Lower Grades- Lesson Topic: Reading (Vocabulary Development, Reading Comprehension)

Unit Description:

In this unit students will participate in a Google Lit Trip (See above technological tools section). Students will read through the children's book "Amy's Travels" and virtually travel via the program Google Earth to all the places that Amy travels to in the story. In the story, Amy travels to five different continents and mentions the different animals in each place, the types of people she finds there, and what languages are spoken there. As the students "travel" through Google Earth with Amy, they will move to the different continents, see images of the animals she encounters, and will learn more information about each place. As Amy travels, the students travel. The videoconferencing portion of this lesson will be to have an online interaction with classrooms from any or all of the places that Amy travels to. This way, the students will gain an even richer experience by being able to communicate with people from places that they have just learned about.

The first step in successfully implementing this unit into the classroom is to establish partnerships with participating classrooms from around the world. The Cooperative Educational Services Agency (CESA 7) and The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILA) in the technology tools sections list thousands of different schools in areas both inside and outside the United States that have access to videoconferencing and their contact information. The classrooms listed in these directories are interested in establishing educational partnerships and should be

contacted before the beginning of the year to effectively plan for an upcoming unit. The planning needed for this type of unit is extensive the first time that it is completed, however, once initial partnerships are established they can be strengthened and continued for years to come. Use the sample letter in the resources section for an example of what could be sent as an initial contact to potential cooperating classrooms. An important note to consider when establishing these partnerships is a potential language barrier. Ideally, there would be a translator available to facilitate conversation between the two classrooms, however, this project is based on the premise that even if language barriers between cooperating classrooms exist, simply interacting with people from another culture will promote multicultural understanding and thus be beneficial to the educational curriculum.

Objectives:

- Students will reinforce their vocabulary skills by associating new words that they learn with interactive images.

- Students will practice reading comprehension skills by having to relate what they read to real-world experiences.

- Students will gain a deep understanding of text by asking clarifying questions and collaborating with fellow students.

Standards (California State Content Standards):

CA- California K-12 Academic Content Standards
Subject : English Language Arts
Grade : Kindergarten
Area : Reading
Sub-Strand 1.0: Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

Students know about letters, words, and sounds. They apply this knowledge to read simple sentences.

Concept : Vocabulary and Concept Development

Standard 1.17: Identify and sort common words in basic categories (e.g., colors, shapes, foods).

Standard 1.18: Describe common objects and events in both general and specific language.

Sub-Strand 2.0: Reading Comprehension

Students identify the basic facts and ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed. They use comprehension strategies (e.g., generating and responding to questions, com-paring new information to what is already known). The selections in Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight (California Department of Educa-tion, 1996) illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.

Concept : Structural Features of Informational Materials

Standard 2.1: Locate the title, table of contents, name of author, and name of illustrator.

Concept : Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

Standard 2.2: Use pictures and context to make predictions about story content.

Standard 2.3: Connect to life experiences the information and events in texts.

Standard 2.4: Retell familiar stories.

Standard 2.5: Ask and answer questions about essential elements of a text.

Grade : Grade One

Area : Reading

Sub-Strand 1.0: Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

Students understand the basic features of reading. They select letter patterns and know how to translate them into spoken language by using phonics, syllabication, and word parts. They apply this knowledge to achieve fluent oral and silent reading.

Concept : Vocabulary and Concept Development

Standard 1.17: Classify grade-appropriate categories of words (e.g., concrete collections of animals, foods, toys).

Sub-Strand 2.0: Reading Comprehension

Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They draw upon a variety of comprehension strategies as needed (e.g., generating and responding to essential questions, making predictions, comparing information from several sources). The selections in Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students. In addition to their regular school reading, by grade four, students read one-half million words annually, including a good representation of grade-level-appropriate narrative and expository text (e.g., classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, online information). In grade one, students begin to make progress toward this goal.

Concept : Structural Features of Informational Materials

Standard 2.1: Identify text that uses sequence or other logical order.

Concept : Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

Standard 2.2: Respond to who, what, when, where, and how questions.

Standard 2.6: Relate prior knowledge to textual information.

Sub-Strand 3.0: Literary Response and Analysis

Students read and respond to a wide variety of significant works of children's literature. They distinguish between the structural features of the text and the literary terms or elements (e.g., theme, plot, setting, characters). The selections in Recommended Readings in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.

Concept : Narrative Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

Standard 3.1: Identify and describe the elements of plot, setting, and character(s) in a story, as well as the story's beginning, middle, and ending.

Standard 3.3: Recollect, talk, and write about books read during the school year.

Grade : Grade Two

Area : Reading

Sub-Strand 2.0: Reading Comprehension

Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They draw upon a variety of comprehension strategies as needed (e.g., generating and responding to essential questions, making predictions, comparing information from several sources). The selections in Recommended Readings

in Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Eight illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students. In addition to their regular school reading, by grade four, students read one-half million words annually, including a good representation of grade-level-appropriate narrative and expository text (e.g., classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, online information). In grade two, students continue to make progress toward this goal.

Concept : Comprehension and Analysis of Grade-Level-Appropriate Text

Standard 2.4: Ask clarifying questions about essential textual elements of exposition (e.g., why, what if, how).

Standard 2.5: Restate facts and details in the text to clarify and organize ideas.

Standard 2.7: Interpret information from diagrams, charts, and graphs.

Sample Lesson:

Individual Instruction: In this lesson, the individual and whole group instruction will switch back and forth as the class reads through the story. As Amy travels to her first destination, Antarctica, students will work in small groups to learn more about this place. They will view other sources of information in small groups like books and images to build background knowledge. Students should also have paper copies of the book so that they can practice reading the story aloud to each other to build fluency and to reference the text for information as they conduct research.

Whole Group Instruction: As students progress through the story, read aloud, and learn about the places they are visiting, pull students together as a whole group to take the Google Lit Trip. They will "travel" to the place that Amy has and be able to view live images of some of the things that she is seeing on her travels. Then, set up a videoconferencing session with someone from the place being visited so students can hear a firsthand recollection of what that country is like. When students hear the accent, see what they look like, see the country landscape in the background, they will gain an in-depth understanding of what the place is like and how to relate it to what is being read in Amy's Travels.

Assessing the Tool:

1. Was the tool simple to use as a teacher? For the students?

2. Did the use of this tool increase student global awareness?

3. What could be done differently to maximize the effectiveness of the tool?

Assessing the Lesson:

1. Did this lesson enhance student multicultural understanding?

2. Did this lesson develop collaborative skills amongst the students?

3. Did this lesson allow students to reach an understanding of the overlying concepts and objectives?