EQUITY TEACHING AND LEARNING IN A SIXTH GRADE SOCIAL SCIENCE CLASSROOM: SUPPLEMENTAL MULTI-SENSORY RESOURCES IN THE FORM OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENTS

Capstone Project

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of
Masters of Arts in Education
(Concentration in Instruction)

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ABSTRACT

Introduction

Multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments are essential for quality implementation of integrated instruction and learning within a student-centered, differentiated, standard-based social science classroom.

Problem

There is currently a need for educators to develop equitable teaching and alternative assessment strategies that enable students to achieve their optimum educational potential within a high-stakes testing paradigm. This project addresses the following question: How can educators provide equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom?

Objective

The objective of this project is to show how multi-sensory resources, in the form of alternative assessments enable all students to achieve their optimum educational potential and demonstrate their development in historical knowledge, reasoning, and communication skills.

Benefits

This project provides a curriculum that requires students to be active participants, draw on their experience, and skill development. It also identifies students’ profile of intelligences and necessitates some form of performance or product to demonstrate competence. Students will also demonstrate communication and social interaction skills, analytic capabilities, problem-solving skills, decision-making, civic responsibility, skill in developing and maintaining wellness, and using technology as a tool for learning.
Dedication

This Capstone Project is dedicated to my husband, Doug, and my children, Holly and Mark for always challenging me to be a better wife, mother, teacher, and human being. I also dedicate this to all the children I have guided over the last thirty-five years who have shared their wisdom, smiles, and their challenges with me.
Acknowledgements

I feel blessed to have completed this degree and to have had such talented people around me. I am truly grateful to Dr. Nina Haydel for her constant wisdom, advice, and high expectations that guided me through this tremendous journey. She is not only my teacher, but my friend. Thank you, Dr. Haydel.

In addition, I want to thank The Fauquier County Board of Education, Dr. David Martin, Mrs. Joy Fling, and Miss Selena Dickey for believing in me. It was their constant support and sincere encouragement that allowed me to complete this degree. I am grateful and honored and hope this information will be valuable to teachers around the nation.
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

This Capstone Project provides equity teaching and promotes learning in a sixth grade social science classroom. This active project establishes an opportunity for an experienced teacher to assert curriculum leadership and quality implementation of integrated instructional teaching and performance-based assessment strategies to accommodate differing learning styles, abilities, and interests.

This qualitative research/active project provides a multi-sensory culminating, collaborative, constructivist teacher’s manual in the form of an alternative assessment. It includes creative instructional assessment strategies designed to enable heterogeneous groups of students to demonstrate their knowledge. It is based upon Virginia state standards, with multiple performance assessments that evaluate and promote student learning. Performance assessments fundamentally shift the paradigm that project–based performance assessment is not just a strategy, but a foundation for transforming schools from the superficial assessment of rote learning. Performance-based learning, also referred to as problem-based, experiential or constructivist learning, helps teachers and students improve learning, which is the true purpose of assessment.

This researcher’s course of action in this project is to show how-in a student-centered, differentiated, multi-sensory, standard-based social science curriculum-alternative assessments are needed, even within the demands of a high-stakes testing paradigm.

The heart of this project is to provide a first-class educational experience for all
students. Efforts are intentional and result-oriented. A vision for this project includes a curriculum that requires students to be active participants, and demonstrate their achievement through authentic alternative assessment tasks. These tasks require higher level thinking; draw on student experience, knowledge, skill development; identify students’ profile of intelligences and necessitate some form of performance or product to demonstrate competence. Students will also demonstrate communication and social interaction skills, analytic capabilities, problem solving skills, decision-making, civic responsibility, skill in developing and maintaining wellness, and skill in using technology as a tool for learning.

This project promotes the quest for equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom by providing supplemental, multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments. The researcher’s classroom approach provides a curriculum with a wide variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences, which foster excellence, respect, compassion, and understanding that promotes academic and personal development.

*Background of the Problem*

The traditional United States educational system was originally developed for and by the European upper-middle class population. If one considers the historic origin of the traditional education system, current differences in worldview, learning and teaching styles, coupled with instructional and assessment methods, one could only predict a high measure of academic failure among our current, diversified student population (Goin, 1999).
According to Roeber (1995), while performance assessment may be new to some people, it is not new nor is it untried. Performance assessments were successfully conducted decades ago. He also states that assessments are vitally needed for more complete information on student performance. Alternative performance assessments are more complex and involved and are an important adjunct to overall large-scale assessment strategies.

An equitable education for diverse school populations require appropriate teaching techniques, appropriate assessment tools, empowering school culture, student-centered strategies and teacher awareness of the impact of his or her own culture and beliefs (Goin, 1999). All students have the right to an equitable education. Politicians and schools have ignored available research that documents the need for educational reform and the use of supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessment.

During the last ten years, teachers in high-stakes states find themselves in test-driven curriculum environments, or frameworks of knowledge specifically designated to be on the state mandated high-stakes tests. Test-specific preparation materials undermine the implementation of good teaching practices and nearly eliminate the use of alternative assessments. According to Nathan (2002), common sense and common experience prove that school reform in the form of high-stakes testing is a fantasy, “a war game in which young people are the expendable pawns” (5). This type of dialogue focuses on one-size-fits-all “accountability,” measured only by standardized tests. It is clearly evident students’ educational needs are not being met.

This project will enlighten and inspire the highly qualified, committed
educational professional to avoid doing what has been done in the past and to create a positive learning climate of respect, collaboration and high expectations, based upon specifically defined instructional strategies in the form of alternative assessments.

Statement of the Problem

There is currently a need for educators to develop equitable, alternative assessment strategies that enable students to achieve their optimum educational potential within a high-stakes testing paradigm.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this qualitative research/active project is to develop a social science sixth grade curriculum manual that utilizes supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessments. The manual is based upon state standards with multiple performance assessments that demonstrate student grasp or understanding of academic content in new and different ways.

Questions to be Answered by the Project

Major Question: How can educators provide equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom?

Sub-questions:

1. What multi-sensory resources, in the form of alternative assessments, enable all students to achieve their optimum educational potential and demonstrate their development in historical knowledge, reasoning skills, and communication skills?
2. What specific instructional tools in the form of authentic alternative assessments can be incorporated in a sixth grade social science classroom, that stimulate and motivate the middle grade student in the learning process?

3. How can a teacher successfully incorporate alternative performance assessments within a content-rich, test-driven standards curriculum?

4. How can total group assessment devices be tailored to acknowledge and make positive application of differences in individual learning styles?

Assumptions

Effective teaching cannot be prescribed by a rigid set of guidelines. The artistry of teaching involves continuous adjustment between the intended experience facilitated by the teacher and the response by the students. The following are the researcher's assumptions and educational community assumptions.

- Educators view a quest for equity teaching and learning as a positive school reform.

- The goal of social science education is to help students become contributing, participating citizens. To achieve this goal, students must know, understand and apply the content and concepts of the various sub-disciplines of social science (government and civics, history, geography, economics, culture, and society) (Alaska Department of Education, 2003).
- Educators will take into account differences in student learning styles, attitudes, interests, and talents.

- Educators will honor all student efforts and contribute to the student's sense of self-worth and academic achievement.

- The use of authentic alternative performance assessments, tests (low-stakes), quizzes, products, and portfolios stimulate interest, enthusiasm, quest for knowledge, improved self-esteem which lead to greater student achievement and understanding in social science.

- Measurement of innovative delivery systems such as cooperative learning, structural indexing, peer tutoring, exploratory and mini-courses, and thematic and research-and literature based units, as well as teacher-directed lessons and lectures occur.

- Teachers who teach with knowledge, enthusiasm, and passion for their material will inspire students. This enthusiasm increases when teachers learn effective new methods and assessments strategies by keeping up with research and collaborate with their peers.

- Teachers and students are partners in successful instruction.

- Instructional practices reflect the wisdom derived from the best teaching practices. Teachers and districts must support instruction that will reach all students.

- Authentic assessment and benchmarking at regularly planned intervals is a must for lesson planning (Forte & Schurr, 2003).
• Educators will use a wide variety of methods and techniques, avoiding overuse of any one testing strategy.

• Educators believe that all children are capable of learning.

• Educators set high standards and maintain high expectations for all students, while understanding that children have natural developmental differences as they grow (NCREL, 1998).

• Performance-based learning in the form of alternative assessments is not accomplished in isolation or in the abstract; it is active and collaborative (Lucas, 2001).

• Alternative and authentic assessments are defined as methods of measuring the end product of learning and competencies in real-life situations.

• The use of project-based learning through alternative methods, such as student portfolios, oral presentations, multi-media reports and review by teachers and peers provides a more complete picture of student progress (Chen, 2001).

• The learning environment of every classroom must take the students beyond rote learning into a level of discovery and exploration (Chen, 2001).

• The alternative-assessment approach is compatible with the constructivist view of learners (Alberts, 2001).

• Safe, supportive and diverse environments must validate each student’s uniqueness.

• All learners deserve developmentally appropriate instruction, assessment, and support.

• Students learn best from real world experiences which each individual perceives
as personally relevant. These experiences are more powerful if they are guided and purposeful.

- Instruction and assessment are inseparable. The first step of instruction is to access students’ knowledge, so that instruction can provide the scaffolding necessary to bridge prior knowledge with new concepts (Fauquier County, 2003).

- Concentrating on assets rather than deficits, teachers are predisposed to see more potential in the children they are teaching and are able to treat the children’s experience and backgrounds as resources for learning rather than constraints, (NCREL, 2000).

- One multiple-choice, plastic-wrapped, politically motivated standardized test cannot access a student’s academic literacy proficiency (AERA, 2003).

- Curriculum and instruction may be severely distorted if high test scores, rather than learning, become the overriding goal of classroom instruction. Traditional instruction focuses on grades, grade point averages, and rankings (AERA, 2003).

- Traditional assessments tap primarily the verbal/linguistic and the logical/mathematical intelligences and, sometimes, visual/spatial (Gardner, 2002)

- Alternative performance assessments focus on the direct observance of a student’s performance. Students do what they learn. Portfolio assessment tends to focus on the growth and development of student potential (Fogarty, 1998)

- Performance and portfolio assessments call into play intrapersonal, interpersonal intelligences, as well as verbal, logical, visual, musical, and naturalist’s (Fogarty, 1998).
The incorporation of specific instructional performance tasks will provide students with the necessary tools for lifelong learning skills (AERA, 2003).

Performance standards, a list of expectations, guide teachers at each level toward either state or local standards, using developmentally appropriate instruction.

The work that students accomplish in school must adequately prepare them for the society in which they will live.

The Importance of the Project

The research and strategies presented in this project are intended to promote the quest for equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom, by providing supplemental multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments.

The researcher’s purpose is to awaken and ignite that spark of excitement and enthusiasm for learning within the child and the teacher. All who work with children must have courage to celebrate standards and accountability in this 21st Century high-stakes testing paradigm, yet embrace the students’ opportunity to construct their own meaning and view American History from a broader perspective.

Essential Key Terms

1. Achievement Test (low-stake): An examination that measures educationally relevant skills or knowledge about such subjects as social science, mathematics, spelling, science and reading.
2. Active Learning:

Learning activities and experiences that have these characteristics:

a. Students are involved in more than listening.

b. Less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on developing students' skills.

c. Students are involved in higher-order creative and critical thinking skills.

d. Students are engaged in hands-on and learning-by-doing tasks and activities.

e. Greater emphasis is placed on students' exploration of their own attitudes, values, and interests.

3. Affective Education: An important component of an educational program is designed to focus on the social, emotional, physical, intellectual, psychological, and ethical development of students.

4. Alternative Assessment: Applies to any and all assessments that differ from the multiple-choice, time, one-shot approaches that characterize most standardized and classroom assessments. Alternative assessments encourage student ownership through self-assessment; set flexible time limits; scored through multi-faceted systems; allow for student strengths and weaknesses; make use of individual learning style and interests; reflects real world-world application of knowledge and minimizes competition.

5. Assessment: Testing or grading of students according to a given set of criteria.
6. Authentic Assessment: Methods of assessing student achievement or performance that are as close to real-life situations as the setting allows. Self-assessment plays a greater role than in conventional testing. The students are often expected to present their work and defend themselves publicly and orally to ensure that their apparent mastery is genuine (Wiggins, 1989).

7. Authentic Learning: A type of learning that requires students to encounter and master situations that resemble real life.

8. Benchmarks: Specific skills/abilities develop by the end of a predetermined organizational levels.

9. Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Development: Bloom’s Taxonomy is a structure for classifying educational objectives so that teachers and students have a common framework for determining the types of desired changes in student behavior as learning take place. Bloom suggests that there are at least six distinct levels of behavioral outcomes related to thinking and that each level is arranged in a hierarchy from the simplest to the most complex. These levels, defined in simple operational terms, are: Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Synthesis, Analysis, and Evaluation.

10. Collaborative Learning: Learning that allows teams or groups of students at the same location to learn together as opposed to highly individualistic modes of learning.

11. Cooperative Learning: Involves teamwork within small groups of diverse, heterogeneous students working in a structured setting, with assigned roles and
working toward a common goal. Five elements distinguish cooperative learning from traditional group work.

12. Concept Map: A person’s graphic diagram or schematic representation

13. Constructivism: An approach to teaching based on research about how people learn. Many researchers say that each individual constructs knowledge rather than receiving it from others.

14. Curriculum: A set of predetermined work plans developed by or for teachers to use in classrooms by which the content, scope, and sequence of that content, and the skills taught through that content are defined and configured.

15. Curriculum Map: A diagram that lays out the sequence of topics and concepts that will be studies in each subject through the grades.

16. Differentiation of Instruction: The ability to reach the academic, emotional, social needs of all your students through your interaction with a multi-sensory approach to each lesson. Consideration will be taken for learning styles, reading styles, multiple intelligence, and left and right brain orientation.

17. Educational Equity: Students should enjoy opportunities to play, learn, and work in diverse and mutually respectful environments. Friendships dispel prejudices, and cooperative groups expose students to multiple perspectives.

18. Evaluations: The process used to determine the general value or worth of programs, curricula, or organizational settings.

19. Exhibitions: An exhibition is a public performance during which a student showcases learning and competence in particular areas. Exhibitions typically
judged by a trained panel of adults and peers (teachers, parents, community
members, employers, students).

20. Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences: Dr. Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple
Intelligences has identified eight multiple Intelligences. He defines these
intelligences as eight different ways of knowing, perceiving, and understanding
the world are around us. Gardner also makes it clear that one or two intelligences
are often stronger and more developed in a person, although everyone has the
capacity for nurturing all eight. It is important that teachers design lesson plans
with these multiple intelligences in mind and that students practice using all of
these intelligences in their work.

21. Instruction: Systematized teaching that uses a variety of delivery systems and
active learning strategies and assessments to teach the predetermined curriculum.

22. Krathwolhl’s Taxonomy: A model for infusing affective values, beliefs,
attitudes, and feelings into your classroom.

23. Learning Styles: Auditory Learners; Visual Learners; Kinesthetic Learners;
Right-Brain Learners; Left-Brain Learners

24. Lesson Standards: Specific student behaviors for meeting unit standards.

25. Measurement: Implies the assignment of a numerical quantity to a given
assessment or evaluation procedure.

26. Megacognition: Stresses the consciousness of one’s own thinking process.

27. Megacognitive Reflections: Self-assessment observations and statements
made by the individual student about each product or performance that he or she
has completed. These reflections become part of the portfolio contents in social science.

28. Negotiated Assessment: The focus on reporting students' progress to parents.

29. Outcomes-Based Education: Focuses curriculum, instruction, and measurement/assessment on the desired student outcomes—the knowledge, competencies, and qualities students should be able to demonstrate when they finish school.

30. Outcomes-Based Assessment: Assessment in the context of outcome-based education. It is those skills, competencies, experiences, talents, and attitudes which the student is intended to have after graduation for the purpose of employment or personal human development which are assessed.

31. Performance Standards: A list of expectations that guide teachers at each level toward with state or local standards, using developmentally appropriate instruction.

32. Performance Assessment: Demonstrations of knowledge or skills in real life, it shows not only what they know, but also what they can do. Standardized (norm-referenced) testing make teachers focus on a narrow range of topics and items that are most likely to appear on the tests. In theory, performance assessments require a broader understanding of subject matter. Different performance assessments produced very different patterns of scores, and student score were still more closely related to student aptitude than to what students were actually taught.
33. **Performance Criteria**: A predetermined list of observable standard used to rate performance assessments. Effective performance criteria include considerations for validity and reliability.

34. **Performance Indicators**: Student behaviors assessed by teachers to validate the achieved standards.

35. **Portfolio**: A collection of representative student work over a period of time. A portfolio often documents a student’s best work, and may include a variety of other kinds of process information (drafts of students work, student’s self-assessment of their work, parents’ assessment). Portfolios may be used for evaluation of a student’s abilities and improvement.

36. **Portfolio Assessment**: The collection of student portfolios, sample or student work over an extended period. Giving students a role in determining the contents of their portfolios may provide greater incentive to learn and a greater sense of responsibility for their own learning.

37. **Process**: The intermediate steps a student takes in reaching the final performance or end-product specified by the prompt. Process includes strategies, decisions, rough drafts, and rehearsals—whether deliberate or not-used in completing the given task.

38. **Prompt**: An assignment or directions asking the student to undertake a task or series of tasks. A prompt presents the context of the situation, the problem or problems to be solved, and criteria or standards by which students will be evaluated.
39. Quality Assessment: High quality assessment must rest on strong foundations. The foundations include organizing schools to meet the learning needs of their students, understanding how students learn, establishing high standards for student learning, and providing equitable and adequate opportunity to learn.

40. Reliable Assessment: One which provides consistent information over time or over a number of trials so that you can see if performance is happenstance or a true picture.

41. Responsive Evaluation: To specify instructional objectives and outcomes; to gather data from naturally occurring setting (qualitative); to observe, interact and participate in the learning environment; a close relationship with the students.

42. Rubric: A set of guidelines for giving scores. A typical rubric states all the dimensions being assessed, contains a scale, and helps the rater place the given work properly on the scale.

43. Standard Scores: A score that is expressed as a deviation from a population mean.

44. Standardized Test: A form of measurement that has been normed against a specific population. Standardization is obtained by administering the test to a given population and then calculating means, standard deviations, standardized scores, and percentiles. Equivalent scores are then produced for comparisons of an individual score to the norm group’s performance.

45. Task: A goal-directed assessment activity, demanding that the student use their background of knowledge and skill in a continuous way to solve a complex problem or question.
46. Unit Standards: Subject, topics, or themes contained in a specific course.

47. Valid Assessment: One which measures what it intends to measure and not something else wholly unanticipated.

48. William’s Taxonomy of Creative Thought: It has eight levels; the first four are cognitive in nature and the last four are affective in nature. In order: Fluency, Flexibility, Originality; Elaboration, Risk-Taking, Complexity, Curiosity, and Imagination.

*Scope and Delimitation’s of the Project*

1. The researcher/facilitator of this project is a sixth grade social science teacher.

2. The classes will consist of one-hundred and twenty five male and female students ages ten through thirteen years of age.

3. The students will attend five social science classes each week.

4. Each class will last forty-five minutes per day.

5. The site is a middle school in Virginia.

6. The designed performance-based alternative assessments will be presented as assessment evaluations in a standard-rich heterogeneous sixth grade social science classroom.

7. Multiple alternative assessment assignments will be designed, including a major multi-sensory thematic unit on the Constitution of the United States.

*Summary*

The hope remains, despite many obstacles, that alternative performance-based
assessments will support a richer, more open-ended curriculum and more accurately assess the skills of all students. As long as supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessments are used as part of the high-stakes testing paradigm, pressure to generate good and improving scores means that there is no sure safeguard against a new trivialization of learning. It is the mission of educators to assist students in their educational learning process by providing enrichment evaluation in the form of alternative assessments, which develops their ability to reason, think, and communicate effectively. Our society demands an educated citizenry.
Chapter II

Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this project is to develop a sixth grade social science curriculum manual that promotes equity teaching and learning through the use of supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessments. The curriculum manual is based upon state and county standards, with multiple alternative performance assessment activities that demonstrate student grasp or understanding of academic content in new and different ways. In this comprehensive Literature Review, the researcher’s course of action is to examine empirical literature to show how in a student-centered, differentiated, multi-sensory, standard-based social science curriculum, alternative assessments are needed, even within the demands of a high-stakes testing paradigm.

Alternative Assessment

Alternative assessment applies to any and all assessments that differ from multi-choice, one-shot approaches that characterize most standardized and classroom assessments. Alternative assessments encourage student ownership through self-assessment. They set flexible time limits and are scored through multi-faceted systems that take into consideration individual learning styles and interests. Alternative assessments reflect real world application of knowledge and minimize competition (Forte & Shurr, 2002).

Historical reasoning and understanding are the principal aims of social science study. Alternative assessment within these studies allows students to organize, interpret and express
their own thoughts. Social science students should be able to differentiate between the past, present and future, ask questions, compare and contrast information; and interpret historical records to construct historical significance of their own. The use of alternative assessments in social science must be designed to have sensitivity to cultural and linguistic diversity and assess student performance in these three related areas: knowledge, reasoning skills, and communication skills. The use of analytic rubrics to access alternative assessments is important. An analytic rubric will show a student’s strength and weaknesses. This type of diagnostic tool establishes parameters for student success (Drake, 1997). There is an abundance of literature on the use of multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments in a middle level social science classroom. Alternative forms of evaluating student progress are changing testing and assessment in our schools. There are many issues triggering this call for change from traditional tests to alternative assessment, and more constructivist, project-based learning (Nickell, 1993).

*Literature In Favor Of Alternative Assessments*

According to Nickell (1993), critics assert that standardized, fixed-response testing may be unfairly misaligned with instruction. Nickell emphasizes that questions may be missed simply because of unfamiliar language or format, not because the student does not have a grasp of the concept. Testing isolated facts in an arbitrary order confuses test takers and truly ignores all that we know about the integration and synthesis of knowledge. Proponents of alternative assessments believe that traditional tests are the main cause for low-level cognitive recognition and true understanding in the classroom.

“Multiple-choice testing, whether used to measure students’ achievement at the classroom,
state, or national level, is a non-authentic means of assessing students' mastery of either
high-level educational objectives or society's expectations” (2). It is important that the
traditional social science curriculum and testing assessment practices be re-examined and
reorganized to insure mastery and high levels of cognitive understanding. There is a call
for alternative assessments that are aligned with what is demanded of students in the real
world. Student-generated demonstrations of mastery are essential with curriculum and
instruction.

Wangsatorntanakhun (2003), believes that performance assessment is a dynamic
process that calls for all students to be active participants in learning. She calls it
“The Challenges for the Three-Story Intellect.” She quotes Oliver Wendell Holmes;

There are one-story intellects, two-story intellects, and three-story
intellects with skylights. All fact collectors who have no aim beyond
their facts are one-storymen. Two-storymen compare, reason, generalize,
using the labor of fact collectors as their own. Three-storymen idealize,
imagine, predict—their best illumination comes from above the skylight (1).

Wangsatorntanakhun points out that performance-based assessment is an umbrella term
that embraces both alternative assessment and authentic assessment. The goal of alternative
performance assessment is to gather information on students that focuses on growth over
time, rather than comparing student to student. The focus is on what they know, rather than
what they don’t know. The final focus is to meet the needs of diverse learning styles,
cultural backgrounds, and proficiency levels. The best place for teachers to start is with
projects and activities already in use. The performance-based task in social science must be
connected to the content, skills, and to the real world.
Alternative performance assessments may be new to some people; it is not new, nor untried. They were successfully conducted decades ago and are vitally needed for more complete information on student performance. They are more complex and involved and are an important adjunct to over all large-scale assessment strategies (Roeber, 1995). This researcher has believed for years that the use of supplemental multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments are essential to the learning process. They enable the child to take his or her learning to another level of exploration and understanding. Educators are setting students up for success by allowing them to be part of focus groups who help develop projects, establish objectives, guidelines and also analytic rubrics.

The goal of social science education is to help students become contributing participating citizens. To achieve this goal, students must know, understand and apply the content and concepts of the various sub-disciplines of social science (government and civics, history, geography, economics, culture, and society). The current learning environment must take students beyond rote-learning and encourage active learning through discovery and exploration with alternative assessment practices (Alaska Department of Education, 2003).

Alternative performance assessments focus on the direct observance of a student’s performance or knowledge learned. Portfolio assessment in a social science classroom focuses on the growth and development of student potential. These assessments call into play intrapersonal, interpersonal intelligences, as well as verbal, logical, visual, musical, and naturalist’s (Fogerty, 1998). Wiggins (1989), also believes authentic alternative assessments play a greater role in achieving mastery of knowledge than conventional testing and standardized testing. Students who present their work and defend themselves publicly
and orally ensure that their apparent mastery is genuine.

A wide variety of alternative forms of assessment are available to teachers for accessing student learning. Classroom assessment is guided by three fundamental principles. Classroom assessments should (1) promote learning; (2) use multiple sources of information; and (3) provide fair, valid and reliable information. When supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessments are implemented appropriately, they make excellent assessment tools (The National Educational Association, 1994). Good assessment products come in a variety of sizes, shapes, colors and formats. They could be structural indexing activities, learning logs, video or audiotapes, multi-media demonstrations, dramatic performances, debates or panel discussions, formal speeches or presentations, tangible products, experiments or inventions, investigations, reports, role-playing or cooperative/collaborative group activities. Alternative assessments show dimensions of student creativity and originality, not evident in traditional kinds of assessment such as pen and pencil tests, quizzes or high-stake standardized tests. Students demonstrate improved attitudes toward learning when they are engaged and active (Forte and Schurr, 2002). Classrooms come alive as students interact and collaborate, sharing ideas, resources and strengths. Alternative assessment requires a flexible completion, which allows for better differentiation of instruction among students in all disciplines (TcTighe & Ferrara, 1994).

*Literature Against Alternative Assessments*

According to NCREL (2003), educators are very important decision-makers regarding the use of authentic, alternative performance assessment in their classrooms.
Criteria for using alternative performance assessments should be aligned with expectations and instruction. If teachers are not properly trained in performance assessment development, there can be problems with validity of the assessments. Within this high-stakes testing paradigm and test-driven curriculum environments, many districts do not encourage the use of alternative assessment practices. Schools continue to be bombarded with expectations by the state, district, legal and other requirements. With these increased expectations, the issue of alignment with alternative, performance assessments becomes very difficult. According to McMillan (2000), assessment decision-making is influenced by a series of tensions. These pressures result in tension for teachers as they make assessment-related decisions. Factors external to the classroom, such as mandated large-scale testing, promote different assessment strategies: such as selected-response multi-choice tests, rather than alternative performance assessments. Some teachers hesitate to create assessments beyond the multi-choice test. It is difficult to write multi-choice tests that go beyond the recall level; there could be time constraints, lack of money, and availability of resources in the classroom (Brualdi, 2000).

The federal and state governments have compelling arguments for high-stakes testing versus alternative assessments evaluations. Politicians, researchers and educational policymakers require standardized numerical data results (AERA, 2003).

*Existing Studies in Favor of Alternative Assessments*

The goal of social science educators is to promote civic competence and help young people develop the ability to make informed decisions for the good of the public. As citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world, the future depends on the ability of the educational leaders of tomorrow to make responsible
choices, critically think and communicate their knowledge, skill, values and attitudes through the use of alternative assessments (The National Council for the Social Studies, 1993), in (Nickell, 1993).

The National Council for the Social Studies also promotes the importance of an outcome-based approach that requires testing in authentic ways, using multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments. If civic competence is valued highly, students should be able to demonstrate mastery of civic competence through authentic, alternative performance tasks that match the demands and expectations of society. Fixed-response, rote-memorization testing will not accurately access a student’s ability to function as a competent member of society (Nickell, 1993).

Performance assessments show what a child has learned. Grant Wiggins, as cited by Nickell (1993), refers to performance assessment as “exhibitions of mastery.” Wiggins continues that educators must remember the purpose of assessment in social science: to enable students to become competent citizens. He states that educators should give less emphasis to recall and low level comprehension of facts and more emphasis to applying knowledge to authentic alternative performance tasks that require a high-level of cognition. “Competent citizens make informed decisions; offer reasonable solutions to social and civic problems; and acquire, synthesize, communicate useful information and ideas” (4).

The Kentucky Education Reform Act charges schools with the task of providing students with necessary tools for lifelong learning. Students who possess a variety of methods to approach learning will have a greater chance of becoming independent, “strategic learners.” Because students learn differently and their needs vary, using only
one instructional method and one assessment tool is not sufficient. Educators must
determine how well a learner has transferred strategies into personal learning tools and
applied his or her knowledge to key alternative assessment components. Collaborative
and cooperative experiences engage students in an interactive approach of processing
information that supports greater retention of material in social science classrooms.
Heterogeneous, cooperative groups are chosen for alternative assessments from different
social backgrounds, skill levels, physical capabilities, gender and learning styles.
Individual students are held accountable for academic performance and social behavior.
To achieve ultimate productivity, students depend upon and use each others’ strengths to
solve problems. The teacher guides, redirects and clarifies. Students are not only applying
knowledge and using their strengths, but they also are engaged learners, respecting
different points of view, participating, listening, role-playing, communicating, tutoring,
team building and establishing positive interdependence (Alaska Department of
Education, 1995).

Performance-based learning in the form of alternative assessments is not done in
isolation or in the abstract, but actively and collaboratively. According to Lucas (2001),
"Isolation and abstraction are enemies of learning" (2). Project-based learning in the form
of alternative assessments promotes a student’s emotional intelligence. Alternative
assessments enable the student to use what he or she has learned in innovative, creative
ways. This is the kind of learning all students deserve and the kinds of skills they will
need to be successful in their future lives.

Alternative assessment in project-based classrooms is productive and exciting and
takes the student beyond rote learning into discovery and exploration. Through the use of
alternative assessments, such as portfolios, oral presentations, cooperative group projects and multi-media presentations, teachers can view a more complete picture of student progress (Chen, 2001). Alternative assessments have enormous power in the classroom as a valued form of evaluation (Alberts, 2001). Alfred North Whitehead wrote nearly eighty years ago:

The art of education is never easy. To surmount its difficulties, especially those of elementary education, is a task worthy of the highest genius. But when one considers the importance of... a nation’s young, the broken lives, the defeated hopes, the national failures which result from the frivolous inertia with which it is treated, it is difficult to restrain within oneself a savage rage. A country that does not value trained intelligence is doomed (3).

Alternate assessment focuses on the growth and development of student potential. (Fogerty, 1998), in (Forte & Shurr, 2002).

Contrasting Points of View on Alternative Assessment

The two major points of view on assessment are those of the constructivist-instructional-reform advocate and the measurement/technical-quality advocate. Advocates of either side recognize the importance of the other, but they view their own as paramount. “Instructional reform is paramount when the assessment is to be used for local purposes and at the classroom and local level. Technical quality issues become important with large-scale assessments at the state, district, or national level that involve high-stakes, school and student accountability” (4). Advocates on either side fail to recognize how this fundamental difference in purpose affects the design of assessment. This particularly affects policymaker’s decisions that lead to conflict between instructional reform and
technical quality. Measurement issues become very important as the stakes attached to these assessments increase. When the results of a weekly classroom exam are combined with the results of several other alternative assessments to determine a student’s grade for the term, the technical quality of each individual assessment is less of a concern. (Simmons and Resnick, 1993), in (NCREL, 2003). Teachers are hesitant to implement alternative performance assessments in their classrooms. These teachers feel insecure because they do not know enough about how to fairly assess their students’ performance (Airasian, 1991), in ( Bruialdi, 2000).

Standardized multiple-choice tests can vary in their ability to fairly assess student knowledge. They are inexpensive and data is readily available making it easy to draw conclusions about a child’s progress. Sanders and Horn (1995), in Education Policy Archives (1995), take a unique position concerning alternative assessment. “Non-standardized alternative assessment has yet to demonstrate validity in generalized assessment” (1). Therefore, the real issue is whether standardized assessment or alternative assessment is the better model for evaluation of educational outcomes. The federal and state governments have compelling arguments for high-stakes testing versus alternative assessments evaluations. Politicians, researchers and educational policy makers require standardized numerical data results (AERA, 2003).

Equity

According to the American Heritage Dictionary (2003), “Equity is the state, ideal or quality of being just, impartial and fair” (462). In an educational setting, achieving equity would mean a state in which all children, including minorities, males, females, successful students and those who fall behind, have equal opportunities to learn and to
participate in challenging programs that will benefit their educational achievement. The many voices of diversity are not being heard; communication differences inevitably will lead to conflicts that could erode school climate and impede the quest for educational excellence for all children.

*Literature In Favor of Equity*

There is currently a need for educators to develop equitable teaching alternative assessment strategies that enable students to achieve their optimum educational potential within a high-stakes testing paradigm. Educators set high standards and maintain high expectations for all students, while understanding that children have natural developmental differences as they grow (NCREL, 1998). An equitable education for diverse school populations require appropriate teaching techniques, and assessment tools, empowering school culture, student-centered strategies and teacher awareness of the impact of his or her own culture and beliefs. Students have the right to an equitable education. Politicians and schools have ignored available research that documents the need for educational reform and the use of supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessment (Goin, 1999).

The first step of instruction is to access a student’s prior knowledge, cultural experience, language proficiency, cognitive style and interests so that instruction can provide the scaffolding necessary to bridge with new concepts. Concentrating on assets, rather than deficits, teachers are predisposed to see more potential in the children they teach. Therefore, instruction and assessment are inseparable. The teacher can treat the childrens’ experiences and backgrounds as resources for learning (The Fauquier County Board of Education, 2003).
To achieve equity in the classroom, teachers must communicate effectively with other professionals and solve problems with the best interest of all students and their families. Educators, therefore, respect and honor their learners’ ways of knowing when they create equitable units of study (Quintero, 2000). It is important to safeguard equity in American schools, particularly during the race for high-stakes standards-based educational reform.

“If standards-based reform falls short of its promises, the potential for harm to traditionally disadvantaged groups are great” (2). Diegmueller (1995), signals a yellow light of caution to policymakers, asking for a postponement of high-stake consequences until the measurement instruments are proven to be valid for all students.

*Literature Against Equity*

It is not that communities are against equity, but they are not meeting the challenges in this very diverse-conscious era. Communities are faced with persistent achievement gaps on tests and in overall performance of Asian American, Hispanic, African American and other minority groups. There is a necessity for candid, targeted discussions that focus on how to address the achievement gap between races, ethnicities and other socioeconomic minority groups. The discussions would focus on cultural concerns and achievement issues.

It is critical that the different groups work hand in hand with districts and administrators to eliminate this achievement gap (Delisio, 2002). Teachers are not against equity teaching and learning either, yet they are not responsive to the academic and cultural approaches needed in teaching a diverse student population. Professional development to help teachers appreciate and accommodate the similarities and differences among students' cultures is essential. Effective teachers of diverse student populations acknowledge individual
differences. Once this has been accomplished, a basis is created for the development of effective communication and appropriate instruction (Burnette, 1999).

Existing Studies In Favor of Equity

When existing studies compare the diversity in the United States today, it is obvious why one educational approach is not appropriate for all. The lack of equity teaching and learning is a problem for diverse ethnic groups, racial groups, lower socioeconomic individuals, gender different groups, above and below level students, ADHD and handicapped students. When schools do not provide students with opportunities to demonstrate what they know in their learning environment, it is unfair (Gaustad, 1996) in (Katz, 1997). “The term excellence is commonly used today as a rallying cry to improve student achievement and equity refers to the access and participation in a quality education for all” (2). Excellence and equity can be achieved simultaneously (Lockwood & Cleveland, 2002), in (Oakes, 1985).

Existing Studies Against Equity

Eric Clearinghouse Urban Education position statement on Gender Differences in Educational Achievement with Racial and Ethnic Groups (2001), reports that there is great debate on which population has been most shortchanged. The effort of educators to provide an equitable education has been a challenge. Teachers are not against providing an equitable response to diverse students, but again professional development and training for reaching the needs of diverse populations has not occurred. To increase the possibility that the assessment of each student is appropriate and valid, supplemental resources in the form of
alternative assessments should be used. Multiple assessment measures should be considered.

High-Stakes Testing

The impact of standardized high-stake tests and their consequences beyond the accountability measure are undermining sound educational instructional practices. The high-stakes testing paradigm in this country is establishing an unhealthy learning environment with schools and communities. Competing to get the best results is jeopardizing sound teaching practices, leaving solid student performance to chance. High-stake tests do not take into account reasoning, communication, commitment, problem-solving, critical thinking, consensus decision-making, and collaboration that takes place on project-based alternative assessment activities within content-rich social science units of study (AERA, 2003). In the 1990’s, states across the country devised new statewide standards, and many required that high school students pass competency tests before graduating. Over the past thirteen years, states have not only focused on establishing challenging academic standards to generate a richer more rigorous curriculum, but standards with high-stakes, or consequences beyond the accountability measure have been implemented. Thus, the evolution of test-driven curricula and a politically misguided educational accountability paradigm has been established. This simply leads educators to teach for a numerical result (AERA, 2003).

Literature in Favor of High-Stakes Testing

The National Commission on Education argued that schools in the United States
were performing poorly compared to other countries, thus losing global superiority. This commission called for rigorous standards, revisions of curriculums and thorough and efficient accountability with high-stake tests. The results from these standardized tests are now being used to make significant educational decisions about schools, teachers, administrators and students (A Nation at Risk, 1983). The NCLB Legislation, signed by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2001, ensures that each child and group of children (by race, income level, special education status) have their progress measured each year through standardized testing measures. This federal law ensures that schools are held accountable for achievement of all students (The No Child Left Behind Newsletter, The Achiever, 2002).

Literature Against High-Stakes Testing

Publishing testing results in the newspapers is considered a stake or consequence. High-stakes are consequences attached to a test beyond the accountability measure. A high-stakes state is one in which much is attached to test performance. If scores are low, schools will not be accredited and may possibly be taken over for improvement. Students may be given a voucher to transfer or the choice to transfer their enrollment to a private, charter or another successful public school. Teachers and administrators could lose their jobs, and students could be denied their high school diplomas. Our nation must protect students, teachers, administrators and communities against decisions based on a single test. Publishers should obtain state-standard content information to align tests with curriculum. With any high-stake testing program, it is important to acknowledge that there is ongoing evaluation of the intended and unintended consequences, and there is potential to cause
great harm to America's children (AERA, 2003).

The reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Act is seen as a federal policy designed to demonstrate the political leaderships willingness to do something about improving education. "The law's provisions are considerably at odds with the technical reality of test accountability. Never, think, in the history of federal education policy has the disconnect between policy and practice been so evident and possibly never so dangerous" (1). It is strange and ironic that conservative Republicans control the White House and the House of Representatives, and have sponsored the single largest and the single most damaging, expansion of federal power over the nation's education system in history. The federal government has mandated a single test-based accountability system for all states, a system currently operating in fewer than half the states. The federal government requires testing at every grade level and a posting of test scores by racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Can a single test define adequate yearly progress? This shift in federal policy is based on little more than policy talk among people who know hardly anything about realities of educational accountability and even less about the problems of improving instruction in schools. "As performance-based accountability becomes test-based accountability, critical issues recede, and a sensible policy becomes a nightmare" (9). American's children, their families and education will never be the same until the paradigm changes (Elmore, 2002).

John Wilson, Director of the National Educational Association urges an end to high-stake testing. The members attending the 2003 NEA Convention made it very clear by addressing their opposition to high-stakes testing. "Testing is important and a tool for
instruction, but now testing is driving instruction” (1). It is clear to the members of the NEA that high-stakes standardized testing is becoming a straitjacket. High-stakes tests are putting too much stress on students and teachers. They further cite that high-stakes testing diminishes the art of teaching and undermines good instructional practices. They realize standardized testing has its place, but there is no single test on any single day that should make a life decision for our children.

Standards and high-stake tests are like apples and oranges. There is very little connection between the two. High-stakes tests should never be used to determine whether or not a student might pass to the next grade or graduate (Nellen, 2003). Publishing companies are not always aligned with curriculum or standards of the state where the test is being used. Nellen agrees with standards, but, “Declassify high-stakes tests as the sole determiner of success or failure” (1). Legal challenges against state testing programs are pending in Arizona and Louisiana. Colorado, Minnesota, and Virginia citizens are putting pressure on legislators to rethink state accountability systems. Policymakers should listen to the backlash and be prepared for impending disaster. The backlash has been the strongest in states that plan to tie decisions on student promotion, graduation and school accreditation. Policymakers and politicians in high-stake states have been warned by experts that no single measure should decide a student’s academic fate (Olson, 2000). Olson refers to high-stake testing as “A Club for Compliance” (5). He also points out that policymakers and politicians are more interested in using standards as a club for compliance than as a means toward better teaching and learning. According to Nathan (2002), common sense and common experience prove that school reform in the form of high-stakes testing is a fantasy,
"a war game in which young people are the expendable pawns" (5). This type of dialogue focuses on one-size-fits-all accountability, measured only by standardized tests. It is clearly evident students’ educational needs are not being met.

Standardized tests typically focus on what is easiest to measure, not on the critical thinking skills students need to develop. One of the key issues is how well do the tests align with the state standards. Forty-eight states and the District of Columbia now include multiple-choice tests. Only eighteen states have performance-based assessments. Two states have developed portfolio assessments. Schools and parents have concern that curricula are test-driven and teachers are spending too much time preparing students for multiple-choice tests. An Education Week survey in 2000 reports that 66 percent of teachers think state tests are forcing them to concentrate on what will be on the test. It also states that standardized tests are culturally biased, drawing primarily upon the experiences of middle-class white students (Education Week, 2003).

High-stakes are attached to the tests. Not only will schools be held accountable for results, but whether students will be promoted or graduate. In 2004, eight states will base grade to grade promotion decisions on high-stake test results. Alaska and Arizona have delayed attaching consequences to such exams. Critics of high-stakes tests are concerned that decisions about students’ graduation and promotion from grade to grade will now be based on their performance on one multi-choice test. According to Kohn (2003), “raising standards has come to mean little more than higher scores on poorly-designed standardized tests.” Lewis (2002), describes high-stakes, test-based accountability under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), “a crazy horse that is being ridden by advocates for poor children and
guardians of rigorous standards, as if it were a Kentucky Derby winner instead of a maniac steed bent on self-destruction ” (1). There is early evidence that the NCLB’s test-based accountability is undermining good teaching practices.

Existing Studies In Favor of High-Stakes Testing

The National Commission on Education, in 1983, argued that schools in the United States were performing poorly in comparison to other industrialized countries, And the United States was in jeopardy of losing its global superiority. They called for rigorous standards, revision of curricula and thorough and efficient accountability of educational content standards (Berliner and Amrien, 2002). Robert Marzano, points out standards hold the greatest hope for significantly improving student achievement. Marzano reports that after A Nation at Risk was published in 1983, educators tried to increase academic achievement by making grade requirements more stringent. The standards movement has had positive effects, yet needs work. America has made a giant step forward concerning student achievement. Marzano reflects that high-stake testing does put negative pressure on teachers, but does not feel standards-based education hurts instructional creativity. “Policymakers are not telling teachers how to teach; they are just saying that we must produce results relative to specific content” (Scherer, 2001, 5).

The William and Mary School of Education is in favor of high-stake testing. It is the goal of every educator to provide students with all the tools to succeed with top quality instruction that is relevant and meaningful. Students must be prepared for the high-stakes test with top notch instruction. High-stakes tests are here to stay and are being intensely scrutinized. Educators cannot leave student performance to chance. Students deserve the
best possible instruction that will accurately reflect their hard work (Rea, 2003).

Existing Studies Against High-Stakes Testing

Standardized achievement testing may undermine self-regulated learning, even when done with the best intentions. It will inhibit appropriate text comprehension because the multiple-choice format restricts opportunities to express adequate meaning. Testing is solitary and competitive (Paris & Ayres, 1994), in (Forte and Schurr, 2002). Standards and tests, in most states, go through their centralized educational bureaucracies. They have developed standard frameworks, resource guides and instructional strategies and set pass rates for the high-stake standardized tests. This locks teachers into standard approaches and abolishes teachers’ judgment as to their diverse student population. State mandated tests are lock-stepped and do not reward creativity or teacher sensitivity to culture or socio-economic standards. Nor do they see the achievement as it relates to the teacher helping disadvantaged students overcoming challenging learning obstacles. “Teaching in a test-driven environment retards developmentally appropriate practices” (8).

There are very few teachable moments because teachers are locked into mandated standard curriculums that revolve around high-stakes standardized tests. High-stake tests can take their toll on poor and minority children especially in the early grades (Harrington and Leuker, 2000) in (Cunningham, 2002).

High-stake standardized tests are not a voice for reason and sound educational assessment. They are creating an educational paradigm in this country that is establishing an unhealthy learning environment within schools and communities. The result of this is growing inequality between the content and quality of education
provided to white, middle-class children and that provided to those in poor and minority schools” (729). High-stakes attached to the scores have made many schools replace the regular curriculum in minority students’ classrooms with test-prep materials that have virtually no value beyond practicing for the test (McNeil, 2000). High-stakes decisions have severe consequences for those affected. The test scores will be used to determine county or district funding, students’ promotion, teachers’ promotion and graduation (Paris, Lawton, Turner, and Roth, 1991), in (NCREL, 2003).

Summary of Literature Reviewed

Supporting research documents show that educators, policymakers and politicians must seek to re-define high-stake standardized testing and the sanctions that go with them. Literature also reveals that in the development of second-generation standards, there is a need to deepen the focus on broader, multiple measures, such as supplemental, multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative performance assessments in social science. This would allow students to demonstrate in a standard-based, differentiated constructivist environment, higher-level thinking skills, communication skills, social interaction skills, analytic capabilities, decision-making and civic responsibility.

Previous studies show it is necessary to establish equity teaching and a first class educational experience for all students. Pride in our educational system will foster excellence in academic achievement, respect, compassion, and understanding that promotes healthy development of our children.

The findings of this literature review may prove helpful to educators interested
in equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom that promotes supplemental, multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments. With vision, dignity, dedication, and perseverance in this challenging educational paradigm, personal courage and the quiet strength of educators across America will continue to touch the future and enable young people to be productive and independent members of society.
Chapter III

Methodology

Introduction

There is currently a need for educators to develop equitable teaching and alternative assessment strategies that enable students to achieve their optimum educational potential within a high-stakes testing paradigm. The purpose of the development of this educational project is to create a sixth grade social science curriculum manual that promotes equity teaching and learning through the use of multi-sensory supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessments. The curriculum manual is based upon state and county standards, with multiple alternative performance assessment activities that demonstrate student grasp or understanding of academic content in new and different ways. This manual will establish an opportunity for an experienced teacher to assert curriculum leadership and integrated instructional teaching and performance-based assessment strategies to accommodate differing learning styles, abilities, interests, cultural backgrounds, and exceptionalities of young adolescent middle level social science students.

Manual Development and Design

The heart of this manual is to provide a first-class educational experience for all students. Efforts are intentional and results-oriented. A vision for this manual includes a curriculum that requires students to be active participants.

The researcher examined empirical literature that shows how in a student-centered, differentiated, multi-sensory, standard-based social science curriculum, alternative
assessments are needed within the demands of a high-stakes testing paradigm. An in-depth, non-traditional unit entitled “Understanding the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution” was developed (See Appendix A), which employs Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought and Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences. They are used as instructional tools for differentiation purposes concerning learning style adaptations, multicultural emphasis, left and right brain orientation. Emphases on creative and critical thinking skills are designed to improve problem solving and decision making skills. The unit is designed to show character-building role models who helped shape our democracy. The students will discover how great Americans approached their own difficulties.

Resource Collection

1. Researcher Materials:

   - List of student web-sites on the Constitution (See Appendix A)
   - List of student resources and videocassettes about the Constitution (See Appendix A)
   - Copy of any sixth grade social science textbook, 1787 – 2000
   - Tips, Tools, and Timesavers For Thinking Success – (Forte & Schurr, 2002)
   - Computers
   - Internet
   - Colored paper, computer paper, glue, scissors, colored pencils and markers
   - Tri-fold presentation display
2. Researcher retrieved studies and empirical information concerning alternative assessments, equity and high-stakes testing from the World Wide Web.

3. Researcher collected books, materials, and professional documentation on the use and effectiveness of supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessments.

Setting for the Use of the Manual

The primary setting for the use of the manual is a small county middle school in rural Northern Virginia, whose major goal is to provide an equitable education for all students. Students will study and master multiple assessment assignments, within a major multi-sensory thematic unit on the Constitution of the United States.

Projected Recipients

1. The social science classes will consist of one-hundred heterogeneously grouped male and female students, ages ten through thirteen years of age.

2. The students will attend five social science classes each week.

3. Each class will last forty-five minutes per day.

4. The site is a middle school in Virginia.

5. The designed performance-based alternative assessments will be presented as assessment evaluations in a standard-rich heterogeneous sixth grade social science classroom.

6. Multiple alternative assessment assignments will be designed, including a major
multi-sensory thematic unit on the Constitution of the United States.

Restatement of Major Question and Sub Questions

Major Question: How can educators provide equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom?

Sub-questions:

1. What multi-sensory resources, in the form of alternative assessments, will enable all students to achieve their optimum educational potential and demonstrate their development in historical knowledge, reasoning skills, and communication skills?

2. What specific instructional tools, in the form of authentic alternative assessments, can be incorporated in a sixth grade social science classroom that stimulate and motivate the middle grade student in the learning process?

3. How can a teacher successfully incorporate alternative performance assessments with a content-rich, test-driven standards curriculum?

4. How can total group assessment devices be tailored to acknowledge and make positive application of differences in individual learning styles?

The Manual

The curriculum manual is based upon a culminating, multi-sensory,
Constructivist unit of study, “Understanding the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution,” (See Appendix A) that allows all students, regardless of ability level, to achieve their ultimate educational potential. Educational equity is evident throughout the design, implementation, and presentation stages of “Understanding the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution.” This unit is based upon the utilization of Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligence’s, Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought, and Left and Right Brain Orientation. The students will discover, through an exciting and enlightening comprehensive study of Democracy and its roots, how great Americans approached their difficulties through wisdom, collaboration, disagreement, and compromise, while shaping American History and American character.

This is a non-traditional, in-depth unit of study based upon “Integrated Instruction.” The teacher and the students facilitate meaningful learning goals. The duration of the unit and assessment project will be three weeks, incorporating state Standards of Learning requirements.

Summary

The research and strategies presented in this manual are intended to promote the quest for equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom by providing supplemental multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments to awaken and ignite that spark of excitement and enthusiasm for learning within each child. The hope remains, despite many obstacles, that alternative performance-based assessments will support a richer, more open-ended curriculum and more accurately assess the skills of all students. As long as supplemental resources, in the form of
alternative assessments, are used as part of the high-stake testing paradigm, pressure to
generate high and improving scores means that there is no safeguard against a new
trivialization of learning. It is the mission of educators to assist students in their
educational learning process by providing enrichment evaluation in the form of
alternative assessments which develop their ability to reason, think and communicate
effectively.
CHAPTER IV

Product Development

Introduction

As stated in Chapter I, there is currently a need for educators to develop equitable teaching alternative assessment strategies that enable students to achieve their educational potential within a high-stakes testing paradigm. This Capstone Project will promote equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom by providing supplemental multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments. The curriculum manual establishes an opportunity for an experienced teacher to assert curriculum leadership and quality implementation of integrated instructional teaching and performance-based assessment strategies to accommodate differing learning styles, abilities and interests.

The objective is to develop a social science sixth grade curriculum manual that utilizes supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessments. The curriculum will be based upon state standards with multiple performance assessments that demonstrate student grasp or understanding of academic content in new and different ways. This chapter addresses the project’s major question and four sub-questions:

Major Question: How can educators provide teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom?

Sub-questions:

1. What multi-sensory resources, in the form of alternative assessments, will enable all students to achieve their
optimum educational potential and demonstrate their
development in historical knowledge, reasoning skills, and
communication skills?

2. What specific instructional tools, in the form of authentic
alternative assessments, can be incorporated in a sixth grade
social science classroom that stimulate and motivate the
grade student in the learning process?

3. How can a teacher successfully incorporate alternative
performance assessments with a content-rich, test-driven
standards curriculum?

4. How can total group assessment devices be tailored to
acknowledge and make positive application of differences
in individual learning styles?

This qualitative research and active project provides a multi-sensory culminating,
collaborative, constructivist teacher’s manual in the form of an alternative assessment,
(See Appendix A). It includes creative instructional assessment strategies designed to
enable heterogeneous groups of students to demonstrate their knowledge.
Performance-based learning (also referred to as problem-based, experiential or
constructivist learning,) helps teachers and students improve learning, which is the true
purpose of assessment. This chapter is organized to answer five specific questions:

Major Question: How can educators provide teaching and learning in a sixth
grade social science classroom? The heart of this project is to provide a first-class
educational experience for all students. Efforts are intentional and results oriented. Multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments enable all students to achieve their optimum educational potential and demonstrate their development in historical knowledge, reasoning skills, and communication skills. These tasks require higher level thinking; draw on student experience, knowledge, skill development; identify students’ profile of intelligences, and necessitate some form of performance or product to demonstrate competence. Students will demonstrate analytic capabilities, problem solving skills, communication and social interaction skills, decision-making, civic responsibility, skill in developing and maintaining wellness, and skill in using technology as a tool for learning. The classroom approach provides a curriculum with a wide variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences, which foster excellence, respect, compassion, and an understanding that promotes academic and personal development.

Sub-Question One: What multi-sensory resources, in the form of alternative assessments will enable students to achieve their optimum educational potential? The use of alternative performance assessments in the form of portfolios, oral presentations, role-playing, technology use, reading and writing response groups, self-directed learning, cooperative learning activities based upon Bloom’s Taxonomy and Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences, and exhibitions are goal-directed assessment activities that demand students use their background of knowledge and skill in continuous ways to solve a complex problem or task.

A Portfolio is a collection of representative student work over a period of time. It documents a student’s best work, and may include a variety of other kinds of
process information (drafts of students work, student’s self-assessment of their work, parents’ assessment, project-based activities, and multi-media reports). A portfolio is used for evaluation of a student’s abilities and improvement. By giving the students a role in determining the contents of their portfolio’s, teachers/educators will provide greater incentive to learn and a greater sense of responsibility for their own learning. Portfolio assessment focuses on growth and development of student potential (Fogarty, 1998).

Dr. Howard Gardner has identified eight multiple intelligences as eight different ways of knowing, perceiving, and understanding the world around us. Gardner makes it clear that one or two intelligences are often stronger and more developed in a person, although everyone has the capacity for nurturing all eight (Gardner, 2002). This project design incorporates these multiple intelligences.

Educators who use a wide variety of methods and techniques when instituting resources in the form of alternative assessments, will keep their students engaged, active and collaborative. Alternative assessments will give a better picture of actual student progress (Chen, 2001). The purpose of alternative assessments in social science is to demonstrate student grasp or understanding of academic content in new and different ways. Alternative performance assessments focus on the direct observance of a student’s performance, Students get to apply what they have learned. High quality assessment must rest on strong foundations. The foundations include organizing schools to meet the learning needs of their students, understanding how students learn, establishing high standards for student learning, and providing equitable and adequate opportunity to learn.
Sub-Question Two: What specific instructional tools, in the form of alternative assessments, can be incorporated in a sixth grade social science classroom to stimulate and motivate the middle grade student in the learning process?

Specific instructional tools in the form of alternative assessments will be incorporated in a sixth grade social science classroom to stimulate and motivate the middle grade student in the learning process. This product reflects a multi-sensory approach to engage students' multiple intelligences, challenge their cognitive ability, and capitalize on students' individual strengths. Students are encouraged to use traditional classroom materials such as glue, scissors, markers and construction paper, while others will be preparing PowerPoint presentations, Excel spread sheets and retrieving multi-media electronic information.

Measurement of innovative delivery systems such as cooperative learning, multiple-intelligence theory, and left and right brain activities are instructional tools for differentiation. These systems promote team building, goal attainment, face to face interaction, positive interdependence, and individual accountability that leads to greater student achievement in social science. Think-Pair-Share, Interactive Worksheets, Roundtable Discussions, Pairs Check will provide students with necessary tools for lifelong learning skills. These cooperative learning activities will adequately prepare students for the society in which they live.

Cooperative Learning promotes high achievement through tasks involving concept attainment, verbal problem solving, categorization, spatial problem solving, retention and memory motor performance, analysis, judging and predicting. Structural Indexing, peer tutoring, exploratory and mini-courses, and thematic and
research-literature based units, as well as teacher-directed lessons and lectures will occur.

Structural Indexing, a teaching strategy utilized for differentiation in a sixth grade social science classroom and is based upon an understanding of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought. Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought tasks will help students construct knowledge, comprehend and understand information, infer, interpret, summarize, and translate. It allows a child to apply information they have learned. They will compute, construct, demonstrate, derive, develop, discuss, investigate, and perform. They will analyze and break down information into its component parts. This will allow them to compare, contrast, debate, draw conclusions, examine, sort, and uncover new information. Students will learn to synthesize information together in new and different ways. They will create, design, propose, and present. Educators honor students’ efforts to assess, defend, perform, validate and verify what they have learned. Its implementation is exciting, and motivational. Creative expression soars in a positive, affective learning environment. Students will perform learning tasks, student worksheets, cooperative learning group assignments and independent study tasks. The curriculum manual will include a structural indexing activity (See Appendix A ).

Emphasis on creative and critical thinking skills are designed to improve problem-solving and decision making skills within the context of my unit. It is essential to use a variety of instructional tools to show a relationship of character-building role models and have students discover how great Americans approached their difficulties. The curriculum manual contains a Constructivist unit that will go through the Introduction, Implementation, Research and Presentation stages (See Appendix A ).
Sub-Question Three: How can a teacher incorporate alternative performance assessments within a content-rich, test-driven standards curriculum?

Teachers and students are partners in successful instruction. Instructional practices reflect the wisdom derived from best teaching practices. Teachers incorporate alternative performance assessments within a content-rich standards environment by creating safe, supportive, and diverse environments that validate each student's uniqueness. All learners deserve developmentally appropriate instruction, assessment and support. Students learn best from real world experiences which each individual perceives as personally relevant. These experiences are more powerful if they are guided and purposeful. Instruction and assessment are inseparable. An in-depth, non-traditional unit entitled “Understanding the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution was developed (See Appendix A), which employs Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought and Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences. They are used as tools for differentiation purposes concerning learning style adaptations, multicultural emphasis, and left and right brain orientation. Historical Reasoning and understanding are the principal aims of social science study. Alternative assessments within these studies allow students to organize, interpret, and express their own thoughts. It will allow them to compare and contrast information; and interpret historical records to construct historical significance of their own.

Sub-Question Four: How can total group assessment devices be tailored to acknowledge and make positive application of differences in individual learning styles?

Total group assessment devices are tailored to acknowledge and make positive application of differences in individual learning styles, (visual, auditory and kinesthetic)
by providing a multi-sensory, differentiated approach. Students have very different kinds
of minds and different kinds of strengths. As educators, this must be recognized in
classroom presentation. Child-centered learning is necessary in a sixth grade social science
classroom to acknowledge and find the "smart" in every child.

The following learning objectives will be established and met during the
implementation and use of the manual:

1. Each student will complete a performance-based task with
   quality standards. Content will be standard-driven, relevant and
   meaningful to sixth grade social science students.

2. Instructional strategies will be driven by learner outcomes and
   products demonstrated.

3. The manual will clearly show how quality standards,
   performance-based assessments, meaningful and relevant
   learning objectives, and appropriate lesson planning can aid
   teachers in ensuring the success of all students when using
   in the form of alternative assessments.

4. The purpose of the manual is to tailor group assessment
   devices to a mixed ability class that creates an active learning
   environment, which results in learning of high intellectual
   quality and challenges the skills and abilities of all students.

The manual shows how group assessment devices can be tailored to a mixed ability class
and creates an active learning environment which will result in learning of high intellectual
quality and challenge the skills and abilities of all students.

Design

The objective of the manual is to show how multi-sensory resources, in the form of alternative assessments enable all students to achieve their optimum educational potential and demonstrate their development in historical knowledge, reasoning, and communication skills.

- Introduction
- Goal Considerations
- Differentiation/ A Major Goal
- State Unit Preparation and Implementation
- Objectives
- Personnel Involved
- Materials Needed
- Location in which product will be used
- Time-Frame of Implementation
- Cooperative Groups Information

Required Resources

- Technology access – For Research

  Puzzlemaker.com
  Mapmaker.com
  Timeliner.com
  Composing
• Any social science middle school text 1787 – 2000,

• Structural Indexing Understanding (See Appendix A)

• Cooperative Learning Understanding (See Appendix A)

• Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought Cards (See Appendix A)

• Multiple Intelligence Theory Activities (See Appendix A)

_Use of Manual_

The curriculum manual is a culminating, collaborative, alternative assessment, Constructivist unit of study. Cooperative learning teams are chosen and individual task assignments made within cooperative groups.

_Cost of Materials and Electricity_

The estimate of expected usage costs:

• tri-fold board (each child will purchase) $4.00 child

• Colored and white paper $30.00 school

• Electricity for computers $30.00 school

• Preparation of Instructional Booklets (Paper) $20.00 school

• Ink Cartridge usage $10.00 school

• Colored pencils, markers, glitter, paint, borders $10.00 child

Total Cost $104.00

_Monitoring and Evaluation Plan_

The manual is designed for a sixth grade social science classroom. It is based upon
state standards, using multiple supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessments. These assessments demonstrate student grasp or understanding of academic content in new and different ways.

The objectives are clear. This manual will provide educators with a unit of curriculum and allows equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom. It promotes multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments, that enable students to achieve their optimum educational potential and demonstrate their development in historical knowledge, reasoning skills, and communication skills. Specific instructional tools in the form of authentic alternative assessments will be incorporated in a sixth grade social science classroom that stimulate and motivate the middle grade student in the learning process. The teachers will successfully incorporate alternative performance assessments within as content-rich curriculum. Finally, total group assessment devices will be tailored to acknowledge make positive application of differences in individual learning styles (See Appendix A).

This manual is meeting the objectives by promoting the quest for equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom through supplemental, multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments. It provides a curriculum with a wide variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences, which foster excellence, respect, compassion, and understanding that promotes academic and personal development. This manual will enlighten and inspire the highly qualified, committed educational professional to avoid doing what has been done in the past, and to create a positive learning climate of respect, collaboration and high expectations, based upon defined instructional
strategies in the form of alternative assessments. The manual emphasizes alternative performance assessments which stimulate interest, enthusiasm, a quest for knowledge, improved self-esteem, and lead to greater student achievement in sixth grade social science. The desired impact will be seen through cooperative learning efforts, team building, and successful performance task completion.

Resources in the form of alternative assessments encourage student ownership through self-assessment; set flexible time limits, scored through multi-faceted systems; allow for student strengths and weaknesses; make use of individual learning style and interests, and reflects real world application of knowledge and minimizes competition. Wiggins (1989) states self-assessment plays a greater role than in conventional testing. Students are often expected to present their work and defend themselves publicly and orally to ensure that their apparent mastery is genuine. Self-assessment observations and statements made by the individual students about each project or performance that he or she has completed reflects understanding and competency. This manual focuses on curriculum, instruction and measurement/assessment on desired student outcomes. It is an educational process where the student takes intermediate steps in reaching the final performance or end-product specified by his or her assignment. Process includes strategies, decisions, rough drafts, and rehearsals deliberate in completing the given task. Resources in the form of alternative assessments are reliable assessment tools that provide consistent information over time. Students receive a set of guidelines for giving scores called a rubric, which states all the dimensions being assessed; it contains a scale for final evaluation.
Using resources in the form of alternative assessments will support a richer, more open-ended curriculum and more accurately access the specific skills of all students. As long as supplemental resources in the form of alternate assessments are utilized, it will be the mission of educators to assist students in their educational learning process by providing enrichment evaluation in the form of alternative assessments that develops their ability to reason, think, and communicate effectively. Our society demands an educated citizenry.
Chapter V

Conclusion, Discussion, and Recommendations

Introduction

This chapter restates the problem and educational elements that were instituted within a sixth grade social science classroom to promote equity teaching and learning. The development of the curriculum manual establishes an opportunity for an experienced teacher to assert curriculum leadership and quality implementation of integrated instructional teaching to accommodate differing learning styles, abilities, and interests. This researcher's course of action shows how, in a student-centered, differentiated, standard-based social science curriculum, supplemental multi-sensory resources, in the form of alternative assessments are needed, even within the demands of a high-stakes testing paradigm.

Problem Statement

There is currently a need for educators to develop equitable teaching alternative assessment strategies that enable students to achieve their optimum educational potential. The curriculum manual is the result of the investigation that supplemental resources, in the form of alternative assessments, support a richer, more open-ended educational environment that more accurately assesses the skills of all students.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this qualitative research/active project is to develop a social science sixth grade curriculum manual that utilizes supplemental resources in the form of alternative assessments. The curriculum is based upon state standards with multiple
performance assessments that demonstrate student grasp or understanding of academic content in new and different ways.

The Importance of the Manual

The research and strategies presented in this manual are intended to promote the quest for equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom, by providing supplemental multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments (See Appendix A).

Methodology Review

This research project examines empirical literature to show how in a student-centered, differentiated, multi-sensory, standard-based social science curriculum, alternative assessments are needed within the demands of a high-stakes testing paradigm. An in-depth, non-traditional unit entitled, “Understanding the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution.” The unit takes into consideration Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought and Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences. They are being used as instructional tools for differentiation purposes concerning learning style adaptations, multicultural sensitivity, and left and right brain orientation. Emphasis is on creative and critical thinking skills and is designed to improve problem-solving and decision making skills.

The manual is intended to promote the quest for equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom by providing supplemental, multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments. This classroom approach provides curriculum with a wide variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that foster excellence, respect, compassion, and understanding that promotes academic and personal development.
Conclusions

Questions Answered by the Project

This evaluative research project serves to answer the following questions:

Major question:

How can educators provide equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom?

The heart of this manual is to provide a first-class educational experience for all students. Efforts are intentional and result-oriented. Multi-sensory resources, in the form of alternative assessments, enable all students to achieve their optimum educational potential and demonstrate their development in historical knowledge, reasoning skills, and communication skills. These tasks require higher level thinking; draw on student experience, knowledge, skill development; identify students’ profile of intelligences; and necessitate some form of performance or product to demonstrate competence. Performance based learning in the form of alternative assessments are not done in isolation or in the abstract; they are active and collaborative (Lucas, 2001). Students demonstrate analytic capabilities, problem solving skills, communication and social interaction skills, decision-making, civic responsibility, skill in developing and maintaining wellness, and skill in using technology as a tool for learning. The use of project-based learning through alternative methods such as student portfolios, oral presentations, multi-media reports and review by teachers and peers provides a more complete picture of student progress (Chen, 2001). The learning environment of every classroom must take the students beyond rote learning into a level of discovery and exploration (Chen, 2001). This classroom approach provides a curriculum with a wide
variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences, which foster excellence, respect, compassion, and an understanding that promotes academic and personal development. Grant Wiggins, as cited by Nickell, (1993), refers to performance assessment as “exhibitions of mastery.” Wiggins continues that educators must remember the purpose of assessment in social science, to enable students to become competent citizens. He states that educators should give less emphasis to recall and low level comprehension of facts and more emphasis to applying knowledge to authentic alternative performance tasks that require a high level of cognition. In order to answer the major question, four sub-questions were established:

Sub-questions:

1. **What multi-sensory resources, in the form of alternative assessments, will enable all students to achieve their optimum educational potential and demonstrate their development in historical knowledge, reasoning skills and communication skills?**

Portfolio assessment focuses on growth and development of student potential (Fogarty, 1998). The use of alternative performance assessments in the form of portfolios, oral presentations, role-playing, technology use, reading and writing response groups, self-directed learning, cooperative learning activities based upon Bloom’s Taxonomy and Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences, and exhibitions are goal-directed assessment activities that demand students use their background of knowledge and skill in continuous ways to solve a complex problem or task.

Dr. Howard Gardner has identified eight multiple intelligences. He defines these
intelligences as eight different ways of knowing, perceiving, and understanding the world around us. Gardner makes it clear that one or two intelligences are often stronger and more developed in a person, although everyone has the capacity for nurturing all eight (Gardner, 2002). This project design incorporates these multiple intelligences.

Educators who use a wide variety of methods and techniques when instituting resources in the form of alternative assessments will keep their students engaged, active, and collaborative. Alternative assessments give a better picture of actual student progress (Chen, 2001). The purpose of alternative assessments in social science is to demonstrate student grasp or understanding of academic content in new and different ways. Alternative performance assessments focus on the direct observance of a student’s performance. Students apply what they have learned. High quality assessment must rest on strong foundations, which include organizing schools to meet the learning needs of their students, understanding how students learn, establishing high standards for student learning, and providing equitable and adequate opportunity to learn. The incorporation of specific instructional performance tasks will provide students with the necessary tools for lifelong learning skills (AERA, 2003).

2. What specific instructional tools, in the form of authentic, alternative, assessments can be incorporated in a sixth grade social science classroom, that stimulate and motivate the middle grade student in the learning process?

Specific instructional tools in the form of alternative assessments are provided for sixth grade social science classrooms that stimulate and motivate the middle-grade student in the learning process. The manual uses a multi-sensory approach to engage students’
multiple intelligences, challenge their cognitive ability, and capitalize on individual strengths. Projects encourage students to use traditional classroom materials such as glue, scissors, markers, and construction paper, while others prepare PowerPoint presentations, or Excel spreadsheets, and retrieve multi-media electronic information.

Cooperative learning, multiple-intelligence theory, and left and right brain activities are instructional tools for differentiation. Multicultural emphasis, promotes team building, goal attainment, face to face interaction, positive interdependence, and individual accountability leads to greater student achievement in social science. Think-Pair-Share, Interactive Worksheets, Roundtable Discussions, and Pairs Check will provide students with necessary tools for lifelong learning skills. These cooperative learning activities will adequately prepare students for the society in which they live. Critics assert that standardized, fixed-response testing may be unfairly misaligned with instruction. Nickell emphasizes that questions may be missed simply because of unfamiliar language or format, not because the student does not have a grasp of the concept. Testing isolated facts in an arbitrary order confuses test takers and truly ignores all that we know about the integration and synthesis of knowledge. Proponents of alternative assessments believe that traditional tests are the main cause for low-level cognitive recognition and true understanding in the classroom (Nickell, 1993).

Cooperative Learning also promotes high achievement through tasks involving concept attainment, verbal problem solving, categorization, spatial problem solving, judging and predicting. Structural Indexing, peer tutoring, and thematic and research literature-based units, as well as teacher-directed lessons and lectures will occur.
Collaborative and cooperative experiences engage students in an interactive approach of processing information that supports greater retention of material in social science classrooms. Heterogeneous, cooperative groups are chosen for alternative assessments from different social backgrounds, skill levels, physical capabilities, gender and learning styles. Individual students are held accountable for academic performance and social behavior. To achieve ultimate productivity, students depend upon and use each others' strengths to solve problems. The teacher guides, redirects and clarifies. Students are not only applying knowledge and using their strengths, by they are engaged learners, respecting different points of view, participating, listening, role-playing, communicating tutoring, team building and establishing positive interdependence (Alaska Department of Education, 1995).

Efforts are intentional and result-oriented. The activities allow students to utilize a wide variety of methods and techniques when engaged in multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments. Alternative assessment will give a better picture of actual student progress (Chen, 2001). Structural Indexing, an alternative assessment (See Appendix A), a teaching strategy that provides equitable and adequate opportunities to learn through differentiation in a sixth grade social science classroom, is based upon an understanding of Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought. Bloom's Taxonomy tasks will help students construct knowledge, comprehend and understand information, infer, interpret, summarize, and translate. It allows a child to apply information they have learned. They will compute, construct, demonstrate, derive, develop, discuss, investigate, and perform. They will analyze and break down information into its component parts. This will allow them to
compare, contrast, debate, draw conclusions, examine, sort, and uncover new information. Students will learn to synthesis information together in new and different ways. They will create, design, propose, and present. Educators honor students’ efforts to assess, defend, perform, validate, and verify what they have learned. Its implementation is exciting and motivational and creative expression soars in this positive, affective learning environment. Wangsatorntanakhun (2003), believes that performance assessment is a dynamic process that calls for all students to be active participants in learning and focuses on what they know, rather than what they do not know. The final focus is to meet the needs of diverse learning styles, cultural backgrounds, and proficiency levels. Students will perform learning tasks, student’s worksheets, cooperative learning group assignments, and independent study tasks. The product of the Capstone Project reflects a structural indexing activity.

Emphasis on creative and critical thinking skills are designed to improve problem-solving and decision making skills within the context of my unit. It is essential to use a variety of instructional tools to show a relationship of character-building role models and have students discover how great Americans approached their difficulties. The manual is a collaborative, alternative-assessment, Constructivist unit that will go through the Introduction, Implementation, Research, and Presentation stages. Wiggins (1989), believes authentic alternative assessments play a greater role in achieving mastery of knowledge than conventional testing and standardized testing. Students who present their work and defend themselves publicly and orally ensure that their apparent mastery is genuine.
3. **How can a teacher successfully incorporate alternative performance assessments within a content-rich, test-driven standards curriculum?**

Teachers and students are partners in successful instruction. Students demonstrate improved attitudes toward learning when they are engaged and active (Forte & Schurr, 2002). Instructional practices reflect the wisdom derived from best teaching practices. Teachers incorporate alternative performance assessments within content-rich standards environment by creating safe, supportive and diverse environments that validate each student's uniqueness. All learners deserve developmentally appropriate instruction, assessment and support. Students learn best from real world experiences which each individual perceives as personally relevant. These experiences are more powerful if they are guided and purposeful. Instruction and assessment are inseparable. Alternative Assessment requires a flexible completion, which allows for better differentiation of instruction among students in all disciplines (TcTighe & Ferrara, 1994).

4. **How can total group assessment devices be tailored to acknowledge and make positive application of differences in individual learning styles?**

Total group assessment devices can be tailored to acknowledge and make positive application of differences in individual learning styles (visual, auditory and kinesthetic), by providing a multi-sensory, differentiated approach. Students have very different kinds of minds and different kinds of strengths. As educators, we must recognize these in classroom presentation. Child-centered learning is a must in a sixth grade social science classroom if we are to acknowledge and find the “smart” in every child. We must discover the abilities in all our students utilizing a richer, more varied curriculum format. The goal
of social science educators is to promote civic competence and help young people develop
the ability to make informed decisions for the good of the public. As citizens of a
culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world, the future depends on the
ability of educational leaders of tomorrow to make responsible choices, critically think
and communicate their knowledge, skill, values and attitudes through the use of
alternative assessments (The National Council for the Social Studies, 1993), in
(Nickell, 1993).

Manual Objectives

The following learning objectives have been established:

- Each student will complete a performance-based task with quality standards.
- Content is standard-driven, relevant and meaningful to sixth grade social
  science students.
- Instructional strategies are driven by learner outcomes and products demonstrated
to answer the question: How does the teacher/facilitator know that the student
  understands?
- The manual clearly shows how quality standards, performance-based assessments,
  meaningful and relevant learning objectives, and appropriate lesson planning can aid
  teachers in ensuring the success of all students when using resources in the form of
  alternative assessments.
- The purpose of the manual is to tailor group assessment devices to a mixed ability class
  and create an active learning environment, which will result in learning of high
intellectual quality and challenge the skills and abilities of all students.

Recommendation for Educators

Educators must provide multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments within a student-centered, differentiated, standard-based social science classroom. There is a need for educators to develop equitable teaching alternative assessment strategies that enable students to achieve their optimum educational potential within a high-stakes testing paradigm. It is recommended that all sixth grade social science educators use “Understanding the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution. This manual provides a curriculum the requires students to be active participants, draw on their own experience and skill development. It also identifies students’ profile of intelligences and necessitates some form of performance or product to demonstrate competence. Students demonstrate communication and social interaction skills, analytic capabilities, problem-solving skills, decision-making, civic responsibility, skill in developing and maintaining wellness, and using technology as a tool for learning. Alternative assessments are essential for quality implementation of integrated instructional teaching and learning.
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Appendix A

Thematic Unit

Understanding the Building of a Nation:

Our Constitution
As educators the greatest gift we can offer our students is to make a difference in their lives, providing them with experiences that show they are capable, responsible and valued!

We are the spirits that lift and lead!

Suzi Meyer
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References for the Manual
Introduction

Maximizing the Magic: Maintaining the Artistry of Teaching in a High-Stakes Testing Paradigm

Understanding the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution

This manual promotes the quest for equity teaching and learning in a sixth grade social science classroom by providing supplemental, multi-sensory resources in the form of alternative assessments. The researcher's classroom approach provides a curriculum with a wide variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences, which foster excellence, respect, compassion, and understanding that promotes academic and personal development.

This is a non-traditional in-depth unit of study based upon "Integrated Instruction," and meaningful learning goals facilitated by the teacher and the students. The duration of the unit and assessment projects will be three weeks, incorporating State Standards of Learning requirements.
Teacher Information
Students Rights

- Each student has the RIGHT to be:
- Respected
- Treated with kindness and caring
- Listened to and be heard
- Have help solving problems
- Have answers to his or her questions
- Have and express his or her ideas and feelings in a polite manner
- Attend school free from physical harm and verbal abuse
- Know what is expected of him or her
- Know what the consequences of his or her choices are
- Expect and receive fair and equitable treatment

Guiding Principles

- Active Learning
- In-Depth Teaching and Facilitating
- Interdisciplinary Teaching/Learning
- Learning Styles
- Multiple Intelligence Theory
- Variety of Assessment Tools
- Hands On – Minds On
- Collaboration
- Performance / Demonstration Learning
  - Student as Performer and Worker
    "I Do and I Understand"
Class Composition

- Mix of above-on-below level students
- Special education inclusion students (Least restrictive environment)
- Gender differences
- Ethnic differences
- Mix of verbal and non-verbal
- Personality mix
- Learning style differences (visual, auditory, kinesthetic)
- Multiple Intelligence Inventory
- Left and Right Brain Orientation
Student products refer to work that students have generated. Products may include journal writing, video- or audiotapes, computer demonstrations, dramatic performances, bulletin boards, debates, formal presentations, student designs and inventions, investigation reports, simulations, physical constructions, or role-playing scenarios.

Advantages of student products include the following:

1. They can show originality that goes beyond what is taught.
2. They can demonstrate knowledge in an effective and attractive manner.
3. They can reflect growth in social and academic skills and attitudes that are not reflected in paper-and-pencil tests.
4. They can engage students who are otherwise unenthusiastic about school.
5. They can bring education to life, making it memorable for students.
6. They can demonstrate to the community what students are achieving in concrete terms.
7. They can allow for the integration of reading/writing/speaking skills with other subject areas.
8. They can give students more flexible time to do thoughtful work.
9. They can permit students to work cooperatively with others.
10. They can encourage creativity.

Integrated Instruction

What is it?
Integrated Instruction occurs when the content of one subject area is used to enhance or enrich the content of another.

Why should I use Integrated Instruction in my classroom?
It allows students to share ideas and to see relationships among ideas and concepts as they plan and experience Integrated Instruction projects.
A sense of community will develop as students cooperate to design projects and displays.
Relationships between "in school" and "real world" issues will become more obvious to students.
As students see connections among ideas and content areas as well as connections between school and home life, they will achieve a better understanding of themselves and the world in which they live.

How can I make use of Integrated Instruction?
Take a good look at your instructional goals. Determine which subject areas truly enhance or enrich one another when they are taught together.
Determine important themes or topics that can be used as you develop activities and tasks that will help students learn, process, and integrate ideas, skills, and concepts.
Do not throw out your textbooks or standard curriculum guidelines! They will prove to be invaluable resources as you develop your integrated units, learning centers, and basic skills-based lessons.
Determine how you will involve students in the development and accomplishment of your integrated learning goals.
As you plan activities, be sure to plan carefully to provide meaningful and realistic authentic assessment techniques to be used to evaluate and make record of student growth and accomplishment.
Cooperative Learning

What is it?

Since the days of the one-room schoolhouse, good teachers have divided students into small groups composed of both heterogeneous and homogeneous abilities for classroom instruction and social interaction. Cooperative Learning was later described by Johnson and Johnson as a method of group learning that offers many advantages for teaching basic skills, reinforcing important concepts in any content area, integrating thinking skills into planned classroom activities, and affording meaningful student interaction and dynamics (Advanced Cooperative Learning, Interaction Book Company, 1988).

According to Johnson and Johnson, Cooperative Learning is distinguished from traditional group learning in that it offers:

- positive interdependence
- face-to-face interaction
- individual accountability
- interpersonal skills
- group processing

Participating students are assigned various roles within the group. Common roles are Recorder, Time Keeper, Manager, Gopher, and Encourager.

Why should I use Cooperative Learning in my classroom?

Higher-order thinking skills can be emphasized with great success in a Cooperative Learning group as students are called on to actively engage in discussion, problem-solving, and decision-making.

Participating students must learn and apply a range of communication and active learning skills.

The rules needed for Cooperative Learning groups will benefit students as they apply similar rules to other class work and to life outside the classroom.

How can I make use of Cooperative Learning?

Common Cooperative Learning rules are:

- Students assume responsibility for own behavior.
- Students are accountable for contributing to group's work.
- Students are expected to help any group member who needs help.
- Students ask teacher for help only as a last resort.
- Students may not "put down" or embarrass any group member.

Select a topic of study that lends itself to presentation in a Cooperative Learning format. Then, with the aid of the cognitive taxonomies and techniques presented in this book, make sure the Cooperative Learning activities include a good balance of the different types of higher-order thinking skills.
Using Cooperative Learning as an Instructional Tool

A cooperative learning group is an excellent means of teaching basic skills or reinforcing important concepts in any content area. Cooperative learning, as described by Johnson and Johnson (1991), involves teamwork within small groups of heterogeneous students working in a structured setting, with assigned roles, and towards a common goal. The five elements that distinguish cooperative learning from traditional group work, according to the Johnsons, are:

- **POSITIVE INTERDEPENDENCE**
  
  ... requires the students to assist one another in the learning process through common goals, joint rewards, shared resources, and specified role assignments.

- **FACE-TO-FACE INTERACTION**
  
  ... requires the students to actively engage in discussion, problem solving, decision making, and mutual assignment completion.

- **INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY**
  
  ... requires the student to carry through on "his or her share of the work" and to contribute as an individual to the established common goals.

- **INTERPERSONAL SKILLS**
  
  ... require group members to learn and apply a range of communication and active learning skills.

- **GROUP PROCESSING**
  
  ... requires the students to consistently evaluate their ability to function as a group by obtaining legitimate feedback and reinforcement.
Although roles for cooperative learning groups vary, the most common roles are those of Director, Time Keeper, Manager, Gopher, and Encourager.

Roles for cooperative learning groups vary too, but the most common are the following:

1. Students assume responsibility for their own behavior.
2. Students are accountable for contributing to the group's work.
3. Students are expected to help any group member who needs it.
4. Students ask the teacher for help only as a last resort.
5. Students may not “put down” or embarrass any group member.

The size of cooperative groups can range from pairs and trios to larger groups of four to six. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the smaller the group, the more chance there is for active participation and interaction of all group members. Groups of two, for example, can theoretically “have the floor” for fifty percent of the learning time, while groups of five can theoretically do so for only twenty percent of the learning time, if all are to contribute to the group goal in an equitable fashion. Likewise, it is important to note that groups should most often be put together in a random or arbitrary fashion so that the combination of group members varies with each task and so that group members represent a more heterogeneous type of placement. This can be done in a variety of ways ranging from “drawing names out of a hat” to having kids “count off” so those with the same numbers can be grouped together.

There are many different formats that can be used with cooperative learning groups and each of them has its advantages. On the following pages are descriptions to provide teachers with several structures that can be used in developing lesson plans around the cooperative learning method of instruction. Several applications for each of these structures can be found on pages 95 through 101.
THINK/PAIR/SHARE

In this format, the teacher gives the students a piece of information through a delivery system such as the lecturette, videotape, or transparency talk. The teacher then poses a higher-order question related to the information presented. Students are asked to reflect on the question and write down their responses after appropriate waiting time has passed. Students are then asked to turn to a partner and share responses. Teachers should prepare a plan ahead of time for ways in which students will be paired. If time allows, one pair of students may share ideas with another pair of students, making groups of four. Sufficient time for discussion and for all students to speak should be allowed. The advantages of this structure are:

- It is easy to use in large classes.
- It gives students time to reflect on course content.
- It allows students time to rehearse and embellish information before sharing with a small group or entire class.
- It fosters long-term retention of course content.

THREE-STEP INTERVIEW

In this format, the teacher presents students with information on a given topic or concept. The teacher then pairs students and asks a question about the information such as “What do you think about . . . ?” or “How would you describe . . . ?” or “Why is this important . . . ?” Each member of the pair responds to the question while the other practices active listening skills, knowing that he or she will have to speak for his or her partner at a later time. Each pair is then grouped with another pair so that each group member becomes one of four members. Person Two answers the question using the words of Person One and Person Three answers the questions using the words of Person Four. Roles are exchanged, and this process is repeated four times. The advantages of this structure are:

- It fosters important listening skills.
- It forces the student to articulate a position or response from another person’s perspective.
- It presents multiple interpretations of the same information.
CIRCLE OF KNOWLEDGE

The teacher places students in groups of four to six. A Recorder (who does not participate in the brainstorming because he or she is busy writing down responses) is assigned to each group by the teacher. A question or prompt is given. Everyone takes a turn to brainstorm and respond to the question or prompt, beginning with the person to the left of the Recorder. Responses should be given by individuals around the circle, in sequence, as many times as possible within a five-minute period of time or “until the well runs dry.” Group Recorders are asked to report responses from their group to the whole class without repeating an idea already shared by another group Recorder. These collective responses are written on the chalkboard or on a piece of chart paper for all to see.

- This structure is good for review and reinforcement of learned material or for introducing a new unit of study.
- It gives every student an equal opportunity to respond and participate.
- It lets a student know in advance when it is his or her turn to contribute.
- It does not judge the quality of a student’s response.
- It fosters listening skills through the rule of “no repetition of the same or similar ideas in either the brainstorming or sharing processes.”

TEAM LEARNING

In this cooperative learning format, the teacher places students in groups of four. Each group is given a Recording Sheet and asked to appoint a Recorder and to assign other group roles. The Recording Sheet is a “group worksheet” that contains four to six questions or tasks to be completed. A team must reach consensus on a group response for each question/task only after each member has provided input. The Recorder writes down the consensus response. When the work is finished, all team members review the group responses and sign the Recording Sheet to show they have read it, edited it, and agreed with it. These papers are collected and graded. The advantages of this structure are:

- Students build, criticize (positively), and edit one another’s ideas.
- Teachers only have a few papers to grade since there is only one per group rather than one per student.
- Students collaborate on the work for a group grade rather than compete for an individual grade.

A wide variety of springboards can be used for Team Learning questions/tasks such as math manipulatives (tangrams, meter sticks, protractors), reading materials (poems, editorials, short stories), science tools (charts/graphs, rock collections, lab manuals), or social studies aids (globes, maps, compasses).
ROUND TABLE

In this cooperative learning format, the teacher forms groups of four to six members. The teacher gives each group of students a comprehensive problem to solve, an open-ended question to answer, or a complex activity to complete. Each student is asked to consider the assigned tasks and to record an individual response in writing. The key factor is that a group is given only one sheet of paper and one pencil. The sheet of paper is moved to the left around the group and, one at a time, each group member records his or her response on the sheet. No one is allowed to skip a turn. The students then determine an answer to represent the group’s thinking, constructing a response that synthesizes many ideas. An optional final stage: each group shares its collective response with the whole class. The advantages of this structure are:

- It requires application of higher-order thinking skills.
- It is useful for reviewing material or practicing a skill.
- It fosters interdependence among group members.

JIGSAW

In this structure, the teacher forms home cooperative learning groups of six members and assigns each member a number from 1 to 6. Each member of a home group leaves that group to join another made up of one member of each of the other groups. The purpose of this arrangement is to have groups of students become experts on one aspect of a problem to be solved or a piece of information to be analyzed. In essence, Jigsaw is so named because it is a strategy in which each member of a given group gets only one piece of the information or problem-solving puzzle at a time. The teacher then presents each of the “expert groups” with a portion of a problem or one piece of an information paper to research, study, and acquire in-depth knowledge. Each “expert” member is responsible for mastering the content or concepts and developing a strategy for teaching it to the home team. The “expert” then returns to the home team and teaches all other members about his or her information or problem, and learns the information presented by the other group members as well. The advantages of this structure are:

- It fosters individual accountability through use of the “expert” role.
- It promotes group interdependence through “teaching and learning” processes.
- It encourages the use of high-quality communication skills through the teacher and learner roles.
Student Directions:

THINK/PAIR/SHARE

A Think/Pair/Share activity is designed to provide you and a partner with some “food for thought” on a given topic so that you can both write down your ideas and share your responses with each other. Follow these directions when completing the Recording Sheet.

1. Listen carefully to the information on the topic of the day presented by your teacher. Take notes on the important points.

2. Use the Recording Sheet to write down the assigned question or task as well as your response to that question or task.

3. Discuss your ideas with a partner and record something of interest he or she shared.

4. If time permits, you and your partner should share your combined ideas with another pair of students.

5. Determine why “two, three, or four heads are better than one.”
Using Multiple Intelligences as an Instructional Tool

Howard Gardner’s Theory of the Multiple Intelligences provides teachers with an excellent model for the design of interdisciplinary units, student worksheets, learning stations, and group projects. Gardner is quick to point out that (1) every student has at least one dominant intelligence (although he or she may have more than one); (2) these intelligences can all be nurtured, strengthened, and taught over time; (3) the intelligences do not exist in isolation but interface and interact with one another when completing a task; and (4) the intelligences provide teachers with seven different ways to approach the curriculum. Gardner has identified and described seven major intelligences:

VERBAL/LINGUISTIC DOMINANCE
Students strong in this type of intelligence have highly developed verbal skills, and often think in words. They do well on written assignments, enjoy reading, and are good at communicating and expressing themselves.

LOGICAL/MATHEMATICAL DOMINANCE
Students strong in this intelligence are able to think in abstractions and can handle complex concepts. They readily see patterns or relationships in ideas. They like to work with numbers and to perform mathematical operations, and they approach problem-solving exercises with the tools of logic and rational thought.

VISUAL/SPATIAL DOMINANCE
Students with this dominant intelligence think in images, symbols, colors, pictures, patterns, and shapes. They like to perform tasks that require “seeing with the mind’s eye”—tasks that require them to visualize, imagine, pretend, or form images.

BODY/KINESTHETIC DOMINANCE
Students dominant in this intelligence have a strong body awareness and a sharp sense of physical movement. They communicate best through body language, physical gestures, hands-on activities, active demonstrations, and performance tasks.

MUSICAL/RHYTHMIC DOMINANCE
Students with this dominant intelligence enjoy music, rhythmic patterns, variations in tones or rhythms, and sounds. They enjoy listening to music, composing music, interpreting music, performing to music, and learning with music playing in the background.
INTERPERSONAL DOMINANCE
Students with this dominant intelligence thrive on person-to-person interactions and team activities. They are sensitive to the feelings and needs of others and are skilled team members, discussion leaders, and peer mediators.

INTRAPERSONAL DOMINANCE
Students with this dominant intelligence prefer to work alone because they are self-reflective, self-motivated, and in tune with their own feelings, beliefs, strengths, and thought processes. They respond to intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards and may demonstrate great wisdom and insight when presented with personal challenges and independent-study opportunities.

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences can be used as a guide for the teacher who is interested in creating lesson plans that address one or more of the intelligences on a daily basis. Teachers should ask themselves the following questions when attempting to develop or evaluate classroom activities using the seven intelligences.

1. What tasks require students to write, speak, or read?
2. What tasks require students to engage in problem solving, logical thought, or calculations?
3. What tasks require students to create images or visual aids and to analyze colors, textures, forms, or shapes?
4. What tasks require students to employ body motions, manipulations, or hands-on approaches to learning?
5. What tasks require students to incorporate music, rhythm, pitch, tones, or environmental sounds in their work?
6. What tasks require students to work in groups and to interact with other students?
7. What tasks require students to express personal feelings, insights, beliefs, and self-disclosing ideas?

The following pages provide the teacher with several examples of how the Multiple Intelligences have been used as an organizing structure when designing classroom materials and assignments.
Using Bloom's Taxonomy as an Instructional Tool

Bloom's Taxonomy is a well-known model for teaching critical thinking skills in any subject area. Based on the work of Benjamin Bloom, the taxonomy consists of six different thinking levels arranged in a hierarchy of difficulty.

Any student can function at each level of the taxonomy provided the content is appropriate for his or her reading ability. In order for teachers to consistently design lesson plans that incorporate all six levels, they should use the taxonomy to structure all student objectives, all information sessions, all questions, all assigned tasks, and all items on tests.

On the opposite page is a brief summary of the six taxonomy levels with a list of common student behaviors, presented as action verbs, associated with each level. When developing learning tasks and activities around Bloom's Taxonomy, it is important to include in each set at least one activity for each level of the taxonomy. Keep a copy of the Bloom's page in your lesson planning book so it will be handy when you need it.

Bloom's Taxonomy can be used to structure sets of learning tasks, student worksheets, cooperative learning group assignments, and independent study units. On the following pages you will find a collection of learning assignments based on this taxonomy. Topics were selected to be appealing to students and to blend into a middle grades curriculum.
Bloom's Taxonomy of Critical Thought

KNOWLEDGE LEVEL: Learn the information.

*Sample Verbs:* Define, find, follow directions, identify, know, label, list, memorize, name, quote, read, recall, recite, recognize, select, state, write.

COMPREHENSION LEVEL: Understand the information.

*Sample Verbs:* Account for, explain, express in other terms, give examples, give in own words, group, infer, interpret, illustrate, paraphrase, recognize, retell, show, simplify, summarize, translate.

APPLICATION LEVEL: Use the information.

*Sample Verbs:* Apply, compute, construct, construct using, convert (in math), demonstrate, derive, develop, discuss, generalize, interview, investigate, keep records, model, participate, perform, plan, produce, prove (in math), solve, use, utilize.

ANALYSIS LEVEL: Break the information down into its component parts.

*Sample Verbs:* Analyze, compare, contrast, criticize, debate, determine, diagram, differentiate, discover, draw conclusions, examine, infer, relate, search, sort, survey, take apart, uncover.

SYNTHESIS LEVEL: Put information together in new and different ways.

*Sample Verbs:* Build, combine, create, design, imagine, invent, make up, produce, propose, present.

EVALUATION LEVEL: Judge the information.

*Sample Verbs:* Assess, defend, evaluate, grade, judge, measure, perform a critique, rank, recommend, select, test, validate, verify.
Structural Indexing
Structural Indexing
Educational Equity At It's Best
A Teaching Strategy That Works

Structural Indexing is a teaching strategy used for differentiation in any
classroom, grades three through twelve. Its design is based upon Bloom's Taxonomy
of Critical Thought and Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences. It is a
strategy that is exciting, motivational and creative expression, critical thinking,
reasoning and decision making are paramount. In a positive, affective learning
environment structural indexing can be used with any ability level, reading level,
diverse population, and inclusion students, so all students achieve educational equity.
Structural Indexing stretches the academic, as well as the emotional intelligence
of every child that utilizes this strategy.

Structural Indexing emphasizing positive interdependence in collaborative
and cooperative learning situations. It can be adapted to any topic or concept within
any discipline. An assessment rubric is included in this unit.
Final Project Poster

Visual Representation

Structural Indexing (Use three task cards, three famous people, three vocabulary words for your Response Cards. Please note other vocabulary words and other famous people can be used in your detailed paragraphs and your essay.)

Timeline

Multiple Intelligence Question

References

Essay
Unit Lesson Plan
Unit Lesson Plan

Understanding the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution

Description: The Importance of understanding the interpretation of our Constitution and the character of the Americans who shaped our Democracy. Students will gain an understanding of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought and learn to use their strength Multiple Intelligence. Emphasis will be on creative and critical thinking skills designed to improve problem-solving, decision-making and technology skills. Students will discover how great Americans approached their difficulties and shaped this great nation. It will be an enlightening comprehensive study of Democracy and its roots. This plan is a culminating, collaborative, authentic alternative constructivism assessment; organizing requested information retrieved from various web-sites and reference books on a Structural Indexing Grid for presentation on approximately day twelve. The teacher/facilitator will provide specific objectives, directions, materials list, web-sites, and rubrics. This is a non-traditional in-depth activity using a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, on-line encyclopedias, and journals to gather information. This information will be synthesized to create a Structural Indexing Visual to communicate knowledge. This comprehensive lesson is based upon the State Standards of Learning USI.7a,b,c,d; The Birth of a Nation.

Goals:

1. Students will utilize the Internet for research, a variety of textbooks, reference materials, and videos.

2. Students will apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate information. They will also draw on their prior knowledge.
3. Students will conduct and gather research on topics concerning the investigation of the Constitution, famous people, vocabulary, and thought provoking task card questions utilizing all levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy and Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence questions.

4. Students will construct and create a Structural Indexing Grid. They will all specific information gathered and a visual for each of the nine grid spaces.

5. After completion of the grid, students will write an essay using the information from all nine of the structural Indexing tic-tat-toe squares. Each square will become a paragraph. Students will add a thesis statement and a conclusion.

6. Final Products
   a. Structural Indexing Visual with pictures and information
   b. Essay

Objectives:

1. Students will use prior knowledge and apply information learned during discovery research and implementation of the unit on the Constitution. They will achieve mastery of their knowledge on all levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy.

2. Utilization of Cooperative Learning Groups will emphasize collaboration, creativity, listening, positive interdependence, and good communication interaction.

3. There should be an emphasis on focus, following directions and time on task for each student. Understanding responsibilities for self and group interaction is essential.

4. Utilization of strategies such as peer mentoring, brainstorming and paired sharing will occur to help students complete research for their project.

5. Development of oral communication and public speaking skills are important.
Collaborative Learning Groups

Teacher or Student Chosen

Groups will choose member designations:

a. Coordinator
b. Encourager
c. Reminder
d. Gopher

Materials

a. Textbook
b. Reference
c. Computers with Internet Access
d. Digital Camera
e. Scanner
f. Poster Board
g. Colored Pencils
h. Markers
i. Glue
j. Large Index Cards (Can be used as response Cards)

Implementation of Project

a. Distribution of Group Folder
b. Students will develop a team handshake
c. Students will design a team flag
d. Students will develop a team name

Team name will be place on team folder. Teacher will discuss all directions and elements to be included on the visual poster. After discussion of procedures and obligation to tasks, the groups may begin interaction.

Items To Include On Your Visual Poster

1. Bottom Right-Side – names, date, period, social studies, teacher’s name
2. *Top/Center* – Poster Name (Example: The Constitution, The Birth of Our Nation)

   Group Name (Example: Constitution Kids, Patriot Pals, or Patriots with Attitudes)

3. *Poster Visual Includes:*
   
   a. Structural Indexing Design -nine response cards, 4X6 or larger (See visual example) Tic-Tac-Toe shape
   
   b. Each card must contain a specific task card topic, vocabulary word or famous person with a visual. You may use computer graphics or self-illustrated picture.
   
   c. You must also have a paragraph explaining your topic. Do a rough draft first, proofread, do a final copy. Then put on response card. The word processing must be computer generated, double spaced and #12 font.
   
   d. After completion of nine response cards that form your structural indexing grid, you may place them on your poster board. (Three up and three down, like a tic-tac-toe board).
   
   e. Venn Diagram - Comparing three historical figures
   
   f. Choose one question from the Multiple Intelligence Sheet
   
   g. Include a Constitutional Timeline - 1787 – 1791
   
   h. Reference Sheet - Completed in APA
   
   i. Include a perfect copy of your essay. Attach with two inch rings.

**Writing Your Essay**

   a. Use your response card grid.
2. **Top/Center** – Poster Name (Example: The Constitution, The Birth of Our Nation)

   Group Name (Example: Constitution Kids, Patriot Pals, or Patriots with Attitudes)

3. **Poster Visual Includes:**
   
   a. Structural Indexing Design -nine response cards, 4X6 or larger (See visual example) Tic-Tac-Toe shape
   
   b. Each card must contain a specific task card topic, vocabulary word or famous person with a visual. You may use computer graphics or self-illustrated picture.
   
   c. You must also have a paragraph explaining your topic. Do a rough draft first, proofread, do a final copy. Then put on response card. The word processing must be computer generated, double spaced and #12 font.
   
   d. After completion of nine response cards that form your structural indexing grid, you may place them on your poster board. (Three up and three down, like a tic-tac-toe board).
   
   e. Venn Diagram - Comparing two historical figures
   
   f. Choose one question from the Multiple Intelligence Sheet
   
   g. Include a Constitutional Timeline - 1787 – 1791
   
   h. Reference Sheet - Completed in APA
   
   i. Include your final draft of your essay. Attach with two inch rings.

**Writing Your Essay**

   a. Use your response card grid.
b. The first three cards across will be sentence one.

c. The second row across will be sentence two.

d. The third row across will be sentence three.

e. The first row down will be sentence four.

f. The second row down will be sentence five.

g. The third row down will be sentence six.

h. Sentence seven will be diagonally across from top left.

i. Sentence eight will be diagonally across from bottom left.

j. After all topic sentences are completed, each topic sentence will begin a paragraph of informational details. You will have eight informative paragraphs with a topic sentence and thorough explanation of detailed information.

k. Peer edit with your group and than your teacher.

l. Write a thesis statement or introductory paragraph, it will now be paragraph one.

m. Write a conclusion paragraph. You will have eleven paragraphs in all.

n. You will have completed a magnificent essay.

o. It must in its final form be computer-generated in #12 font and double spaced.
Student Information

The Understanding of the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution

Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Constitution</th>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>Preamble</th>
<th>Amendments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Legislative Branch</td>
<td>Senate</td>
<td>Checks and Balances</td>
<td>Rule of Law</td>
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<td>Executive Branch</td>
<td>Compromise</td>
<td>Delegates</td>
<td>Federal</td>
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<td>Judicial Branch</td>
<td>Virginia Plan</td>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>Secrecy</td>
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<td>House of Representatives</td>
<td>Ratification</td>
<td>New Jersey Plan</td>
<td>Bicameral</td>
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<td>President</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>Supreme Court</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Separation of Powers</td>
<td>Federalism</td>
<td>Bill of Rights</td>
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</table>

Famous Americans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>James Madison</th>
<th>George Washington</th>
<th>Ben Franklin</th>
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<tr>
<td>Thomas Jefferson</td>
<td>John Blair</td>
<td>Robert Morris</td>
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<td>Alexander Hamilton</td>
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<td>Patrick Henry</td>
<td>Edmund Randolph</td>
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<td>George Mason</td>
<td>Roger Sherman</td>
<td>James Wilson</td>
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<td>Charles Pinckney</td>
<td>Pierce Butler</td>
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Task Cards

(See Attachment)

Multiple Intelligence Questions

(See Attachment)
Final Project Poster

Visual Representation

Structural Indexing (Use three task cards, three famous people, three vocabulary words for your Response Cards. Please note other vocabulary words and other famous people can be used in your detailed paragraphs and your essay.)

Title of Card

Illustrated Picture or Graphic

Paragraph (Computer Generated)

Timeline

Multiple Intelligence Question

References

Essay
Standards of Learning
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>SOL</th>
<th>SKILLS</th>
<th>ORGANIZING</th>
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<td>Birth of the Nation</td>
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<td>Define a federal system of government as a government in which the federal government is divided into three branches.</td>
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<td>AVM Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Education, Fine Arts</td>
<td>US1.16</td>
<td>Three branches of government: executive, legislative, judicial.</td>
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<td>United States Department of Education Textbook</td>
<td>US1.16</td>
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<td>Smithsonian Institute Social Studies</td>
<td>US1.16</td>
<td>Examples of powers of the three branches of government.</td>
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<td>National Council for the Social Studies Library of Congress</td>
<td>US1.16</td>
<td>Examples of articles of the Constitution.</td>
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<td>Documents of American Revolution Center for Civic Education</td>
<td>US1.16</td>
<td>Article 2: President.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditory materials</td>
<td>US1.16</td>
<td>Article 3: Supreme Court.</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference information for complete page 53 for complete</td>
<td>US1.16</td>
<td>Article 6: Congress.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Sample Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Classroom</th>
<th>Sample Classroom</th>
<th>Sample Classroom</th>
<th>Sample Classroom</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whiteboards</td>
<td>Unit tests</td>
<td>Student reports</td>
<td>Quizzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion groups</td>
<td>Projects</td>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>Group Discussions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Related SOL**

- US1.17: Explain the Constitution of the United States, the relationship between the national and state governments.
- US1.16: Define a federal system of government as a government in which the federal government is divided into three branches.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Resources</th>
<th>Sample Classroom Methods</th>
<th>SOL</th>
<th>Related</th>
<th>Essential Understandings, Knowledge, and Skills</th>
<th>Topic Organizing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>*Explain the following basic principles of</td>
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<td></td>
<td>government's structure.</td>
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<td>The Constitution of the United States.</td>
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<td>United States of America and Bill of Rights.</td>
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<td>Birth of the Nation.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Essential Understandings, Knowledge, and Skills</th>
<th>Sample Resources</th>
<th>SOL Related</th>
<th>Classroom Assessment Methods</th>
<th>Sample Scopes and Sequence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S.L.H</td>
<td>The First Ten Amendments to the Bill of Rights.</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S.L.E</td>
<td>Thomas Jefferson was the author of the Bill of Rights that provided a written guarantee of individual rights.</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S.L.E</td>
<td>Explain that Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson had opposing views on the role of the national government that resulted in the creation of two political parties.</td>
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</table>

(continued) Birth of the Constitution (Basic Principles of Government Continued)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Essential Understandings, Knowledge, and Skills</th>
<th>Sample Resources</th>
<th>Sample SOL</th>
<th>Sample Classroom Methods</th>
<th>Organizing and Instructing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USL1.34</td>
<td>Were Virginians except John Adams, likely the first five presidents, all of whom national government has continued throughout United States history.</td>
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</table>
Rubrics

Self-Evaluation Forms
NAME ___________________________ DATE ___________ PERIOD _______
DEVELOPED BY SUZANNE MEYER

STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK RUBRIC
SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS
BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

FOLLOWED DIRECTIONS ________________________________ 20

CLEAR AND CONCISE SENTENCES DEVELOPED ___________ 20

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY OF CRITICAL THOUGHT/ ALL LEVELS OF
UNDERSTANDING VERIFIED ____________________________ 20

POSITIVE GROUP INTERACTION AND INTERDEPENDENCE ___ 10
(SOCIAL SKILLS)

ALL PERFORMANCE TASKS COMPLETED SUCCESSFULLY_____ 10

CORRECT SPELLING. PUNCTUATION, AND PARAGRAPHING___ 10

ORAL PRESENTATION WAS INFORMATIVE AND INTERESTING__ 10

TOTAL POINTS _______

COMMENTS:__________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________

REFLECTION

THE ASSIGNMENT WAS TO COMPLETE A STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK
ANALYSIS WITH THE UTILIZATION OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING GROUPS.

IT REPRESENTS QUALITY BECAUSE__________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________

THIS PROJECT SHOWS THAT ONE OF MY GREATEST STRENGTHS IS__
________________________________________________________________________________________________________

I ENJOYED WORKING ON THIS ASSIGNMENT ASSESSMENT BECAUSE
________________________________________________________________________________________________________
PROJECT ORAL REPORT EVALUATION SHEET

5 - 10 minutes

DATE: __________________ SPEAKER __________________ GRADE __________________

TOPIC __________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. VOCAL QUALITIES</th>
<th>EXCELLENT</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>FAIR</th>
<th>POOR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
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<td>Pronunciation</td>
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<tr>
<th>II. PHYSICAL QUALITIES</th>
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<td>Hands</td>
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<td>Facial Expression</td>
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<td>Eye Contact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Body Movement</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. CONTENT</th>
<th>EXCELLENT</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>FAIR</th>
<th>POOR</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address Audience</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>(INTRODUCTION, BODY, CONCLUSION)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Past, Present, Future)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>(interesting examples and information which engage the reader and or listener)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV. VISUAL AIDS</th>
<th>EXCELLENT</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>FAIR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use</td>
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<td>20</td>
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</table>

Teacher Comments: __________________

Student Comments: __________________
Student Information

Student Folder
Unit Lesson Plan

Understanding the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution

Description: The Importance of understanding the interpretation of our Constitution and the character of the Americans who shaped our Democracy. Students will gain an understanding of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Cognitive Thought and learn to use their strength Multiple Intelligence. Emphasis will be on creative and critical thinking skills designed to improve problem-solving, decision-making and technology skills. Students will discover how great Americans approached their difficulties and shaped this great nation. It will be an enlightening comprehensive study of Democracy and its roots. This plan is a culminating, collaborative, authentic alternative constructivism assessment; organizing requested information retrieved from various web-sites and reference books on a Structural Indexing Grid for presentation on approximately day twelve. The teacher/facilitator will provide specific objectives, directions, materials list, web-sites, and rubrics. This is a non-traditional in-depth activity using a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, on-line encyclopedias, and journals to gather information. This information will be synthesized to create a Structural Indexing Visual to communicate knowledge. This comprehensive lesson is based upon the State Standards of Learning USI.7a,b,c,d; The Birth of a Nation.

Goals:

1. Students will utilize the Internet for research, a variety of textbooks, reference materials, and videos.

2. Students will apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate information. They will also draw on their prior knowledge.
3. Students will conduct and gather research on topics concerning the investigation of the Constitution, famous people, vocabulary, and thought-provoking task card questions utilizing all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy and Gardner's Multiple Intelligence questions.

4. Students will construct and create a Structural Indexing Grid. They will all specific information gathered and a visual for each of the nine grid spaces.

5. After completion of the grid, students will write an essay using the information from all nine of the structural Indexing tic-tat-toe squares. Each square will become a paragraph. Students will add a thesis statement and a conclusion.

6. Final Products
   a. Structural Indexing Visual with pictures and information
   b. Essay

Objectives:

1. Students will use prior knowledge and apply information learned during discovery research and implementation of the unit on the Constitution. They will achieve mastery of their knowledge on all levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy.

2. Utilization of Cooperative Learning Groups will emphasize collaboration, creativity, listening, positive interdependence, and good communication interaction.

3. There should be an emphasis on focus, following directions and time on task for each student. Understanding responsibilities for self and group interaction is essential.

4. Utilization of strategies such as peer mentoring, brainstorming and paired sharing will occur to help students complete research for their project.

5. Development of oral communication and public speaking skills are important.
Collaborative Learning Groups

Teacher or Student Chosen

Groups will choose member designations:

a. Coordinator
b. Encourager
c. Reminder
d. Gopher

Materials

a. Textbook
b. Reference
c. Computers with Internet Access
d. Digital Camera
e. Scanner
f. Poster Board
g. Colored Pencils
h. Markers
i. Glue
j. Large Index Cards (Can be used as response Cards)

Implementation of Project

a. Distribution of Group Folder
b. Students will develop a team handshake
c. Students will design a team flag
d. Students will develop a team name

Team name will be place on team folder. Teacher will discuss all directions and elements to be included on the visual poster. After discussion of procedures and obligation to tasks, the groups may begin interaction.

Items To Include On Your Visual Poster

1. *Bottom Right-Side* – names, date, period, social studies, teacher’s name
2. **Top/Center** - Poster Name (Example: The Constitution, The Birth of Our Nation

   Group Name (Example: Constitution Kids, Patriot Pals, or Patriots with Attitudes)

3. **Poster Visual Includes:**
   
a. Structural Indexing Design - nine response cards, 4X6 or larger (See visual example) Tic-Tac-Toe shape
   
b. Each card must contain a specific task card topic, vocabulary word or famous person with a visual. You may use computer graphics or self-illustrated picture.
   
c. You must also have a paragraph explaining your topic. Do a rough draft first, proofread, do a final copy. Then put on response card. The word processing must be computer generated, double spaced and #12 font.
   
d. After completion of nine response cards that form your structural indexing grid, you may place them on your poster board. (Three up and three down, like a tic-tac-toe board).
   
e. Venn Diagram - Comparing three historical figures
   
f. Choose one question from the Multiple Intelligence Sheet
   
g. Include a Constitutional Timeline - 1787 – 1791
   
h. Reference Sheet - Completed in APA
   
i. Include a perfect copy of your essay. Attach with two inch rings.

**Writing Your Essay**

a. Use your response card grid.
b. The first three cards across will be sentence one.

c. The second row across will be sentence two.

d. The third row across will be sentence three.

e. The first row down will be sentence four.

f. The second row down will be sentence five.

g. The third row down will be sentence six.

h. Sentence seven will be diagonally across from top left.

i. Sentence eight will be diagonally across from bottom left.

j. After all topic sentences are completed, each topic sentence will begin a paragraph of informational details. You will have eight informative paragraphs with a topic sentence and thorough explanation of detailed information.

k. Peer edit with your group and then your teacher.

l. Write a thesis statement or introductory paragraph, it will now be paragraph one.

m. Write a conclusion paragraph. You will have eleven paragraphs in all.

n. You will have completed a magnificent essay.

o. It must in its final form be computer-generated in #12 font and double spaced.
Student Information

The Understanding of the Building of a Nation: Our Constitution

Vocabulary

The Constitution | Articles | Preamble | Amendments
---|---|---|---
Legislative Branch | Senate | Checks and Balances | Rule of Law
Executive Branch | Compromise | Delegates | Federal
Judicial Branch | Virginia Plan | Philadelphia | Secrecy
House of Representatives | Ratification | New Jersey Plan | Bicameral
President | Democracy | Supreme Court |
Separation of Powers | Federalism | Bill of Rights |

Famous Americans

James Madison | George Washington | Ben Franklin
Thomas Jefferson | John Blair | Robert Morris
Alexander Hamilton | Gouverneur Morris | John Dickinson
John Adams | Patrick Henry | Edmund Randolph
George Mason | Roger Sherman | James Wilson
Charles Pinckney | Pierce Butler |

Task Cards

(See Attachment)

Multiple Intelligence Questions

(See Attachment)
Web-site Resources for Students

http://www.archives.gov/national_national_archives_experience/charters/constitution/html

http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html

http://bensguide.gpo.gov/6-8/index.html

http://www.usconstitution.net/constkids.html
Student Resources

Videocassettes


Videocassette. AGC/United Learning, 1999. 30 min.

The Amendments.


Federal, State and Local Government.

Videocassette. Schlessinger Media, 2002. 23 min.

The Federal System.

Videocassette. Schlessinger Media, 2002. 23 min.

The History of American Government.

Videocassette. Schlessinger Media, 2002. 23 min.

Our Constitution: The Document That Gave Birth To A Nation.

Rainbow Educational Video, 1988, 35 min.

“We The People” The Story of the Constitution.


What is Government.

Videocassette. Schlessinger Media, 2002. 23 min.

Books

Jaffee, Charlotte S., and Barbara T. Roberts. We The People.


United We Stand, Divided We Fall!
Cooperative Learning Management Chart

General Directions
Laminate the poster. After dividing the class into cooperative learning groups, list each group's name and its members on the poster with a wipe-off marker. When you’re ready to change groups, wipe the poster clean and reprogram with new groups.

Two Types Of Cooperative Groups
There are two types of cooperative groups. Task groups work together to accomplish a common goal, such as completing a science experiment or writing and presenting a play. Task groups are formed of two to five students of different abilities, talents, and motivation. In task groups, the same students work together only for the duration of the particular task. Base groups are formed of three to five students who meet together regularly over a long period of time. Base groups help students develop teamwork, build trust, and strengthen friendships. Base groups can also be used to review the week's work, discuss current events, check homework, work out differences, solve problems, and set goals.
Use the poster to list either task groups or base groups.

✓ Building Team Spirit In Cooperative Groups
To help groups build a team identity, have them complete any of the following activities:
• Select a team name.
• Design a team flag or pennant.
• Create a team slogan.
• Use one worksheet and one marker or pencil per group.
• Set group goals.
• Brainstorm ways group members are alike.
• Create a group song or rap.
• Paint a team slogan or name on plain white T-shirts. Wear the shirts each week on a predetermined day.
• Make a poster about your group. List its strengths and special qualities.

After A Cooperative Activity
It is important that students have time after completing a cooperative activity to evaluate the experience and reflect on what was learned. Use the reproducible forms on the back of this centerfold to follow up any cooperative activity. After each student has completed a form, have students pair up and share their responses.

For more cooperative learning activities, see page 17.

Spotlight On What I Learned

What did you learn from this activity?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Name ________________ Group __________________

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Cooperative Learning
Group Project Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group (N # or Name):</th>
<th>Roles:</th>
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Group Members:

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Topic:

Type of Project:

Beginning Date: ____________________ Completion Date: ____________________

What We Want to Find out:

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What We Will Need:

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What We Will Do:

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How We Will Evaluate:

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How We Will Share Our Project:

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</table>
Cooperative Learning Group Roles and Student Badges

**ENCOURAGER**
- Keeps track of time allotted for assignments and keeps group on time.

**RECORDER**
- Keeps notes on group processing and social skills.

**COORDINATOR**
- Name

**COMMUNICATOR**

**GO-FER**

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Cooperative Learning Group Roles and Student Badges

- Reader
- Evaluator
- Checker
- Praisers

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Final Project Poster

Visual Representation

Structural Indexing (Use three task cards, three famous people, three vocabulary words for your Response Cards. Please note other vocabulary words and other famous people can be used in your detailed paragraphs and your essay.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of Card</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illustrated Picture or Graphic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paragraph (Computer Generated)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Timeline

Multiple Intelligence Question

References

Essay
Venn Diagram

Use this diagram to show relationships among topics and subtopics: areas of commonality (in the intersecting segments of circles) and differences (in the nonintersecting segments of circles).
KNOWLEDGE

Identify the important dates and people associated with the development of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.


COMPREHENSION

Explain the purpose and design of the U.S. Constitution.


KNOWLEDGE

Record the number of Articles and Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.


COMPREHENSION

Summarize reasons the U.S. Constitution should be studied by students in school.


KNOWLEDGE

Write down the definitions of "constitution" from the dictionary and circle the one that relates to a study of the U.S. Constitution.


COMPREHENSION

Describe how a person's life was different before the U.S. Constitution was developed and after it became a reality.

APPLICATION

Construct a short, informative paragraph describing the accomplishments of at least five of the important people listed at the Knowledge level.


ANALYSIS

Compare and contrast any two individuals recorded at the Knowledge level. Show your work in chart form.


APPLICATION

Construct a set of fact cards outlining the important information associated with at least five of the monuments, memorials, and/or moments listed at the Knowledge level.


ANALYSIS

Compare and contrast any two monuments, memorials, or moments recorded at the Knowledge level. Discuss your results in a pair of descriptive passages.


APPLICATION

Construct a timeline showing the key dates and/or activities associated with any five of the inventions listed at the Knowledge level.


ANALYSIS

Compare and contrast any two inventions recorded at the Knowledge level. Show your work with a series of drawings.

SOCIAL STUDIES
Investigate the U.S. Constitution


GRAPHIC CARD
APPLICATION

Construct a timeline showing the development of the Constitution from its beginning to the 26th Amendment.

Investigate the U.S. Constitution

APPLICATION

Predict what the public's reaction would be today if the 18th Amendment was still in effect.

Investigate the U.S. Constitution

APPLICATION

Illustrate one or more of the Bill of Rights in action.

Investigate the U.S. Constitution

ANALYSIS

Select an amendment of your choice and determine what situations would have caused it to be enacted.

Investigate the U.S. Constitution

ANALYSIS

Determine the significance of the Bill of Rights on our lives today.

Investigate the U.S. Constitution

ANALYSIS

Compare and contrast the U.S. Constitution with the Declaration of Independence. How are they alike and how are they different?
The United States Constitution

The Power of the Constitution

VERBAL/LINGUISTIC
Write a paragraph that explains the significance of each of these in the “evolution” of the Constitution: Articles of Confederation, Constitutional Convention, Bill of Rights, Federal vs. State Powers, Separation of Powers, Constitutional Amendments.

LOGICAL/MATHEMATICAL
Make an analysis: Why has the United States Constitution endured for so many years?

VISUAL/SPATIAL
Complete each of the following tasks: (1) Construct a Constitutional timeline that shows the sequence of events in the development of the United States Constitution; and (2) Construct a diagram that shows how a bill becomes law.

BODY/KINESTHETIC
Re-enact a set of great scenarios and moments from the Constitutional Convention.

MUSICAL/RHYTHMIC
Make a tape recording of some of America’s favorite patriotic songs and prepare a booklet that has the lyrics for each song.

INTERPERSONAL
Develop a series of FACT VS. OPINION statements about the development of the United States Constitution. Remember that a FACT is a statement based on documented information and an OPINION is a belief or inference that is not based on documented information. Share your FACT VS. OPINION activity with several friends and see how good they are at distinguishing one type of statement from the other.

INTRAPERSOINAL
Determine how each of the first ten Amendments affects your life today. Which of these rights is most important to you and why?
Models For Differentiating Instruction: Model Three

A Sample Interdisciplinary Unit
Using the Multiple Intelligences
as its Organizing Structure

Note: Teachers can use the multiple intelligences for several purposes in the classroom. They can be used as a structure for identifying learning styles; they can be used as a structure for creating interdisciplinary or thematic units; and they can be used as a structure for setting up permanent learning stations.

“HISTORICAL HEROES”

VERBAL/LINGUISTIC TASK:
Choose a historical figure from the past that you consider a hero, and write a description of his or her major accomplishments, including the one that you would be most proud of if you were that individual.

LOGICAL/MATHEMATICAL TASK:
Create a timeline of the important events that made up the life of your historical hero.

VISUAL/SPATIAL TASK:
Draw a picture of something that you think this hero might accomplish today if he or she were alive at this time.

BODILY/KINESTHETIC TASK:
Act out or role-play a significant event from your historical figure’s childhood. Get some friends to help you if needed.

MUSICAL/RHYTHMIC TASK:
Suggest three different types of music, composers, or instruments that you think best typify the personality of this historical hero, and give reasons for your choices.

INTERPERSONAL TASK:
Determine what leadership qualities this historical figure demonstrated that enabled him or her to get along with people. Give specific examples to support your viewpoint.

INTRAPERSONAL TASK:
Describe how your historical hero might have completed this starter statement:
“If I have one regret about my life, it is that . . .”

NATURALIST TASK:
If this historical figure could live in one geographical part of the world today, where do you think he or she would decide to move, and why?
optional

Who, What, When, Where, and Why Triangle

Use this triangle to organize your information for a content-based article, a news article, a biography or autobiography, or even for a book report.

Title: ____________________________

Who ____________________________
What ____________________________
When ____________________________
Where ____________________________
Why ____________________________

Important Details

Less Important Details

Summary Statement
Self-Reflection

Students will write a self-reflection on why they completed this alternative assessment successfully. If there were problems please discuss. Please write in your Interactive Student History Journal or on a sheet of notebook paper.

a. How did you utilize your strength multiple intelligence?
b. What was your major contribution to the cooperative group?
c. Were they focused and on-task?
d. How do you feel about the end product?
e. Is there anything you would have done differently and why?
f. What was the most important concept you learned about the Constitution?
g. Do you like working in cooperative learning groups and why.
h. Was the teacher a successful facilitator?
i. Do you have any suggestions for your teacher and or your group.
References of the Manual


