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A handbook for teaching the Appalachian culture to specific learning disabilities students through the use of quality children's literature

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A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHING THE APPALACHIAN
CULTURE TO SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES
STUDENTS THROUGH THE USE OF
QUALITY CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

MASTER'S PROJECT

Submitted to the Department of Teacher Education
University of Dayton, In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

by

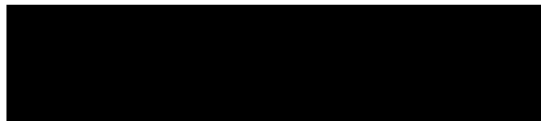
Cindy Kay Angle

UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON

Dayton, Ohio

December 1994

Approved by:



Official Advisor

DEDICATION

I am dedicating this Master's Project to my husband, Tim and my children, Ashley and Alyssa for their love and patience. Without their help during the past few months, I could never have completed this project.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In the author's fourth/fifth grade specific learning disabilities classroom, there seemed to be a significant need in the area of teaching Appalachian culture, which is an important part of several of the author's students' family histories. The author's students range in age from 10 to 12 years. They mainly come from backgrounds of broken homes, with little to no support in the home. The parents often have poor parenting skills. The majority of the parents are employed outside of the home and as a result, the students are left to care, discipline, and entertain themselves on a daily basis. The students possess very little motivation to learn, although they have seemed to enjoy school because they receive the attention they often do not get at home.

The school is located in a small village in Darke County. At the peak of the community's history, Bradford was a thriving railroad town. Since the railroad ceased its heavy operations about fifty years ago, the town has not advanced in population or economically. Most of the homes the students now live in are former railroad homes. The village has a lot of low-income housing and the students are not proud of

their homes or their heritages. The students have little knowledge of their own personal history and their family members have little interest in supplying it, if it is even known. Most of the author's students are aware of significantly close relatives living in parts of Kentucky, West Virginia, and Southern Ohio, such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Purpose of the Project

Although the author's district course of study cited specific objectives which must be taught involving the Appalachian culture, there were little resources, outside of the social studies textbook, available for the teacher's use. Therefore, the author chose to design and develop an integrated thematic handbook revolving around the Appalachian culture through the use of excellent children's literature, child-centered projects, and manipulative activities. The unit's objectives satisfy the author's course of study, as well as the other objectives the author has placed on the students as a result of their individual educational plans (IEPs).

The author's students have a very high motivation level towards learning when there is an awareness that it involves them personally. The students are also interested when the learning is intertwined with various

learning techniques involving manipulatives and creativity. The author has been very interested in using the whole language approach of teaching. Therefore, children's literature has been a common sight in this author's classroom. For the author's SLD students, children's literature had a more realistic view for them to follow and understand as it was easier to relate to in real life, making comprehension not so difficult, especially when there was a purpose for reading evident. The author's SLD students also had a very difficult time learning through the traditional methods of reading a textbook, which is often at a reading level above the student's, taking notes from a lecture, which requires several processes at one time, and grasping new concepts only through auditory means. The SLD students come to the resource room for language arts and reading. They are mainstreamed into the regular education classroom for science, social studies, and math. There are often little to no modifications for the students. The author believes that she can make a significant difference in the attitudes of the students towards the mainstreamed classes if she teaches the reading and language arts through an integrated thematic unit, such as the Appalachian culture. The students will have received some background information

before the regular education students, as well as learned about their personal family histories in an in-depth and positive manner. As a result, the students will have a positive attitude about the material they are learning and will feel more comfortable in the mainstreamed classroom with their peers. The SLD students' self-esteem will increase as they will be able to answer questions more appropriately as they have already been exposed to the material at hand. The students will not only accomplish their IEP objectives, but the objectives for their mainstreamed classes as well. The author believes the students will experience success not only in the resource room, where instruction is designed to the specific academic levels of the individual student, but also in the regular education classroom, where they are measured against their peers. Therefore, the students will have a better disposition about themselves as regular education learners.

The handbook the author has designed and developed is a comprehensive integration of a simple theme, the Appalachian culture. It has many significant uses in the author's classroom. However, the most important result of the handbook will be the students' successes in the classroom and the positive feelings the students gain about their own specific family histories, which

is the ultimate purpose of the handbook.

Definitions

1. Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) - students who have an average IQ, but have a severe discrepancy between their achievement and performance
2. Individual Educational Plan (IEP) - an individual plan developed specifically for the student by the teachers and parents. It includes specific objectives to provide the best learning situation for the student as possible.
3. Integrated Curriculum - concepts that are taught from the given course of study that interrelate to one another and often relate to real life experiences
4. Thematic Unit - learning concepts that revolve around a certain theme, such as Appalachia
5. Resource Room - a classroom where individuals receive specific instruction in small groups or individually for the objectives cited on an IEP

Limitations

This handbook is be limited to students who are SLD and in the third - fifth grade. The students have reading levels from a 2.1 to a 4.3. The activities within the handbook are based on students with low

comprehension skills, both listening and reading. The students also have poor written language skills as well. The activities are also designed for a classroom size of twelve to sixteen.

The handbook does not include a means for the evaluation of the activities, concepts, or centers. The individual teacher would have to design and develop her own method to evaluate her students should this handbook be used.

Significance of the Project

The author of the handbook believes that children need to understand and acknowledge their personal family histories in order to be a complete individual. The need for family connections is very important in life and leads to the ties between generations of people in various cultures.

The author also believes that teachers in general are so overwhelmed with the varying students they have, the curriculum that has to be taught, and the pressures of always-changing methods of teaching that they need resources that are easy to follow and implement in their classrooms. The handbook which is included in this project is intended to fill that need.

Finally, the use of a handbook provides the route through which a particular topic, Appalachian culture,

can be taught using all the learning styles, whether visual, auditory, or kinesthetic, with creative, exciting, and manipulative ideas. The author's intent is one of helpfulness and ease in adjusting the activities included into the reader's own curriculum. Fulfilling one's obligations to teach the curriculum is important, but when it can be integrated with a sensitive area, such as family history, the outcome can be nothing but successful for the students involved.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Elementary educators spend a large part of the school day teaching reading and language arts to their students. John Amos Comenius stated in the 17th century that children can discover new information being introduced to what is familiar to them within their life's experiences; by being able to manipulate the concrete objects being studied; and by using the language to which they know to talk about what they are learning. (1887) Whole language teachers believe the same thing today. Children seem to learn best when they are motivated about the topic at hand. In this review, research will show the importance of using good, quality literature to support the concepts being taught in a whole language instructional method, the use of integrated thematic units for teaching, and the rich and deep Appalachian culture which is a part of the heritage of many students in the area in which the author resides.

Using good quality literature is a wonderful part of the whole language method. When the literature is used within the area of the social studies curriculum, it will not only enhance the social studies program, but will enrich the student's reading ability. For the

author's SLD students, finding quality literature that fits into the social studies curriculum is often the only way they are able to pick up various concepts and skills needed to attain the course of study objectives. The given textbooks, although helpful at times, often confuse and seem disinteresting to SLD students because they are too hard or very unmotivating. Anderson, Heibert, Scott and Wilkinson (1985) believe that "reading, like playing a musical instrument, is not something that is mastered once and for all at a certain age." Reading is a skill that must be practiced, especially for someone that has a disability in that very area. Children should be practicing and applying their reading skills in all subjects. Integrating children's literature with social studies will provide such practice. "The most logical place for instruction in most reading and thinking strategies is in social studies and science rather than separate lessons about reading." (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, Wilkinson, 1985) Educators, Barbe and Lucas, (1976) believe that reading skills should be practiced in books other than textbooks. When the teacher uses children's literature in social studies, the language arts period is being extended and instruction is provided in that content area as well. (Schluck, 1989)

Another important characteristic of whole language education is the encouragement it gives students to learn using reading, writing, and oral language. Ken Goodman (1986) says whole language education encourages students to take part in all language areas. It invites them to use language, talk about it, react to it, ask questions, write about it, and share it with others. This is one way to try to stimulate thinking, and make it more interesting. Children then develop language and literacy through daily use.

Students read for many reasons, but literature reading may increase if the student is allowed to choose the reading material. Holdaway (1982) believes that students learn to read by reading. During reading, students use their prior learning and experiences to make sense of the texts. The students in the author's room may have heard their grandparents speak of various ways of life when they were young. Often, the author's students read about a character and often comment that their grandmother said she used to do the same thing. Then, they ask the author if the situation could have really happened. According to Huck (1977) students can identify themselves with the characters by getting in touch with their emotions and feelings. Interesting discussions can develop. Watson (1989) contends that

students read for meaning, and begin to see themselves as successful readers, not learners of decoding skills. Therefore, a development of a positive attitude about reading may emerge. Success is very important, regardless of a particular individual's reading ability, which is very important is this author's classroom. Huck (1977) believes that students who are able to experience the joy in reading will generally become life time readers.

Reading good literature will promote many skills needed in life. Fountas and Hannigan (1989) say that exposure to literature enhances comprehension and vocabulary. Students learn to predict, hypothesize, question, and confirm the meaning of text. Images are mentally formed during reading. Huck (1977) believes that exposure to good literature promotes the development of creativity, prediction skills, and imagination in children. But most of all, reading is fun! Huck (1987) also concludes that the use of literature has a tendency to bring about pleasure reading along with broadening children's horizons with new and exciting learning experiences.

Using children's literature will provide opportunities to apply many skills connected with all academic areas, as well as real life experiences. In

most classrooms, there are only a few copies of each book so therefore, the students will need to convey the information by giving oral reports, summaries, reading selections aloud, outlining, writing their own books, making posters, charts, diagrams, or possibly putting on a short play for not only their classmates, but perhaps the entire school or community.

By using more than one book to find information, children are taught to do research and not to rely solely on one source of information. Children may also begin to question the validity of some information. When a textbook alone is used, this opportunity does not often present itself. Huck (1987) explains that students should experience real literature for academic purposes. Informational books provide exciting, interesting reading. These high quality books are excellent teaching tools because of the indepth, richness, and recent detail and information. From another resource Huck (1977) states:

No textbook in science or social studies can begin to present the wonder, the excitement, the tragedy of man's discoveries and mistakes as the biographies, stories, and information books that are available for children today. Not to use them is to deny children their right to participate in the drama of making our civilization. (p. 368)

By using good, quality literature interwoven

throughout this author's curriculum, the author hopes to help her students not only master the objectives in the course of study and their individual educational plans, but learn about their family histories, problem solving strategies, and most importantly, learn to enjoy literature as a source of information and sheer enjoyment.

By the third grade, students view the various subjects of the day as simply changes in behavior, teacher attitude, areas of the room, and times of the day. Rarely does anyone ever explain how the subjects relate to one another in real life. (Jacobs, 1991) An integrated curriculum addresses this problem of fragmented schedules that shatter curriculum into isolated pieces of knowledge. By teaching integrated curriculum units, a teacher helps her students understand the targeted concepts and skills of the various subjects more easily and effectively. Research (Jacobs, 1991), however, does not say that this is the only way to teach as it is sometimes necessary to teach the concepts or skills through a single discipline. Therefore, the combination of integration and single subjects are better mixed and necessary for effective learning to occur. The idea that underscores integrated curriculums is one based on common sense. Both teachers

and students need to make sensible connections among the subjects. Deliberate planning that integrates two or more disciplines mutually reinforces concepts and skills. (Jacobs, 1991)

Reading, writing, listening, and speaking (components of a whole language classroom) should be used naturally and interwoven with each other in all or some of the content areas. A quality education should require that students communicate with each other in one way or another. An obvious way to accomplish this would be to use the language arts to support the content areas. As Goodman (1986) states:

Halliday (1984) concludes that we learn through language while we learn language. The whole language curriculum builds on this conclusion; it is a dual curriculum; every activity, experience, or unit is an opportunity for both linguistic and cognitive development. Language and thinking develop at the same time that knowledge is developed and concepts and schemas are built. (p. 210)

Walmsey and Walp (1990) believe that thematic units provide authentic language experiences for all curriculum areas. Integration is the main idea in a whole language classroom. Topics or themes put everything into perspective. Relevant activities should be created to integrate all or parts of the units to the curriculum. Units may begin in science, social studies, or math and be enhanced through the literature area.

Another factor leading to the importance of integrated thematic units is the time constraints of the normal school day. Teaching in fragmented sections is very difficult and tiring. Teachers should teach so that the content area and language arts are connected. Interwoven activities that get the students involved through discussion, sharing, writing, and reading can expand student understanding. As Pearson (1989) sums up, "The curriculum is integrated in the sense that artificial boundaries are not set up between any two of the four language functions -- reading, writing, speaking, and listening." All languages support each other. These languages are then to be used throughout the content areas, so as to get a natural flow in the curriculum. Therefore, by using integrated thematic units based on content areas, such as social studies, enhanced through quality literature, this author hopes to create a learning environment in which her students have an enriching experience with meaning.

The word Appalachia conjures up popular stereotypes of the poor "hillbilly" out of the hills of West Virginia or Kentucky, with little education, a rusting hulk of a car and a house full of ill fed and poorly clothed children. This negative characterization often keeps white Americans from wanting to be identified with

this group of people. This image, while not accurate, has put a burden on migrating Appalachian parents and their children with the same barriers to educational and economic opportunities faced by other American ethnic groups. By presenting an integrated unit using an Appalachian theme, this author hopes to provide Appalachian children or children with Appalachian backgrounds with a positive image of themselves.

The Appalachian region is a place of many kinds of people. There are rich people and poor people. There are those who live in cities and people who live on farms. All of these people have families who are different in some ways and who are alike in other ways. The Appalachian family tends to stress family traditions. They are very stable. The families also extended and very loyal.

Another important factor of the Appalachian culture is the values that are present. Appalachian people have values that are similar to the early American settlers. Some strong values taught are religion, individualism, self-reliance and pride, neighborliness and hospitality, family, love of place, modesty, sense of beauty, being polite and respectful to others, and patriotism. (Tucker Publishing Co. 1993)

A final thrust to present the Appalachian culture

in a positive manner would be to highlight the famous people who have come from Appalachia. There are several, such as Chuck Yeager, Mary Lou Retton, Loretta Lynn, John Luther "Casey" Jones, and Pearl S. Buck.

This author believes that as a result of the composite of her classroom, it is very important to bring positive family backgrounds into the curriculum. Through the use of an integrated thematic unit featuring the Appalachian culture, this author's students will find success in attaining their academic and emotional goals. They should also feel positive about themselves as members of the community.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

In using the whole language approach to teaching, teacher manuals and textbook methods of instruction are no longer the main source of information. This technique, therefore, requires more work and creativity on the part of the teacher. As a result, the author of this handbook chose many child-centered and manipulative activities through the use of quality children's literature in teaching the Appalachian culture. The ideas for the handbook occurred in various ways. The author has participated in many excellent whole language classes and workshops. The author has discussed various activities with other respected teachers. The author has also reviewed varying journals, professional books, the course of study, and children's literature books from various libraries. The most significant factor in the choice of activities within the handbook comes from the author's students. The students' feedback when doing different activities should be the determining factor when deciding on new activities.

The activities in the handbook were designed in a multi-disciplinary approach so all areas of the curriculum are addressed. There are reading, language arts, math, science, social studies, daily living

skills, and the fine arts lessons included. The author's intent is not to do every single activity included, but to pick and choose the activities which best fit the individual students. Not all children have the same interest level in these different disciplines, so hopefully, this approach will appeal to the students in some positive way.

Organization of the Handbook

The author searched for the reading material in various locations. Then, she read the books and spent a few days thinking about the activities her particular students would enjoy. After studying the current course of study in her district, she wrote the activities her students could do that would both satisfy the course of study and the IEP. Next, she organized the activities by subject although, the intent is to flow between subjects and not fragment the students' learning. It is important to remember that the activities are not meant to be done in any order or that all of them have to be completed. Finally, the books chosen are listed in alphabetical order by the author. At the end of the handbook is a list of other sources for the reader to use, such as videos, contacts, or tapes.

As a result of little information given to the teacher in her classroom for teaching this culture, the

author of the handbook would recommend the following books for the use of the reader. The books describe the the geographical information, historical background, and the economical situation of the Appalachian culture.

Roberts, Bruce and Nancy. Where Time Stood Still: A Portrait of Appalachia. New York: Crowell and Collier Press, 1970.

Shull, Peg. Children of Appalachia. New York: Messner, 1969,

Toone Betty L. Appalachia: The Mountains, the Place and the People. Illustrated by Joyce Hoffman. New York: Franklin Watt, Inc., 1972.

Although these references are copyrighted in the earlier 1970s, the material is very useful in gathering the knowledge of the culture and how time has seemed to stand still in this region.

Finally, the author hopes the information gathered and the activities chosen provide a meaningful and revelent learning experience to the students who are involved in the activites. The author firmly believes the sense of family and achievement are important to attain in the cycle of life.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE PROJECT

A HANDBOOK
of the APPALACHIAN CULTURE
through the use of literature,
and integrated activities

Cindy Angle
Bradford Elementary School

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INTRODUCTION

The author believes a Handbook on Teaching the Appalachian Culture through Children's Literature would be helpful because the social studies textbook does not include appropriate reading levels or any integrated activities designed to help the student who can not grasp concepts and skills simply through reading and lectures. The author has experienced problems with SLD students coming to the resource room feeling as failures because they do not understand the concepts or skills being taught in the mainstreamed classrooms. In the future, the author would like to teach all her language arts and reading through science and social studies units. Therefore, the author chose an integrated thematic unit of Appalachia to begin the year with next year. The Appalachian culture will be motivating as most of the students' family histories lie in Appalachia. Also, through the use of good, quality literature, my students will not only find reading about the culture easier, but daily life skills will also be taught.

Anderson, Joan. Pioneer Children of Appalachia.
 Photographs by George Ancona. New York:
 Ticknor and Fields, 1986.

SUMMARY - Text and photographs re-create the pioneer life of young people in Appalachia.

Activities

Reading - 1) The students could read this piece of literature to themselves. Then, a schedule of a typical day for pioneer Appalachian children could be developed. The students could then compare their day with that of a child from that time period.

2) The students could do a vocabulary study of words such as holler, chores, flax, flintlock, lye, froe, drawknife, barter, bellows, etc.

Language Arts - 1) The students research soapmaking or candlemaking and then write the necessary steps to take to do these functions. The children could then follow the steps and make their own soap or candles.

2) A field trip could be made to the local history museum to see these functions being done if it is unfeasible to do them in the classroom. The students could prepare questions for the demonstrators.

Social Studies - 1) The students could compare the life of the pioneer child in Appalachia with the life of a child in present times. The student would have to recall information already learned about the area or research the area of interest. A venn diagram could be used to show the comparison.

2) The students could explore the ways the Appalachian homesteads got their specific names. The students

could then come up with their own names based on the information they locate. A model of the "mountain" could be made showing the various names and how they were received.

Daily Living Skills - 1) Through the media of a field trip, the students will demonstrate the need for good questioning skills, as well as listening skills. These skills are required for employment and society as a whole.

2) The field trip will also provide the students with ways of traveling outside the school community. Manners, proper behaviors on public transportation, and interests can be addressed.

Science - 1) The students can research the various herbs and plants used for health reasons by the Appalachian culture. Interviews with grandparents may also prove beneficial to see if they have used any plants/herbs for health. The book mentions Yarrow, Sassafras Root, Pokeberry, Garlic, Cherry Bark, and Coltsfoot. The students could find out where these various plants live, the uses, and the dangers.

Mathematics - 1) The students could problem solve the rate of dipping candles if Elizabeth Isaac dipped from dawn until way past noon and they had to dip each candle at least 25 times and they ended up with 120 candles. The students would have to decide on the variables, how they could change, and the total number the two could have dipped.

Art/Music/P.E. - 1) The students could sing "Froggie Went A-Courtin" and "Barbara Allen", two songs mentioned in the story. They could then research where the songs came from.

- 2) The students could also make toys out of corn husks, such as dolls and fiddles. Then, the students could either give them away to people as gifts or keep them for themselves.

Public Relations - 1) The students could invite various speakers to the classroom to discuss pioneer life to the students. The author knows local museums have programs. A simple phone call, possibly by the students, would be easy to do.

Objectives

sequencing
comparing/contrasting
vocabulary
specific direction writing
following written directions
questioning skills
listening skills
modeling
proper behaviors
plants/herbs
problem solving
making items from corn husks

Birdseye, Tom. Soap! Soap! Don't Forget the Soap! An Appalachian Folktale. Illustrated by Andrew Glass. New York: Holiday House, 1993.

SUMMARY - This hilarious tale is one about the memory of Poor Plug. He has trouble remembering everything, including his own name. He runs into trouble when his mother sends him to the store to buy some soap. He can only remember the soap if he repeats "Soap, soap, don't forget the soap!" The story continues with all the people Plug meets and how his memory fails him once again.

Activities

- Reading - 1) Before reading the story, the students could predict what they think the story will be about just by examining the front cover. Their predictions could be listed on chart paper.
- 2) The students could read the story, either silently or in groups and discuss cause and effect situations that make Plug forget what he is after. These results could be placed on a chart. (Included)
- Language Arts - 1) After a discussion of memory skills, the students could interview five people about how they remember what they have to do, names, dates, etc. The students could then present their findings to the whole class and discuss what would work for each person.
- 2) The students could study quotation marks and the use in stories for quotation marks. Then, they could use the characters and their words and make a puppet show of the tale to present to other classes.
- Daily Living Skills - 1) The students could explore how well they remember things and how they could improve their memory skills.

- 2) The students could role play the various characters in the folktale and respond to the words Plug said. Then, a discussion way people interpret words could occur. The students would need to understand that although they often do not mean any harm, their words are interpreted differently and often misunderstood.

Music/Art/P.E. - 1) The students could design and make their own puppets of the folktale to present their puppet show.

Objectives

predicting
cause & effect
study skills (memory)
interviewing
oral presenting
quotation marks
retelling
understanding others' feelings
design and create puppets

Event

Cause

Effect

Caudill, Rebecca. Did you carry the flag today, Charley? Illustrated by Nancy Grossman.
New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston,
1966.

SUMMARY - When Charley Cornett begins school in the Appalachian Mountains, his brothers and sisters explain to him that the highest honor at the Little School is being chosen to "carry the flag" - the award each day for the child who has been the most helpful. No one really expects Charley to win the award for Charley is hardly the helping type...but Charley, in his own independent way, eventually does get to carry the flag.

Activities

- Reading - 1) This book could either be read aloud or silently, depending on the levels of the readers present (4th grade reading). After reading, the students could list the events Charley had to do and show the relationship between cause and effect. For example, Charley has to climb out on a tree limb to see how the apple attached. What happens? Why? This book is packed with cause and effect events.
- 2) The children could make predictions on what "carrying the flag" means. When they know that it is some kind of reward, the children could predict how someone would feel when they were chosen for the award. Then, the children could compare how they get awards for something similar and how they feel when they get the award.
- Language Arts - 1) Since this book takes place in the library at various times, the students could investigate the set up of the library, such as how books are arranged, the numbers on them, where various materials are located, and the card catalog.
- 2) The students could brainstorm the things they do when they are not in school, such as the activities they do, who they spend time with, things they are interested in, and then

write a short story or journal entry about the things they do. Charley gives them a lot of wonderful ideas and interests.

Mathematics - 1) A study of time could take place with this literature. Charley has no sense of time, such as the length of an hour, minutes, or the time it takes to get from one place to another. Clock manipulation could be used.

2) The students could go on a scavenger hunt in the community to investigate the time it takes to travel by foot from place to place. They could predict the time it will take and then actually time themselves to see how close they were to their predictions.

Social Studies - 1) The students could research the need for the mountain roads to "look like a black ribbon tied around the mountain". The need to wind the roads instead of going straight up, where mountain homes are located, etc.

2) This story talks a lot about coal mines. The students could research this important economic resource for the Appalachian culture. The needs for coal, how it is mined, the dangers involved, and importance to the community could be discussed.

Daily Living Skills - 1) The students could use a decision making process to list ways in which personal behavior produces consequences. The students could list the behaviors necessary at home, school, or in a work setting, if appropriate. The students could talk about the benefits of rewards.

Science - 1) Since Charley investigates a lot of

animals, the students could do an animal study about the animals that live in the Appalachian Mountains. Snakes could be a specific study. The adaptations to weather for the animals could be included.

- Art/Music/P.E. - 1) The story talks about using modeling clay. The students could create their choice of object with the clay and then paint to decorate it.
- 2) The story mentions playing a comb. The students could study the musical instruments of the Appalachian culture and then try to play some of the instruments, such as the juice harp or the comb.

Objectives

cause and effect	listening comprehension
predictions	personal feeling
library skills	written expression
brainstorming	time
problem solving	researching
mountain layouts	natural resources
decision making	animal study
manipulating clay	
investigating cultural musical instruments	

Haley, Gail E. Jack and the Bean Tree. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1986.

Still, James. Jack and the Wonder Beans. Illustrated by Margot Tomes. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1977.

SUMMARIES - Both of these stories are versions of the folktale of Jack and the Bean Stalk. The stories both contain the same ideas, yet are presented in different ways. They both contain some rich Appalachian dialect.

Activities

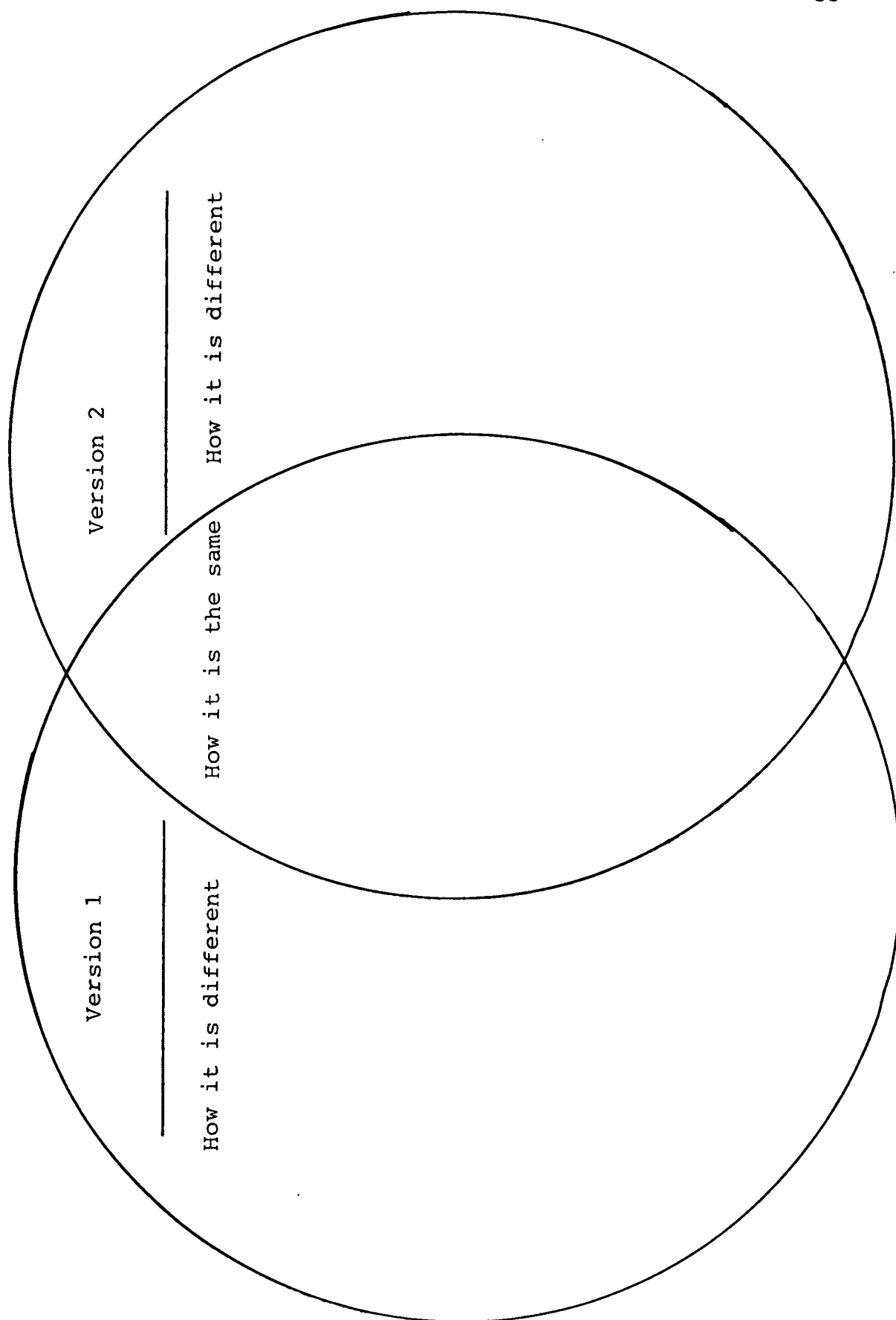
Reading and

- Language Arts - 1) These stories would serve a great way to compare and contrast the two versions. The students could use the included Venn Diagram for a model.
- 2) These books would provide an excellent model of the Appalachian dialect. The students could experiment with the pronunciations and what the words really mean.

- Daily Living Skills - 1) The students could discuss greed and what it can do to people. The teacher should make sure to point out that although Jack got everything that he wanted, that magic was also involved. Real life is not always magical.

Objectives

Comparing/contrasting
Discovering dialects/vocabulary
Values



Houston, Gloria. The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree. Illustrated by Barbara Cooney. New York: Dial Books for Young Readers, 1988.

SUMMARY- Since Papa has left the Appalachian area to go to war, Ruthie and her mother wonder how they will fulfill his obligation of getting the perfect Christmas tree to the town for the holiday celebration.

Activities

Reading - 1) Before reading the story, the students could relate the traditions their individual families follow for the holidays. These could be listed on chart paper and displayed.

2) The students could read the story, either in groups or silently. This story would also be a good read aloud. Sequencing of events in a picture accompanied by sentence would be appropriate for this story. A framed structure (included) could be used as well.

Language Arts - 1) After discussing their own family traditions during the holidays, the students could then interview several other people to compare and contrast the traditions prevalent in the area the students live.

2) The students could write a detailed account of their family traditions. The emphasis should be on detailed writing with very specific information. The whole writing process should occur.

Social Studies - 1) The story occurs during World War I. The students could study the war (in general) and how it affected the families involved.

2) The students could map the distance between the Appalachian region and the places the war took place.

The students could use yarn to show the distances involved and show an appropriate map scale to relate the distances.

Mathematics - 1) The students could use the map scale designed in the social studies portion and measure the total miles involved between the Appalachian region and Europe.

Science - 1) The students could conduct a study of all the various kinds of Christmas trees available. The story mentions several. The students could also discover where the trees are found in the United States. A possible letter to those areas could produce information by the growers of these trees.

Daily Living Skills - 1) Using the idea given in the science section, the students could write the letters to the growers of the Christmas trees, take to the post office, purchase the necessary postage, and mail the letters.

Public Relations - 1) The students could go to several older community members and inquire about their holiday traditions. The students could use the information gained for their interviewing.

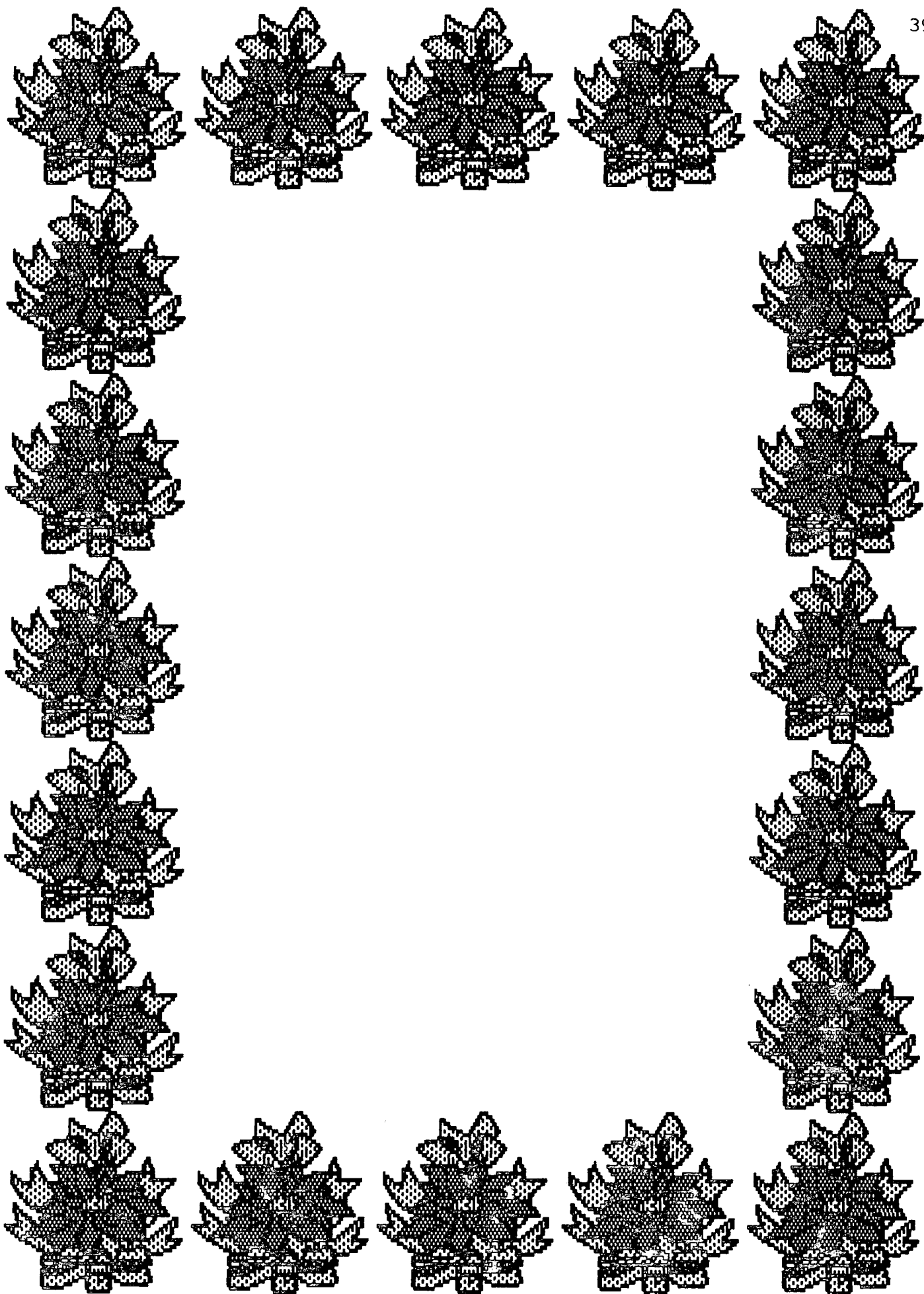
Music/Art/P.E. 1) The students could discover and sing various Christmas carols important to Appalachian region, some are given in the story. The students could perform the songs to the entire student body or to the community.

2) The students could make sock dolls like the Ruthie's mother did for her. The students could bring in scraps of material and decorations. The dolls could then be kept or given away to the Community Center.

Objectives

Oral Language
Sequencing
Interviewing
Compare/Contrast
Detailed Writing
Map Skills
Singing

War Effects
Measuring
Calculation
Study of Trees
Letter Writing
Community Travel
Puppet Making



Lyon, George Ella. Basket. Illustrated by Mary Szilagyi. New York: Orchard Books, 1990.

SUMMARY - Over the years, Grandma's basket becomes embedded in many family legends.

Activities

- Reading - 1) This story is an excellent read aloud. While the teacher or student is reading, the ones listening can be noting the various uses for the basket Grandma seems to have. The students can either rely on memory or have a piece of paper handy to make notes.
- 2) After hearing the story, the students can orally translate the various uses noted in the above activity. These should be listed on chart paper for the class to visually see.
- Language Arts - 1) The students can work on the skill of using a comma to separate items written in a list. At first the students can practice using the lists in the story and then transfer their knowledge into a story of their own where they have to have some sort of lists involved.
- 2) The students could look around their house or one of a relative to see if there is a special basket or container that has been used for many things over the years. The girl in the story learned a lot about her heritage from the memories held in the basket. The students could report on something similar if possible.

- Art/Music - 1) The students could make a small basket of their very own using either yarn or reed if possible. A resource person could come to school and teach the students how to make the craft. The baskets could then be taken home or given as a gift.
- 2) The story contains a song about a spool of thread. The words and music are in back of the book so the students could sing the song or play it on their flutophones, which is a requirement of the music curriculum in the district.

Objectives

reading for a purpose
memory skills
listing skills
comma useage

oral language
basket making
singing
playing an
instrument

Lyon, George Ella. Cecil's Story. Illustrated by Peter Catalanotto. New York: Orchard Books, 1991.

SUMMARY - A boy thinks about all the possible scenarios that exist for him at home if his father goes off to fight in the Civil War.

Activities

Reading - 1) This book is done in large print, simple vocabulary, and few words to a page. Therefore, the students should be able to read it to themselves. The students could read the story and then think of all the things they would have to do around the house if one of their parents had to leave for awhile. The jobs could be listed on chart paper and then compared to others in the classroom.

Language Arts - 1) The students could write a short summary of the story. The teacher should model how a summary is written if the students are not acquainted with summary writing.

2) A short lesson on contractions, especially wouldn't, you'd, and couldn't, could be held after reading this story.

Social Studies - 1) The story takes place during the Civil War. The students could study the areas the Civil War took place in, who was involved, and the effects. The students could research what the Appalachian people did as far as joining which side or staying out of it completely.

Daily Living Skills - 1) The students could list the jobs necessary to run a home successfully. The students could then role play the various jobs or become involved in situations where they are actually doing the

specific job at hand. The jobs should include both village living and rural living.

Objectives

reading for meaning
summarizing
contractions
Civil War Study

job descriptions
performing household
chores

Lyon, George Ella. Come A Tide. Illustrated by Stephen Gammell. New York: Orchard Books, 1990.

SUMMARY - In this fun to read story, a little girl provides a lighthearted account of the spring floods common to her rural home in the Appalachian region.

Activities

Reading - 1) This story can easily be read silently. The students could read the book and then retell the story to another student or to the teacher. The retelling should include sequencing and basic comprehension.

2) The students could investigate some of the vocabulary in the book. Words like Come a Tide, Holler, Stout, Kinfolk, and Mud-Mapped could be studied.

Language Arts - 1) The students could write letters to various organizations, such as The Red Cross, and ask for information concerning flood relief and what people can do to help those in need.

Science - 1) The students could investigate the effects of snow and rain in the spring on already full rivers or partly frozen ground. The students could examine the damage to the land and areas surrounding the rivers.

Social Studies - 1) The students could study the effects of the flood to the Mississippi River area in 1993. The students could either interview family members or do research in the library. An investigation of the long term effects could also be examined.

2) According to the story, it seemed that the Appalachian area experiences floods almost yearly. Research into how the families prepare for the floods could be done. Also, the effects on the

people and their methods of living could also be looked into through research or interviewing.

Art - 1) The students could depict their most prized possessions in a colored pencil drawing like the ones Stephen Gammell does in this book.

Daily Living Skills - 1) The students could volunteer at the local community club that provides hot meals to senior citizens and those in need. The students could participate in helping others in their own communities.

Objectives

Reading for meaning
Summarizing
Letter Writing
Vocabulary Study

Study of Floods
Effects of Floods
Artwork
Community Service

Mills, Lauren A. The Rag Coat. Boston: Little & Brown Publishing, 1991.

SUMMARY - Minna proudly wears her new coat made of clothing scraps to school, where the other children laugh at her until she tells them the stories behind the scraps.

Activities

- Reading - 1) Students could read the book orally in small groups or with a buddy. They then could make a story tree which lists the plot, theme, setting, characters, and feelings.
- 2) The students could then read The Patchwork Quilt by Valerie Flourney and compare and contrast the two books using a Venn Diagram.
- Language Arts - 1) The students could write about a particular event in their lives that could be represented on a quilt square. The events could then be written into class books or on an actual quilt.
- 2) The students could interview their parents about events in their family histories. The events could then be represented on a family quilt or in a family booklet.
- Mathematics - 1) The students could construct a quilt using squares of a particular size and then figure the perimeter and area, using the quilt for the manipulative.
- 2) The students could problem solve the processes of making a quilt, such as how many squares are needed, what size do the quilt squares need to be to be reasonable, etc.
- Social Studies - 1) The economic status of the Appalachian culture could be researched and then discussed as to why clothing was handmade and passed down through families.

- 2) Timelines could be used to show family events as depicted in many quilts. The students could graph their events on timelines in the same manner.

Daily Living Skills - 1) Through the use of quilt making, students use skills of sewing, practicality of handmade clothes and hand-me-downs, and the prediction of reasonability.

- 2) By discussing their family histories with their family and friends, the students can use their oral language skills, questioning, and listening skills. They will also develop a sense of who they are.

Science - 1) The discussion of fabric and what it is made of can take place. Experiments of the softest, scratchiest, better wearing, ease of finding the material, etc. can take place.

Art/Music/P.E. - 1) The students can design and decorate their own family quilts on paper, either free-hand or with graph paper. This can be displayed throughout the school or community.

Public Relations - 1) The use of mothers and fathers can be very helpful during this time period. They could relate stories to the children, help to set up the quilts, and even teach the functional skills of sewing.

Objectives

Oral Reading
Determining Character Feelings
Plot, Theme, and Setting
Comparing/Contrasting
Written Language
Interviewing
Perimeter
Area
Problem Solving

Timelines
Daily Living Skills
Oral Language
Predicting
Hypothesizing
Experimenting
Artistic Design
Researching

Rylant, Cynthia. Appalachia: The Voices of Sleeping Birds. Illustrated by Barry Moser. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1991.

SUMMARY - The author tells about life in Appalachia, the there, the dogs they have, and more. This quote comes from the book's fly leaf: "Some people who grow up in Appalachia never leave. Those who do nearly always come back and chances are they won't be able to tell you why. If you have never been to Appalachia, this book will give you a sense of the place and the people who live there. And if you are fortunate enough to know Appalachia well, you need no explanation - none at all."

Activities

- Reading** - 1) This book could be read orally in small groups. The story is told from a dog's point of view. A discussion of point of view and the author's intent would be appropriate.
- 2) The book contains a lot of details about the Appalachian lifestyle. The students could work on noting details within the story and summarize the book accordingly.
- Language Arts** - 1) Since the story is very descriptive, a lesson on descriptive writing would benefit the students. The book could be used as a model. Each passage is very visual. The students could visualize their own lifestyles and possibly write about them.
- Mathematics** - 1) To prepare for the science experiment, the students will need to experiment with the measurements of cups, pints, quarts, and gallons.
- Social Studies** - 1) The students could either draw or or build a model of an Appalachian homestead, using the book for reference. The student would have to choose between a modern home or a home from the past.

- 2) The students could state the responsibilities of the family members, noting the differences depending on the season.

Daily Living Skills - 1) Since growing and canning their own food is important to the Appalachian culture, the students could possibly plant vegetables and then can them. Later, in the school year the students could prepare them for a meal.

Science - 1) The students could do a study of the seasons and weather of the Appalachian region. Activities that go with the seasons could be noted, as well as coping skills to deal with the severe winters often experienced.

Art/Music/P.E. - 1) The students could draw or design their impression of an Appalachian homestead after reading this book or hearing it read.

Objectives

Point of view	Cultural homesteads
Author's intent	Responsibilities of
Noting details	family members
Summarizing	Producing, preserving,
Descriptive writing	cooking food
Liquid measurement	Designing
Comparing/contrasting	Seasons
Weather	Coping/decision making
	skills

Rylant, Cynthia. Miss Maggie. Illustrated by Thomas DiGrazia. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1983.

SUMMARY - Young Nat is afraid of old Miss Maggie and her rotting log house until his heart conquers his fears.

Activities

Reading - 1) This story could be read individually or in small groups. The text is fairly easy and could be used for a read and retell situation. The student reads the story and then retells the events in his own words. The retelling could be to another child or to the teacher. The retelling could then be used as a diagnostic tool to check for main idea, details, and sequencing.

Language Arts - 1) This piece of literature is a true story. The students could look at sequencing and its importance in story writing. Then, the students could brainstorm people who once frightened them simply because they didn't know anything about the person and write about their fear, whether they ever found out about the person, and the results.

2) The story involves a lot of details, such as "nosy old cow peering...", "brown, wrinkled face partly hidden by a faded blue bonnet..." The students could work on using descriptive words in their stories above.

Social Studies - 1) The students could investigate the differences in culture of the older generation. Some questions to answer would be how do older people live, act, and relate to others? Why do younger people often become afraid of older people they do not know?

2) The students could contact the local municipal government to find

out the distribution of ages within the area. The students could then study birth rate and death rate and the implications of each.

Daily Living Skills - 1) To follow up with the study of the older generation, the students could visit a local nursing home and interview the occupants. This author would suggest going a few times before the interview so the students can become familiar with the older people and not be so frightened. Then, the students could possibly penpal with the older person or visit regularly.

Science - 1) The students could investigate the growth of tobacco in the Appalachian region. The students could then discuss the health issues related to the tobacco industry and note the differences in cigarettes and chewing tobacco.

Art/Music/P.E. - Nat decorated tobacco tins for Miss Maggie as gifts. The students could bring tins and decorate them with things from the book, such as leaves, foil, and ribbons. The students could then fill them with candy or decorative items and give them to their nursing home penpals.

Public Relations - 1) The students will learn a lot about the heritage from their own community from the nursing home patients they interview. Likewise, the patients and community will see how the school tries to tie the village together.

Objectives

reading for purpose
comprehension
 main idea
 noting details
 sequencing
written expression
descriptive writing
dealing with personal fears
recognizing the older generation
identifying government services
interviewing
letter writing
making useable gifts
health issues

Rylant, Cynthia. Missing May. New York: Dell Publishing, 1992.

SUMMARY - This is a story of a twelve year old girl who lives in a trailer with her rather eccentric aunt and uncle. When her Aunt May dies, their life is turned upside down. She shares her struggles to deal with "missing May" with her uncle and a young boy who is trying to deal with problems of his own.

Activities

Reading - 1) This book can be used as a read aloud since it is at an upper elementary reading level. Discussion questions could be asked as the story is read to maintain a comprehension of the story. The students could also summarize the story after each reading session. A review before the next session of reading could also be held.

Language Arts - 1) The students could write diary entries describing the feelings that Summer has as she learns to deal with May's death. The students would have to gather their information from the daily readings noted above.

2) The students could write a letter to Summer trying to cheer her up. The students would have to use proper friendly letter format and recognize vocabulary that makes one feel better about a sorrowful event.

Social Studies - 1) The students could identify Charleston, West Virginia on a map. They could determine why Cletus wanted to visit the state capital so bad, how many miles it is from Ohio, and important landmarks in the capital.

2) The students could research the state of West Virginia, the setting of the story. An oral report and

poster could be used to display the information obtained by the students.

Science - 1) The students could research various diseases, such as diabetes which May died from. The ideal situation would be for the students to work in cooperative groups with each student taking on a specific job.

Art/Music/P.E. - 1) The students could research the word "whirligigs" and then design and make their own. These could be displayed outside the school.

Daily Living Skills - 1) The students, using this book for a model, could identify ways of coping with the death of a close loved ones. The students could brainstorm feelings they may have and then ways to deal with the feelings.

Public Relations - 1) The students could possibly sell their whirligigs and donate the profits to The National Diabetes Association.

Objectives

listening comprehension
oral summary
written summary
analyzing characters
friendly letter
vocabulary
map skills
research (state and city)
identify diseases
designing crafts
ways of coping with personal feelings
understanding donations

Rylant, Cynthia. The Relatives Came. Illustrated
by: Stephen Gammell. Bradbury Press, 1985.

Summary - The relatives from Virginia pack their ramshackle old car full of goodies and travel winding mountain roads for a family visit. The fun and logistics of dealing with a bunch of hugging, laughing, eating, snoring relatives is delightfully described in this funny tale.

Activities

Reading - 1) The students could read this book in small groups and then discuss their memories of family reunions. The students could web their memories, either as a class web or as individual webs, to use for a writing experience.

2) The students could make a story map, noting the setting, characters, problems, events, and the solution to the problems. The map could then be displayed for the other classrooms to view.

Language Arts - 1) After webbing their memories of family reunions, the students could write about a particular reunion that was special. The students could note what was good about it and what was not so good. The writing could then be made into a book to share with the classroom.

2) A study of vocabulary could be done through the use of this book. Various words could be compared that are differing in the room, such as the pronunciation of creek with a long e sound and the word creek with a short i sound. A discussion of the cultural expressions found in the area could be held.

Mathematics - 1) Since the story never exactly tells where the relatives are going (location), the students could figure the distance the relatives travelled

if they went 50 miles per hour for a day, a night, and another day. The students could then map the total number of miles from Virginia and get the different areas they could have arrived. This would be a part of social studies as well.

- 2) The students could problem solve the reasonability of the number of relatives shown in the pictures and if they could really have fit into the car, the house, and the various settings shown.

Social Studies - 1) The students locate Virginia on the map and study the state, noting the lay of the land, the natural resources available, and the main source of income.

- 2) The students could make a model of the hills and mountains the relatives talk about while they are travelling. Then, the students could compare and contrast the differences of mountains and hills.

Daily Living Skills - 1) The students could simulate the planning in a family reunion, how much room, food, sleeping arrangements, activities, etc. Then, the students could have their families come to school for a picnic with the students doing the cooking and preparing.

Science - 1) The students could design a menu with the foods grown in and around Virginia. The students would need to include foods from the four food groups in their menus.

Art/Music/P.E. - 1) The students could research the types of mountain music the Appalachian cultures are known for. The class could present a few songs the night of the picnic.

Public Relations - 1) A picnic celebrating family and

relatives should greatly increase the students' self-esteems, as well as provide an enjoyable time for the parents.

Objectives

Oral Reading
Oral Sharing
Webbing
Comprehension
Settings
Characters
Events
Sequencing
Problem Solving
Written Language

Figuring distances
Noting details
Plots on maps
Reasonable answers
State study
Comparing/Contrasting
Cooking
Planning a Reunion
Food groups
Cultural music

Rylant, Cynthia. When I Was Young in the Mountains.
 Illustrated by: Diane Goode. New York: Dutton,
 1982.

SUMMARY - An absolutely lyrical recollection of life in the mountains. This gorgeous prose brings life to the daily occurrences and important events in a typical child's experience. This book is a rich glimpse into the culture and heritage of that time.

Activities

- Reading - 1) This book would be a wonderful read aloud. Some of the vocabulary would be difficult for some SLD students. An oral questioning could take place and comprehension measured at that time.
- 2) An author study could occur after reading this book as it is a reflection of Rylant's childhood memories. The students could read other books by Rylant and note similarities and differences.
- Language Arts - 1) The students could share recollections of their childhoods with one another. They could possibly bring in pictures of their younger years and make a scrapbook of their memories. Help from the parents may be needed.
- 2) The discussion of journals, diaries, photos, keepsakes, and family heirlooms could be held. The students could learn the importance of written language as a source of information for the generations to come.
- Mathematics - 1) The students could problem solve and decide how many years ago their grandparents were born, then their parents, and then themselves. The family timeline could be made and then a discussion of generations could be held.

Social Studies - 1) A study of mountain life should be conducted. Such topics might include: the trees and vegetation found in mountainous regions, the areas in the United States with mountainous regions, the natural resources found in the mountains, the animals present, the ways of life of the people, etc.

Daily Living Skills - 1) The importance of childhood could be discussed and the ways to cope with an unhappy childhood, such as talking to someone, journal writing (where the student is the only one to see it), or enjoying different activities.

2) The act of storytelling could also be explored and practiced. The students could then present some stories to the rest of the school or at a community function.

Science - 1) The students could compare the children of the mountains to themselves, such as the foods they eat, the activities they do, the chores they do, the family traditions, etc.

Art/Music/P.E. - 1) The students could explore the dance of clogging, the various instruments used, such as the juice harp, and the music appreciated by the Appalachian culture. Tapes, videos, and performers could be taken advantage of by a teacher.

Public Relations - 1) A program could be held for the presentation of storytelling. The students could write their own experiences, design their props, and retell their stories to an audience of parents and community people.

Objectives

Oral sharing
Comprehension
Oral comprehension
Author study
Problem solving
Sequencing
Written language
Noting details
Timelines
Comparing/contrasting
Cultural music
Regional study (mountains)
Coping
Decision making
Storytelling

Meet Cynthia Rylant

Cynthia Rylant grew up in West Virginia in a coal mining town. She lived with her grandparents from the time she was four until she was eight. Her grandfather was a coal miner and had been in the mines since he was nine years old. Her grandparents did not have much money, but "they lived life with strength, great calm, and devotion to other people."

Rylant mostly read comic books when she was young because they were cheap. There were no bookstores or libraries in the town. She didn't start writing books until she was twenty-three years old, the first year she ever walked into the children's department of a library.

Most of her books come straight from her own childhood. She uses people and places she knew in West Virginia as characters. Sometimes she just writes a true story about herself and her family.

Her advice to young people is for them to go out and play. Play a lot and have a good time. She also tells children not to worry about what they will be when they grow up because that will take care of itself.

Meet George Ella Lyon

George Ella Lyon was born April 25, 1949 in Harlan, Kentucky. She grew up in the Appalachian Mountains, which has often been the source of her great inspiration for her books and poems. She now lives in Lexington, Kentucky with her husband and two sons.

Lyon attended school in Harlan in a building that was so small that all twelve grades were located in one building. There was not a library in the school, but her parents loved books and either read or told stories to her, thus passing their love of books to her.

Writing has always been an important part of George Ella's life from elementary school on. She started her career writing poetry. An editor, admiring her work, asked if she had thought about writing children's books, to which she said no but she would like to try. Now, she has many children's books to her credit.

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CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS
FOR PRACTICE

In chapter one, the writer described the location of her classroom, the types of students involved, and the community background of the students. The writer also defined a problem in the area of teaching the Appalachian culture through literature, which is not only a part of the curriculum, but also a major part of the students' family histories. As a result, the writer chose to design and develop an integrated thematic handbook revolving around the Appalachian culture through the use of excellent children's literature, child-centered projects, and manipulative activities.

In chapter two, the reader found a comprehensive review of the literature concerning the importance of using good, quality literature to support the concepts being taught in a whole language instructional method, the use of integrated thematic units for teaching, and the rich and deep Appalachian culture which is a part of the heritage of many students in the area where the writer is employed.

In the third chapter, the writer described how she designed the handbook, where the ideas came from, and

how the handbook was organized. The author used many sources to gather activities and find the children's literature that was available in several different libraries. The writer also found a few reference books for the teacher to assist in the information of the Appalachian area.

Chapter four is the actual handbook for teaching the Appalachian culture. It is organized alphabetically by the author and the activities are broken down by subject areas, although the activities are meant to flow together and not be fragmented. There are fifteen different children's books that are common to most libraries. There are also a few activities already made included with the activities.

Implications for Practice

The writer's vision for the handbook was one of a widely used teacher's tool that flowed across the curriculum. The writer tried to develop activities that were adaptable to elementary students with beginning teachers, veteran teachers, special education teachers, or regular education teachers. The writer also designed the handbook with her students in mind. She thought of activities that the students not only had to have to pass the grade level, but also ones that included personal attachments that would be interesting and fun

to become involved. The writer also kept herself in mind as she firmly believed that personal histories and backgrounds are important for everyone, whether a child or adult, to be aware of.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the most powerful implication was for me, a special education teacher of fourth/fifth graders who have Appalachian cultural ties. The writer's students' needs are the most important determining factor of how concepts are taught and which concepts are taught. The handbook that was developed meets the writer's students' needs and also meets the state's requirement for the students on the I.E.P. The handbook also gives the writer an organized manner of teaching the culture through cross-curriculum objectives. The students not only receive the academic skills, but the personal aspects as well. Through the communication needed to successfully complete most of the activities, the students will have developed a sense of worth and the necessary skills needed to be successful after the school years are completed.

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