The Importance of Participating Responsibly Within a Community

The Anhinga Team:

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Creating a Community of Learners
Fall 2007

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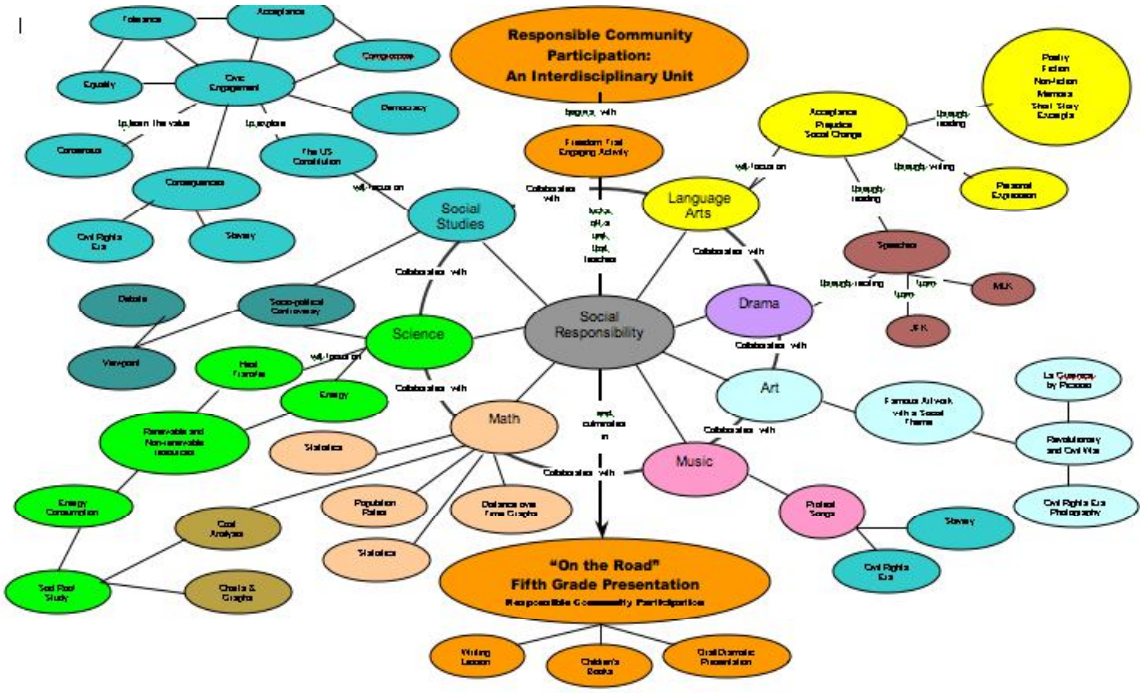
Concept Map



Concept Map for Anhinga Team ITU: Jillian Schenkler, Andrew Miller, Lori Vastano, Jeffrey St. Germaine, Michael Adamowicz

This concept map attempts to simplify a complicated integration of the core subjects and three unified arts subjects. The design utilizes a circular format. At the center is the main concept, Social Responsibility. Encircling the main concept are the core subjects to exemplify the underlying them of collaboration. Radiating from each subject area are some of the focal elements of each discipline as well as some specific concepts. Social Studies, Science and Math are arranged near each other because they integrate naturally, although social studies and language arts are closely tied as well. Language arts integrates well with drama and art, therefore they are located near each other. It seemed natural to place music with the other unified arts classes although it integrates well with social studies.

The Anhinga Team
Walsh Middle School
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October, 2007

To the Parent/Guardian of:_____,

We'd like to take this opportunity to once again welcome you to Walsh Middle School and the Anhinga team. Now that we are well into this new year we are very excited to begin an intense journey in our curriculum. We believe that cooperation between students, teachers, parents and members of the community is vital to the success of not only our curriculum but of your student.

The theme of our curriculum over the next eight weeks is, "The Importance of Participating Responsibly Within a Community." This unit will kick off with an exciting treasure hunt on Boston's famed Freedom Trail. Students will be introduced to different aspects of our nation's history through a series of clues which when unlocked will reveal answers to key components of the overall theme of our unit. Our intention is to model a true team approach to this unit and to have as much fun as possible in this collaborative learning environment.

Connections will be made between math, science, ELA, social studies as well as art, music and drama. Students will be exposed to a variety of learning styles, activities, presentations and performances throughout the unit. Examples of these connections include the dramatic presentations of speeches read in ELA class, the calculating of transportation means in math while on the treasure hunt and the framing of the constitution in social studies and ELA class. While these are just a few of the examples of integration planned throughout the unit we hope that our student-centered approach will be an amazing experience for everyone involved. Students will work toward a culminating presentation intended to share their knowledge and understanding with their parents, teachers, peers, and the fifth-graders in our school system.

Please feel free to contact us with questions, comments or suggestions. Your input is valuable to not only us, but to your students.

Sincerely,

Ms. Schenkler
Mr. Miller
Mr. Adamowicz
Ms. Vastano
Mr. St. Germain

Introduction

As middle school teachers, an integral part of our job is to help our students explore the kind of people they want to become. In order to do this in an informed way, students must examine their own communities and the way people interact within them. In the hopes of steering our student toward becoming proactive participants of their community, this integrated unit will focus on the study of our nation and how the nation has evolved with and without tolerance and acceptance of others. In each of their academic classes, as well as some of their unified arts classes, students will study how and why America is what it is today, who some of our most influential people in this process have been, and finally, how the students themselves may make a difference.

Teaching this unit with a student-centered approach we plan to inform our students not only about the society in which they live, but also to get them to see how their own cooperation with one another is a direct reflection of our overall theme. Our prediction is that at the onset of this unit the students will know what the terms acceptance and tolerance mean but that they have not yet developed a full understanding of these concepts.

We believe that modeling the collaborative approach is one of the keys to the success of this unit. Merely telling the students to work together is not an approach we are willing to settle for. We expect that the students will be challenged at first by the complete integration of this unit, but our goal is that each student will eventually understand how the process of collaboration is beneficial for the not only the student and his/her learning, but for the teachers, the team and the community. Setting the bar high will reinforce our expectations of excellence from the students.

Lessons in ELA, the Unified Arts, social studies, math and science will all focus on the collaborative aspect of learning in a fun, interesting and informative way. Eventually students will be able to experience the power that they hold as a community and they will impart that power to other, younger members of the community.

Realizing how important team integration is, we have decided to dedicate one day per

cycle (a total of eight meetings) to gathering as a whole, including all academic and specialized teachers along with the 110 students on our team. Our speculation is that our students will have a fuller understanding of the overall theme of our unit if we take the time to show them that we are all working together. This active form of displaying unity is an effective and creative way to help the students understand that we are not merely *talking* about team unity but we are actually engaging in it.

Goals and Objectives

- Students will recognize their own power within a community – that what they do and say matters
- Students will understand their responsibility to making their community a better place
- Students will understand how their actions impact others.
- Students will learn appropriate ways to deal with anger and conflict.
- Students will understand the power they possess when they develop a program to promote understanding, and acceptance at the elementary school level.
- Students will be able to make connections to historical events and the world they live in today.
- Students will understand how simply being a bystander can affect the outcome of any situation: such as WWII, and the Civil Rights Movement.

Promising Practices

We feel strongly that the overall success of this unit depends not only on the teacher-student interaction but also on our ability to include, and promote, promising practices throughout the eight week timeframe. As our team has been constructing this unit we have been consciously choosing promising practices to employ within our disciplines. The following is a list of practices which will be used during the unit.

Student Choice: Students will chart their own course of action to follow through this study. Some choices will be in the literature they choose to read, the art they choose to emulate, and the ways in which they present their findings.

Parent Participation: Parents are an integral partner in their child's learning and will be invited to participate in our culminating activity.

Community Involvement: Students will visit community resources to gain a deeper understanding of their town, and how they may be active participants in it. In addition, the culminating activity will involve the elementary school teachers and students.

Group/Partner Work: Because students learn from each other, many of our activities throughout the unit will require students to work in pairs and groups.

Varied Assessment Strategies: Students will be assessed in a variety of ways. They will be assessed through informal discussion and observation, journal entries, projects, presentations, and self-evaluations.

Advisory Program: Students will be placed with a member of the school or local community in order to help facilitate their participation in the culminating activity.

Habits of Mind

One of the goals of an ITU, especially one of this stature, is the expectation that students will not merely 'go through the motions,' but will be genuinely engaged in the learning process.

As educators our job is not only to inform, but also to lead students to understand how to think and how to make connections. One of the best ways we can do this is by integrating habits of mind throughout our ITU.

As simple as this may sound, ***Finding and Keeping* Focus,** is a necessary habit of mind to reinforce. Often times we make the mistake of assuming that our students have the same zeal for learning as we have for teaching and this is clearly not always the case. Our engaging activity, the scavenger hunt, is a student-centered, cooperative, *fun* activity, but we must be careful to ensure that the focus of the endeavor is not overlooked. Reminding students that the goal at the end of the day is increased knowledge is vital in our efforts to maintain focus.

Our ELA and UA lessons are intentionally designed to keep the focus of the students. Important works of literature and poetry, influential artwork, and fun and engaging activities are just some of the tools we have chosen to assist our students in developing a self-awareness of keeping focus.

Logically, a second habit of mind we are striving to engage in with the students is the idea of ***Cooperating and Collaborating*.** This habit fits right in with the theme of our unit and is a habit which we will be repeatedly asking our students to engage in. Offering the students the chance to further their inquiry through collaborative learning serves a two-fold purpose. First, the students are engaging in a promising practice, which fosters creativity and inquiry. In addition, the collaboration, and anticipated cooperation that the students will share is paramount to the full understanding of this ITU.

In the ELA and UA classes students will continually work in pairs and small groups. Readings, presentations, writing, and artwork can and will be enhanced through the use of this particular habit of mind. Partnerships and small groups will be a consistent approach to learning and investigating how to "be green" in Science as well.

Open-mindedness is another aspect of the ITU which we will focus on with the students. Understanding that tolerance, acceptance and open-mindedness are all derived from ***Being Attentive,*** the team will continue to focus on this detail. While gaining a deeper understanding of the overall theme of the unit is paramount, the attention paid to detail is also of utmost importance.

Attention to questions, process, and understanding will be part of the ELA and UA classes. While many pieces of literature have clear meanings there are plenty of details which many students often times overlook. The UA pieces require a great amount of attention paid to detail. Artwork, music, and performances are only enhanced by the use and understanding of attention to detail.

While all of the above-referenced habits are incredibly important, perhaps the one overriding goal of this ITU is to get the students to understand that ***Asking Good Questions*** will only enhance their understanding of the work we are asking them to do. Our thinking is that while it is easy to ask a question such as, "When is this due?" asking a relevant question is not the easiest thing to do. Through questioning, and modeling this habit, we intend to show students how new ideas and topics can develop. In Science, asking good questions is a fundamental quality of discovery. Students will be encouraged to begin their inquiry with their own questions.

Student inquiry is a prime focus of our team and we want students to feel comfortable enough to be able to ask their questions. Illustrating to students that tolerance and acceptance is often achieved by asking good questions to gain a full understanding is another focus of our team. Through the effects of careful team-building, students will feel safe to ask difficult questions because we understand that it is through questioning that growth is achieved.

Through this habit students will participate more fully in the ELA and UA classes and will have a more enriching experience.

Engaging Activity

To jump-start this unit, students will embark on a one-day scavenger hunt throughout The City of Boston. Students will travel in their base groups to the Boston Public Library as well as to various locations on the Freedom Trail. All activities will be supervised and chaperoned by parents and teachers. The scavenger hunt, designed in advance by their teachers, will guide the students through the birth of our nation.

Students will explore the Freedom Trail and chart the various locations and points of interest using compasses. Students will use a map, which will be modified by the math and social studies teachers. The directions will integrate problem solving and calculation into the instructions for the day. Individual locations will be marked and highlighted. Students will have to calculate the number of steps that it takes to get from location to location and keep a record. Then, using information (hints) provided by the teacher, students will use math to figure out specific problems such as their overall travel speed. This sort of activity will be based on the distance that they traveled and divided by the time that it takes them to complete their journey. They might compare their calculation to how much faster it would take if they were using a colonial form of transportation, like horse and buggy; we could use this information to investigate various public transportation choices and the various vehicles' overall effect on the environment.

In order for the students to be successful on this journey, students will have to utilize the talents of their team to complete the mission. The goal of this portion of the activity is to have our students become functioning teams, able to accomplish a variety of tasks. Some students may be better at math, some may have leadership skills, and some may be good at record keeping. Whatever the case, team members will have to work well and collaborate in order to have a productive day. They will not be able to move on to the next site until they complete the task at hand. For example if they are at the burial ground, they may not be able to travel to the Boston Common unless, they multiply the number of years that James Otis has been dead by the original date that the Massachusetts State Constitution was written. Group members will have to plan their time accordingly. At various locations (King's Chapel Burial Cemetery, Boston Public Library, State House) the students will participate in games and solve riddles. In addition, they will

receive historical facts and data that will be necessary for them to solve the next problem. After they have made it to the various locations, the entire team will meet in Boston Common for processing, debriefing, more games and food.

To prepare the students for the field trip students will perform a similar activity on the computer, namely a virtual tour of the tumultuous late fifties and sixties. The JFK museum in Boston provides access on line civil rights information. Students will use technology resources to facilitate and deepen their understanding of the struggles and growing pains endured by the nation during the course of its evolution. This will require students to thoughtfully and actively examine and question our nation's history, the struggle for acceptance, and change in our country – essential skills and questions that the students will be using throughout our unit. This scavenger hunt skills that they develop in completing these engaging activities will provide students with the foundational knowledge and inquiry methods necessary to maximize the learning potential that this unit offers.

In addition to providing students with foundational knowledge, these activities will also be the first of many team-building activities employed in our unit. Our goal of teaching acceptance and tolerance must be a multi-faceted and cooperative approach. Allowing our students to work together on the initial activity will illustrate to them our dedication to teamwork. The students will also see how teamwork is needed, if not required, in order to effect change in our communities and in the country.

In fact, one of our many goals is to help students to understand that from colonists to the abolitionists, from the Civil War to the Cold War, and from The Great Depression to the Internet Boom the idea of teamwork has been present throughout history.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

The Sharon Middle School eighth grade English Language Arts curriculum is based on a reading/writing workshop approach. Students, who meet with their ELA class five days out of a six day cycle, are presented with mini-lessons that lead to options for writing in the classroom. Looking at short stories, poetry, and non-fiction selections from the perspective of both readers and writers are ongoing year long objectives. In a typical

forty-five minute period students may have a ten to fifteen minute lesson, followed by thirty minutes to reflect on what they are reading, write, conference, and work on items for classroom publication or to be stored in their portfolios. Throughout the school year, multiple strands are woven into the fabric of the classroom, allowing students to change the focus of their work.

This strand of the ELA curriculum will focus on examining fiction, memoir, poetry, and speeches. All of the chosen texts relate to a larger community, issues of acceptance, as well as participation in a community. Student thinking will be centered around themes of acceptance, social change, and individual action and responsibility. Focus will be on vocabulary development, word choice, persuasive writing techniques, critical analysis of author's intent, and the varying formats for different writing genres. Texts include various picture books focusing on social issues, as well as *Seedfolks* by Paul Fleischman. *Seedfolks* will be examined for perspective and point of view. Students will also examine poetry by Langston Hughes that deal with the issues of prejudice and acceptance in America. Excerpts from other works such as *Black Like Me* and the *Color of Water* will also be used. Another aspect of the ELA curriculum is the power of word choice. Students will analyze author word choice and class discussion will include evaluation of the author's intention as well as the power of language, including the language of acceptance as well as the language of hate.

The unit will be split into two for the purposes of the ELA class. The first four weeks of the unit will focus on introducing students to the ideas as well as the various writing genres, and students will be working primarily as readers, examining other people's text. For the second half of the unit, their focus will shift to using what they learned to create their own writing.

ELA STANDARDS

During the course of this eight week unit we will be addressing a variety of standards in the ELA class. Varying our approach and making the learning process as collaborative as we can our students will enjoy a multi-faceted approach in ELA.

A. Language Strand

1.4 Students will know and apply rules for formal discussions.

We feel this is a very important standard to be addressed as students will be participating in small group and whole class discussions as well as utilizing active listening skills while engaged in discussion. This standard includes: taking turns, remaining focused on the topic, following agreed upon rules and avoiding personal attacks.

2.4 Students will integrate relevant information gathered from group discussions and interviews for reports.

Often times discussion among a class, with peers and with a teacher leads a student to think about a topic in a way they had not previously envisioned. The point of integrating this standard is to generate a deeper level of thinking and exploration on the part of the student. Many of the activities we will be doing in ELA will involve discussion and interpretation.

3.10 Students will present an organized interpretation of a literary work, film or dramatic production.

Students will be exposed to many influential writings and speeches during this unit. One of our goals as ELA teachers is to help students to understand how their own interpretation of a work can be more effectively conveyed when it is well organized and coherent. Using a text such as *Seedfolks* may pose a dilemma for the student who has trouble with organization. Through our collaborative learning environment the team will help these students to develop a well-written interpretation.

3.12 Give oral presentations to different audiences for various purposes, showing appropriate changes in delivery.

Students will understand that the way in which they present something to a group of parents will differ from the way they present this same information to a group of 5th grade students.

4.20 Develop the meaning of unfamiliar words using context clues.

Students will be dealing with literature and speeches which may present vocabulary challenges. Effectively employing context clue strategies will help the students with their understanding of the work.

6.7 Analyze the language styles of different characters in literary works.

Comparing and contrasting language used in a selection is one way which students will gain a deeper understanding of the intent of the piece.

B. Reading and Literature Strand

8.19 Identify and analyze sensory details and figurative language.
8.22 Identify and analyze main ideas, supporting ideas and supporting details.

In a unit of this undertaking, understanding the main idea is the driving force behind the success of the student. Understanding why supporting ideas and details are important is another aspect of this standard which students will begin to comprehend.

8.24 Interpret mood and tone, and give supporting evidence in a text.
8.27 Identify evidence used to support an argument.

We continually stress the importance of 'showing not telling' to our students and this unit will give the students many chances to illustrate this.

14.4 Respond to and analyze the effects of sound, form, figurative language, and graphics in order to uncover meaning in poetry.

15.6 Identify and analyze how an author's use of words creates tone and mood.

18.4 Develop and present characters through the use of basic acting skills.

This standard is important in addressing as our students will be presenting their interpretations of the works we have studied during the unit. While our goal is not to turn the students into Hollywood caliber actors, we do want them to have some understanding of basic stage presence.

C. Composition Strand

19.21 Write reports based on research that include quotations, footnotes and a bibliography.

19.22 Write and justify a personal interpretation of literary, informational or expository reading that includes a topic statement, supporting details from the literature and a conclusion.

These are both key elements of the ELA class and something which we repeatedly reinforce with our team. Focusing in on the writing process, students will understand that the use of this process is intended to create better writing and better clarity for the reader.

21.7 Improve word choice by using a variety of references.

23.10 Organize information into a coherent essay or report with a thesis statement in the introduction, transition sentences to link paragraphs and a conclusion.

As a team we are paying particular attention to the ability of our students to be reflective and provocative in their thinking. Stressing the importance of clear and concise writing is a necessity at this level and modeling this is extremely helpful for the students.

24.4 Apply steps for obtaining information from a variety of sources, organizing information, documenting sources and presenting research in individual projects.

This standard is of great importance because this is where we will be addressing differentiating between sources, correctly citing sources and the documentation of information. In today's society the students have a multitude of resources from which to gather information and understanding how to correctly cite this information is a skill which the students must master.

D. Media Strand

26.4 Analyze the effect on the reader's emotions of text and image in print journalism, and images, sound and text in electronic journalism, distinguishing techniques used to achieve these effects.

Again, because students are exposed to a variety of media in this day and age we feel looking at the word choices being used and the angles of the different media outlets is an interesting as well as a necessary standard to include in this unit.

Promising Practices

Student Choice: Students will chart their own course of action to follow through this study. Some choices will be in the literature they choose to read, the art they choose to emulate, and the ways in which they present their findings.

As ELA teachers, we understand that students derive a great amount of satisfaction from the ability to make as many choices as possible. Some students need to be directed in a certain area, whether it is topic selection, vocabulary or transitions within a piece of writing and therefore appreciate a more directed form of learning. However, most of our students feel that they can participate more freely if they have a say in what is being learned.

Group/Partner Work: Because students learn from each other, many of our activities throughout the unit will require students to work in pairs and groups

This is a practice which we are both fond of asking our students to engage in. The amount of genuine learning that can take place, when the students are focused, is both incredible and inspiring. Often times our students will discover an angle or have a thought which neither of us had anticipated.

Varied Assessment Strategies: Students will be assessed in a variety of ways. They will be assessed through informal discussion and observation, journal entries, projects, presentations, and self-evaluations.

Understanding the value of differing forms of assessment, we will utilize these variations during the unit. One of the main reasons for this is positive feedback we have received from students telling us that they enjoy a mixture of activities.

Week One:

Students will begin this unit by a brief introduction to the team-wide engaging activity. Following the activity students will debrief with their ELA teacher as to how the engaging activity relates to their English Language Arts class. They will examine the following poem attributed to Pastor Martin Niemöller about the inactivity of German intellectuals following the Nazi rise to power and the purging of their chosen targets, group after group.

When the Nazis came for the communists,
I remained silent;
I was not a communist.

When they locked up the social democrats,
I remained silent;
I was not a social democrat.

When they came for the trade unionists,
I did not speak out;
I was not a trade unionist.

When they came for the Jews,
I remained silent;
I wasn't a Jew.

When they came for me,
there was no one left to speak out

Students will begin to understand that they will be analyzing language and word choice, as well as examining their community and their role in it. Students will examine Langston Hughes' *Let America Be America Again*, *Dream of Freedom*, *Some Day*, *Give us Our Peace*, and *I Dream a World* during the first week of the unit. Discussion will revolve around what they heard, and noticed in the poetry in regards to rhythm, word choice, tone, mood, and author's intent. Students will work in pairs, and engage in brief research regarding the time period the poetry was written and how it influenced Hughes' writing. Students will engage in both oral and written discussion, and participate in Socratic Dialogue. One picture book with a social issue will also be read in the class, giving students another view of how they may express themselves through writing. Written assignments will include reactions in their writing journals, as well as creative free-writing influenced by the work they are reading. Assessment will include informal classroom observation as well as evaluation of the journal writing.

Group Activity:

During week one we will use the ***Find Someone Who Knows*** group activity to facilitate interpersonal learning skills amongst the students. This is a great activity because it is fun, involves movement and allows students to talk with each other. Our students will be pretty familiar with each other at the onset of the unit, but this is a very effective way to introduce a new topic.

Week Two:

During the second week of this unit students will examine Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech as well as his "Letters From a Birmingham Jail," JFK's 1961 Inaugural Address, and selected quotes of James Baldwin such as, "I love America more than any other country in the world and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually," as well as, "It is certain, in any case, that ignorance, allied with power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can have." Students will complete anticipation guides for these speeches, predicting what they will feel, notice, and what they think their reaction will be. Students will mark the texts for new vocabulary, discuss the words in their groups, use context clues to determine meaning, and record new

understandings in their reading folders. Students will also mark the texts for persuasive language as well as format, examining how authors use space to convince their readers of their point of view. Connections will be made to current situations that relate to the students' lives, both in the larger community of the United States as well as the smaller town and school community. Connections will be made to the poetry of week one, particularly between that of the James Baldwin quotes and Langston Hughes poetry. During week two a second picture book focusing on social justice will be shared with the students. Assessments will include informal discussion assessment as well as formal assessment of the students reading folders.

Group Activities:

This is a great week to use the ***Inside-Outside Circle*** with the team. We chose this activity because we understand that delving into speeches can be hard for many students. We feel that this type of review and sharing forum will lower the affective domain and will allow for a broader range of question and answers.

This is also a good time to gauge the climate in our classrooms. Using the ***Life in this Classroom*** assessment tool we will gain a deeper insight into the thoughts of the students. The anonymity will hopefully evoke truthful and constructive answers from the students and will allow Jillian and me to check our own perceptions about the team. We feel that using this assessment in the middle of the second week has given the students enough time to acclimate to the new unit, but allows for plenty of time to make changes if the assessments dictate a need.

Week Three:

During week three students will read excerpts from two memoirs: James McBride's *Color of Water* and John Howard Griffin's *Black Like Me*. Students will begin to understand that we read others' experiences, lives and perspectives, in order to understand our own lives and place in the world, and that by making meaning of others' lives, we can begin to make meaning of our own. Lessons will focus on the idea that

writing about our experiences with a purposeful topic helps us to understand how communities function, and how we may be further effective within that community. In addition students will examine memoir writing with the purpose to understand that good memoir writing is crafted with purposeful language and deliberate format. Students will see that rich content, clear communication, coherent organization, specific, concrete details, sentence variety, and standard conventions all lead to writing being further effective. Students will respond to the writing they are reading through reader response letters to each other as well as their instructor. They will engage in discourse both orally, and through these letters.

Group Activities:

We feel that asking students to engage in the ***Learning Links*** activity during this week will be very beneficial. This activity asks students to create a graphic organizer for listing key ideas and concepts. As the unit progresses we expect our students to be able to share their ideas in a variety of ways and to employ a multitude of organizational practices.

Another great activity we will be using this week is the ***Numbered Heads Together*** structure. This group work arranges students in groups of four with each student having a different number from 1-4. The teacher will ask a question of the entire class but the group members have no idea which number the teacher is going to pick to answer the question. As a result each member of the group must be able to answer the question accurately. This activity is great for reinforcing the purpose of using deliberate and format.

Week Four:

Students will read Paul Fleischman's Seedfolks over the course of the fourth week of the unit. This novella, told in vignettes from perspectives of neighbors in a small community, illustrates the importance of helping others. Students will read in groups, act out the roles in front of the class, read some on their own, as well as listen to dramatic

readings of two of the vignettes. Attention will be paid to the idea of perspective – both in life as well as in literature. A third picture book will be shared with students, and some discussion will revolve around the format and structure for picture books. Connections will continue to be made to the previous week's work as well as the work they are accomplishing in other courses.

Group Activities:

Role Playing will be focused on exclusively during this week. Part of the reason for this is to draw connections to the drama class and another part of the reason for this is that we feel the students should being to experience some aspects of the culminating activity. Developing a strong comfort level for speaking in front of others is a goal that Jillian and I have for our ELA classes as well as our drama class.

Weeks Five and Six:

Throughout week focus will shift from the examining of other's writing, to student's own writing. Although students have been responding to the works of others through their reading and writing journals, beginning in week five their focus will switch to the Writing Workshop. Options for writing workshop will include writing their own poetry, memoirs, picture books, editorials, opinion essays, speeches, and vignettes, a la Paul Flesichman. They will be encouraged to respond to the various writing we have examined, by creating their own works. During writer's workshop students brainstorm, write, revise, and edit their own work. In addition, they peer conference, as well as conference one on one with the instructor. Eventually the work will be typed up and printed at the student bank of computers in the ELA classroom.

Assessment will be made during these weeks based on classroom performance, and how much they are accomplishing during the writing workshop. Assessment will be made through brief "status of the class" check-ins at the start of class, as well as instructor perusal of the students' "Work In Progress" folders that they keep with all of their creative writing in it. At the end of each class, students update their status sheets in the folders, entering in what they accomplished that period, as well as a brief plan with what they intend to accomplish the following period. The instructor must be actively involved in the workshop in order to properly assess all students and continue to help them navigate through what they have learned and incorporate it into their own writing.

Group Activities:

Our focus is now on writing but this does not mean that group activities are no longer beneficial. In fact, the activities may be even more appreciated by the students at this point. One of the first activities we will utilize is the ***Think-Pair-Square.*** We love this activity because it allows the students some individual choices, but also leads to input from peers.

Offering students the freedom to navigate the classroom is a necessity that Jillian and I are very aware of. For this reason we will also use the ***Mix-Freeze-Pair*** which allows students to move about the room and also to share ideas/writings with peers. This is another great exercise to get the students to review their writing, topic selections and brainstorms.

Weeks Seven and Eight:

Students continue Writer's Workshop during the last two weeks of the unit, also focusing on how their writing will fit into the culminating activity of this unit. Over the last two weeks, there will be much integration with the unified arts as well as social studies classes, to get the culminating project off the ground. Students will be determining how their writing will fit into the larger piece they are creating. Assessment will follow the same guidelines as weeks five and six, with students also having access to rubrics that specify what needs to go into the pieces they are creating.

Group Activities:

Now that the unit is nearing completion we feel that the students should brush up on asking, and responding to, probing questions. Using an activity such as the ***Three-Step Interview*** will prepare the students for their roles in the culminating activity. This exercise allows for great peer interaction as it pertains to sharing and supporting ideas.

This is also a great time to administer another ***Life in this Classroom*** assessment to the students. As teachers we are constantly trying to assess the climate in our rooms and to adapt to differing personalities. By administering this assessment again, this time near

the completion of the unit, we hope to understand the ways in which students have participated in the class and to use the feedback for future units.

Course Connections:

Social Studies: Connections will be made to social studies with the language employed by the founding fathers in the writing of the Constitution. In addition, as students study famous quotes and speeches their learning will be related to the discussions ongoing in their social studies course.

Science: As the science curriculum will focus on renewable energy and energy resources, the students will make clear connections to helping their community understand the responsibility they have to the earth and the people, animals, and plants that inhabit it. This connects with the ELA study of *Seedfolks* and the growth of a community garden and its importance.

Social Studies

Inquires and activities within the Social Studies component of this ITU will be focused around equality, tolerance and social responsibility within a democracy, or more specifically the American Constitution. "In a time when the democratic ethic and processes are shaping the political structures and values of many of the nations on our planet, a major responsibility of public schools is to educate thinking persons (p. 4, Martinello, Cook)."

Montesquieu once stated that "if tyranny rests on fear, a free government must rest on civic virtue." Thus, it is the opinion of this team that tolerance and civic engagement are key ingredients in the foundation of a sound and civil society. In our increasingly multi-cultural landscape, listening and valuing a variety of ideas and perspectives are paramount to the ongoing success of the American "experiment," and the establishment of sister democracies around the world.

The goal of this unit is to teach tolerance, compromise and equality. Without tolerance, compromise cannot occur, thus the values cannot be separated. Students will be placed into the same environment as that of the early founders and will be granted decision making power. Over the course of weeks, key values will be examined.

Students in the Social Studies component of this ITU will explore the value of consensus, how to agree and disagree and how to make sound decisions with other people's viewpoint in mind. We will also examine self interest and selfishness as well as the early American Enlightenment idea of "disinterestedness (Gordon Wood, What Made the Founders Different)." Over the course of this curriculum, students will search for the meaning of individual responsibility: What is my role in a democratic society? Can one person make a difference? Why should I care about others? What does it mean to be an active participant in society? Who should lead? If I don't like the way things are, how can I voice my concern, how can I change society? Students will ponder these questions and much, much more.

Students will examine the moral dilemmas that sometimes challenge compromise. Are their consequences associated with abandoning principles for the sake of accomplishing a task? What were some of the mistakes made at the Constitutional Convention - often, overlooked, slavery was one of the compromises that northerners conceded to the southern states. Are the consequences of certain key decisions still being felt in twenty first century America? Are their consequences to compromise?

The success of America's founders is somewhat a contradiction. The notion that egalitarianism was established by a group of aristocrats makes the very notions of equality in America seem ironic. A couple of short presentations will occur, where students are taught the philosophies of Locke and Montesquieu. Students will quickly split into groups (committees) and examine these ideals.

Students will take on the concerns, agendas and self interests of the founders. Certain students will be stripped of their rights; others will be abolitionists and some proponents of states' rights, distrustful of centralized power. Certain students at the beginning of this

unit will be granted the same “white aristocratic privilege” of the key founders. We will have a student Jefferson, Washington, Franklin, and others.

Students will simulate the conflicts found on the convention floor. When you consider the fact that many of the founders (Jefferson, Washington, Franklin) were slave owners and that women were not allowed to vote, American doesn’t seem to be quite the “city on the hill” that is celebrated in most American textbooks. Also, white plantation owners in Georgia and South Carolina threatened to walk from the convention if the institution of slavery was compromised. The Constitutional Convention was a delicate process that could have fallen apart at any moment. Even after the Constitution was ratified, it was far from certain that the document would become the crowning achievement that it is viewed as today.

Looking back at history, it is easy for teachers to tell student the important events and tell students how far we have come, however it is the believe of this team that is more important for students to recognize for themselves the difficulty of establishing a democratic republic in the early days of American history. During a time when the United States was expanding and the demand for slaves increasing, slavery became a bargaining point. Students will be presented the interests of the times and will have to make difficult decisions.

“The Constitution was a compromise between slaveholding interests of the South and moneyed interests of the North. For the purpose of uniting the thirteen states into one great market for commerce, the northern delegates wanted laws regulating interstate commerce, and urged that such laws only require the majority of Congress to pass. The South agreed to this, in return for allowing the trade in slaves to continue for twenty years before being outlawed (Howard Zinn, The People’s History of the United States).”

Student will participate in lessons and activities where they emerge themselves into questions about the meaning of equality, social justice, and fairness. Disciplines covered will include: History, Geography, Political Science, Social Science, and Philosophy. Students will simulate government, inequity, constitutional conventions, and debate. The

culminating activity for these sections will include a student drafted constitution, including a bill, or declaration of rights. The goal of this unit is to recreate the key events, questions and problems that occurred during the Constitutional Convention. Students will write their own constitution, make changes and ultimately create a form of government, a form of government that could, in turn, also serve as a governing piece in the classroom itself. Thus, our project is multi tiered and has possibilities and relevance beyond the time it takes to present it. The lessons in our unit will continue to resonate with students long after the unit is completed.

Original Enlightenment thinkers such as Montesquieu had a limited idea of democracy in that he thought the democracy was possible only within the confines of a small society. The fact that Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton and others achieved all that they did as the country was increasing in size is truly amazing feat, flaws and all. However, this team will ask: Could certain flaws have been avoided? What was the context of the times? Were the founders truly great? Getting students to understand for themselves that the success of this document lies not in the past, but in the present and its ongoing interpretation is the greatest challenge for educators, but a challenge that this team is ready to take on.

It took many years, debate and war for the abolition of slavery, women's rights, the direct election of Senators, and other important changes in the original Constitution to occur. In order for students to realize, or self-actualize the potential of this document, they must experience inequity themselves. History tells us that that the founders were victims of their own successes-putting the decision making reigns into the hands of the populace in many ways slowed progress. Students will be given the challenges of the early document, and the granted the reigns to make these changes themselves.

Students will understand that democracy is not easy work and thus will gain a new appreciation of the world's most successful democratic republic. The ability to amend the constitution will lie in the hands of the students. Students will be given a variety of scenarios as part of an overall effort to address the situations /challenges found in early

American history, situations that motivated and continue to motivate the passing of key Amendments.

Criticism of the founders and honest inquiry into their personal flaws and character has caused historians in recent years to question the greatness of the founders; we will do the same. However, when you take a closer look at the ideals of the constitution, and why the document has lasted so long, the achievements of the founders holds up. It remains a truly amazing achievement. The fact that we will be teaching kids to value the process gives our students the potential to value the document in new and exciting ways.

SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS

During the course of this eight week unit we will address a variety of standards in Social Studies class. Students will learn about and relate the Constitution, American Government, and the ideas of the Enlightenment to their own lives. The following is a list of standards addressed:

USI.1 Explain the political and economic factors that contributed to the American Revolution

Students will participate in small group and whole class discussions. Active listening skills will be stressed. Students will engage in discussions on economics, political thought and the historical events that shaped the Revolutionary period. Group work and cooperative learning practices will be interspersed with mini-lectures, and presentation done by the teacher. Students will be able to relate how political and economic factors created a backdrop and situations that lead to the American Revolution, and ultimately the American Constitution.

USI.1

B. How freedom from European feudalism, aristocracy and the widespread ownership of property fostered individualism and contributed to the Revolution.

The reasoning behind highlighting this standard is to make connections between how geography, distance from England, and newfound freedom/prosperity lead to the creation of an American identity. Students will examine their own identities and compare and contrast them to those of the founders.

USI.2 Explain the historical and intellectual influences on the American Revolution and the formation and framework of the American government

Students will become exposed to influential writings, pamphlets and philosophies during this portion of the unit. Primary documents will be compared/contrasted after students compose their own "primary documents" in small groups. Some examples will include the *Mayflower Compact, Common Sense,* and *The Declaration of Independence*.

US1.2

B. The political theories of such European philosophers as Locke and Montesquieu.

USI.3 Explain the influence and ideas of the Declaration of Independence and the political philosophy of Thomas Jefferson

Again, the reasoning here is for students to connect the ideas that they will discuss themselves in their base groups to those of the great Enlightenment thinkers. Comparing and contrasting their own ideas with classic Revolutionary War thought will give students a deeper understanding of ideas and motivations that eventually lead to the creation of the Constitution.

Some themes that will be spread throughout this unit are the purpose, characteristics and the rights and responsibility of government. These will be taught and delivered exclusively through group and inquiry practices. The following standards will be met as we engage the students in related activities:

USI.7 Explain the roles of various founders at the Constitutional Convention. Describe the major debates that occurred at the Convention and the "Great Compromise" that was reached.

Major Debates:

A. The distribution of political power
B. The rights of individuals
C. The rights of states
D. Slavery

Founders:

A. Benjamin Franklin
B. Alexander Hamilton
C. James Madison
D. George Washington

Students will engage in role playing here. We will have a student Franklin, Hamilton, Madison, and Washington. Students will debate the issues at the Convention as if they themselves were participating and had a stake in what was happening.

USI.8 Describe the debate over the ratification of the Constitution between the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists and explain the key ideas contained in the Federalist

Papers on Federalism, factions, checks and balances, and the importance of an independent judiciary.

USI.9

- **A.** Explain the reason for the passage of the Bill of Rights
- **B.** The particular ways in which the Bill of Rights protects the basic freedoms, restricts government power, and ensures the rights to persons accused of crimes.

Students will continue debate after they complete and ratify their documents. This is to display to the students that the Constitution is a living, breathing document that often needs reexamining. They will also create their own bill of rights based on what they feel are "inalienable" rights.

USI.10 On a map of North America, identify the first 13 states to ratify the Constitution

Other standards covered:

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USI.11 Describe the purpose and functions of government

USI.14 Explain the characteristics of American democracy, including the concept of popular sovereignty and constitutional government, which includes representative institutions, federalism, separation of powers, shared powers, checks and balances, and individual rights

Most of the standards covered here overlap and are reinforced with the previously listed standards. The function of government is an example of the type of thought and idea that will be found throughout this unit. There is tremendous opportunity in the Social Studies section to reinforce key ideas as well as additional opportunity to connect with other disciplines, especially English/Language Arts.

Promising Practices

Student Choice: Students will chart their own course of action as they create their own constitutions/governments. There will be some documents that emphasize individual rights, some that have a strong central government, and some that might even have socialized thought interfused. Whatever the case, the students will have the choice to create the type of system that meets their needs.

Students ought to have as many choices as possible. Some students may need to be directed in certain areas; therefore differentiation is part of this practice. If more direction is required, the teacher will "float" and provide help where needed. However, most of our students enjoy helping each other, and will naturally provide help and assistance to other students that may need it.

Group/Partner Work: Because students learn from each other, most of our activities throughout the unit will require students to work in groups and sometimes pairs. Students will be given focused tasks, and a certain amount of time to complete the daily assignments. Students may be forces to work on several aspects of a lesson within the same period, however there is also flexibility for the teacher to differentiate and give individual focused tasks if necessary. Groups will go about their work differently from each other, but all will get to the same place.

Varied Assessment Strategies: Students will be assessed in a variety of ways. They will be assessed through informal discussion and observation, journal entries, projects, presentations, self-evaluations, and essay writing. We will, in some cases, break up individual sections of the assignment for individual grades; however there will also be group grades. The reasoning behind this approach is to provide the students will as many opportunities as possible to do well and succeed.

Goal Setting and Planning: Students will need to plan their activity well in order to get their work done in a reasonable amount of time. Team goals and individual goals will be facilitated by the teacher and passed on to the team. The teacher will serve as a motivator and will meet with individual teams and assist when needed.

Asking Teacher/Peers for help: This unit will only be possible if the students trust and relate to one another. It is imperative that they have developed a reasonable amount of confidence in the teacher's teaming methods. We will start in October, that way the students will have already developed some best teamwork practices. They will need to apply a fair great amount of teamwork skill to complete this sort of unit. It is very important that students recognize that they are not in this alone and may ask for help.

Week One:

Students will begin this unit with an inquiry lesson on natural rights. Students will examine human nature, personality and character. What traits of personality and character, if any, do all human beings have in common? For example, are all people selfish or do they tend to care for the good of others?

Task:
Imagine that all the students in your school were transported to a place with enough natural resources for everyone (an island, or another planet). When you arrive, you have no way of communicating with the rest of the world.

Inquiry questions:
Upon arrival would there be any government or laws to control how you lived, what rights, or freedoms you exercised, or what property you had, why?
Would anyone have the right to govern you? Would you have the right to govern anyone else? Why? Would you have any rights? What would they be?
What might people who were stronger or smarted than others try to do? Why?

What might the weaker or less sophisticated people try to do? Why?
What might life be like?

At the end of the week, students will have a list of natural rights. They could also draw or create their island and will report in a detailed way what life on their island/planet might look like.

Week Two:

During the second week of this unit students will examine the social contract. The teacher may introduce role playing that is designed to highlight problems that may occur while living in a state of nature.

Task:
Eventually, you determine that you are not satisfied living in a state of nature. Thus, you and others on the island agree to enter into an agreement (social contract) to protect your own and each other's rights. Your task is to design and establish some kind of guarantee that will protect your natural rights. You and your team agree to enter into an agreement that offers equal protection for those who sign the contract. Write down your contract and sign it.

Inquiry questions:
What is the main purpose of your agreement?
Where does the contract get its authority to tell the people on your island what you can and can't do? What will you do if your contract fails to protect your individual natural rights?

At this point the teacher will introduce the concept of the social contract. The students will write their own social contract and examine each other's. Following the activity, students will present their contracts, report on their experience, and the teacher will

debrief information as it relates to standards and learning goals. There is also the opportunity to collaborate will the ELA teacher during this activity.

Written assignments will include reactions in their writing journals as well as individual written records of their group work (each student is responsible for keeping organized notes on their group work). Assessment will include informal classroom observation as well as evaluation of the journals/notes. Students will be formally graded on their contracts and group presentations.

Group Activities:

This is a great week to use the ***Human Knot***. We feel that this activity clearly illustrates that the students have a vested interest in each other and are connected. The group has to ultimately agree, but it is the individuals that must operate effectively, communicate, and do their job in order to ensure ongoing success. A nice metaphor as well as a fun activity.

Week Three:

During week three students will read excerpts from two primary documents: *Mayflower Compact, the Fundamental Orders of Connecticut*. Students will begin to understand ideas, experiences, and perspectives similar to the ideas in found in their own contracts. Assignments will focus on comparing and contrasting the documents that they came up with to the seminal primary documents aforementioned. Students will engage in group discussions and compare the experiences of the early English settlers with that of their own findings. Students will write individual essays for formal assessment.

Students will use a number of graphic organizers beforehand to organize their thoughts before writing. This also provides the teacher an informal assessment vehicle to regard before assigning the essay.

Group Activities:

Our focus this week is on writing, but there are several group activities that can be used

to better prepare. ***Think-Pair-Square*** is an example of a pre-writing group activity that will allow the students to get some peer feedback before engaging in the individual task.

Week Four:

Students will be given handouts on the *Magna Carta, Petition of Right,* and the *English Bill of Rights*. All three highlight three basic principles: the rule of law; that basic rights may not be denied by government; that government should be based on an agreement, or contract, between ruler and the people. Students will read individually, then discuss in base groups.

Task:
Ultimately students will take any ideas that seem valuable or worthwhile from these documents and add them into their social contract. Connections will be made to the previous week's work as the students begin the laborious process of designing their own governments.
It is important to note that the teacher will grant permission for students to take ideas from the *Magna Carta*. One of the learning goals and standards covered in this section is that students recognize that much of our government and law are based on preceding British ideas and principles, therefore, only in this case, it's alright to plagiarize.

Weeks Five and Six:

Students will debate as to whether or not they should maintain connection with their mother county/planet, or if they should declare independence.

Task:
It has been determined that connection with your mother country/planet is no longer necessary. Though it is in some ways convenient to maintain allegiance to the motherland, you are finding it increasingly difficult to do so. Your mother country is in

conflict with your newly formed government (students are invested in this) and wants you to follow a new set of rules that restrict the newfound freedoms that you have grown accustomed to having; and the manor that you enjoy living. In addition. taxes are increasing (teacher may list colonists' grievances as examples). What do you and your group want to do?

After the groups decide their course of action, selected students will read the *Common Sense* and the *Declaration of Independence* to the whole class. The teacher will provide handouts and information that links these primary documents to great Enlightenment thinkers such as Locke and Montesquieu

Weeks Seven and Eight:

Task:
Students will be presented each base group's government (they will all be different, though they will also share some key similarities). Students will have to debate and take turns discussing the merits of their government and how to best consolidate the ideas of all their governments for the goal of creating a union. The teacher will introduce a fictitious delegation that must be included and will represent the ideas and whatever interests the students leave out (likely slavery). It will be explained that these interests must be included in order for the new government to declare independence from the mother country.

Students will also have to create a bill of rights.

Group Activities:
Now that the unit is nearing completion, we feel that the students should brush up on asking, and responding to, probing questions. Using an activity such as the ***Three-Step Interview*** will prepare the students for their roles in final debate. This exercise allows for great peer interaction and allows time for the groups to clarify their thoughts and reasoning on the matters at hand.

This is also a great time to administer the ***Life in this Classroom*** assessment to the students. As teachers we are constantly trying to assess the climate in our rooms and make necessary changes. By administering this assessment near the completion of the unit, we hope to understand the ways in which students have participated in the class and to use the feedback for the creation of better future units.

Course Connections:

English/Language Arts: Connections will be made to English with the language employed by the founders in the writing of the Constitution. In addition, students will read, study, and make use of primary documents in their learning. They will also write in journals and compose essays.

Science: As the science curriculum will focus on renewable energy and energy resources, the students will make clear connections to helping their community understand the responsibility government has to the earth, its people, and the plants and animals that inhabit it. The idea of balance of power in government could also be connected to ecosystems.

Math: The engaging activity for this unit is an equal balance of math and social studies that are interdependent. It is necessary for students to complete the math to answer the social studies component/questions. Also, it should be noted that great Enlightenment thinkers like Franklin and the other founders were well rounded, and thus, often great mathematicians.

Science

The understanding that "WE" can make a difference is reinforced in the science portion of this unit. While investigating important science concepts, our young adolescents will understand that they can be responsible citizens by "thinking green." Through a unit on Energy, students will explore renewable and non-renewable resources, heat transfer and other physical and chemical relationships to energy use and

conservation. Students uncover ways to defray energy costs by exploring alternative measures such as, sod roofing, wind turbines, solar energy, etc. Through inquiry activities, young adolescents will explore the big ideas and then take the message home by implementing the methods they learned. By planning and taking action in their town, school, and home students can solve local and global economical and ethical issues related to energy use.

There is no place better than in science class for exercising the habit of mind, ***Asking Good Questions***. By asking their own questions such as: Where does energy come from? How much energy do I use every day? What can I do at home to help save energy? How can we save energy in our school? this group of eighth graders will become engaged in seeking answers to problems related to their own lives.

As an extension to Social Studies students will learn that part of our civic duty is to become knowledgeable about controversial or political topics that are related to Science and Technology/Engineering. In the age of renewable resources and "global warming" communities are struggling with whether alternative energy resources are worth some sacrifices. Students will learn differing points of view by reading real-life articles and case-studies from other communities or possibly their own. In one lesson students will learn that our opinions are formed by what we choose to hear and read and that it is our responsibility to learn as much as possible to formulate an intelligent opinion. Once students become knowledgeable about heat transfer, energy, resources, and how we transfer energy into electricity, they will engage in debate around a possible local scenario such as researching the feasibility of an installation of a sod roof on their school building or installing wind turbines in their town. By reading the perspectives of others and by having the opportunity to choose their own point of view, students will understand that their viewpoint is valued, and that they can make a difference by expressing themselves.

For a culminating activity in science, students will produce a feasibility study and proposal of a sod roof for Walsh Middle School. They will gain understanding of the science concepts behind the technology through hands-on investigations. Once concepts are learned, students will work in groups to conduct research. Through this activity, math will be integrated by the use of graphs, charts, and cost analysis. The final result will be a

proposal to the town complete with prototype.

Massachusetts Science Standards

Earth and Space Science – Heat Transfer in the Earth's System

3. Differentiate among radiation, conduction, and convection, the three mechanisms by which heat is transferred through the earth's system.

4. Explain the relationship among the energy provided by the sun, the global patterns of atmospheric movement, and the temperature differences among water, land, and atmosphere.

Physical Sciences (Chemistry and Physics) Forms of Energy

13. Differentiate between potential and kinetic energy. Identify situations where kinetic energy is transformed into potential energy and vice versa.

Heat Energy

14. Recognize that heat is a form of energy and that temperature change results from adding or taking away heat from a system.

Technology/Engineering

2. Engineering Design

2.1 Identify and explain the steps of the engineering design process, i.e., identify the need or problem, research the problem, develop possible solutions, select the best possible solutions(s), construct a prototype, test and evaluate, communicate the solutions(s), and redesign.

Promising Practices

Group/Partner Work: In order for them to maximize learning from each other, students will work in various teams and partnerships depending on the assignment. Base groups will be formed to establish a comfort level whereas other groupings will be based on student interest and choice.

Learning through Inquiry: Students are likely to become more invested in science concepts through discovery and investigation. As much as possible students will learn by doing and seeking rather than by reading and hearing.

Assessment Strategies: Students will be assessed through tests and quizzes, observation of group dynamics, journal entries, projects, presentations, and self-evaluations.

Understanding Goals:

Students will understand how heat is transferred.
Students will understand where energy comes from.
Students will understand ways in which we convert energy into electricity.
Students will understand the difference between non-renewable and renewable resources.
Students will understand what types of technology exists that convert non-renewable and renewable energy into products and processes for society's needs.
Students will understand that they can change the affects of human interaction on the environment.

Classroom Environment/Materials: Books, magazines, textbooks, websites, materials needed for investigations and experiments, computers, printers, work tables, markers, various types of paper including graph paper, videos/DVD's,

Week One: Introduction to Controversy in Science

It is this team's belief that our role is to teach students to become independent thinkers. We feel that in order for our students to become responsible citizens, we need to provide them with the knowledge that responsible citizens formulate intelligent opinions based on information seeking. In science class, students will be introduced to the unit by

discussing ways science, civic duty, and politics might be related. They will read about various historical controversial issues caused by scientific discovery. For example, they will investigate the theories developed by Copernicus and Galileo, and the controversy around heliocentrism and geocentrism. Students will learn how advances in mathematics and technology changed society's misconceptions of how the universe worked. Before they have been introduced to the history, students will engage in a discussion to first expose any of their misconceptions but to instill in them that they know things based on background knowledge. After exploring a few other controversial issues from the past we will focus on recent controversy around renewable and non-renewable resource technology.

Once enlightened about how science can be controversial, we will discuss the importance of taking a position based on careful and deliberate research. In one exercise students will engage in an adaptation of a formal learning group activity from *The Cooperative Classroom* by Baloche, that I renamed ***Cards in the Middle***. Similar to ***Academic Controversy***, (Baloche, 1998), this exercise is a combination of ***Pens in the Middle***, (Baloche, 1998) and ***Reading Opposing Perspectives to Form an Opinion***, in *Strategies That Work*, (Harvey & Goudvis, 2000). Since students are required to use a writing implement, I decided to use index cards on which each student puts their name hence the name ***Cards in the Middle***.

Students, who are in groups of three or four, first create a three-column diagram labeled "Evidence For/Evidence Against/Personal Opinion." Each team member will be given an interview of someone who has voiced their opinion regarding an issue related to our topic. Teams have a different selection of interviews. Students are instructed to read independently first and then determine whether their person(s) is for or against the particular issue. Then they write the evidence in the appropriate column. I model this part at first, using a different interview. Once this has been accomplished and all members of the group have completed this step, they take turns sharing the information with their group, who will then write down the evidence in the appropriate column. Once a member has spoken, she puts her card (with her name on it) in the middle of the table. Once all members have shared, they are then instructed to formulate their own opinion based on what they have read and discussed and add that to the "Personal Opinion" column. Some

group members may not agree and that is okay. The class discusses the conclusions of each group. The end result is that some groups may have more negative evidence and others more positive. Other groups might have an equal amount of evidence "for" or "against." Students will discover that their opinions vary depending on what they read.

Cards in the Middle is an effective group exercise because it is structured so that each member has a distinct task and is given the opportunity to speak and share. The results culminate in a concrete conclusion, one in which students were given the opportunity to choose their own opinion. As an extension, the class can be given the opportunity to change their opinion based on the classroom discussion, simply by asking, "Has anyone's opinion changed based on what we have just heard?"

This activity also implements the group roles of "recorder," "reporter," and "starter" effectively, which by now is very familiar to them. By way of assessing I move from group to group to ensure the students are maintaining their roles and check for understanding. Some students may have difficulty identifying and finding the evidence in their text.

Note: Students keep their cards for future exercises. You could satisfy the artist by allowing more time to let the children decorate their cards.

The remaining portion of the first week will include a synopsis of the next six to eight weeks. They will be introduced to the overall topic of ENERGY and the Essential Question: What can I do to save energy at home and at school?

Because I am interested in what my students already know about ENERGY, I will ask them to fill out a K-W-L diagram. Students will write what they know about energy under the K and what they want to know under the W. Since these are eighth graders they might know quite a bit. On large pads of paper with one color marker, we will add all the responses that students are willing to share. On another sheet students will give me their questions for what they want to know. This information will determine which activities and lessons will follow. Once learning has begun, I will refer back to these sheets and by using another color, I will ask the students again, what they know and if any of the questions have been answered and add them to the sheets. By using different color markers, the progress in learning will be explicit.

A team-building activity will also be incorporated during the first week.

Process Skills/Habit of Mind: Perspective taking (formulating an educated opinion)
Interpersonal and Small-Group Learning Skills: Consensus taking

Back to Being Scientific

Week one's main function was as an introduction and preparation for a team-wide unit. Students met as a team, went on a field trip, and in science discussed and explored how science relates to social responsibility. Throughout the next four weeks students get back to scientific discovery with hands-on inquiry based learning. The content area that will be covered in the next four weeks serve to build and develop the scientific knowledge needed toward fulfilling the final project of the last three weeks. Each week or content area will begin with an inquiry activity related to Heat Transfer, Energy, or Electricity. Serving as a discrepant event, students become engrossed in the topic through discovery and questioning.

Group Structure: At this point students will be established in base groups. They will have a mature understanding of group roles. For the next three weeks they will remain in their base groups for the inquiry activities allowing each student the opportunity to perform each of the group roles at least once.

Week Two: Heat Transfer

Objectives: Students will understand

- that energy transferred from a hotter object to a cooler one is referred to as heat.
- how heat is transferred by conduction, convection, and radiation.
- the three laws of thermodynamics

- that the process by which gases in Earth's atmosphere trap solar energy is called the greenhouse effect.
- human activities that add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere may be warming Earth's atmosphere.

Process Skills/Habit of Mind: Predicting and inferring, identifying and controlling variables, experimenting, graphing, interpreting data.

Interpersonal and Small-Group Learning Skills: Sharing an idea

Discrepant event – Students will discover the second law of thermodynamics – heat naturally travels from warmer areas to cooler areas unless some work (energy) is added to the system. In a ***Think-Pair-Square*** activity, pairs will ***Predict*** the temperature of various objects and liquids. They will then measure the temperature of the objects and liquids, and record them in their notebooks/journals. Individually they will make ***Inferences*** based on the results. Students will be given a worksheet with the following questions, "What were the results?" and "Were you surprised?" and "Why do you think you got the results you did?" "Has this changed how you think about temperature?" Students will discuss their answers with their partner, then they share with another pair. A classroom discussion will follow with the intention of uncovering the second law of thermodynamics. They will also review the zeroth and first law of thermodynamics.

The connection between the "big idea" of systems and equilibrium, and heat transfer on earth and in smaller systems is the focus for the rest of the week and possibly into the next week. Students explore the three ways heat is transferred by studying radiation, convection, and conduction. They will investigate the greenhouse effect and global warming. Students will learn about the effects of global warming thereby developing a knowledgebase toward formulating an opinion regarding renewable resources. Each of these concepts will be learned through readings and hands-on activities or demonstrations. *An Inconvenient Truth* – the book or the movie by Al Gore – will be incorporated into this lesson to graphically and dramatically present the evidence of

global warming.

Students will design three experiments that measure and compare the rates of conduction, convection, and radiation in the classroom. They will be provided with the materials such as thermometers, heat sensitive paper, heating element, ice cubes, etc. An important part of the experiment is to chart the rate of change, therefore it will be necessary to integrate with the math teacher and review how to chart rates of change. This lesson idea is based on an online lesson at http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/nttidb/lessons/13/cndct13.html

The experiment just described helps segue the lessons on Heat Transfer into a unit on Energy. Since they are so related, the two concepts overlap so I hesitate committing to any kind of formal time-frame.

Week Three: Energy

Objectives: Students will be able to

- define energy as the capacity to do work.
- define work as being equal to the force needed to move an object multiplied by the distance it moved (work = force X distance)
- state that energy is measured in joules, kilowatt hours, calories and
- identify the two forms of energy – potential and kinetic.
- recognize that heat is a form of energy
- state the law of the conservation of energy as; energy can be neither created nor destroyed.
- connect the use of energy to global warming.

Process Skills/Habit of Mind: Finding and Keeping Focus
Interpersonal and Small-Group Learning Skills: Predicting and measuring

Discrepant event – Rubber bands and basketballs. Students go outside or to the gym to explore how potential energy converts to kinetic energy. These simple exercises

help to get children thinking about energy conversion while releasing their own pent up energy. I will need to remind them to remain focused as there is great potential for them to get out of control.

The first exercise explains how the potential energy in a stretched rubber band converts to kinetic energy when released. In another experiment students stretch the rubber band, place it to their lips to feel the temperature, then stretch and relax the band repeatedly a number of times. Students then feel the rubber band to their lips and discover the change in temperature. Students are asked where the heat came from.

The next activity involves bouncing a basketball. Students raise the ball over their head and let the ball drop to the floor. Students are asked why the ball does not return to the height at which it was dropped. Students return to the classroom to write and discuss the activity.

Students investigate energy conservation and measurement through activities and readings. They will view the video *Energy Resources: Uses and Conservation* (2006, Library Video Company). Students will watch the video to gain some important vocabulary that will be used throughout the unit. I will provide a worksheet to help them determine important content. The film offers a general overview of energy, electricity and renewable and non-renewable resources therefore this is a good time to introduce it. It will also serve to give them background information for future discussions.

Teaching students to understand that energy is neither created nor destroyed will involve careful consideration of readings and hands-on activities. Misconceptions will be exposed by another KWL activity. After they have learned the basics about energy students will focus on the importance of saving energy and the effects of our energy use on the environment. I will refer to *An Inconvenient Truth* to get them interested in how they might save energy at home or in school to protect the environment. They will brainstorm ways they use energy everyday and ways that they might save. If fluorescent light bulbs do not come up, I will introduce it to them. I will then ask students to design an experiment to test how much more efficient a fluorescent light bulb is to an incandescent. The results should speak for themselves. Students will then design an ad for the newsletter or poster to hang in school that encourages people to use fluorescent light bulbs. Students can also choose to consider other ways of saving energy and

produce promotional materials accordingly.

The next week or series of lessons also segue such that the two subjects are interrelated. They are divided into weekly lesson in order to structure the goals and habits of mind but ideally they would be interweaved.

Week Four: Electricity

Objectives: Students will be able to

- define electricity as the effect caused by the presence or movement of charged particles.
- explain how electricity is a form of energy and can be converted to other forms of energy like heat or light
- define what an electrical circuit is and create one.
- define an electric motor as a machine that transfers electrical energy into movement energy and give examples.
- Define a generator as a machine that transfers movement energy into electrical energy and give examples.
- differentiate between conductors and insulators.

Process Skills/Habit of Mind: Cooperating and collaborating, perseverence
Interpersonal and Small-Group Learning Skills: Listening carefully

Discrepant Event: Students are first asked if they think they could light a bulb with one D battery, one insulated wire, and a small flashlight bulb; if so draw it in your notebook. I conduct a quick discussion to determine how much they already know about circuits. If the consensus appears they could not light the bulb without some trial and error, I tell them to try. They are in their base groups already and know their group roles. They will be working in pairs, however the four-member model stands and getters get the materials for two pairs, starter keeps the four on-task, etc. I give them about 20 minutes to persevere as they try to light the bulb four different ways, draw and label it. They will

need to work cooperatively and share and to ideas (collaborate) through this exercise. We then discuss it as a class to learn the four ways and to discuss what a circuit is.

The week focuses on similar lessons designed to learn about generators, motors, switches and other electrical concepts, technological devices and terms. Examples of how we convert energy into electricity are explored with a culminating activity of creating a wind turbine from a kit. All this is to gain knowledge and understanding toward the final project that of planning a green roof for their school.

Week Five: Renewable and Non-renewable resources and the Technology

Objectives: Students will be able to

- name the different types of non-renewable resources; nuclear energy, wood, fossil fuels such as, coal, oil, and natural gas.
- name the different types of renewable resources; solar, geothermal, biomass, windpower, and hydroelectric power.
- identify the types of technology used to transfer renewable and non-renewable resources such as nuclear power plants, solar panels, wind turbines and dams.
- identify ways in which we can reduce the harmful effects of greenhouse gasses, such as driving electric automobiles, install a green (sod) roof, turn down the heat in winter and turn off the air conditioner in the summer.

Discrepant Event: The building of a model wind turbine at the end of the previous week serves as the discrepant event for this next mini-unit. Students explore the differences between non-renewable and renewable energy resources.

These eighth graders read and discuss more selections from the book, *An Inconvenient Truth*, as well as selected articles from magazines such as National Geographic.

This week will also be dedicated to summarizing and reviewing the preceding four weeks. Many concepts and vocabulary words have been developed thus far therefore a summative assessment is deemed appropriate. Class time will be spent playing review games such as bingo and jeopardy. The deeper connections between the various concepts will be investigated through an ***Inside-Outside Circle*** activity, discussion and essay

writing. Before they move on to the next three weeks, meaning and invested interest will be assessed.

This is a good time for another group building activity. Because the next assignment will require the various multiple intelligences, the ***Multiple Intelligence*** group building activity fits well here. At this point, students know each other well and will be aware of their classmate's unique talents. This is an exercise that is fun to watch and monitor. If it becomes necessary to pick the groups for the final project, this exercise will give me a fresh look at my student's skills and talents. At this time I will also conduct a class perspective evaluation, ***Life in This Classroom***, to re-assess how my students are thinking about the class.

Week Six, Seven, and Eight: Thinking Green

Students become entrenched in a ***Group Investigation*** (Baloche, 1998) by developing an authentic proposal/feasibility study for planning and installing a green roof on their school as the final product. As explained in Baloche's, *The Cooperative Classroom*, ***Group Investigation*** helps students build resource interdependence by breaking the information down into sizable chunks in the form of questions, which they can explore. The teacher acts as facilitator while students plan and conduct investigations and ultimately share what they have learned. This activity is especially appropriate for its relevance to our ITU theme of *Participating Responsibly in a Community*. The democratic nature of this structure helps to strengthen the theme of community and personal responsibility.

Groups will form into research groups based on interest, development and brainstorming of sub-topics. For example, groups might be formed to answer questions such as, How do green roofs work? Who has a green roof? And can we talk to them? How much will our school save? What do we need to build a model? What do the people in our town think of green roofs? How can we inform the public about green roofs?

Once groups have been formed, each student will fill out a KWHLS diagram. Some time will be spent on developing the H column, "How I will learn it and work with others to attain our mutual goals." Students will be required to complete assignments on specific

due dates. These assignments will be formally graded. This is important since the final product will be the compilation of each group's work. The ultimate goal is that the class appreciates the value of teamwork and collaboration.

As facilitator, it is my responsibility to provide the resources; books, magazines, websites, phone numbers, videos/DVD's, and any other materials deemed necessary to acquire knowledge and understanding. I will also provide daily lessons on specific research or reading strategies. It might be necessary to provide small groups mini-lessons on reading non-fiction, determining importance, or summarizing. I know my students are learning excellent reading and writing strategies in Language Arts because we communicate and integrate on a regular basis. However, a particular content area reading and writing skill might need to be reviewed or reinforced, therefore I am poised to provide lessons accordingly. One such lesson might be ***Showing Evolving Thinking by Summarizing the Content and Adding Personal Response*** (Harvey, Goudvis, 2000). In this activity students read text from a young adult trade magazine. The purpose of this tool helps students pick out the most important ideas in the text, learn how to be concise, and integrate their thinking with the content by responding to what they have read in a personal way

Group Activity/Game: Early in the Group Investigation project, students will be introduced to the game, ***Five Squares.*** This is an appropriate group game that will help eighth graders learn how to become more interdependent and resourceful.

Habit of Mind: Collaborating

Process Skills: Graphing, Modeling, Interpreting Data, Communicating

Interpersonal and Small-Group Learning Skills: Making choices, planning and integrating ideas.

Assessment: Students will be informally assessed by deliberate, periodic check-ins and student conferencing. Groups will critique each other through various evaluation tools. Each group member will be responsible for completing scheduled assignments based on their KWHLS worksheet. The final project will be assessed based on the written report, artifacts, and/or models.

Mathematics

Students will discover the best solution to the question, “Quicker by wagon or faster by SUV” by investigating the distances and length of times it took to travel around Boston by bus and comparing it to how fast people got around in Boston on horse in buggy 200 years ago. This will incorporate the use of rates and simplistic Algebraic equations. How many Americans does it take to make a civil movement like the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s? Did constituents and protestors change the political leaders minds or politicians and protestors change the constituents minds? The students will exam the numbers in the three categories and try to conclude the foundation of American leadership, because statistics do not lie. While the students venture into researching ways of living a “greener” lifestyle in the science classroom, the students will be market researchers in the mathematics classroom. Students will learn to research data formulate it into useful information so that it can be applied to make intelligent decisions. These critical thinking activities will executed in heterogeneous groups with differentiated instruction per group member as well as homogeneous groups with differentiated instruction per group.

The mathematics frameworks that are covered in this unit mostly occur during the critical thinking part of each textbook section. Critical thinking is the processes used when problem solving with mathematics as well as social justice and responsibility and the students will learn the similarities in each of these processes. *Here is the list of standards and which week they will be first covered in over the eight week period*.

Parent partnering will play an important part in some of the research data as students will use their parents and their networks to supply the students will public opinion polls. The questionnaire will unite the students and the parents with a common topic related to the students school work in a situation where the more work the parent does the more good the parent’s involvement will be for their student’s market research program.

Community involvement will be focused on market research and analysis activities collaborating with the science research and objectives on how society can live

greener lives. Students learn the process of manipulating data into useful information so that a person is empowered to make to make conscious and responsible decisions.

Group & partner work will be the structure implemented for all these real life critical thinking activities. The following is a list of informal and formal group activities I plan to use during this unit are in the book by Lynda Baloche, The Cooperative Classroom (1998 by Prentice Hall): Think-Pair-Share (p102), Numbered Heads Together (p 102), Roundtable Robin (p 103), Jigsaw (124) and Group Investigation (p 125)

Varied assessment strategies from formal to informal, culminating project with a rubric and open response quiz/test will account for the assessments of this unit. The objectives that will be the criteria for the rubric will be generated by the students and will have flexibility due to the amount of areas researched by the science department.

Here is a schedule listing the standards that will be covered and which week they will be first covered in over the eight week period of the unit.

8.P.1 (week 1) Extend, represent, analyze and generalize a variety of patterns with tables and graphs and when possible symbolic expressions (week 4 symbolic expressions) . Students investigate energy bills that use different methods to heat there homes or place of doing business. The amount of information is endless, sometimes useless because it is not converted to useful information or it is not being compared with the correct information (apple to apple versus apple to orange) This is a two period project.

8.P.2 (week 2) Evaluate simple Algebraic expressions for given variable values.8.M.1 (week 2) Select convert (within a measurement system) and use appropriate. . 8.M.5 (week 2) Use models, graphs, and formulas to solve simple problems involving rates, like speed This activity will be analyzing the data regarding the time and money used to get around Boston today compared to the days before the infrastructure was built for the use of automobiles.

8.M.4 (weeks 3&4) Use ratio and proportion(including scale factors) in the solution of problems, including problems involving similar plane figures and indirect measurement. 8.D.1 (weeks 3&4) Describe the characteristics and limitations of a data sample. Identify different ways of selecting a sample (different types of surveys). 8.D.2 Create interpret, and utilize various tabular and

graphical representations of data, e.g. circle graphs, scatterplots, etc.8.D.3 (weeks 3&4) Find, describe, and interpret appropriate measures of central tendency (mean, mode, and median) and spread (range) that represent a set of data. Use these notions to compare different sets of data. 8.N.3 (weeks 3&4) Use ratios, proportions in the solution of problems, in particular, problems involving unit rates scale factors, and rate of change. A combination of an in-class survey structured around the theme, "The Importance of Participating Responsibly within a Community" and a market research survey that will be conducted with the support of the parents so that the students can understand the responsibility and consequences of the decisions that they choose to make.

8.N.11 (weeks 2-8) Determine when an estimate rather than an exact answer is appropriate and apply in problem situations. This standard is embedded throughout the unit as the question of whether or not "an estimate" is good enough to have useful information so that an insightful decision can be made, but even if an estimate is acceptable, we may still complete the problem because it is necessary to work on other standards.

8.P.4 (week 5) Create and use symbolic expressions relate to verbal, tabular and graphical. At this point in the unit students will be able to take data, using algebraic language set up the data so that it will become useful information. Once the data has become transformed to useful information then the students will learn the skill to communicate the information by creating a visual like a chart or graph.

8.P.5 (weeks 6&7) Identify the slope of the line as measured of its steepness and as a constant rate of change from the table of values, equation, or graph. Apply the concept of the slope to the solution of the problems.

8.P.7 (week 8) Set up and solve linear equations and inequalities with one or two variables, using algebraic methods, models and/or graphs. Inquiry learning activities will be adopted around the science investigations researching the variety of energy choices we have to fulfill our demands. The conclusion of the investigation, students will convert scientific data into useful information needed to make responsible decisions.

DRAMA

In drama class students will continue their analysis of Langston Hughes poetry as well as famous speeches by influential Americans such as John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, and Martin Luther King Jr. Students will look at these famous works from the public speaking and dramatic presentation point of view; eventually each student will choose a famous work to present, while taking on the personae of the famous speaker.

The drama portion of this unit will begin during the second week of the overall unit. At this time students have begun to formulate a deeper understanding of the themes they're exploring. In their English class they have researched the poetry and speeches they will need to begin their work in drama class. During this first week of exploration in drama the students will solidify their choice of poem or speech for their continued analysis. During the second week, students will write introductions for their chosen work; incorporating their own thoughts and feelings on the writers, speechmakers, and famous pieces they have been analyzing. Over the course of the third week, students will be practicing and applying the public speaking skills they have been studying in drama class to the famous works they have chosen. During the fourth and fifth weeks students will work together to put their poems, and speeches into a cohesive presentation. Once the presentation has been woven together, students will work on the other aspects of the production - lighting, sound, and any scenery necessary. In addition, student creations from art class will be incorporated into the set of the presentation. This will take place during weeks six and seven. By week eight students will have a presentation that has melded together the work they've accomplished in English, social studies, drama, and art to take on the road to the elementary schools.

Drama/Theater Standards

Standard A: Acting

1.7 Create and sustain a believable character throughout a scripted or improvised scene

Meeting this standard will be very important in our culminating activity. One of the aspects of the culminating activity is a performance piece in which the students will adopt certain personas.

1.8 Make and justify choices on the selection and use of properties and costumes to support **character dimensions**

Appropriate costumes will serve to enhance the authenticity of the culminating activity for the unit.

1.9 Use physical acting skills such as **body alignment,** control of isolated body parts, and rhythms to develop **characterizations** that suggest artistic choices

1.10 Use vocal acting skills such as breath control, **diction,** projection, **inflection,** rhythm, and pace to develop characterizations that suggest artistic choices

1.11 Motivate character behavior by using recall of emotional experience as well as observation of the external world

We will be employing these last three standards throughout the drama classes and will focus on the effects of diction, projection and character motivation.

Standard B: Reading and Writing Scripts

2.7 Read plays and stories from a variety of cultures and historical periods and identify the characters, setting, plot, theme, and conflict.

Standard C: Critical Response

5.5 Continue to develop and refine audience behavior skills when attending informal and formal live performances

As simple as this standard sounds, proper behavior at a performance is often not taught at this level. As a result many students simply do not realize that excessive whooping and hollering, prolonged clapping and screaming are simply not appropriate

5.7 Articulate and justify possible criteria for critiquing classroom dramatizations and dramatic performances

ART

In art class students will examine famous works of art that have made social statements. This includes works portraying wars such as the Revolutionary War and Civil War. Specific attention will be paid to Guernica, arguably the most famous anti-war work of art in existence. In addition students will examine famous photos of the Civil Rights era as well as photos of the Vietnam War. Students will also create their own works of art expressing their personal feelings regarding these issues.

During week one of this unit students will examine famous works of art from the Revolutionary and Civil wars. They will discuss artist's intent as well as the techniques the artists used. During week two students will study and interpret famous photos of the Civil Rights and Vietnam eras. For the third week students will research and find one specific work of art that they will interpret and present to the class. In this way students will be making their own choice of what to focus on, and in addition the students will be gathering information and sharing it with their peers. By the fourth week, students will have an understanding of the various mediums and techniques that artists and photographers use to capture feelings and emotions. The students will use this information to begin to create their own work of art. Bringing in what they have learned in English Language Arts and their social studies classes, students will choose an issue they feel strongly about, and begin to create a work of art to be used in the culminating project for this unit. During the last four weeks of this unit, the students will continue to work on their individual projects, while deciding how, where, and when the projects will be incorporated into their dramatic presentation. The art and drama classes will be working together at this point to insure a cohesive final presentation.

Art Standards

Standard A: Methods, Materials, and Techniques

1.7 Use the appropriate vocabulary related to the methods, materials, and techniques students have learned and used in grades PreK–8.

1.5 Maintain the workspace, materials, and tools responsibly and safely.

Again this seems like it would be a non-issue at this age, but experience has told us otherwise which is why we are going to address responsibility and safety within the art room.

Standard B: Observation, Abstraction, Invention, and Expression

3.6 Create artwork that employs the use of free form symbolic imagery that demonstrates personal invention, and/or conveys ideas and emotions.
For example, students create works that convey paired concepts such as conflict and cooperation, happiness and grief, or excitement and repose

Standard C: Critical Response

5.6 Demonstrate the ability to describe the kinds of imagery used to represent subject matter and ideas, for example, literal representation, simplification, abstraction, or symbolism.

MUSIC

In music class students will examine various protest songs from many eras of history. During the first week of this unit students will be introduced to the protest songs of slaves before the Civil War such as “We Shall Overcome,” and “This Little Light of Mine” to protest songs of the 1960’s and 1970’s such as “Blowin’ in the Wind.” They will analyze the lyrics of these songs, looking for the innate commonalities as well as the inherent differences. During week two students will research from the 1980’s through today, looking at songs written about apartheid, nuclear war, world hunger, and the AIDS epidemic, to come up with songs to share with their classmates. Over the course of week four and five, while discussing the issues they are studying in their other classes, students will choose issues they feel strongly about in the present day, that they would like to create their own music about. During weeks six, seven, and eight, students will create their own lyrics expressing their thoughts and feelings on issues they would like to protest or situations they would like to change. In addition, they will choose music they

have studied to add to their end-of-unit presentation.

Music Standards

A. Singing

1.2 Sing expressively with appropriate **dynamics, phrasing,** and interpretation.

Students will engage in basic singing exercises pertaining to various musical pieces from the Revolutionary era all the way to the 1980's. Our thinking here is that students will take an active role in exploring the ways in which music has been used throughout history.

1.8 Sing music representing diverse genres and cultures, with expression appropriate for the work being performed, and using a variety of languages.

Students will look at different genres of music as they pertain to the evolution of this country. The expression and passion felt in the music is something we want to bring to the attention of the students. Asking them to envision the context in which the songs were written and performed will also be important to the development of this standard.

B. Critical Response

5.7 Analyze the uses of elements in aural examples representing diverse genres and cultures.

5.11 Listen to formal and informal performances with attention, showing understanding of the protocols of audience behavior appropriate to the style of the performance.

Culminating Activity

As a culminating activity students will develop a program to bring to elementary school students in their town. Our 8th graders will demonstrate their understanding of all of that they've learned by helping to teach it to the rest of the community. The program will include picture books written by eighth graders in their English Language Arts class on themes of acceptance, and community responsibility to be shared with the younger students. They will help teach writing strategies that the fifth graders will incorporate in their own class projects. As the main event for this program, students will take the significant speeches and poems they studied in drama class, weave them together through thoughtfully written introductions and annotations and present these famous works to the fifth grade community. In doing so, students will solidify their own understanding, as well experience the power of reaching out within their own community.