be sure to identify the type of estimate (knowledge-based or order of magnitude) and write at least three sentences explaining how you developed your estimate.

- Estimate the cost of a meal for yourself at a fast food restaurant.
- Estimate the cost of a new washer and dryer.
- Estimate the distance from Boston to Los Angeles.
- Estimate the weight of your family car.

Plan a Party

Your team needs to plan a party for the seventh grade students and teachers with a budget of $750. You will need to plan meals and activities for the party and determine where the party will be held.

- Start by picking a place to have the party.
- Next, determine what food and drinks you will serve and what activities there will be.
- Estimate the cost of the party.
- Go over your plan and estimate with your advisor.
- Use the Internet and other information sources to refine your estimate for the cost of the party. If you have gone over budget, revise your plans so your project is under budget.
- Develop one spreadsheet listing the party costs and another listing the activities.

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Plan the Class Trip

You will need to develop plans and budgets for the class trip to you selected destination. As you work through each piece of the process, be sure to have two or three options for each plan so you have some flexibility when it comes time to finalize your plans. You may find that you are under budget with your plans and can go with a better option, or may need to reduce costs by going with a cheaper option.

- Travel
  - Develop plans to get 100 students and 10 adults from our school to your destination city and back. Consider different forms of travel, be flexible with departure and travel times, buy be careful about making the travel too complicated.
  - Develop plans for traveling around your destination city to all the activities you have planned.
- Lodging
  - Find lodging for 100 students and 10 adults in your destination city. Consider room sharing arrangements, distance from sites we will visit, facilities your lodging choice offers, and whether meals are included or meal plans are available.
  - Be creative in your choice of lodging!
- Meals
  - Plan three meals a day for each day we are traveling, plus snacks and drinks for during the day. Budgeting for meals can be done by developing a per diem amount, the amount one person would spend in one day. You may be able to find some information on-line.
  - You can consider self-prepared meals if we will have access to kitchen and eating facilities, but be sure we will have adequate facilities and equipment to feed our group and remember that you and your classmates will be doing the cooking and cleaning and that it will take time away from activities. Also, some meals are easier to cook than others.
- Activities
  - Identify a selection of cultural and fun activities we can do in your destination city.
  - Find the costs associated with each activity.
  - Be sure to check that our whole group can be accommodated.
  - Be sure the activity will be open and available on our planned visit dates.
- Cost spreadsheet
  - Put all cost information in a spreadsheet, subtotal by the groupings above. Be sure to give both total and per person costs and make it easy to change the spreadsheet if any of the details change.
- Schedule
  - Put together a schedule (itinerary) for the trip that includes all activities from the time we meet at school until we return back to school. Include all travel and lodging details, including emergency numbers.

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Science Subject Area

Landforms and Climates of North America

Goal: Students will gain knowledge of the climates and landforms of North America, and that knowledge will be used in their selection of a site for their eighth grade trip. In addition, this information will be useful in preparation of their MCAS test.

Objectives

Students will be able to describe the following climates: humid tropical, tropical savanna, desert, steppe, Mediterranean, humid sub-tropical, Marine west coast, humid continental, sub-arctic, and tundra.

Students will be able to describe what is included in the study of weather.

Students will be able to describe the plants and animal types that live in each climate.

Students will be able to describe how the sun's energy, wind, and ocean currents affect the climate of a place.

Students will be able to describe the primary and secondary landforms of North America.

Students will learn how to work cooperatively in order to achieve a goal.

Week One

Students will be introduced to the physical features of North America, climates, and specific North American climates. They will create an edible map where different foods will represent different physical features. Then we will do a vocabulary strip activity where students will learn the vocabulary in order to identify what each climate means. The strip activity involves definitions on strips of paper and the students are divided into pairs. They then pick up each strip (one at a time) and write down the definition. After they are familiar with the different types of climates, they will create a climate map of North America. They will use this information in order to decide the location of their class trip.

1. Introduction to North America: K-W-L, create an edible map of N. America's physical features

2. Introduction of Climate: vocabulary activity

3. Creating a climate thematic map: define a thematic map, and create a thematic climate map of North America

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Week Two

During week two, the students will be studying weather and the plants/animals of N. America. The instruction will include a PowerPoint presentation, and then the students will create a picture book. They will use the text and any other sources they want in order to create a picture book of the plants and animals of a particular climatic region of N. America. Also, the students will act out a weather skit.

4. Weather: winds, currents, and precipitation: PowerPoint, and act-out forecast

5. Plants and Animals: create a picture book on a climate's plants/animals

Week Three

Students will understand how plate tectonics works by reading from text, and completing worksheets on how plate tectonics work. We will then review what we have learned so far by playing a review game called "Head of the Class". In the game, there are four people at the front of the room, and the object is to replace them by stumping one of the people in the front with a question from the review sheet.

6. History of Landforms: plate tectonics

7. Reviewing for test: review sheet, and review game.

Week Four

Students will have a test on the material covered, and then they will work on their class trip presentations.

Assessment

1. Homework: finishing class work
2. Quiz Grades: edible map, picture book
3. Test
4. Class participation: weather forecast and discussions

Materials

Cyr, Martha Ph.D., Mialoulis, Ioannis Ph.D., Padilla, Michael J. Ph.D. *Science Explorer: Earth's Changing Surface*. Prentice-Hall, Inc., Needham, MA, 2000.

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Social Studies Subject Area

Week One

The students will be laying the foundation they will need in order to make an informed decision about their destination. In order to understand and analyze the culture of another city or region, the students will first have to explore what makes up their own regional culture. The students will brainstorm ideas about what comprises their own culture, and eventually produce a list in their class that they believe captures the cultural identity of their own region. The teacher will facilitate this process with the use ESR activities to help the students think critically about their own environment.

Once the students have developed a working model for their own cultural identity, they will then begin to explore the identity of other cultures in the United States. The teacher will select several regions of the country with distinct cultural differences, and lead the students through activities to understand these cultures and compare them to their own.

The week's final activity will be a discussion of community service and what it means to perform community service. Because the students will be expected to propose a service project in their location, they need the tools and the language to do so. The discussion will be broad and focus students towards an understanding of matching a service project with the needs of a particular region. In addition, students will be given resources about how to investigate community service projects in a particular area.

Week Two

During the second week the students will begin their research about the location they selected in math class. The research will start with the completion of a formal outline that details all of the relevant facts and figures of their location from the almanac and the encyclopedia. The outline will include information related to history, government, economics, geography, and demographics.

After the outline is finished, the students will use the information they have gathered to select at least three places of cultural significance they would like to visit. These destinations may include museums, monuments, landmarks, art galleries, parks, rivers, or anything else the students believe is relevant to the culture they will visit. In addition, the students must select their idea for a community service project to be performed during the trip to their destination. This research and collection time will also be used to select one entertainment location the students think would be fun for the class.

Finally, by the end of the week the students will also produce a short oral report about their destination's education system, that includes some basic statistics about the city or regional schools, the curriculum most students learn in seventh grade, and any issues facing the education system today.

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Week Three

The third week will be coordinated with English class and give students time to work on their persuasive essays and their travel brochures. Social studies resources will be available to help students use evidence from their research to create a polished paper and brochure.

Week Four

Week four will be used as a wrap up to the whole unit. The students will finish their persuasive presentation speech. After their speech is complete the students will begin rehearsing in front of their classmates. They will finish a necessary work on their travel brochures. The last two days of the week will be used as a dress rehearsal before they must present in front of the whole team and then family and friends in the evening.

Materials and Resources

- 2005 Almanac
- 2005 Encyclopedia
- Access to the Internet and online resources, including:
  - http://www.worldbook.com
  - http://www.encarta.com
  - http://www.google.com
  - http://www.ed.gov
- ESR *Conflict Resolution in the Middle School* by William J. Kreidler
- School librarian
- School technology coordinator

Research Outline

I. Location
  A. Location (in the United States)
  B. Size
    1. Area
    2. Population
    3. Population density
  C. Physical features
    1. Coastline
    2. Rivers
    3. Lakes
    4. Mountains
  D. Typical vegetation found in the area
  E. Natural resources
  F. Natural tourist attractions
    1. National or state parks
    2. Public parks or gardens

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II. People
- A. Ethnic and cultural groups
- B. Religions
- C. Festivals and holidays
- D. Languages
- E. Food
- F. Architecture
  - 1. Residential
  - 2. Commercial
  - 3. Important landmarks
- G. Sports and recreation
- H. Colleges and Universities
- I. Museums, libraries, and galleries
- J. Entertainment
  - 1. Shopping
  - 2. Theater
  - 3. Sports and recreation

III. Economy
- A. GDP
- B. Chief products
- C. Transportation
- D. Communication

IV. Government
- A. Head of city or region (if applicable)
- B. Legislature (lawmaking body)
  - 1. Number of members
  - 2. Term of office
- C. Politics / political parties

V. History
- A. Ancient
- B. Exploration and settlement
- C. Significance in American history
  - 1. Landmarks
  - 2. Monuments
  - 3. Historic sites

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Culminating Activity

The culminating project will have two components.

The first component will be an oral presentation to the entire team of students and teachers, based on each group's persuasive essay. The gro0up will have ten minutes to sell its idea to the team using some form of creative or visual media. The students will not be expected to cover everything they have studied; rather, they will be expected to use the various products of the unit and select highlights of their research that will be most appealing in convincing the team to pick their location. The team will vote at the end of all the presentations, and the students will be graded by the team of teachers based on their performances and the quality of their presentations. Each student and teacher will be able to vote for three groups, and the group with the highest total number of votes will officially win the competition.

The grading rubric used for the student presentations will look like this:

_____ Group members showed enthusiastic body language (3)

_____ Group members spoke with enthusiasm about their destination (3)

_____ Group members made eye contact with the audience throughout the presentation (3)

_____ Group used visual aids and other creative means to make its point (3)

_____ Students in the group presented and discussed equally (3)

_____ Group accurately represented its destination (3)

_____ Group discussed an appropriate potential community service project (3)

_____ Group discussed three appropriate cultural landmarks (3)

_____ Group disclosed the total cost per pupil of its trip (3)

_____ Group went above and beyond expectations of the presentation (3)

_____ Total (out of 30)

The group will receive one grade as a whole for the culminating presentation.

After the presentations, the grade will have the second component of the project, an exhibition evening at the school. This event will give parents and members of the community an opportunity to view the final products of each group in the class. All of the materials the students produced will be on display, as well as a standard project board that captures each group's main ideas and creative identities. The final votes for the competition will not be tallied

until after the exhibition, to make every student's contribution equally valuable. Parents and community members will be encouraged to fill out questionnaires about the exhibition and the project itself. Teachers will circulate to ensure that all students participate, but the exhibition will not be graded; rather, it will be a celebration of all the hard work put in by the students before the final destination is selected.

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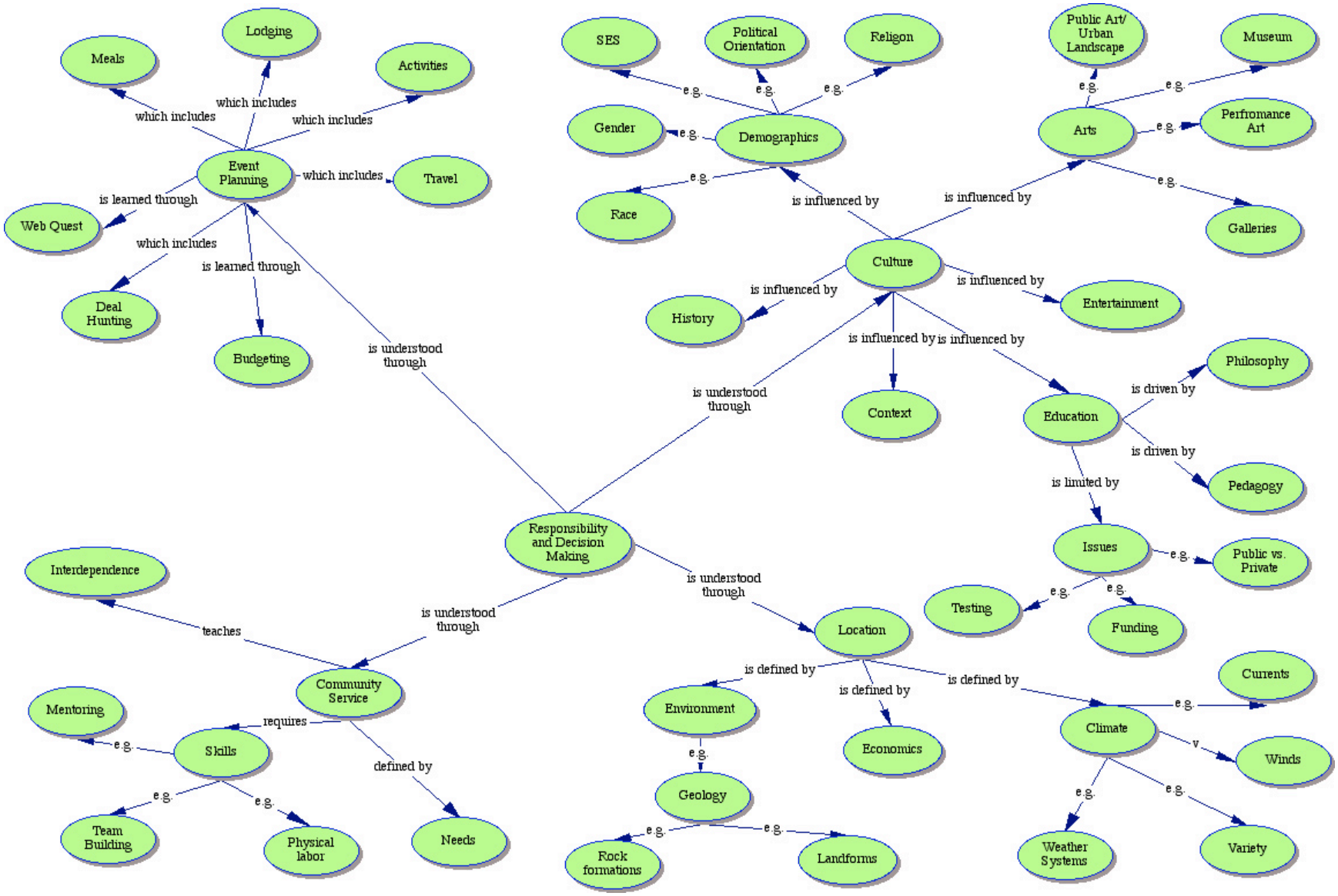
Appendix A – Concept Map



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Appendix B – ITU Schedule

Week	English/Arts	Math & Technology	Science	Social Studies
Engaging Activity	Kick-off for project. Overview of class trip including presentations from last year's class and classes that have gone on trips. Review of unit goal, requirements, structure/schedule, and assessment.			
1 – Laying the Foundation	Read *Around the World in 80 days* Read *Out of the dust* and begin project journal Read and review travel brochures and guidebooks Travel agency field trip	Assess and strengthen web research skills, presentation and spreadsheet skills. Research initial destination choices and select group destination.	Learn about climate in the US and what causes variation.	Study cultural factors for our community. Study cultural factors for other US cultures. Learn about community service projects
2 – Research destination	Continue journal writing Begin work on persuasive essay.	Web quest for trip logistics: travel, lodging, meals, and activities. Develop spreadsheet for trip costs. Develop schedule for trip.	Research weather patterns and topology for destination and compare to home Identify weather-related trip requirements.	Research destination culture, activities, and community service projects Select three culturally significant sites. Develop oral report on destination.
3 – Develop presentation	Work on travel brochure Complete persuasive essay Continue work on journal	Complete budget for trip details. Complete plan for trip logistics.	Create presentation materials for trip.	Work on travel brochure and persuasive essay.
4 – Culminating event	Complete draft presentation Rehearse and tweak presentation Present final project to students, faculty, and parents Voting			

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