Integrating social studies and literature using folktales

Susan Sublett Newton

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INTEGRATING SOCIAL STUDIES AND LITERATURE USING FOLKTALES

A Project Submitted to
The Faculty of the School of Education
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of

Master of Arts
in
Education: Reading Option

By

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The Problem

The purpose of this project is to design sample lesson plans in which literature (specifically folktales from a variety of cultures) is integrated into third grade social studies units.

The educational system in the state of California is in transition. Literature is becoming more important in the teaching of reading as well as in other content areas. In 1988, the State Department of Education adopted the History Social-Science Framework, which mandated that literature should be an integral part of the social studies curriculum. For many educators, this is a drastic change.

As with any major change, it will take several years to align the curriculum with the framework. For example, the social studies textbook is currently up for adoption. The textbook publishers undoubtedly have re-vamped the texts to include more literature. In the meantime, the task of incorporating literature into the curriculum is the job of the teacher. However, even after the
adoption of new texts, the teacher will have to carefully review the textbook and decide which units to study directly from the book and which to revise and augment with other literature and/or activities.

**Procedure**

This project outlines a series of lesson plans designed to incorporate folktales into the third grade social studies curriculum. The literature review presents a complete rationale as to the importance of literature in education in general, and social studies in particular. The review of the literature includes sections on incorporating literature in education, integrating subjects, and combining social studies and literature. It also presents a rationale for using folktales as a medium for studying culture.

The literature review is followed by a series of lesson plans using folktales from a variety of cultures. The lesson plans include the objectives of the lesson, activities for "Into, Through, and Beyond" the text, and a means of evaluating the students.

The final part of this project consists of a bibliography of folktales for children which can be used in the social studies curriculum.

**Conclusions**

Until social studies texts align themselves with the
state framework, it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to include literature in the social studies curriculum. This project presents a method for incorporating folktales into social studies lessons.
INTRODUCTION

In the state of California, "we are in the midst of a revolution" (State Department of Education, 1987, p. 1). This educational revolution was sparked by the publishing of two documents by the State Department of Education: the English Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools (1987) and the History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools (1988). Both of these documents outline great changes in education. The two frameworks call for a change in teaching techniques and attitudes. Both espouse the importance of an integrated curriculum, and both advocate the use of literature in the curriculum. In fact, the frameworks have many similarities. In order to comply with the documents, many California schools are going to have to make many changes.

On May 6, 1986, the English-Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools was adopted by the California State Board of Education. The adoption of the framework was the first step in revitalizing the teaching of English-language arts in the California schools. In order to follow the guidelines presented in the new framework, many educators, as well as school boards, administrators, and parents, are revising attitudes and teaching strategies. Indeed, the new framework will drastically alter the teaching of reading and language arts in California.
Similarly, the History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools calls for "the correlation of history-social science with other disciplines" (1988, p. ix).

This framework proposes both an integrated and correlated approach to the teaching of history-social science. The teacher is expected to integrate the teaching of history with the other humanities and social science disciplines. The teacher is also expected to work with teachers from other fields, such as the language arts, science, and the visual and performing arts in order to achieve correlations across subjects. (1988, p. 4)

The two frameworks are similar in other aspects. They both emphasize the importance of literature. The English-Language Arts Framework states "to touch students' lives and to stimulate their minds and hearts, we need a literature-based English-language arts curriculum that engages students with the vitality of ideas and values greater than those of the marketplace or the video arcade" (1987. p. 7). The History-Social-Science Framework "emphasizes the importance of history as a story well told . . . . [It] emphasizes the importance of enriching the study of history with the use of literature, both literature of the period and literature about the period" (1988, p. 4)
Alexander (1988) points out "In every grade our pioneering guide deepens the study through the rich use of literature . . . . It emphasizes the narrative approach to history" (p. 10).

Many educators have advocated the use of literature in the area of social studies. "Stories are a powerful way to engage students' interest in the social studies curriculum" (Common, 1986, p. 246). William G. Brozo and Carl M. Tomlinson (1986) also agree that literature can be an effective tool for teaching the content areas. "Children's literature used skillfully in tandem with texts makes the curriculum more palatable and memorable, and that use of literature is likely to promote students' in and involvement with content material and thereby increase their learning" (p. 288).

Sides (1982) cites many of the benefits of a literature program. A great number of these advantages have a direct correlation with social studies. According to Sides, students are able to "learn about their cultural heritage, and gain personal insight. However, one of the strongest arguments for a literature program is that it affords the reader/listener the opportunity to live the events of past, present, and future" (p. 281). While textbooks often make historical events seem dry and boring, a good story can make history come alive. It is more interesting and exciting, therefore more memorable.
In the third grade, literature plays an integral part in the history-social science curriculum. The course title for grade three is "Continuity and Change," with a subtitle of "Our Nation's History: Meeting People, Ordinary and Extraordinary, Through Biography, Story, Folktale, and Legend" (1988. p. 4). Therefore, folktales are particularly appropriate for third grade.

Closer inspection offers other commonalities between the two frameworks. "The overarching goals of the English-Language arts curriculum are: to prepare all students to function as informed and effective citizens in our democratic society" (1987. p. 1). "The goals of [the] History-Social Science Framework fall into three broad categories . . . [including] incorporating an understanding of our national identity, constitutional heritage, civic values, and rights and responsibilities . . ." (1988, p. 10). Both frameworks stress the importance of developing well informed future citizens.

The implication of these two important documents is that there must be some changes in the teaching of language arts and social studies. Changes are mandated by both frameworks. Therefore, social studies curricula and texts must be revamped to include more literature. Until then, teachers must develop programs which integrate literature and social studies.
LITERATURE REVIEW

Children's Literature in Education

Educators today have a difficult task. They are competing against television and electronic devices which often captivate the interest and imagination of children, even before they enter school. Teachers know that reading is a vital skill for students. They realize that the ability to read is the backbone for future education and success as an adult. However, "The young are notorious hedonists, preferring to expend energy on activities that offer satisfaction here and now. With children, feelings come first. To make them want to learn, instruction must appeal to the emotions as well as the intellect" (Sloan, p. 133).

The problem sounds enormous. However, the solution is not as difficult as it appears at first glance. Children, for the most part, will learn if they are presented with meaningful, interesting material. Quality literature provides an excellent resource for learning. Most young children love to hear and read stories. If the teacher can lock into this interest and utilize it, the business of teaching reading will be much less difficult. Unfortunately, too often this love of reading is quickly extinguished with an emphasis on dry, boring exercises, rather than exciting, interesting stories.
Literature is a powerful tool in education. Most children love to hear and read good literature. From the time they are very young, children are fascinated with hearing stories and looking at pictures. Yet in many traditional reading programs, stories are often delegated to a short "story time" and ignored in the more structured reading instruction. As the children grow older, the length of the story time is decreased and it often disappears entirely in the intermediate grades and middle school. However, experts have recently begun to advocate the use of children's literature in the elementary curriculum. According to Sides (1984) "A literature program has many benefits. Among those frequently cited are: helping students develop a love of literature, increase reading ability, gain knowledge, develop aesthetic awareness, learn about their cultural heritage, and gain personal insight" (p. 281).

Quality literature is an excellent resource for teaching reading. Yet for many years, literature was watered down, or completely omitted, in materials used for teaching reading. It was replaced by phonics drills, skills, and worksheets. The traditional basal approach often caused children who loved to read and hear stories to dislike the subject of "reading" as it was taught in the majority of classrooms. What they really disliked
were dry, dull reading exercises. Yet young students were unable to make the distinction between skills and reading. In some cases the basal reading program actually backfired. Students may have learned the reading process, but they lost their interest in reading books. Reading became a chore.

Some teachers advocate the "skill and drill" method presented by the basals and object to using literature for teaching reading. Yet according to Sloan (1980):

Those who insist that increasing the dose of skill and drill is the cure for illiteracy simply do not know what turns children off and on. The exploits of Curious George, Madeline, Henry Huggins, Deenie, George and Martha, Encyclopedia Brown, Pippi Longstocking and other characters from books turn young readers on. The eccentricities of long and short vowels do not. (p. 133)

These same teachers may argue that basals do have stories. Yet these so called stories with controlled vocabularies are sometimes as boring as the workbooks and worksheets to which the students are subjected. The result, contends Lukens (1986), is:

Children do not read because so often the stories or poems offered them in childhood are poor literature, dull and uninteresting, obvious, preaching or teaching in purpose, limiting children
by sex role and stereotyping, by narrow vocabularies and by required reading level. (p. 154)

Recently, however, experts have advocated the use of quality literature in all areas of the elementary curriculum. Odland (1979) recognized the importance of literature in elementary reading programs:

Reading programs are recognized to be incomplete if there is no evidence that the skills of reading are used and, conversely, those who study children's progress in learning discover that those who do read can read better. The contribution of literature to personal growth and enrichment as well as to the power of the imagination makes literature an essential part of a child's education. (p. 363)

Many studies have been conducted comparing the effectiveness of traditional basal programs versus a reading program using children's literature. Bader, Veatch, and Eldredge (1987) conducted one such study. Control groups used basals adopted by their school districts. The experimental group used a variety of trade books.

The control group followed the directions and recommendations of the teacher's manual in the basal series. The experimental group participated in a variety of reading activities.
The bulk of the reading period was spent in children reading, the teacher reading to children, and activities to stimulate interest in reading. Comprehension activities to improve vocabulary and thinking skills were developed through materials read to children, 'sharing of books' sessions, and content area reading. (p. 64)

The study concluded that "the use of children's literature to teach children to read had a strong effect upon students' achievement and interest in reading--much greater than the traditional methods used to teach children how to read" (p. 65).

Most experts agree that one component of a successful reading program involves the teacher reading aloud to the students. Koeller (1981) recommends having the teacher "read aloud to the children on every possible occasion" (p. 554). Sloan (1980), Lukens (1986), and Alex (1988) state that reading aloud to students is an important part of reading instruction. Sloan (1980) points out that "Studies by Carol Chomsky, Dolores Durkin and others link early reading aloud to later success in learning to read, to the desire to read and to general linguistic development" (p. 134).

When students hear a story read aloud, they can learn to enjoy and appreciate the storyline without having to struggle over individual words. Furthermore, students can
gain exposure to new vocabulary and can hear reading fluency. All of these components are important to reading.

There are many different programs which have been developed that use literature as a basis for the program. The title of the article by Sides (1982), "Story Time is Not Enough", conveys the author's feelings regarding a literature program. "A literature program is a sequence of planned activities designed to help children respond more fully to stories from books and periodicals" (p. 281). In a good literature program, children learn to do more than just listen to stories. They learn to analyze and question. They learn to compare and contrast and form their own opinions.

Integration of Children's Literature into the Curriculum

Literature is useful in many other areas of education in addition to reading. In fact, literature can be the core of an effective integrated curriculum. In today's elementary classroom, students have a great deal of information and concepts to learn in a limited amount of time. In addition to the "basics" of language arts (including reading, writing, and spelling) and math, students need to be literate in the areas of social studies, science, health, physical education, drug education, and computer education, among others. The only
effective way to teach this variety of subjects is to integrate the curriculum.

A whole language classroom, which is based on units centered around a common theme, is an excellent way to integrate curriculum. Fountas and Hannigan (1989) state:

In classrooms where skills and subject matter are interwoven, children experience a curriculum that is not fragmented . . . . Units of study are not contrived but rather flow naturally from children's interests . . . . In all of these activities, students are actively involved in exploration of a topic; they discuss and share as they expand their understanding. (p. 136)

Literature is an integral part of a whole language classroom. Children in a whole language classroom are immersed in a literate environment. Fountas and Hannigan (1989), describe many ways in which literature is vital to the whole language classroom. "In a whole language classroom, teacher's surround children with language in meaningful context" (p. 134). Their suggestions include having a variety of literature in different forms, such as plays, fiction, and non-fiction. Children should be allowed to experience the literature in a variety of ways including reading to themselves, hearing literature read aloud and shared reading.

Other researchers have found that integrating
subjects can be a successful technique for teaching. Fortson (1977) asserts that not only do the language arts, including literature, provide an excellent tool for teaching other subjects, but the other subjects can enrich the language arts. "When joined with social studies, mathematics, art, music, or dramatics, language arts experiences can take on new dimensions, and can elicit the types of intellectual and social-emotional responses which promote personality integration as well as academic competence" (p. 378).

**Integrating Children's Literature and Social Studies**

Social studies provide an excellent opportunity for integrating language arts and literature into a content area. Nelms (1987) points out that "there is no dearth of studies . . . that point out the need to use writing as an aid to reading and writing in the content areas in elementary schools" (p. 572). Schmidt et al. (1985) state that "Integrating language and reading instruction with other curricular areas means providing richer instructional content for students--opening up connections and relations that skill-focused compartmentalized instruction will not offer to students' understanding, practice, and possibly enjoyment" (p. 319).

As previously stated in this paper, reading aloud to students is accepted by many experts as being a critical
component of the teaching of reading. Oral reading by the teacher can also enhance other subject areas including social studies. Social studies provides a wide variety of subjects which can be enriched by the teacher reading literature aloud. Literature can bring history alive. It can introduce children to far away people, places and cultures; and it can provoke thoughts and discussions of social issues. Indeed, literature can be an excellent tool for the teaching of social studies for all ages and grades. Aiex (1988) concurs that "interdisciplinary activities can be incorporated into most novels" (p. 460).

The History-Social Science Framework places special emphasis on the use of literature in the primary grades. "The students will read, hear, and discuss biographies, myths, fairy tales, and historical tales to fire their imagination and to whet their appetite for understanding how the world came to be as it is" (State Department of Education, 1988, p. 5). One important component of the third grade curriculum in the framework is "Our Nation's History: Meeting People, Ordinary and Extraordinary, Through Biography, Story, Folktale and Legend" (p. 43). American folktales and folktales of other cultures can be read, discussed and compared to allow students to see the similarities and differences among various cultures.

The study of different cultures is another component of the framework. "[Students must] understand the special
role of the United States in world history as a nation of immigrants [because] the multicultural, multiracial, multiethnic, multireligious character makes it unusual among the nations of the world" (p. 21). People from many cultures and backgrounds live in California, and must learn to live together. Therefore, students need to study the various cultures to better understand other people in their community. Literature provides an excellent way to introduce students to different cultures. "As a transmitter of various cultures, literature also serves to fuel the meaningful exploration of a variety of people and places" (Fountas and Hannigan, 1989, p. 136).

The multi-ethnic aspect of California is a reality in the lives of California's children and adults. Therefore, it is critical that the multi-ethnic aspect of California not be ignored in its schools. Schools are doing a great disservice to students of all ethnic backgrounds if they do not represent a wide variety of cultures. Unfortunately, social studies texts are often written from a white, middle class point of view and for a white, middle class student. In most California schools, this viewpoint does not represent the population being taught.

There are many reasons why the social studies curriculum should include a study of literature from a wide variety of cultures. Minority students often suffer from low self-esteem. When the social studies curriculum
extols the virtues and accomplishments of Caucasians only while ignoring the historic contributions of Blacks, Hispanics, Orientals and other minorities, the self-esteem Minority children are often incorrectly led to believe that members of their race did not contribute to the greatness of the United States. The United States is made up of people from many ethnic backgrounds who have all worked together to make the country great. Children of all ethnic and racial backgrounds must be taught about the contributions of all ethnic groups. Literature can help promote understanding and peaceful co-existence among people of various backgrounds.

Students need to be aware of differences among cultures and realize that these differences make the world more interesting and exciting. Just because a culture seems different or even strange does not make it any less valuable. The world would be pretty boring if all people had the same values, backgrounds and beliefs. Each culture is valuable because of its uniqueness. In addition, understanding another person's culture can often lead to understanding the behavior and values of other people. Children need to learn why others act and behave in a certain way.

Despite many differences which exist between cultures, there are often many similarities. This, too,
is important for children to learn. Often times another culture may seem to be completely strange and foreign. Yet closer study and examination yield many similarities. Children need to learn that a different culture may not be as strange and foreign as they originally believed.

People fear the unknown. Fear often turns to violence. In a society where racial tension exists and violence is becoming more common and widespread, a way to lessen this tension may be to educate children from an early age. Therefore, schools have an obligation to include multi-ethnic studies in their curriculum. Literature is a crucial part of these studies.

Linda Reed (1976) states that "A major goal of teaching literature is to broaden and deepen the experiences of children" (p. 257). She believes that the schools have a responsibility to teach literature from many cultures. She agrees that learning about a variety of cultures is good for several reasons. Firstly, "When they read the literature of other cultural groups, children will also learn that there are many similarities between those groups and their own" (p. 257). Secondly, students learn "that people belonging to ethnic groups other than theirs are real people with feelings and emotions similar to theirs, and with needs very much like their own" (p. 258).

Folktales are one of the best means for exposing
children to a large variety of cultures. "To begin with, they are marvelous entertainment" (Storr, 1986, p. 63). Children are more apt to learn if they enjoy the material. Folktales have been enjoyed by children for many years. They are simple, straightforward and easy to understand. Furthermore, they are usually action packed and exciting. Folktales capture children's imaginations as well as their hearts.

The anthroliterary approach to cross-cultural education, originally developed by Margaret Mead and Rhoda Metraux, and further refined by Jesse Goodman and Kate Melcher (1984), is a technique designed specifically to use folklore as a means of studying a cultural group. "[The] approach uses the oral or written literature of a cultural group to gain insight into its way of life. . . . Traditional folklore is a valuable resource for educating children about other people's cultural knowledge" (p. 200).

Goodman and Melcher (1984) give three reasons for using the anthroliterary approach. First, it promotes understanding of others. "True understanding requires empathy and the ability to view life from different perspectives" (p. 201). The authors also point out that the anthroliterary approach, while illustrating the differences among cultures, also shows the similarities among cultures. "Folklore from many cultures may contain
similar themes, such as joy, despair, courage, beauty and responsibility" (p. 201).

Secondly, folklore allows students to increase self-understanding. "Folklore allows students to observe, compare, identify, and experience life vicariously, permitting them to reflect upon what they learn and to apply to their own lives" (p. 201).

"Finally, an anthroliterary approach promotes active learning . . . instead of being told what another culture is like, students must draw their own conclusions from the picture presented in the literature" (p. 201). Students are much more likely to learn and retain knowledge when they are active participants, rather than passively sitting and listening. A great deal can be discerned about a culture by reading its stories, especially its folktales, and students are much more likely to remember the facts they have discovered for themselves, rather than those they have read in a social studies text.

Barnet (1978) presents many of the same arguments. She believes that the first goal of using folktales to teach culture is that "participants in folklore study are able to know themselves better. And after themselves, others. . . . Folklore helps people understand themselves because it treats values as living forces which motivate behavior" (p.7,8).
Barnet agrees that students who read folktales will come to know a culture more intimately than students who simply study facts in a text. They begin to know and understand a culture and its people, and develop empathy towards the group. They also come to feel that they are part of the same "human family" with many of the same feelings, beliefs, and customs. "That sense of closeness helps generate a positive interest in alien custom, rather than fear of strangeness" (p. 7). The more they know about the similarities and differences of another cultural group, the less they will fear them. Students must learn not to be threatened by people who are different, nor to feel superior to them.

Studying cultures through using folktales integrates several different subjects including social studies, reading, and language arts (speaking and writing). Additional activities can be added to include drama, music, art and even cooking (math and science). Students can gain better understanding of a people by sampling their food. The subjects covered are only limited by the imagination and energy of the teacher.

The teacher plays an integral part in the teaching of culture through literature. The teacher, along with the students, must decide which cultures will be studied and which folktales will be read. They also must research the culture and plan activities. During discussions, the
teacher must act as the facilitator, trying to draw out pertinent information without lecturing or dominating the discussion.

This project presents a series of lesson plans to be used in a third grade classroom and is a whole language approach to reading and curriculum. It stresses using the literature as a whole without breaking it down into parts. It also integrates various language activities (reading, writing and language arts) as well as activities in other content areas.

These lessons use folktales from a variety of cultures as a "springboard" to further discussion about the culture. By studying the culture through the use of folktales, the students will learn about the lives and the customs of those being studied. In addition, they will learn about the similarities and differences among these different cultures. Finally, the students will learn about folktales as a literary form.

**Evaluation:**

Whole language reading instruction is, for most educators, a new approach to teaching reading. Whole language requires the "rethinking" of many of the traditional components of reading instruction. In the whole language approach, evaluation is actually a part of the process of reading instruction, rather than a measure of skills. Whole language teachers use evaluation to
determine strengths and to discover areas which need improvement. Evaluation is a stepping stone to learning, not a culmination.

In the preface to *The Whole Language Evaluation Book* (1989), a collection of strategies for evaluation in the whole language classroom, Kenneth S. Goodman outlines some basic principles of whole language evaluation. Goodman believes that whole language evaluation strategies should be "holistic and . . . not fragment language. They [should] employ natural language in authentic contexts. They [should be] meaningful and relevant to learners" (p. xii). Just as whole language instruction uses literature rather than contrived stories with controlled vocabulary, whole language evaluation should not be simplistic and contrived.

The whole language approach to teaching reading requires a different role for the teacher. The teacher must be creative and develop many of his or her own teaching strategies. The whole language teacher cannot simply open up a teacher's guide and follow it. Whole language evaluation also requires the teacher to use his or her own instinct, experience, and education to evaluate students. Although it is frightening to some teachers to develop evaluation strategies, the whole language approach regards teachers as competent professionals who know what
is best for their students and are able to evaluate student work through a variety of methods. "[Whole language evaluations] treat both teachers and learners with respect" (Goodman, 1989, p.xii).

As Goodman points out (1989), evaluation is an on-going process in the whole language classroom. "It happens in the course of the teaching/learning. It is therefore an integral part of the curriculum and not something separate" (p. xii). Evaluation helps the teacher to know which direction instruction should take. Therefore, instruction will vary from student to student and class to class.

Evaluation in the whole language classroom is considered to be a tool. Not only does it help the teacher design curriculum, but it also allows the student to feel a part of the learning process.

Self-evaluation is the most significant kind of evaluation; pupils and teachers need to have a sense of why they are doing what they are doing so they may have a sense of why they are doing what they are doing so that they may have some sense of their own success and growth....Grades should represent growth (Goodman, 1989, p. xii).

Methods of evaluation are also different in a whole language classroom. Traditional evaluation procedures rely mainly on tests, sometimes prefabricated tests from
the text, sometimes teacher made tests, sometimes standardized tests. Many of these tests are multiple choice or require only simple one word answers. In contrast, "whole language teachers use interaction, observation and analysis" (Goodman, 1989, p. xii). The results are often more accurate, precise, and detailed than traditional tests.

Social studies, as well as reading, can be taught using the whole language approach. When evaluating social studies, the teacher should consider the objectives of the lesson. What was the purpose of teaching the unit? (Note: These objectives should be determined by the teacher, rather than an arbitrary outside source, such as the textbook.) The teacher should then use observation techniques to evaluate the student. Did the student participate in the discussion or activity? Did he or she seem to understand the concept being taught? Did he or she show insight or creativity during the lesson? If a student did not participate, why? Was he or she shy, or did he or she not understand the lesson? Finally, the teacher should remember that evaluation is part of the learning process. The student should be a part of the process, and the results should be thoroughly discussed.

The teacher should also remember that the results are not set in stone and that the evaluation can be amended
by further work from the student. As Goodman (1989) points out "[Whole language evaluation should be] open-ended . . . [and] allow for modification and change. They [should never be] permitted to be closed and completely self contained" (p. xii).

Although the whole language method of evaluation may be somewhat intimidating to some teachers, the teacher who is willing to try something new may discover that the results are much more revealing and accurate than traditional methods of evaluation.
LIMITATIONS

This project is designed to be part of the social studies curriculum for the third grade, however it is not intended to be the entire social studies program. The History-Social Science Framework (1988) for the state of California recommends a balanced social studies curriculum including geography (focusing on local geographical features), map skills, local history (the history of the students' own community), and multicultural education. The lesson plans in this project include some activities in each of these areas, but the emphasis is on multicultural education. And while folktales are a wonderful springboard for learning these skills, they certainly are not the only way to teach multi-cultural education.

Many types of literature can enrich a social studies lesson. Historical fiction can bring history to life. Biographies and auto biographies can introduce students to great people. Non-fiction selections can help explain the unknown. The types of literature used is only limited by the imagination of the teacher and the students.

In a whole language program, the students and the teacher work together to decide what and how they want to learn. Therefore, it is impossible to have a set of lesson plans which are appropriate for all students and
classes. The class should work together to plan lessons which meet their needs.

The stories in the lesson plans are all in English. Therefore the specific lesson plans can not be used by non-English speakers. The teacher will need to modify the lessons for limited and non-English proficient students. Another alternative is to read folktales in the students' native language, if they are available.

The lesson plans in this project are to be used only as a guide. The folktales, cultures, and activities should be adapted to accommodated the needs of the students. The bibliography provides a list of other folktales and stories which can be used to supplement or replace the folktales in the lesson plans, but the bibliography is by no means complete. There are literally hundreds of other books, many of which can be found in the local library. If the books in the lesson plans can not be located, others can easily be selected.

The activities in the lesson plans are also merely suggestions. A teacher should not be afraid to change, augment or delete the activities if necessary. The students themselves can also suggest activities. Children can be very creative and often can enlighten their teacher. Although the concept of developing curriculum together is new (and sometimes frightening) to many
students and teachers, the results can be very rewarding.

There are many limitations to the lesson plans contained in this project. Yet there are no limitations to the students and teachers who are not afraid to stretch their minds and learn as much as they possibly can.
Lesson Plans

The lesson plans are designed in the following manner.

Story: The name of the folktale and the author of a selected version. Further information on the book can be found in the bibliography.

Culture: The name of the area where the story takes place, or the area which originated the story, or the name of the cultural group being studied.

Objectives: The educational goals of the lesson.

Into: Activities designed to be done before actually reading the story. The activities can introduce the culture, the pertinent vocabulary and any other information which is necessary to understand the story.

Through: Activities involving the reading of the story.

Beyond: Activities which further enrich the story and which extend the study into other content areas (including, but not limited to, social studies, art and music.)
Story:  *Why mosquitoes buzz in people's ears* by Verna Aardema

Culture:  West African

Objectives:  Following this lesson students will be able to:
1. Identify a variety of animals which are found in Africa.
2. Recognize the moral of the story.
3. Recognize that quotation marks are used to identify people speaking.
4. Identify on a map the area where the story takes place.

Into:
1. Show the students a raw yam or sweet potato. Ask them if they know what it is. Allow the students to taste raw, cooked or canned yams.
2. Show the students a map of Africa. Tell the students that the folktale comes from West Africa. Identify the area on the map.
3. Show the students the cover of the book. Introduce the title. Ask the students to predict what they think the story is about.
4. Before reading each page, ask students to identify the animals on the page. As each animal is mentioned, write the name on the chalkboard. This introduces vocabulary, such as iguana and mosquito.
5. Before reading each page, ask students look at the picture on the page and predict what they think will happen on that page. Write their predictions on the chalkboard or chart paper.

Through
1. Read the book aloud to the students, allowing them to hear the flow of the language.
2. After reading the book, review each prediction. Were they correct?
3. On a subsequent day, read the story aloud without analyzing the story. This allows the students to simply enjoy the story.
4. Allow students to select a character and read their parts. Students will be introduced to quotation marks and their uses. Students should be allowed to read through their parts at least once to practice, then at least once to perform. This can be done page by page, followed by performing the entire book.
5. Discuss the message of the story. Is there a moral? What is it? Is there more than one moral?
6. Discuss the sequence of the story.
7. Discuss the illustrations. Do they add to the story? Why do some animals look mean in the illustrations?

Beyond:
1. Tape record the story. Allow students to read along silently as they listen to the story. This is very
effective with students who have difficulty reading independently. This activity can be done concurrently with "Through" activities. (Reading)

2. Have students design their own books. They can summarize each page, then illustrate the pages. (Writing, Art)

3. Have students design masks or puppets, then perform the story for their own class or other classes. (Language Arts, Visual Arts)

4. Students can research African culture and customs. Are any evident in the story? (Reading, Social Studies)

5. Students can research African Animals and compile a notebook of pictures. (Social Studies, Science)

6. Students can listen to African music. As a further activity, students can create their own music or chants. (Music)

7. Students can practice map skills, such as directions, and can identify various countries on a map of Africa. (Social Studies)

8. Have students read other African folktales (see Bibliography for suggestions). Compare and contrast these folktales with How mosquitoes buzz in people's ears.
Story: Arrow to the sun by Gerald McDermott

Culture: Native American (Pueblo Indian)

Objectives: At the end of this lesson students will be able to:
1. Recognize some elements of Pueblo Indian life and culture including housing, art, occupations, and weapons.
2. Compare and contrast the story to the Christian religion.
3. Locate on a map the area where the Pueblo Indians lived.
4. Recognize that all Native American tribes did not live alike.
5. Compare and contrast the lives of members of various Native American tribes. How were they alike? How were they different?

Into:
1. Show the students the illustrations from the book. Have them guess what culture the legend comes from.
2. Before reading each page, ask students to look at each picture and predict what they think will happen on that page. Record their predictions on the chalkboard or chart paper.

Through
1. Read the book aloud to the students, allowing them to hear the flow of the language.
2. Have students practice reading the story to a partner.
If student copies of the book are not available, reproduce the text so that students are able to practice the text, then pass around the actual book to allow them to practice reading the story with the book.

3. Students can read the story to younger children, in kindergarten or first grade. Make arrangements with another teacher to allow the third graders to read to an actual group of students.

4. Discuss the story with the students. Does it seem familiar? (The story is similar to the story of Jesus in the Christian religion.)

Beyond:

1. Tape record the story. Allow the students to read along silently as they listen to the story. (Reading)

2. Give the students black construction paper. Using light color crayons or chalk, have the students "tell" their own stories using pictures done in the same style as the book. Students may write words on the page or have the opportunity to tell their story orally. (Visual Arts)

3. Students can research Native American Indian tribes. They can do reports or projects on various aspects of life in each of the tribes. (Reading, Social Studies)

4. After researching the tribes, locate on a map of the United States the general area where the tribes live. Students can develop a map legend to identify each tribe and can plot the location on an individual map. Students
can also trace the movement and relocation of the tribes. (Social Studies)

5. Allow students to read other Native American folktales. Discuss how they are alike and how they are different. Have students analyze the similarities and differences of various Native American tribes. (See Bibliography for suggestions.) (Reading)
Story: The magic mallet adapted from Sun and moon: fairy tales from Karos by Kathleen Soros (see Reference Section, Van Decar, Patricia. Teaching elementary school children about Korea.)

Culture: Korean

Objectives: Following this lesson students should be able to:
1. Recognize the moral of the story.
2. Read from a play format.
3. Identify elements from traditional and modern Korean life.
4. Identify fictional and non-fictional elements of the story.
5. Recognize the steps necessary to present a play.

Into:
1. Introduce the word "goblin" to the students. Ask them if they have ever heard the word, then ask them to identify other characters which could be considered "goblins".
2. Point out Korea on a map. Tell the students they are going to be reading a story from Korea.
3. Tell the students the name of the story. Ask them to predict what they think the story will be about. Record their predictions on chart paper or the chalkboard.

Through:
1. Allow students to select a part they would like to
play. Have the students read through their parts silently several times. If they are unsure of words, have them follow the following steps:

(1) Try to figure out the word from the context of the sentence.
(2) Ask at least three friends.
(3) Ask the teacher.

2. Read through the play several times as a group.
3. Compare the story with their predictions. Were they accurate?

Beyond:
1. Have the students make a mask depicting their characters. (Art)
2. Have students memorize their parts. Then, have the students create appropriate actions for their characters. Read through the play daily, eventually acting out the parts. When the play is polished, students can present the play to other classes or to the school as a whole. (The play can even be presented as a program for parents). (Performing Arts)
3. Have students research traditional and modern Korean culture. How have things changed in Korea? How have things stayed the same? Compare and contrast modern Korean life to life in the United States. (Reading, Social Studies)
4. Have students cook some traditional Korean food.
Recipes can be found in the article by Van Decar (1988). Compare and contrast these foods with more familiar foods. (Math—Measurement)

5. Students can read other Korean and/or Oriental folktales. (See Bibliography for selections.) Compare and contrast these folktales to The magic mallet. (Reading)
Story: The enchanted caribou by Elizabeth Cleaver

Culture: Canadian Indian

Objectives: Following this lesson students will be able to:
1. Identify some customs of the Indians of Canada.
2. Locate Canada on a map.
3. Present a shadow puppet version of the story.
4. Compare and contrast the customs of these Native Americans of Canada to customs of the Native Americans of the United States.
5. Recognize that various tribes had different customs.

Into:
1. Have the students identify Canada on the map. Discuss directions. Students should recognize that Canada is north of the United States.
2. Have the students share their knowledge of Native Americans and their customs. Discuss tribal differences.
3. Show the students the illustrations. Have them guess how they were made.
4. Before reading the story, show the students the pictures in the book and have them predict the plot. Write their predictions on a chart.

Through:
1. Read the book aloud and show the illustrations.
2. Have the children compare the story to their
predictions. Were their predictions similar to the story? Compare and contrast the predictions to the story.

3. Allow the students to form groups. Have the students practice reading the story aloud in their groups. Stress cooperation rather than criticism.

Beyond:
1. At the back of the book, there are directions on how to present a shadow puppet play, as well as patterns of the characters to trace. Have the groups design, make and present the story as a shadow puppet play. If they choose, allow them to present the play to other classes. (Art, Performing Arts)
2. Have the students write their own stories and present them as a shadow puppet play. This can be done in groups or alone. (Writing, Performing Arts, Art)
3. Have the students select another folktale or a favorite story and present it as a shadow puppet play. (Writing, Performing Arts, Art)
4. Have the students research the customs and cultures of various Native American tribes. Have them analyze how their surroundings effected their lifestyles and customs. (Language Arts, Social Studies)
5. Read The mountain goat of temlaham by Elizabeth Cleaver. It is also a Canadian Indian folktale. Compare and contrast this folktale with The enchanted caribou. (Reading)
Story: Legend of the Milky Way Retold and illustrated by Jeanne M. Lee

Culture: Chinese

Objectives: Following this story students should be able to:

1. Recognize that early cultures used folktales to explain natural phenomena.
2. Identify various astrological configurations.
3. Identify other astrological configurations with stories and/or legends connected with them.

Into:

1. Show the students the illustrations in the book. Have the students guess where the folktale originated. Discuss the similarities and differences in Oriental customs and people (Chinese, Japanese, Korean and others).
2. Have students locate China on a map. Discuss the differences between the two Chinese governments.
3. Discuss the Milky Way. Show the children star charts to locate the Milky Way, as well as other stars and astrological configurations.
4. Show the students the illustrations from the book. Have them predict the plot.

Through:

1. Read the story aloud to the students.
2. Have the students analyze their predictions. Were they similar to the story? How were they alike and
different?

3. Have the students select a partner. The partners should read and discuss the story.

Beyond:

1. Have the students research astronomy. (Science)
2. Students can research astronomical configurations (such as the big and little dipper) and find out why they were named and any legends behind them. (Science, Literature)
3. Students can research and do reports on astrology and astronomical signs. Have students compare and contrast astronomy and astrology. (Language Arts, Science)

Warning:

Some cultures and religions consider astrology to be evil. Teachers should carefully consider the cultural background of students before discussing astrology with the students.

4. Have students read folktales from other Oriental cultures and China. Compare and contrast these stories to Legend of the Milky Way. (Reading)
5. Have the students read The Milky Way by Adet Lin. (See Bibliography) Compare and contrast this legend to Legend of the Milky Way by Jeanne M. Lee. (See Bibliography) (Reading)
Story: The warrior and the wise man by David Wisniewski

Culture: Japanese

Objectives: After reading this story students will be able to:
1. Identify Japan on a map.
2. Identify similarities and differences between this story and other oriental folktales.
3. Recognize that Japan was once ruled by emperors.
4. Identify realistic elements in the story and fictional elements of the story.
5. Create a picture using the same artistic techniques as the author.
6. Recognize the moral of the story.

Into:
1. Show the students the illustrations. Have the students:
   - guess how the illustrations were made;
   - guess the country where the folktale came from.
2. Have the students locate Japan on a world map. Students can work together in small groups.
3. Ask students to tell what they know about Samurai Warriors. Write the facts on the board. Students can also research Samurai Warriors and present what they learned to the class. This research can be done in small groups.
Through:
1. Read the story aloud to the students.
2. The students can break up into small groups or with a partner. If enough copies of the book are available, the students can read the story to each other in a paired reading situation. The groups can discuss the story.
3. Students who wish to act out the story can practice in their small groups and present the story to their own class or other classes.
4. Read and discuss the Author's Note, located at the end of the book. (It describes some interesting facts about the story.)
5. Have students identify the realistic elements of the story and the fictional elements of the story. List these on a chart.

Beyond:
1. Describe the way the illustrations were made, using cut paper. Have the students make pictures using the same technique. (Art)
2. Students can research ancient and modern Japanese customs and compare and contrast them. (Social Studies, Language Arts)
3. Students can research traditional Japanese dress. (Social Studies, Language Arts)
4. Have a demonstration in origami. (Art)
5. Compare and contrast this story with Mufaro's beautiful daughters by John Steptoe.
Story:  *How night came* retold and illustrated by Joanna Troughton

Culture: South American Indian (Tupi Indians of the Amazon of Brazil)

Objectives: Following this lesson students will be able to:

1. Locate the Amazon River on a map.
2. Locate South America on a map.
3. Identify various South American Animals.

**Into:**

1. Show the students the illustrations from the book. Have the students predict what will happen in the story.
2. Discuss the seven continents. Have the students name as many continents as possible. Allow volunteers to locate South America on a map.
3. Have students in small groups look at a world map. Have them describe how rivers are shown, then locate the Amazon.
4. Show the illustrations. Have the students identify as many of the animals as possible.

**Through:**

1. Read the story aloud to the students.
2. After reading the book, discuss the predictions. Were the students right or wrong?

**Beyond:**

1. Show the students the movies *The little mermaid*. Have
them compare and contrast the movie with the story. (Reading)

2. Tape record the story. Allow the students to listen to the story while reading along. (Reading)

3. Have students write and illustrate their own "How" story. (Writing, Art)

4. Students can draw their own pictures to illustrate the story on a roll of paper. This will create a "scroll" which they can run through a box in a mock T.V. show. The students can narrate the story using their own words. (Art)

5. Read aloud How the birds changed their feathers by Joanna Troughton. Compare and contrast the two stories. (Reading)
Story:  **Who will be the sun** by Joanna Troughton

Culture: North American Indian (Kutenai Tribe from Minnesota)

Objectives: Following this lesson students will be able to:

1. Locate Minnesota on a map of the United States.
2. Identify North America on a map of the world.
3. Compare and contrast the folktale with other American Indian folktales.
4. Identify various American Indian dwellings.

Into:

1. Give students a map of the United States. Have them locate Minnesota, California and other states.
2. Show students a map of the world. Have them try to identify the continents. This folktale takes place in North America.
3. Show the students the illustrations. Have them guess the names of the animals in the story.
4. Arrange a field trip to a museum exhibit on Native American life.

Through:

1. Read the story aloud to the students. As a group, discuss the story.
2. Allow students to form groups. Have each child select a character to read. The students can practice reading the part they select.
Beyond:

1. The students can make masks of their characters, then practice reading their parts. Those who are interested can present the story to their classmates and other classes. (Art, Reading)

2. Have the students research various Indian tribes. They can compare and contrast the dwellings of various Indian tribes. Discuss why they had the different types of dwellings. The fire stealer by Elizabeth Cleaver has references to one type of dwelling. (Social Studies, Language Arts)

3. Compare and contrast this folktale to How night came by Joanna Troughton. How is the story the same? Are there similarities because both were written by the same author? (Reading)

4. Tape record the story. Allow the students to read the story while listening to the tape. (Reading)

5. Students can read The fire stealer by Elizabeth Cleaver. Both are considered "trickster tales". Compare and contrast the two stories. (Reading)
Story: **The Goori Goori Bird** by Graham L. Walsh

Culture: Australian Aborigine

Objectives: Following this lesson students will be able to:

1. Identify Australian animals.
2. Recognize the moral of the story.
3. Locate Australia on a map.

Into:

1. Have students locate Australia on a map. Discuss that it is both a continent and a country.
2. Ask the students to name Australian animals. Discuss reasons why they only live in Australia.
3. Show the students pictures of Australian animals. Discuss marsupials.
4. Show the students the illustrations. Discuss the geographical features shown in the pictures.
5. Watch the movie *Crocodile Dundee*. Discuss Aboriginal life.

Through:

1. Read the story aloud half way. Have the students predict how the problem will be solved. Write the predictions on the board.
2. Have the students finish reading the story alone or in groups. Have them review their predictions.

Beyond:

1. Read aloud and discuss *The peopling of Australia* by
Percy Trezise. (Science)

2. Have the students make a diorama of their favorite part of the book. (Art)

3. Have the students write a different ending for the story. (Writing)

4. Compare and contrast this story to Legend of the Milky Way by Jeanne M. Lee. (See lesson plan.) (Reading)

5. Students can research Aboriginal life past and present. Compare them to Native Americans. (Social Studies, Language Arts)

6. For other activities see lesson plan for Legend of the Milky Way by Jeanne M. Lee
Bibliography

The books in the bibliography are children's books. Those selections marked with * are used in the lesson plans. The others are books that can be used for further lessons.


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