Mystery Skype

Unit Plan and Teaching Materials

The grade 5 classroom engaged in an inquiry to understand the significance of Canada's landforms in the lives of the inhabitants. After extensive research the class participated in a "mystery" skype with another class in Canada to use a 20 question format to discover where they were located. This package includes the teacher planning, instructional materials, photos, and the questions used in video interviews held following the Skype call.

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Gr. 5 Social Studies and English Language Arts – Lindsey Hodel classroom teacher and Mary Scott Teacher-Librarian

Students were introduced to heroes using a teacher made PowerPoint. A discussion began as to whether these people are or are not considered heroes. "Run" by Eric Walters was the novel used in the ELA class. Several discussions, thinking activities, and movie were used to introduce Terry Fox to the students.

The collaborative teaching sprung out from the novel. The initial idea was to focus on Canada's geography following the route that Terry had taken across the country. Various questions arose such as:

- What conditions would Terry have had to endure as he moved west?
- How would conditions have changed as he moved into the next month or seasons?
- What is the geography like in Canada and how does that affect the weather, vegetation etc?

These are sample questions that were first thought of as they focused on Terry's run. They were also focusing on how they as Canadians could make a difference to others.

The Backwards By Design Unit Plan shows some of the lessons used during the collaborative teaching which focused on preparing for the Mystery Skype. In order to successfully answer questions about our own country students set out to learn about Canada's provinces and territories. Research focused on   climate, region, neighboring provinces, time zone, capital, famous landmarks, geographical location.

The students were divided into jigsaw work groups to research these topics. These "puzzle pieces" would be brought together at the end in order to share with everyone. In their groups students worked to extrapolate information, manipulate and read atlases, maps, graphs and charts. Deep into the research and after group reflection, a new question or big idea came to the forefront…."**How does Canada's geography affect the way people live?"**

The first activity in preparation for the Skype was to develop some strong questions. Students used the starter activity along with their own research to come up with questions. The students then learned how we might have to "narrow down" the questions….what the next step might be in solving the mystery.

Students were assigned roles. Each role was described. Students added their ideas as to how we might make these roles more effective.

In preparation for the Skype, students gave much input into the set up. Suggestions were made that a laminated map be used by one group in order to eliminate places as they gathered appropriate information. Teams felt that they should all have an atlas in order to follow the ideas. Some of the information books and resources were gathered for each station and of course google maps was added as an important tool.

During the Skype, student engagement and interaction was amazing. Each student knew their role and participated with fantastic enthusiasm. These students have learned first-hand about "flattening the classroom." They have learned about cultural and geographical understanding and differences by connecting globally.

Backward Design Unit Planning Template

Unit:	
Targeted Outcomes:	**Assessment(s):**

Social Studies : DR5.2
English Language Arts CC5.1;CC5.2;CC5.3 AR5.1; CR5.1
 	
Cross Curricular Competencies
Goals: K-12 Goal: Understand, value, and care for others
     K-12 Goal: Construct knowledge related to various literacies
     K-12 Goal: Explore and interpret the world using various literacies
     K-12 Goal: Express understanding and communicate meaning using various literacies
     K-12 Goal: Engage in communitarian thinking and dialogue
     K-12 Goal: Think and learn contextually, creatively and critically
	Ruberics
	Informal assessment on research and group work
	Reflection journals
	Skype

Big Ideas:	Description of Culminating Task:
What are the marks of a true hero? What does being Canadian mean? How can we as Canadians make a difference to others? What conditions would Terry Fox have had to deal with if his journey was completed to British Columbia? What conditions would Terry have had to endure as he moved west? How would conditions have changed as he moved into the next month or seasons? How does Canada's Geography affect the way people live? **Essential Skills:** Students will be able to… - Work collaboratively in a small group - Extrapolate information about the inquiry topic using a variety of resources (jot notes) - Think creatively, contextually and critically - Develop presentation skills - Read atlases, maps, graphs, charts - Make connections between different locations and communities. - Practice speaking and conversation skills - Become better at asking questions and collect data	- Students participate in a jigsaw activity where each group will research and become experts on various regions and provinces and territories within Canada. Each group will create poster, chart, 3-D map for presentation to other groups. - Students will participate in a Mystery Skype with a classroom from somewhere in Canada.

Enabling and/or Other Assessment Tasks	

Title/Task – Mystery Skype
Introduce students to Mystery Skype early in the research process.
    • Teach process of only using yes or no questions.
    • Brainstorm questions that they think would best guide them to the mystery location. (students focus on information gathered from their own research piece)
    • Brainstorm "narrowing down" questions.
Resources:
Diagnostic/Formative /Summative –
	Curriculum Outcomes:
	 DR5.2
	CC5.2
	CC5.3

2. **Title/Task: prepare for Skype** Discuss and assign student roles. **Resources**: computer, maps, atlases, information charts prepared by students for their group presentations**.** **Diagnostic/Formative/Summative**: Prepare written greeting and thank you.	**Curriculum Outcomes:**
3. **Title/Task:** Skype Discuss and review digital courtesies- how to be ambassadors for our school. **Resources:** **Diagnostic/Formative/Summative:**	**Curriculum Outcomes:**
4. **Title/Task Mystery Skype Practice** Practice Skype with another teacher/colleague etc. to ensure students are aware of roles and responsibilities **Resources:** Skype, colleague, materials listed previously. **Diagnostic/Formative/Summative:**	**Curriculum Outcomes:**

5. Title/Task: : Mystery Skype Culminating Activity **Students use all resources, information, to participate in Skype!** **Resources: mac computer, data projector, mpas, atlases, group projects, google maps, laminated map of Canada, chart paper and marker for recorders, cameras for photographers.** **Diagnostic/Formative/Summative:**	Curriculum Outcomes:

Type of Inquiry

- Initially teacher directed allowing students to take a leadership role in the direction of the inquiry.

Inquiry Question

- Main: How does Canada's geography affect the way we live?
- Sub Questions
    - What does being Canadian mean?
    - How can we as Canadians make a difference to others?
    - What conditions would Terry Fox have had to deal with if his journey was completed to British Columbia?

Interview Questions (collaborative teaching partners)

1. Where did the idea for the inquiry come from?
2. How did inquiry unit unfold?
3. How did you have the students engage in the inquiry?
4. How did you want the students to showcase their learning?
5. How did the students prepare for this?
6. What successes did you experience? What challenges?
7. As educators what do you take away from this process?

Students took leadership role and directed their own learning under teacher's guidance and curricular outcomes wanted to attain?

Interview Questions (Students)

1. You just finished an inquiry about Canada. What was the highlight for you?
2. Do you have any other big questions as a result of what you have learned about Canada?
3. Where did you find the information you needed in your research?
4. You were assigned specific work groups. What did you learn about working with others?
5. One thing I learned and do not want to forget is………………….

<date>   **Parental Permission Letter for Students to Participate in Skype**

Dear Parents,

We have been studying Canada, looking at the provinces, landforms, vegetation and water. We began our research by following Terry Fox's run and wondered what conditions he would have had to deal with as he travelled through the country.

A "Big Question" came to mind as we started thinking about how the geography of our country affects the way we live. Students were put into groups to become "experts" on the following topics: provinces, and territories, landforms, vegetation, climate and bodies of water in Canada. Our research has been vast, using paper resources, online resources, videos and maps.

We were introduced to an activity that we thought would be very exciting to use as our culminating activity. The opportunity has arisen to " Skype" with a classroom in another province. There's a hook, though, because this would be a "Mystery Skype". What's this you ask? Well simply it is a game like 20 questions where we ask a classroom in another part of the country, questions about their location. Using only yes or no answers we have to put the clues together to determine their location. This would be done through Skype.   With "expert" groups, the project allows students to deepen their understanding of their own community and extend their learning across the country.

Students are assigned roles so that everyone participates in the process. Roles that we have chosen include:

1. Greeters - Say hello to the class and some cool facts about the class - without giving away the location.
2. Inquirers - these kids ask the questions and are the voice of the classroom.
3. Answerers – these kids will answer the questions - they should know their country facts pretty well.
4. Think tanks – Students work in a group to figure out the clues based on the information they knew.
5. Question keepers - these students typed all of the questions and answers for us to review later.
7. Atlas mapper – students use atlases and map to also piece together clues.
8. Clue keepers - work closely with answerers and inquirers to help guide them in their questioning.
9. Runners - Students that run from group to group relaying information.
10. Photographer - takes pictures during the call
11. Clue Markers - These students worked with maps to remove any provinces that don't fit into the clues given.
12. Problem solver - this student helps students with any issues they may encounter during the call.
13. Closers - End the call in a nice manner after guesses have been given.

This project gives students the opportunity to actively apply their knowledge and what they have learned. When they are asked questions, students will collaborate in order to respond accurately to questions about their own province and country.

Although the focus of this "inquiry" is Social Studies, the students have explored oral fluency, presenting, research skills, note taking, critical thinking and cooperation.

The date for the Skype has been set on <date> from <time>. The students will eat their lunch prior to the skype.

In order to take part in this project we will require permission for each student. There is nothing dangerous about this activity. No names will be used during the Skype. Not all students will be seen by the other school and nothing will be recorded. Photographs that will be taken by our students will be used to complete our in- school project.   The following permission form is for the skype itself.

We have also applied to the SSLA (Saskatchewan School Library Association) to be a part of a project which provides support for teacher-librarians as they further explore "inquiry" with the students. Please see the attached information which explains the project in detail.

<name> from <school division> will also be invited to come to the school to video tape the process in the event that we are accepted for the project.   The video will reflect an "inquiry unit" in action.

There are numerous forms that will have to be signed in order for your child to participate. We are one of 2 schools in the <school division> who are currently learning about and taking part in "Mystery Skype" The SSLA project will be very helpful to other educators in the field.

Thank you very much in advance for your help and interest.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact <teacher> at <phone number>.

Please return this slip by <date>.

Yours in Education,

PERMISSION

I give my (son/daughter) _____permission to participate in the

"Mystery Skype" Dated:_____

Signature:_____

Technology Integration is….

Environment	
Effective/Transformative Practice	**Entry/Beginning Practice**
Students can articulate **classroom expectations** for technology or web tool including: • classroom procedures for accessing technology with minimal disruptions • rules and expectations for using technology ethically to respect equipment, themselves and others	Evidence of disrespect for • equipment • privacy and posted work of others in online products or communication • copyright and other people's ideas
Students have **ongoing access** to technology as a resource and can **effectively select tools** for different purposes including: • researching • assessing (feedback) • communicating • producing	Access to technology is scheduled: • primarily only used with direct teacher instruction • allowed when "real work" is complete or as a "reward"
Use of technology to **collaborate with others** to **produce work** and **share it** within the classroom and, ideally, with other classrooms and/or experts: • email • blogs • Skype • Google documents	Students primarily work alone • no interaction with others online to create, share, or reflect on products
Technology promotes **effective communication** to provide **timely and relevant information** to support learning through email, classroom blogs, web pages, digital assignments or other tools between: • teacher and students • student and student • teacher and parents	Little or no digital communication to provide feedback • basic communication with little opportunity for feedback and participation • disconnected from learning in the classroom
Notes and Observations…	

Instruction

Effective/Transformative	Entry/Beginning
Technology infused lesson is **constructive** • student uses technology to build understanding of curriculum topics • student centered	Technology is primarily utilized as direct instruction; • students do not actively participate • passively receive information • teacher centered
Technology tools and tasks are **authentic** to the learner: • promote problem-solving and higher order thinking skills • cross-disciplinary	Tasks are basic without correlation to real world problems: • drill and skill only, • basic computer training • AR quizzes only
Learning outcomes are communicated and evident in the task/lesson	Technology skills are the focus of the lesson with limited correlation to curriculum outcomes
Students communicate ideas effectively to a **variety of audiences** with **different media formats** including: • print • video • images/graphics • discussion forums • diagrams	Repeated use of print or word processing as the only technology media format; limited audience to classroom only
Notes and Observations…	

Preparing for a Skype Call

We will connect with a ☐ School ☐ Teacher ☐ Expert
In City, State, Country: _____

Question #2

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_____
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Question #1

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Question #3:

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Remember, no questions that you can answer with a yes or no.

Questions Starters

*We learned about...what do you...?

*Can you describe.... to us?

*How is...like...?

*How do you feel about...?

*Can you explain to us...?

*Can you tell us about an experience you had with...?

*Have you ever...?

We Skyped Today!

We connected with a ☐ School ☐ Teacher ☐ Expert in _____

We connected with a City, State, Country: _____

What information can you share with your classmates, teacher, parents?

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I was surprised to learn:

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What would you like to investigate further? :

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_____

My Job Today was:

☐ Collaboration-Coordinator
☐ Calendar
☐ Greeter
☐ Share
☐ Q &A
☐ Photographer
☐ Videographer
☐ BackChannel
☐ BC Clean-up
☐ Google Maps
☐ Google Earth
☐ Blogger
☐ Data Form
☐ Timer
☐ Info Station