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Confluent education: Curriculum developed to create connections for students

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CONFLUENT EDUCATION: CURRICULUM DEVELOPED
TO CREATE CONNECTIONS FOR STUDENTS

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Interdisciplinary Studies:
Integrative Studies

by
Blythe Ariana Wilson Fuge
March 2008
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ABSTRACT

This project focuses on the confluent approach of education. It researches the history of confluent education. This history is used to design and create a unit based on the confluent approach for ninth grade English classes. The results are discussed with recommendations for corrections for future units.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my advisors for all of their patient help and advise throughout this process. Although there were many hardships, like the theft of my laptop with all forms of the thesis taken as well, I have really learned a considerable amount about this topic and the educational process. Despite my muscular disability, I was able to finish the thesis and create a better product. It has taken longer due to the length of time it takes me to write and type and I really appreciate all of the patience and support of this program.
DEDICATION

This thesis and work is dedicated to my loving husband. His support and compassion helped to see this through to the end. He kept me going when I was really frustrated, especially after the theft of the laptop and all digital backups. He really helped me to make the time to see this through and I can never thank him enough.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

General Statement of Problem

The purpose of this project is to develop a confluent interdisciplinary unit for use by other teachers. Confluent education focuses on teaching the affective and cognitive domains in a seamless approach in which the education of both domains are part of the objectives in the lessons. The goal of this project is to create a meaningful unit that will be standards based, but will also focus on emotional growth and education.

The significance of the project is that it will help students to develop and learn in a meaningful, useful way. Teachers are trying to work with students who have a wide variety of skills, abilities, and needs. This project will use confluent methods, which should help the students overcome any emotional blocks that prevent them from learning in a meaningful way. These blocks can prevent the child from learning the taught curriculum and from being able to access the learned data later. Emotions affect how learned material is accessed, whether it can be accessed, and how it can be used effectively (Mayes, 2003) and this
Project should provide some guidance for integrating affective objective with standards based objectives.

All throughout the elementary years in school, students are encouraged to explain how they feel about their academic assignments. In the lower primary grades, many of the academic assignments focus on their emotions and their lessons. They write about how they feel and their experiences. This helps them to develop their ability to discuss and express how they feel. As they grow throughout the upper primary grades, they work on units that are thematic and create connections between math, science, language arts, and social studies.

As the students age, their teachers use different teaching styles and the students are not always taught how to change their learning patterns to adapt to these differing styles. Many lessons target the intellectual or emotional growth of the students; rarely do they attempt to integrate both. By middle school and high school, their classes are split by subject and although they may relate to the other courses, there is no emphasis placed on how these elements relate across the core curriculum. Teachers rarely ask the students how they feel about the subject they are learning about. After years of being taught how things interconnect and being asked for their reactions,
they are thrust into an environment that expects them to make the connections and keep their emotions in check. This sets up the students for failure. They are not aware of how facts naturally relate and do not naturally make the necessary connections between their core subjects. It is important to show how to make the emotional and intellectual connections required to be successful as students and adults. They need to be supported in learning how to express their complex adolescent thoughts and emotions.

Confluent education, introduced by George Brown (Brown, 1971b) in the 1970s, provides the framework and methodological approach to successfully integrate the socio-emotional and intellectual needs of the students. Further, according to Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, (Woolfolk, 2001, p. 370-371) self esteem and a sense of safety is very important to the success of a student in the classroom. Without addressing and meeting those deficiency needs, the individual cannot move to meeting their growth needs. By creating a classroom that allows for and validates the student’s emotional and intellectual needs, they will begin to develop a stronger sense of self-esteem and feel safe within the classroom.
The concept of this project is to use an interdisciplinary approach to the confluent education methodology. The students will range in age from 13-15, 8th and 9th graders. When teaching classical literature, like Homer’s Odyssey, I often need to provide historical context to the poem. I have noted that the students get a more authentic experience if the cultural mores and standards of that time are compared and contrasted with today’s ideals. I emphasize that there are many moral issues at play in this tale and many of these issues have no clear answer. Just like in life, the main characters are faced with decisions that provide them no solace as they endure each challenge. We openly embrace the discussion, facing issues from betrayal, revenge, and adultery. Then we also engage in vocabulary development as we review the more difficult words from the pre-chunked selection. Finally, we read the selection and deconstruct the meaning of the poetry from imagery to figurative language. We also look for symbolism that relates to the cultural mores and history of the Greek city-states. We then move through the entire poem moving from direct instruction to guided reading to finally a Socratic dialogue where the students lead the discussions and help to create their own tests and review.
Throughout the whole unit, the emotional development of the students is as strong a focus as the intellectual development. Their emotions are developed through journal responses, class discussions, art projects, Powerpoint presentations and essays. I expect the students to develop an appreciation of the classical literature and realize that the people of ancient Greece had needs and emotions very similar to those of people from modern times. I believe they will develop a confidence in their ability to analyze classical literature and poetry. The students will also learn how to express and feel emotions as they read and visualize the text.

I believe that the combination of an interdisciplinary approach and a confluent methodology will provide an easy teaching environment that is student driven and centered. I believe this combination will affect the classroom environment by reducing abhorrent student behaviors. Additionally, I believe that the students will benefit from an enhanced self-esteem, a defined voice for analyzing literature, a strong foundation for emotional reactions, and an ability to express their beliefs from an emotionally and intellectually connected foundation.
The significance and effectiveness of this unit depends on the preparedness of the instructor. If the instructors follow the notes that prepare them for the guided instruction and historical information, they will be able to guide the students through the needed connections for intellectual and emotional integration. You have to listen as the students deconstruct the text and use guiding questions to encourage them to develop empathy for the characters and their choices. The students will be able to write persuasive arguments based on the situations that occur and develop a strong voice within their writing. They will be able to find Homeric or heroic similes and find imagery. They will also develop an understanding that even though the world of Odysseus is separated from today by three thousand years, the needs and values of those from his time are not all that different from today.

The limitations of this project will be time and topics. The project cannot take longer than six weeks to create the emotional connections and complete the standards based curriculum. Additionally, it is important to keep the topics to general beliefs and feelings, avoiding anything that may be too personal, like parents that abandoned the students. Another limitation may be the
students’ ability to emotionally connect to the material. This is a skill that the students may not have developed previously and may not be fully developed by the end of the unit. Finally, an additional limitation is the type of curriculum. It must be based on English Language Arts for use in my classroom and must use the textbook and novels approved for classroom use by my district.

In the second chapter, I will review the literature and discuss the research available regarding confluent education and brain based research. I will look at the history of confluent education and its use currently in education. I will look for strategies and theories that will help to develop a unit on confluent education.

In the third chapter, I will develop my methodology and look for strategies to use in the classroom that will create a unit based on confluent education. I will look at the California standards for English language arts to find standards that can be combined to create an effective unit. Next, I can pick a topic that is consistent with confluent educational goals that will cover those standards. I will review the objectives with my peers to look for a novel or text that will best meet those goals. Finally, I will review the approved materials to find a
text or novel appropriate to those standards and create the lesson plans for this unit.

In the fourth chapter, I will review the results of implementing the methodology. The state standards must be reviewed to find content goals that can be connected through a unit. The selected topic must cover the standards and be presented in a meaningful manner that creates emotional connections between the students and the cognitive goals of the content. The emotional needs of the students must be identified and addressed through the unit.

In the fifth chapter, I will look for ways to improve the unit in the future. I will evaluate the effectiveness of the unit. I will need to see what patterns have emerged. I will need to evaluate my strategies and approaches for greater effectiveness in the future.
Confluent education is a remarkable approach to education that was ahead of its time. Created in an era when the popular approach to education mirrored the factory model, confluent education and its creators, George Isaac Brown and Stewart B. Shapiro, were pioneering a new way to approach curriculum development. The idea that education needed to address the emotional and intellectual needs of the student simultaneously was foreign to most educational researchers and educators in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Shapiro (1998) noted, “The major problem is still the lack of an explicit, consensual definition - a more precise *internal* [author’s emphasis] understanding of what it included and what it did not include.” (p. 91) Confluent education can include many different humanistic or progressive educational methodologies. Confluent education reinvented itself through its pseudonyms: humanistic and psychological education. The ideas from confluent education also appear in many of the modern models of education such as multicultural education. Many of its ideas and approaches have leaked out into mainstream education making confluent
education an educational model with a rich history and a potentially bright and effective future for students and educators.

Confluent education is a "... term for the integration or flowing together of the affective and cognitive elements in individual and group learning -- sometimes called humanistic or psychological education." (Brown, 1971b, p. 3) Generally, teachers design lessons with objectives that are broken down into three types: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor. "Cognitive objectives describe the knowledge that learners are to acquire. Affective objectives describe the attitudes, feelings, and dispositions that learners are expected to develop. Psychomotor objectives relate to the manipulative and motor skills that learners are to master." (Gunter, Estes, and Schwab, 1999, p. 27) In traditional educational models, like direct instruction, concept attainment, or the inquiry model, the goal is generally to stimulate the cognitive areas of the brain which are responsible for the thinking and intellectual functions of the brain. The affective region of the brain controls the emotions, attitudes, and valuing. There is an emotional aspect to learning and experience. Students carry emotional reactions to their education. They react either
consciously or subconsciously to how they feel about wanting to learn, how they feel as they learn, and how they feel after they learn. “Our emotional brain is the seat of all relationship and is involved in memory - recalling what we know. We learn by relating something unknown to something we know.” (Pearce, 2002, p. 30) Piaget explained this concept as assimilation. “Assimilation occurs when the individuals incorporate new information into existing knowledge.” (Santrock, 2001, p. 102) As we learn, our emotional condition taints the knowledge as it is recorded in the brain. Blair and Caine (1995) noted:

Emotions are critical to patterning. What we learn is influenced and organized by emotions and mind-sets involving expectancy, personal biases and prejudices, self-esteem and the need for social interaction. Emotions and thoughts literally shape each other and cannot be separated. Moreover, the emotional impact of any lesson or life experience may continue to reverberate long after the specific event that triggers it. (p. 25-26)

By ignoring these hidden emotions, the real reasons associated with the successes and failures of the students during their education remain unaddressed causing the
student to subconsciously create their own failures. Many students could be reached and helped to achieve higher levels of success if they were aware of those emotional reactions and were taught methods to work with their emotions allowing them to experience learning without the self-defeating reactions.

An additional problem with standardized instruction requires every student’s needs and growth are equally educated regardless of their personal needs can create a sense of inadequacy in the student. “Among the false suppositions of mechanistic education that have created serious problems is the idea that children cannot learn on their own.” (Gallegos Nava, 2001, p. 27) In this system, students are not capable of making informed decisions about their education, many are not capable of being educated, and students are expected to learn in the same way at the same pace. “Comparison is a practice that destroys the love of learning. It instills shame in children over their performance, makes them afraid to participate, and crushes their dignity.” (Gallegos Nava, 2001, p. 28)

John Dewey envisioned a new approach to education when he described progressive education. “The educational system must move one way or another, either backward to
the intellectual and moral standards of a pre-scientific age or forward to ever greater utilization of scientific method in the development of the possibilities of growing, expanding experience.” (Dewey, 1938, p. 89) The idea behind confluent education is to combine thinking with the emotions so that both benefit. “Confluent education, however, also includes learning experiences wherein may exist an interplay between affectivity and cognition, where frustration and tension in appropriate degrees from this interplay are seen as valued conditions, directly related to healthy growth and development.” (Brown, 1971a, p. 3) Traditionally, education treats the emotions and intellect as separate regions of the brain. For example, in Bloom’s taxonomy, the cognitive objectives are separated into higher and lower abilities but the emotional component is left out. Piaget believed that information was organized based on four factors: biological maturation, activity, social experiences, and equilibration. Although these are valid processes for learning, they do address all of the processes for learning. The biology of how the learning is stored and recalled is only taken into account through equilibration. “If we apply a particular scheme to an event or situation and the scheme works, then equilibrium exists. If the
scheme does not produce a satisfying result, then disequilibrium exists and we become uncomfortable." (Woolfolk, 2001, p. 30) Piaget theorized that when disequilibrium occurs, people will strive to regain balance, but that is not always the case. In many cases, students that develop a negative response to learning lack the ability to have the world view necessary to overcome their preconceived failures. Without proper guidance from a teacher or parent, the student may never be able to overcome their fear and experience success.

Objectives in a teacher's lesson plans are generally selected by student needs and state requirements. Each objective is written to show which of the three areas of the brain will be strengthened and how. Typically, the focus of most academic classes at the secondary level is the cognitive domain. "Cognitive objectives specify the knowledge the students will retain as a result of instruction." (Gunter, Estes, and Schwab, 1999, p. 29) This is the type of knowledge that the high pressure standardized testing emphasizes. Although the lesson and experiences in the classroom may focus on obtaining mastery of these cognitive objectives, testing requires that the knowledge remain accessible and useable for years, as is the case for 6th through 8th grade social
studies. The 8th grade students are required to remember the details of history from prehistory around the world through the Enlightenment and in America from the Colonies through the Expansion period. Although these lessons are given over the span of three years, the students are not tested upon the ideas at the state level until May of their 8th grade year in California (CA Dept. of Ed., 2006). Direct instruction will provide the material to the students, but may not create lasting, accessible, learned knowledge.

There are a variety of ways to create useable knowledge. "Concentration on the material as it is read is important to retention." (Roe, Stoodt, and Burns, 2001, p. 195) Encouraging the student to focus and place an importance on the key concepts will work for some students, but not for all of the changing students of today’s schools. The ideas of traditional teaching and school environments have evolved from a historical value base which certain intrinsic roles that may no longer be observed in every household. Caine, Caine, McClintic, and Klimek (2005) observed the following:

It was the parents who made certain that their children studied because ‘some day’ they would need to know everything taught school. The ability to
think far ahead is a cognitive function that was not expected of most children; it is assumed parents would be responsible for that. Unless they are a close relationship with an adult who engages their minds by questioning their conclusions, helps them resolve their personally relevant issues, or helps them see the consequences of their adopted beliefs, our students are left with facts that are not tied to real-life experience or consequences. (p. 8)

Therefore, the teacher must find a way to make this data relevant and important to the student while repeating it in a way to keep the knowledge fresh and meaningful without becoming tedious. The emotional factor becomes critical as these facts are transitioning between short and long-term memory.

Confluent education attempts to combine the cognitive and affective areas into one to create a holistic educational experience for the student. By simultaneously training the intellect with the emotions, the student will learn to react to situations using both domains. "This integration, it is held, reduces and then overcomes many basic psychological conflicts within a person, particularly during adolescence, leading to learning which is significant to the learner and which will produce
intelligent behavior in him as he matures." (Brown, Yeomans, & Gizzard, 1975, p. 132) This approach should prevent a conflict between the intellect and the emotions by developing the necessary skills to integrate both thus developing effective and appropriate reactions. Additionally, this can create the necessary focus required for the retention of the needed lessons.

The two main psychological theories that confluent education is based on are gestalt therapy and psychosynthesis. The objective of these two is to help the individual become whole and in touch with intellect and emotions simultaneously. Frederick Perls (Brown, Yeomans, & Gizzard, 1975) developed Gestalt therapy in the early twentieth century. Gestalt therapy is concerned with the Here and Now state. It begins by looking at what is rather than what was or will be. The personality is viewed as a flowing energy that gets blocked throughout life. It can be restored to the natural flow by using awareness, present experiencing and working with projections, introjections, and retroflections. This psychological approach believes that natural and healthy growth will only occur when the individual is aware of and lives each instant fully. Furthermore, gestalt therapy believes that growth occurs in the growing, not in the desire to grow.
Wanting to grow can actually get in the way of growing because the preconceived ideas and elevated expectations can prevent the individuals by focusing on the goal rather than the experience. The experiences may not be fully realized and some of the lessons thereby lost. Previous problems and concerns can create emotional reactions that taint the authenticity of the individual’s reaction. By avoiding either emotional reactions or disturbing situations students can create a "... condition of avoiding feeling of anaesthetizing affect, of retreating to a fantasy existence in order to avoid altering the status quo of one’s life is directly related to the lack of realization of the creative potential of each individual." (Brown, 1971b, 25) When the individual takes responsibility for the effects of living fully in each moment, each moment becomes a fresh experience. It is very hard for many people to acknowledge their emotions and the validity of their reactions. It is very difficult for many people to evaluate their reactions, incorporate them, and then proceed with a new perspective. Despite the difficulties, the results are promising because this process helps the individual to become aware of what parts of their persona and life are fully experienced and those that are without any emotion or feeling.
Psychosynthesis is a psychological approach to personal growth that was developed by Dr. Roberto Assagioli in the beginning of the 20th century. In this conception of the human persona, the personality is centered on awareness and an internal energy for the personal self and the transpersonal self. There are a variety of elements created within this personality that may or may not be consciously aware of each other. The goal here is to become aware of all of these elements and to integrate them into an effective order that creates harmony within the persona. (Brown, Yeomans, & Gizzard, 1975) Ultimately, these two psychological approaches are very similar in goals and concepts. Thus, they compliment each other and contribute well to the goals of confluent education.

Confluent education is concerned with what is affecting the normal desire to learn and is looking to find a way to restore a healthy curiosity for learning. This approach can assist the student in changing their conceptions about school and themselves. These blockages include inadequate self-concepts and negative self-images. These misconceptions can cause the student to create failure because the student is unable to absorb the
information readily since the instruction is tainted by the emotional reaction. Pearce (2002) noted:

The result is that we may find ourselves reluctant to recall what we actually know – on some deep level (the concepts) are associated with fear or pain, which moves one part of us to protect another part from repetition of that trauma. (p. 34)

These emotional reactions affect attention, retention, and participation. For example, if a previous teacher or authority figure labels a child "lazy", the child’s sense of identity can be affected causing a self-fulfilling belief that they are in fact lazy. The quality of work will suffer as the child, consciously or unconsciously, becomes lazy. As long as the student is receiving the punishment for being lazy, there is no incentive for them to become anything else. The punishment or negative environment is as much self-inflicted as it is external and the student does not always have the world vision needed to see that they can change that experience.

Physiologically, the brain does not function as well if there is a perceived threat, whether real or imagined. Caine, Caine, McClintic, and Klimek (2005) found the following:
Some areas of the brain lose energy while those in charge of securing survival are charged. Areas in the brain that are minimized during threat include those that are not directly essential for survival and that process more slowly, such as areas that govern reflection, thinking and analysis, interpreting social nuance, and consciously analyzing a situation. (p. 30)

With these processing skills depressed by the socio-emotional reaction, the knowledge that may be learned during the class time either does not store properly or is not learned altogether. To help make the knowledge obtainable, it is important to help the student change their emotional reaction to the situation.

The creative process relies upon two things: hard work and intuitive processes. The drive to learn and continuously learn can be attributed to the emotions. Emotions motivate and sustain the need to discover the truth by providing some type of passion or positive emotion. An explorer’s need to discover comes from an internal passion that pushes them to do what others have not. By returning this internal passion, the student will be able to succeed. Students can be trained to overcome their preconceived blockages and concerns. This can be
done through tying in student emotional reactions with the knowledge required by the standards. “This integration can not only increase his desire to know but also assure that his continuing learning will be a rich, meaningful, and emotionally healthful personal experience.” (Brown, 1971b, p. 16) These experiences can be obtained through a variety of approaches, including integrating technology into the learning experience. (Suleman, 2001, p. 6) Elizabeth Leonne Simpson discovered six approaches used consistently and effectively by confluent educators:

1. The small group experience, often a circle
2. Simulation exercises and educational games
3. The use of language as a symbol system
4. Contextual learning
5. The use of the body for the physicalization of abstract concepts
6. The expression of the creative unconscious
   (Simpson, 1976, p. 12)

There are several strategies, according to Clifford Mayes (2005) that can be used to re-invigorate this internal spark; however, combining the cognitive and affective domains seems to be the key to retraining the student’s brain to have positive associations. The application of Jungian psychology to education is one of
these strategies. Carl Jung also saw this disconnect between what he calls the shadow and the public persona as a potential source for failures within the classroom (Mayes, 2005). He recognized several situations that are both student and teacher created which contribute to negative self-perpetuating experiences.

It is important for the teacher to recognize the archetypal nature of the student-teacher relationship with its inherent problems and benefits. (Mayes, 2002) Clifford Mayes (2005) discussed the heart of the conflict in, "Ten Pillars of a Jungian Approach to Education". He believes a "...teacher who understands the student-teacher archetype, and who is most in touch with the archetypal nature of not only his profession but his very psyche, is also bound to be an influential teacher." (p. 34) It is difficult for many teachers to make this transition. Many are more comfortable with the traditional roles and obligations of educators and students. However, for healthy growth to occur for both the teacher and the student, new ideas should be considered for validity. "Where there is an empathic sensitivity expressed, there is also an active response to assist and empower those facing difficult circumstances. There is a sense that students and staff..."
are more willing to turn away from anger.” (London, et al, 2004, p. 30)

When students come into a classroom, they have their own experiences and preconceived ideas about the classroom, content area, and teacher. Students even transfer their emotional reactions from their parents to their teacher. They may misinterpret the teacher’s emotional states and react poorly because of the student’s expectations based on their parent’s reactions. Clifford Mayes encourages teachers to, “... understand that when a student challenges them in an inappropriate way that seems to go quite beyond the academic point being discusses in class, this might be the result of transference.” (Mayes, 2002) By questioning the student’s reactions, the student may react negatively because they feel threatened. Rather than deal with the real issue, the student focuses on the negative emotion and associates it with the teacher creating a negative association with the teacher and classroom. Many teachers have difficulty with their students transferring negative emotions. It may help teachers to realize that they have no control over this process of transference. Some students become overly compliant because of their unresolved emotions created primarily by their experiences with their parents. The
student may self-sabotage or deny any personal success because they have learned to not show any skill that would challenge the parental order. Although these students are quite capable, they cannot allow themselves to attain any success because they fear the misconceived consequences. Neither of these situations can be resolved by the teacher quickly or even throughout the year. However, recognizing these patterns can allow the teacher to begin making the intellectual connections that will help the student be successful in life. As a strategy, Mayes (2005) recommends:

The teacher must handle the student’s failure in a constructive, nonpunitive manner, patiently helping the student see how she fell short and what together they can do to help her reach her full potential in a given area, however great or limited that potential may turn out to be. (p. 37)

It is important to take the time to figure out what motivates and threatens the child. The motivators can be used to create new successes and the factors that threaten can be examined and overcome.

Confluent education creates a live classroom. Many classrooms throughout the country are dead. They are mechanized, over-ritualized, dull, and boring. Often
teachers fall prey to the simplicity and implicit order of a classroom plagued by rituals. Every day the students file in and begin their lessons in the exact same order. The passion and drive that helps students to reach new academic heights is usually regimented out of the classroom. Eventually, the students become passive observers as their education occurs around them but not with their active participation. “Words, though important, are only bits of information. They are not experiential and only poor substitute for the directness and freshness of hands-on learning.” (Hannaford, 1995, p. 30) A live classroom is described as a classroom where the students are actively engaged. The major difference is the students’ sincere enthusiasm and the level of authenticity. Authentic learning and engaged learning occurs at exponential chaotic levels. This classroom can be troublesome for some teachers because things do not occur at regulated times. There are bursts and moments of stagnation as the students learn, absorb, and adjust to their new knowledge and skills. The students in this classroom have as much responsibility for learning as the instructor has for their progress and direction. A live classroom requires an open teacher and an open classroom. The teacher freely shares ideas with the class and the
students are permitted to discuss ideas openly. All of the
general school rules are still observed but a sense of
shared ownership of the classroom and curriculum allows
all, teachers and students, to participate at a higher
more engaged level. Crowell, Caine, and Caine (2005)
discussed three basic types of teachers whose, "... instructional approaches move from being primarily teacher controlled using a delivery model to being primarily learning centered, with a high degree of student participation and student decision making in a dynamic learning environment." (p. 13) Teachers can be stuck in the teacher-centered method for education, use a student driven learning environment, or can move fluidly between the two approaches. Generally, the teachers who are using a teacher driven method are not aware of how to move to a student centered one or how to accomplish this. It is important to note that students may appear engaged in an assignment but in fact are not learning. Vacillating between these two modes may actually present learning opportunities that will provide meaningful learning. Rachel Kessler has noted several strategies in The Soul of Education (2000) that can create this open dialogue using symbolism, moments of silence, creativity, and many other teacher guided, but student driven experiences.
Creating a safe learning environment is not a new concept; however, focusing on the emotional wholeness of the student is a new aspect of this approach. As the types of students in any given classroom continue to become more diverse and their needs more varied, new approaches will need to be integrated. As the variety of at-risk groups continue to increase, alternative methods must be used to create meaningful learning opportunities for all students simultaneously. Teachers cannot teach each student individually, but there are enough shared experiences that can be tapped to create positive learning situations. Confluent education can create a new inlet for teachers into the minds of students to help them be successful.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

In the review of the literature, I reviewed confluent education as conceived primarily by George Brown (1971a) and Stewart Shapiro (1997). I further investigated the connection between emotions and learning as shown by several sources on psychology and education. Brain-based research also corroborated this connection by tracking the neurological connections developed during educational experiences. The review of the literature also discussed the importance of integrating the creative process by using a variety of strategies. Carl Mayes (2002) applied Jungian psychology to educational theory, showing the emotional connection to intellectual learning. Finally, there were some strategies listed that would help to create the live classroom, a needed component of the educational experience as identified by Brown and Shapiro.

Based on these sources, I began to develop a unit based upon the theory of confluent education. The first step was to identify state standards that needed to be covered in the classroom. I looked for standards that could be connected into one learning experience allowing for an interdisciplinary approach. Based on the review of
the literature, I believed it to be important to cover several main standards in the same unit showing the students a variety of ways to approach the same concepts and providing several opportunities to become more comfortable with the core curriculum. As I reviewed the state standards for 9th and 10th grade English-Language Arts, I believed that the standards could be staged to cover several different ones throughout the same unit. I looked at Reading 1.0, Reading 3.0, Writing 1.0, Writing 2.0, and Written and Oral English Language Conventions 1.0. Reading 1.0 requires students to use prior word knowledge to decode new words. Reading 3.0 expects students to read historically significant works and analyze their themes. Writing 1.0 focuses on the writing process and expects students to write coherent essays that are well supported. Writing 2.0 is a refinement of Writing 1.0, but focuses on different types of writing like expository and persuasive writing and requires a minimum of 1,500 words in the student work. Written and Oral English Language Conventions 1.0 expects students to verbally express their opinion showing understanding of the English language and conventions. These standards can be covered together in a unit providing a large number of experiences for the students.
The second step was to find a topic that would be consistent with the goals of confluent education and cover the identified standards. In confluent educational approaches, it is important to create a safe learning environment that will appeal to the student’s intellectual and emotional development. To do this, I am going to focus on developing positive emotional reactions to the curriculum. This unit will create the necessary sense of safety for emotional growth and a meaningful learning experience based on the state standards. I believe that it is important to discover the emotional needs of the students and make emotional connections to the curriculum. By creating a positive environment, the students can be encouraged to work harder to gain greater insight into the required standards. The curriculum should be presented in a way that it seems exciting and interesting. Everything can be exciting and fun; the challenge is finding the hook for the concepts. It is ideal to incorporate games, plays, and art as they can help create meaningful opportunities that made the learning fun for all.

To discover the emotional needs and development goals of the students, I decided to use journal responses to give the students a chance to express their feelings and fears. After having them write about their experiences and
reactions in my and other classrooms, I will have them write about things that trouble them socially and interest them. Patterns will begin to develop and the types of stories that interest them most will become clear.

Based on the standards and the emotional needs of my students, I will look to other teachers familiar with the grade level curriculum and developmental needs of the students. I want to know what things would be appropriate to the curriculum that were approved by our district for use in the classroom, and would be of interest to the students.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the unit, I plan to use four sources. First, I will use student journals to evaluate how they feel about themselves and the progress throughout the unit. I will look for honesty in their responses and authentic learning. I will expect to see a sense of connection to the material emerge over time. Second, I will look at the student grades at the beginning of the unit and at the end of the unit to see if there was improvement in homework submission and quality or work. I expect to see erratic, although overall positive, improvement. Some students should be able to show improvement in skills while others will begin with emotional goals and then develop improvement in skills. I
will look at student participation in the classroom to see if it improves. Finally, I will show this unit to other teachers to get their opinions regarding the unit. I will have a bilingual teacher, a social studies teacher, and a language arts teacher review the unit for effectiveness.

The first step in teaching students Homer’s "The Odyssey" is to activate their sixth-grade history schemata. A brief review of the culture of ancient Greece will enable students to envision the settings in "The Odyssey”. It is important for students to try to figure out what makes this story so special that people were able to remember the story. This should give the students a sense of the context of the times, the community, and the poem. I will frequently revisit this concept through journals and discussions throughout the unit. Additionally, the story was told for such a long period in time that it was able to transition from oral literature into written literature. By emphasizing this aspect, I will use it to generate curiosity and interest in the topic for the students. By beginning with the emotional interest of curiosity, I can gain the emotional connection needed for the students to become engaged in the topic.

I will use this unit with three of my ninth grade English classes. This is a high school with class size
reduction at the ninth grade level for English classes. Many of the students receive free or reduced lunch. There will be a wide variety of students in these classes. There will be a few RSP students. There will be a few ESL students. There will be several at-risk GATE students. Most will be low performing students. There will be a low rate of participation in class work and homework at the beginning of the unit. This unit will help these students to change their rates of participation.

I will begin the daily journal assignments with a prompt that asks the students to explain what they know or do not know about Greek mythology and literature. These journal assignments assist the students in learning how to discuss their feelings and opinions about the reading selections. I begin with an easy topic and encourage discussions previous to the writing. Then, I will then transition to more engaging and emotionally charged ideas requiring value-based judgments. It is critical to a confluent approach that the students understand with the topics based on values and emotions.

After the introductory assignments, the students should be able to begin reading "The Odyssey". I will begin each book with a vocabulary lesson to familiarize the students with unusual words contained within each
book. To assist students in comprehension of classical literature and poetry, books 1-4 will be read aloud by the teacher and students. I will encourage the students to keep notes on the books by allowing all notes to be used on the test. We will also discuss how effective our note taking was after we take the test. This should help them to develop the ability to reflect on their learning and help them to learn to self evaluate.

After we have completed the first four books, we will review the books and specifically look for social themes and moral lessons. Typical types of social themes and moral lessons should include single parent families, absentee fathers, stepparents, and war heroes. These themes should lead to good journal discussion subjects that will be used daily as we read "The Odyssey". I will also sporadically add grammar worksheets that are about "The Odyssey" while we work on this unit. It should help the students review the plot while they review grammar rules.

At this point, I will give the students comprehension questions that test basic reading comprehension. I will only test basic reading comprehension for the first four books because I believe that if low performers are capable of basically understanding classical literature then they
are achieving my goals for the first part of the unit. Additionally, this provides them an opportunity for success in learning, building their self-esteem. Many low performing and unmotivated students also require additional time to truly understand how to properly support their answers and ideas and to get in the habit of regularly doing their homework. At the end of books 1-4, I will give a light assessment. This test will contain multiple-choice questions, true or false questions, matching questions, and short answer questions. Towards the end of the unit, the comprehension questions will become more difficult and assess literary devices as well as reading comprehension.

Guided reading will continue through books 5 through 8. During this section of the unit, I introduce literary devices such as Homeric similes, metaphors, and personifications. To assess comprehension, I will assign reading comprehension questions that test their ability to understand basic plot, characters, and literary devices. I will allow for students to work cooperatively, although each student will be required to individually turn in their assignments. By book 8, I will begin to have the students write their own Homeric similes, metaphors, and personifications. This will be a good time to have a
journal topic that discusses what they are enjoying or not with "The Odyssey". This can also be the time to discuss what parts of "The Odyssey" the students are finding frustrating in their journals.

At the end of this reading selection, I will give another test with a similar variety of questions as to the test for books 1-4. I also will review at this point what concepts are important for tests. Through more journals, we will discuss their skills, emotions, and strategies with the hopes of getting them to revise any choices that are not successful.

With the first third of "The Odyssey" completed, I can ease the students from guided reading to cooperative group and independent reading. This is also where I can begin to incorporate art assignments into the unit since less class time will be spent on the reading. As with the other reading assignments, Book 9 can begin with a vocabulary assignment. After they have completed the vocabulary assignment, they may cooperatively read and interpret book 9. To begin activating their imagination, I will have the students cooperatively draw one vivid moment from book 9. As a large group, we will collectively brainstorm what sections in book 9 provided vivid enough images to create drawings. For additional assessment, I
can have the students answer short answer questions that focus on images and plot driven details for book 9.

Since books ten through twelve are relatively short, the students can cooperatively read these books and answer questions. At this point, I will use random quizzes and I can increase the difficulties of the tests and the quizzes to ensure that the students effectively read the selections. The questions will include difficult items for the students to evaluate such as Homer’s opinions on drugs and the subtle differences between Circe and Calypso. They will be required to base their answers upon evidence in the books. Now that the students have completed reading books one through twelve, I will begin showing the movie “The Odyssey” (2000).

Next, we will complete a seventh cycle labyrinth. A seventh cycle labyrinth is a design used by ancient Greeks to map out their basic town design. I will show the students several times upon the board how to draw the seventh cycle labyrinth in the classroom for the two or three days before the assignment. One of the homework assignments will be to draw it at home and explain how it might relate to the story.

The students will need approximately a 35’ by 35’ area to draw the labyrinth. I will provide them the
sidewalk chalk or regular white chalk. I will also bring a broom to clean up the assignment after we are finished. We will discuss various ways to complete the drawing. Once they have a good idea, I can hand them the materials and they begin to draw. All students are required to participate in the drawing or in cleaning up the drawing. Once the seventh cycle labyrinth is completed, the students will be asked to consider the plot of "The Odyssey" and life while quietly walking through the labyrinth. As we clean up the labyrinth, the students orally discuss their reactions and experiences to the assignment. They will be required to write a short reaction paper after they have walked the labyrinth.

Next, I will introduce the major assignment for this reading selection, which is a Powerpoint presentation on a character or theme from "The Odyssey". This will be a major assignment equivalent to two tests. I will take them to the library and teach them how to cite their sources using MLA standards while they begin their research. The Powerpoint assignment will require the students to have 7 to 10 slides about any Greek character. One of the slides must be a title slide. There must also be a conclusion and works cited or bibliography slide. The works cited slides must have three websites for sources. The project must
have at least two hyperlinks to websites and an e-mail hyperlink. There must also be sound effects, transitions, manipulated background slides, pictures of Greek art, and graphics.

While the students will be working independently on their Powerpoints, we will begin writing character or theme essays in class. I will guide the students through outlining the essay and creating these essays. Then I will allow them to complete their essays in cooperative groups. Each group is required to proofread each essay and highlight the thesis statement and topic sentences for each essay. I will explain a different type essay every few days at this point in addition to the other reading assignments. I will start with a character essay and then work on a theme essay. All essays will be completed as a five paragraph essay with a thesis and two quotes or paraphrases using parenthetical documentation. According to the California state standards in English, the thesis statement and proper supporting ideas are a requirement that must be mastered at this age. By being asked to cooperatively proofread their assignments, they will identify the mistakes that others make and also correct mistakes within their own writings. This will also assist them in properly supporting their powerpoint
presentations. These essays will constitute an effective review and assessment.

As we reach the end of "The Odyssey", I will return to group discussions. There are so many visual images and literary devices in the final books. I believe it will be important to make sure the students identify and comprehend them completely. The basic structure of the assignments is similar to the previous sections, however if the students have changed their patterns of behavior and participation they can help choose how we proceed. They can either do written assignments or tests for assessment. Comprehension will be checked with discussions and journals. At this point in the unit, most students should be taking regular notes that include similes, metaphors, personifications, and major characteristics. They should be capable of leading their own essay evaluations or test reviews.

The final assignment is creating a sequel to "The Odyssey". The student written play will be about Ithaca after "The Odyssey". Odysseus will be placed on trial for the murder of the suitors. It will be important to explain to the students how trials occur and who plays what type of role in a trial. The students will be responsible for choosing how to try Odysseus and whether he is guilty or
innocent. Only characters appropriate to Greek literature may be used for this assignment. The students will be broken up into cooperative groups of approximately five students to create their play. The requirements I will use for this assignment are as follows:

1. All characters must be from Greek mythology or "Homer's "The Odyssey"
2. All evidence must be from "The Odyssey"
3. Both prosecution and defense must have two witnesses or more
4. The story, setting, and plot must remain consistent with "The Odyssey"

The students will receive full credit for this assignment if all objectives are met. I deduct up to 25 percent for each incomplete section depending on how poorly it was completed.

This assignment is broken up into four separate steps. First, the students must create a character list for their play. They must have a reason for choosing each character in the play. For example, there must be a justification for selecting Athena as a lawyer rather than a witness. They need to have a rationale for their jury selection. I will recommend the students use either the dead souls from the land of the dead or the elders from
the assembly of Ithaca for the jury. This assignment is a small assignment and should not have a high point value. Secondly, the students can collectively create an outline for their play where they list what their evidence will be from the poem and what the outcome will be for their trial. This is also a small assignment with a low point value. After the students have received approval for their cast list and outline by the teacher, the students may begin writing their play. Next, the students will also create Greek masks or symbols to represent the characters used in the play. These are worth 50 pts total. Finally, the students will perform their play for the class. This is a high value assignment and should be weighted the same as a test.

For closure, I would like allow the students to create their own myths. These stories must be read to the class and contain a morality lesson just like Greek mythology. I will allow three days for these stories to be completed; one of those days will be spent in the computer lab to allow the students to type their stories for submission on the day that they orally present their story. This assignment is a small, low value assignment.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

This chapter discusses the results of implementing this confluent education based unit. To create this unit, the first step was to identify state standards that needed to be covered in the classroom. I looked for standards that could be connected into one learning experience allowing for an interdisciplinary approach. The second step was to find a topic that would be consistent with the goals of confluent education and cover the identified standards. Next, I identified my students' emotional and educational needs through journals and testing. Based on the standards and the emotional needs of my students, I looked to other teachers familiar with the grade level curriculum and developmental needs of the students. After discussing the unit and its objectives with a variety of teachers, I found the types of comments and suggestions they had would not be consistent with the confluent educational approach. Many of the comments would have returned the project to a traditional teacher driven unit.

This unit was based upon the educational approaches described by Brown (1971a) and Shaprio (1997). In a confluent approach, the emotional needs of the student
must be integrated into the core content lessons to create meaningful learning experiences. The affective objectives help the students to develop emotionally while the cognitive goals give the students the information needed to obtain mastery of the standards. Teaching to both domains simultaneously should allow students to learn information in a more meaningful way. To further support the ideas and approaches Brown and Shapiro explained, additional support for the process was found through Jungian psychological approaches and brain based educational approaches, which also believe that teaching to both domains provides a lasting learning experience. According to the review of the literature, teachers must create lessons that provide meaningful learning opportunities that engage the affective and cognitive domains. The emotional state of the student will affect the accessibility of the information at later times. Positive learning experiences will be accessed easily while negative learning experiences will be more difficult for the student to recall. Previous experiences will affect the student’s ability to process information in other classes. Negative experiences can be overcome by the student, but may require a patient and supportive tone from the current teacher.
Therefore, I identified the following as important guidelines in creating the unit:

1. The state standards must be reviewed to find content goals that can be connected through a unit.

2. The selected topic must cover the standards and be presented in a meaningful manner that creates emotional connections between the students and the cognitive goals of the content.

3. The emotional needs of the students must be identified and addressed throughout the unit. This guideline implies that some of the specifics of the unit would be adjusted if needed to address the emotional needs of the students.

After reviewing the students' journals, patterns developed identifying concerns regarding wars, social stability, and personal relationships as important. The students were most interested in literature that was either fantasy or realistic fiction relating real world experiences.

Most of the ninth grade teachers did not have a clear unified vision of what would be meaningful to the students. There were no statements or goals that were
consistent or similar. They all believed they had very
different needs. Most of their objectives were educational
and not emotional. Many of them focused on the topics that
they were the most familiar with, believing their level of
knowledge would help the students meet mastery rather than
considering what would interest the students as a first
priority. Overall, they liked the unit and believed it was
a good unit. I did get some suggestions for improvement,
but they were not consistent with a confluent approach.
Many of their points would change this to a teacher driven
unit using direct instruction. Additionally, these
teachers are uncomfortable discussing emotional reactions
with their students so they recommended avoiding it in the
classroom. Since their corrections were not consistent
with a confluent approach, those recommendations were not
used within the scope of this unit.

The final step was to develop lessons based on
confluent education, the data from students and the
responses from the teachers for use in the classroom. This
led me to “The Odyssey” by Homer. It can be used to cover
the aforementioned standards. The district approves this
story for use in the classroom. This poem addresses many
of the issues that the students identified as points of
concern. Although many of the teachers were not convinced
that this would be a success with the students, I believed that the confluent educational approach would provide results where direct instructional methods may not have been hugely successful.

Students can relate to classical literature if the proper environment is created. The unit begins with a general introduction in the Homeric world and the Greek gods. Many students will have forgotten how a city-state government operated. They will have forgotten how trade agreements provided the necessities for life. The students needed to know that trade agreements kept these people protected in times of war and provided foods and items that may not be available in their kingdoms. They may not understand that a king in ancient Greece was still a farmer and a landowner. The king was the person who helps to maintain the society and law. He did not live in a huge stone castle, but rather a larger farm. Additionally, it was important to explain that women assisted in all aspects of daily life. They worked on the farms; they made the clothes. Women contributed to life to the best of their abilities. Once economic and gender roles are understood, it will be important to explain that this is a 3000-year-old story. This is a story that was orally told.
From there, the poem is introduced in the classroom with an emphasis on vocabulary instruction and reading strategies. As these ideas are introduced, the emotional component is addressed by having the students evaluate the characters' reactions to their situations and predict their personal reactions if they were in those situations. This builds the connection to the curriculum for the students. I have included several examples of lesson plans in Appendix A.

To help encourage the students to feel comfortable with writing, I tell them there are no right or wrong answers; there are merely supported and unsupported statements. This encouraged thoroughly thought out ideas and honesty in the emotional responses. These journal assignments assist students in overcoming their fear of speaking out in class because there is no fear of the judgment of their peers in a journal assignment. As they become used to expressing their opinion in writing, they become interested in sharing it orally. As long as the students complete the sentence requirement for my journal prompts, I did not reduce the grade for spelling and grammar. This reduced the anxiety attached to writing and helped to build their self-confidence. Additionally, this helped to develop a sense of trust between the students.
and teacher allowing for greater communication and growth. As the journal topics became more increasingly complex so did the reading assignments, the students became more comfortable talking about the complex ideas in class. During the first four books, I used guided reading. This guided reading allowed the students to get used to reading ancient literature and poetry. It assisted them in learning how to pronounce words phonetically and then they applied that skill to pronounce Greek names and words in class.

By the time we got to the tests, more of the students were actively participating and keeping notes in preparation for the test. By the second test, students began to have a better idea of what types of things are required for their notes and the test. The journals provided a good sense of comfort and accomplishment. They were willing to take risks and do their best on the tests rather than leaving answers blank. The students also began to reevaluate their test taking skills.

Once the connection was developed and the interest was generated, the focus shifted from vocabulary and reading strategies to literary analysis and writing strategies. As the students developed a sense of comfort with the material, the skills needed for mastery of the
standards also developed. Additional skills were developed through adding technology to do research and produce presentations. The students became so focused on the technology that they did not worry about their skill levels. They enjoyed using the technology so much that their comfort level was raised and their level of engagement in the material improves. Appendix B has lesson plans and rubrics I used for the powerpoints.

I found that this unit was remarkably successful with low performing students, twice gifted students, and gifted students. Most students don’t expect to enjoy classical literature. They believed that most readings in an English class have little meaning or relevance for them in their lives. This was an opportunity for an English teacher to truly surprise their students. This story was used to compare and contrast classical and modern life. Many of the daily practices are different, but many emotions like family and love are very similar. The students seemed to connect with Odysseus’s need to return home to his family, Penelope’s longing for her love, and Telemachus’s desire to revenge the insolence of the suitors with his father.

I found the journal writing to be crucial for understanding the perspectives of my students and their comprehension rates. Their grades were low when we began
the unit. Their participation in the writing was poor. I noticed that the grades went up as did the participation as we got further into the unit and I utilized the confluent educational approaches within the classroom. I found some journals to be very touching and surprising with the amount of insight that the students demonstrated. This really helped us to develop a higher level of communication.

I also discovered that the manner in which the information is presented is crucial for success. In the beginning of the story I emphasized the betrayals of the suitors and servants. I repeatedly asked the students what they would do if someone were trying to destroy their relationships. This allowed the students to begin to connect with Odysseus and Penelope. Later on, I placed an emphasis on the violence in the stories. I questioned through journals and class discussions whether or not modern entertainment is more violent than the ancient entertainment found through the storytellers like Homer. This discussion and reading allowed the students to effectively connect with the content and question the true meaning of violence in entertainment. I repeatedly brought up the social and moral issues that are discussed in the Odyssey. Many of these issues are still relevant today,
but the students assume that things like rape, single parent homes, and adultery are modern problems. This approach allowed the students to realize that humanity has had massive problems for long periods of time. As a global society, humanity is still trying to understand how to correct the same problems. This experience allowed the students to realize that some of these problems are difficult to solve. By discussing these problems in class, it allowed the students to become more open with their problems and helped them to find better solutions. It also helped because they realized that it is acceptable to not solve a significant problem quickly with an unsatisfactory solution. They realized that people can work on problems for long periods of time and that never giving up is part of the process.

I found that the cooperative groups required a significant amount of supervision and concrete assignments for low performing and twice gifted students. For example, I found that it helps to have some sort of paper or assignment turned in from our class discussions for the students to constructively complete the objectives. They need a clear set of objectives with jobs and tasks assigned specifically to allow for equal workloads.
As I began to experiment with the objectives and methods of confluent education, the low functioning students were not engaged or participating in classroom and the high functioning students were not challenged by the curriculum and tended to do the least work possible because they knew they did not have to try to succeed in a typical classroom. The students came in unconnected to the classroom experience. The quality and quantity of work was low from the students. What work there was, lacked any real emotional connection or thought. It reflected students that were disenfranchised and disillusioned. The whole classroom felt dead and withdrawn.

I believed the best way to re-engage the students was to give them control over their assignments and direction in the classroom. Therefore, I explained to them that they could pick the types of assignments we did, but not the content. They could only have a choice when their grades and participation improved. They could pick from written assignments, group projects, and technology presentations. As we began the unit, they were hesitant. I gave them an opportunity to do a lesson developed from confluent objectives (Appendix A). They really enjoyed the process of choice, but I did not see an improvement in participation or grades. I returned to direct instruction.
They did not like that and agreed to improve their work quality. As it got better, they got more choices and their grades continued to improve. Students who were typically under performing and withdrawn became engaged in the academic process and improved the quality of their work as well as their attitudes.

The assignments that had the greatest success with all levels of students were the creation myth and the Powerpoints. The students needed to discuss values and education. They needed to understand for themselves that behavior and participation matters. They needed to realize that they could learn and participate despite whatever emotional problems were preventing them from actively learning in the classroom.

For the myth assignment, I asked them to write a creation myth with a valid moral lesson. They could create anything that they wanted to; they could even create something that did not yet exist. What they also had to do was create a situation in which either the listener or the characters gained a life lesson. Additionally, they also had to write over three pages in a group of no more than three students. As a group, they had to agree on the topic, characters, and story line. They were required to
have an outline and the rough draft approved prior to writing the final draft.

As a group, we discussed the meaning of morals and value lessons. At first, only 15 percent of them had an understanding for stories with morals or value lessons. We discussed why morals are important to stories and to communities. Students believed that stories were an easy way for cultures to express their ideas and mores. We discussed the idea that the stories are an opportunity to learn by listening rather than doing. We all agreed that listening to the consequences of bad choices is a much easier way of learning in comparison to having to learn the lesson by making the mistakes personally.

Once I was convinced that they understood the depth and scope of the concept, I gave them three days to create their outline and rough draft. Many of the students immediately got on task and began to create their stories. Most groups focused on identifying the main idea of the story as their primary objective. Some groups began with creating characters. Only a few groups focused on identifying the values that they wished to write about. As I walked around the room, I used questions and prompts to verify that the groups were on task. These critical questions would cause the group to either doubt or confirm
their beliefs that they were on task. I allowed the group leader to make the decisions as to whether or not the group was on task.

As they realized that they were entirely responsible for the product that they were creating the tone and pace of the class dramatically changed. The students were engaged in their lessons once again. They were asking responsible questions that focused and refined the quality of their work. They were working towards completion rather than a deadline. They wanted to be sure their story both fully developed and explained the creation and the moral lesson. As other students in their groups got off task, I told the group leader that he/she was responsible for getting the story done on time and managing the team. If the leader petitioned me with good reasons for removing the off topic individual then I would consider their request during a conference with the problem student. If the student was unrepentant and did not change the offending behaviors I informed the student and the leader that the student would be removed from the group and responsible for completing the entire assignment alone without the group. By empowering the leaders and making the troublemakers responsible for their own actions, the class really got creative and focused. Only two groups
required reorganization and removals. All classes knew of these occurrences and were aware that non-participation caused their removal from their groups. The remaining offenders immediately got on task to appease their leader to avoid a similar fate. It was remarkable; being censored by their own peers really corrected the adverse behaviors. When we discussed behaviors at the end of the project, the leaders really enjoyed having the right to petition for removals, but didn’t like having to follow through with it unless absolutely necessary. The teammates agreed. Those who were removed began to understand that how they were behaving was not only socially unacceptable, but also detrimental to their academic growth. They had to work harder to recreate what they had barely participated in to finish the assignment on time without the assistance of their peers or the group’s notes. Although it was a painful learning experience, most understood that it was of their own making and something that they should have corrected when they were warned.

This was not a quiet or quick project. Groups argued with each other over a variety of topics including whether or not they were on topic and the proper spelling of words they made up. The biggest source of trouble was absenteeism. I informed the students at the beginning of
the assignment that absenteeism would not change the deadline or scope of the project. They were working as a group. The group had to make the deadline no matter what. When groups appeared to be missing students, I queried them as to who had the project. If the project was in the hands of the absent student, I required them to keep working to make the deadline. I told the leader it was part of the position to make sure that all deadlines were observed. No extensions would be given for any reason. Miraculously the next day the project, the absent student, or both appeared in class. Only one group was required to rework their whole story due to absenteeism. We discussed this problem as a class when the rough draft and outline was due. The consensus was that absenteeism is a big problem. It disrupts the flow of learning. It was hard to work on the story without the initial beginning and really hard to make the story flow properly under those circumstances. This is consistent with the confluent approach. The students had developed the needed emotional connections to the classroom and the content.

After reviewing their outlines and rough drafts, I made brief corrections that I discussed with the leader to make sure that the needed topics were understood and included. Only one group out of twenty-two was completely
off topic. Unfortunately, only the teammates understood that and the leader did not. Although I tried several times to explain it to her, she was not actively listening to what I was saying or her teammates’ protestations. She had great characters, but there was no moral or life lesson. She was told to correct that error and listen to her teammates. Unfortunately, she did not do either of these suggestions and the group suffered the consequences since the assignment did not complete all of the required objectives. Using consequences is a necessary part of any teaching method. Developing a positive emotional connection is a part of the confluent approach, but that does not mean that there are no consequences. Consequences that are fully explained and understood help the students to make better choices in the future. As the lower grade was given, I fully explained why this was not a successful project and gave the group the option to redo it for a better grade. All the other leaders returned to their groups to revise minor things like spelling, grammar, page length, and clarity. Most of them understood that these things were already a problem, but lacked the ability to edit for all of it. Considering the apathy the class was plagued with at the beginning of the lesson, I was surprised at their growth and participation.
When the projects were due, I required one person from each group to read the story aloud and then the class as a whole decided whether or not the project met the itemized goals for the project. As each group read their project, I was pleased. Most had really listened and addressed the objectives. The items created were unique and creative. The lessons learned were valuable and insightful. Two groups were late with the assignment. One group had a printer malfunction. The other group did not have their project prepared due to absenteeism. They lost twenty-five percent of their grade. Previously, less than one third of the classes were turning in the work completely finished. For this assignment, all groups had a completed project. Not every project accomplished every part of the assignment. However every project was at least ninety percent complete. This was a commendable improvement compared to previous participation on assignments.

As a class, we briefly discussed their reaction to the project. Most of the students liked it. They agreed that these problems, like poor participation and missing work, were really a big problem. They became familiar with the inconvenience of absenteeism, the awkwardness of misbehavior, the difficulties that occur when others do
not listen and participate equally. They reported that this would change their approaches to their class work and homework in the future. They also had a clearer picture of why values are important. They believed that it was important to learn about values, to choose which values were important, and be able to explain the values. If they could not explain the values clearly, they understood that the values might be misinterpreted.

The powerpoints had similar benefits and problems. The students had learned to be on task and follow the directions closely. They worked hard to find the needed research for the project. They were so concerned with the technological objectives, like transitions and animations in the slide show, that they did not worry about the research, documentation, and writing which they previously thought was difficult. They really enjoyed the project and created meaningful projects.

All in all, this experiment with confluent education was a remarkable success. I look forward to using this approach in the future. I do believe that I overloaded the students with the sheer variety of ideas that I was asking them to master, but I also believe that the challenge is what snapped them out of their apathy. For future classes, I will scaffold the behaviors and objectives better so
they do not have to accomplish so much at once. This group of students did not want to participate effectively until the end of the quarter when grades were due. My biggest objective in the future will be to make the importance of participation and completion more real to the students. I will also try to work on creating a greater sense of ownership and cooperation. I think that by teaching in this way my students will be better equipped to learn throughout the school year. It was a good learning experience for me because I learned that I can reach any student at any skill level no matter how disillusioned, disenfranchised, or apathetic.

Although the test scores were disappointing at the beginning of the unit, the test scores did improve by the end of the unit. I found that guiding them through the test reviews at the beginning of the unit enables them to master the concepts necessary for notes taking and enables them to formulate their own reviews by the end of the unit. Most students don’t know how to take effective notes. They tend to use their highlighters or pencils to mark everything. I found that it is critical that at the beginning of a unit the students are guided how to figure out which items are key. Guiding them through prereads and rereads is essential in helping them to decipher what
parts are main ideas and important plots points. Literature is not organized like a typical textbook. The words are not always highlighted or placed in bold. The students become more effective readers and note takers over time as they begin to see how the rereading helps them to find the main points and really improves their test scores. Once again, this is a chance to connect with their emotions. They needed to learn about the satisfaction that comes from understanding a text and the importance of working through the difficulties. As the students develop their emotional connections to the class and reading, the students developed an enhanced self-esteem in regard to their class work.

Additionally, while the movie "The Odyssey" (2000) is an effective review, the movie is told a chronological order while the poem has flashbacks. This becomes an effective opportunity for the students to critically analyze films and why things are done differently in films than they are in literature. The students become very interested in making sure that they understand the differences in the two mediums. I may not use the movie in the future because the differences in the presentation between the chronological movie and the poem told through flashback caused confusion in the order for many, but not
all students. Those who were confused by the movie believed the poem was in the same order as the movie and could not process the flashbacks effectively for analysis. All though this does give them the proper timeline, it does not help them to analyze the literary tool of flashbacks in storytelling.

The art assignments were consistently a great success. The students were very good at critically using their imaginations to create beautiful works of art. The drawings, powerpoint presentations, and seventh cycle labyrinths were always amazing to see. The one assignment that always caused problems was the drama assignment. It is very difficult to get the students to cooperatively write creatively together. It requires a lot of classroom management. With the last batch of low performers, I was unable to finish the assignment because too few of the students were actually participating. Rather than having the creative assignment become a play, I had the creative assignment become a short story. The students who had been participating were able to effectively complete the assignment. The students who were not participating were unable to complete the assignment. However, the students that did complete the assignment made the expected emotional connections and reinforced their understanding
of the story. They began to read for better details and processed the information with a better understanding of the story setting and plot.

Learning to write essays is always a difficult task for most students. For some reason the students in this project became so interested in “The Odyssey” that the essay writing became easy. They became very good at organizing their thoughts and supporting their ideas effectively. They were able to write thesis statements and topic sentences which were well thought out.

I looked at their grades and originally their grades were low. The participation was erratic. The quality of the work was low. I looked at topics that would generate interest for the students and selected “The Odyssey” by Homer because it has real world experiences and problems while having moments of otherworldly fantasy. It is a state and district approved poem that can be used to cover many standards in an interesting manner. It can be used to teach a variety of poetry, language, and writing standards. It also provides an opportunity to research Greek gods and major themes in literature. These are skills that typically need additional support for student success.
There are many things to consider as I plan for future revisions. I reviewed the four sources of data from the students, teachers, and state standards for patterns and based on those patterns I would revise the unit in the following ways. Based on student results, I would proceed in the same way, but I would cut some of the activities based on the length of time involved for successful completion. This unit is long and this process of creating connections is time consuming. The students are able to make connections at different rates so it is important to use scaffolding. I would like to have the students read more at home so we can work with the material more in class. Too much time was spent on just reading and decoding the material. They prefer the projects to the vocabulary and grammar assignments so I may try to integrate those activities into the completion of the projects themselves. Their persuasive writing skills dramatically increased and their ability to write response to literature essays improved as well. Their ability to perform on multiple choice tests did improve but not consistently or dramatically. However, they were able to maintain a high level of analytic discussion regarding the material on varying topics from theme to motifs. They also were able to explain how "The Odyssey" affected literature.
in the western cultures that developed from Greece and Rome. Since the teacher recommendations were inconsistent with a confluent approach I am not going to use their recommendations.

Since each class has a wide variety of students with a large range in emotional and intellectual needs, I do not expect every class will develop the discipline to be able to complete a play. There are time constraints due to the length of developing other skills earlier in the unit. An alternative that I can use is a movie final. After reading and writing about "The Odyssey" for such a long time, the students should be familiar with most of the major elements of "The Odyssey". I can get parental permission to show "O Brother, Where Art Thou" in class as a final. The students will be required to effectively identify thirty references to "The Odyssey". They will split their papers into two columns with "O Brother Where Art Thou" on one side of the paper and "The Odyssey" on the other. An example answer would be Ulysses from "O Brother Where Art Thou" and Odysseus from "The Odyssey". There can be over one hundred and fifty different references. I like this final because it allows the students creatively contact classic literature with modern culture. It shows that the classical literature continues
to have acted upon society. If they can properly support the reason why they feel that this answer is an allusion to "The Odyssey", I will give the points. Ultimately, if they can create appropriate connections and properly explain themselves, then I have prepared them for adulthood. This also acknowledges the connection between English and film history. It brings for opportunities for multimedia connections into classroom.
Confluent education is a mix between intellectual and emotional education. It focuses on the student as a whole being without separation between their emotional needs and intellectual needs, seeing the balance between the two as the key to meaningful learning. The purpose of the project was to create a unit that would apply the theory of confluent education in the classroom. After reviewing the literature and identifying the key approaches to integrate affective and cognitive learning, I created a unit based on confluent education to teach my students through exploration of Homer’s “Odyssey”. I reviewed the state standards in Language Arts prior to selecting the unit to select standards that could be combined into a unit. My students wrote journals so I could discover their emotional needs and concerns in their personal and academic lives. I spoke with my peers to discover which readings might be successful teaching those standards and meeting my students’ emotional needs. Based on that input, I created a project based on Homer’s “Odyssey” for use in my classroom.
In confluent education, it is important to identify and address the students' emotional and intellectual needs. To do this, I reviewed my students' journals and grades where I saw growth. I showed the unit to my peers and they found many strengths in the unit prior to my implementation of the unit in the classroom. They believed this approach could provide meaningful learning experiences for special populations. They also felt that the students would benefit from learning about Greek literature because they would be able to recognize allusions and morphemes in the future. After speaking with my peers regarding this unit, I found that they were concerned with the amount of time needed to make these connections. Although there are many standards covered, they were concerned that the amount of time needed would prevent other stories from being used in the classroom. They preferred a survey of many topics rather than a deep look into one topic. There was also a concern that they would not have the technological skills needed to teach the powerpoints in a way that would make the technology easily understood by the students. Additionally, the language arts teacher recommended changes in the lessons that were not consistent with the confluent approach removing many of the emotional connections to the material
replacing it with teacher driven direct instructional approaches. These changes to the journal topics and the group assignments would remove many of the activities that develop the emotional connections. The social studies teacher had very little to add or change. However, the bilingual teacher believed a greater emphasis should be placed on language acquisition over emotional connections, which would cause this unit to no longer be consistent with a confluent approach.

By completing this project, there are a few things I have learned about helping students create connections. The students do not always react or read with empathy. I believe it will be important to explain book 5 completely explaining the reasons Odysseus is sad and Calypso is unwilling to release him. Many students did not understand the relationship between Calypso and Odysseus. Odysseus is introduced in the poem as a man crying on a rock. Many students had problems understanding why a war hero would be crying. Odysseus is later portrayed as a hero who is loyal to his wife. He is also romantically tied to Calypso. Students need to understand that he was a prisoner. He cannot leave. They tend to make snap judgments based on the first piece of information and do not re-evaluate their choices. This book makes for a good
teaching opportunity to encourage students to reconsider their choices. Journals can be used to help the students evaluate their beliefs regarding the characters after reading this book. The first four books provide descriptions of Odysseus from the other characters back in Ithaca. These descriptions need to be remembered as Odysseus is introduced so his character is not misjudged. I believe that Odysseus can be considered a victim of rape since he cannot choose to leave and Calypso can punish him or Penelope. Calypso is a goddess with the ability to ruin their lives or kill them entirely. Odysseus knows that she can cause he and his family to suffer horribly if she chooses to. This interpretation creates more sympathy for the character of Odysseus and his loyalty for Penelope. It also helps the students to realize why he is crying when this hero is introduced. Additionally, this is a great place to evaluate the text based on emotions and experiences.

I also learned that Book 9 is a good book for that transition from guided teacher driven reading to group and independent reading because of the subject matter. The highly suspenseful and gory descriptions of Cyclopes Island should interest the students and keep them reading. It worked really well for helping them to visualize the poem.
using art projects for assessment. The students can be guided to ideas such as the eating of the men, the blinding of the Cyclops, the escape by sheep, and the taunting of the Cyclops. Part of the assessment for this assignment is to maintain the visual setting from the reading selection. For instance, they were drawing a picture about the blinding of Cyclops, the dung piles and the six-foot olive branch. The students could see how the details used in the poem were needed for a complete image of the scene in their picture.

I do not like that the movie, “The Odyssey” (2000), is told in chronological order while the poem is told through flashbacks and chronological order. This movie is an effective review and reinforces the timeline of “The Odyssey” because many students have a problem conceptualizing that “The Odyssey” is told through flashbacks. The order of events often gets confused. This can open discussion on the differences between movies and literature. A journal topic can be on their opinions on the differences. They can safely voice their beliefs on the accuracy of the movie and whether the book or the movie is the most effective at conveying the theme and ideals of “The Odyssey”.

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There were some limitations to this project. This was my first attempt at the confluent approach. This was difficult to complete since there are few examples of units developed using this approach. There are some descriptions of confluent units for the elementary level, but they are thematic and interdisciplinary. None are done as a secondary single subject approach or focused on a single text.

Overall, I have found this unit to be a success. I am impressed with the variety and the strength of the results that I found. There are many emotional issues that are brought up through “The Odyssey”. For future use, I must be prepared to deal with the subjects openly and honestly. By doing that, the students can really benefit and the experience will give them opportunities for success.

I really feel that I incorporated all the questions that I thought were important into this unit. I would like to try to build more opportunities for students to explore Greek literature and history more personally. I will not try to have so many activities at the end of the unit. Although part of using confluent education requires many teaching options to be available based on the needs of the students, it is not possible to try and do all of these. I would use one creative writing project and the powerpoint
lesson. I would not use the creation myth and the trial of Odysseus creative writing projects. They are too time-consuming to do both. I would also use groups to read books 16-24. Each group could read a separate part and report it to the group. This would help with the amount of time it takes to complete the unit and would move some of the ownership of the material to the students.

I believe confluent education provides a meaningful way to connect to the students. It is also a way to teach difficult materials with successful results. This approach could be used by any core content to develop curriculum for effective use in the classroom. I plan to use this approach in the future to develop lessons in language arts and social studies.
APPENDIX A

LESSON PLANS FOR UNIT
LESSON PLANS FOR UNIT

Journal topic: “The journey is just as important as the destination.”

Overview: Introduce the students to the world and culture of Homer and Greece.

Objectives: Students will:

1. Read the Introduction to “The Odyssey”.
2. Answer introduction questions regarding Homer and his world.
3. Work in groups 2-3 to find the appropriate answers.

Activities/ Procedures:

1. Review the Introduction p.712 in Class.
2. Discuss the world of Homer and Greeks.
3. Discuss the Greek Gods and review Vocabulary list.

Assessment:

Successful completion and comprehension of the reading will allow the students to complete the worksheets in class with complete answers. Additionally, if they work cooperatively in groups, they will complete these assignments quickly and completely. Finally, successful completion will allow them the privilege of more group activities.
Journal topic: “Experience is the name everyone gives to their mistakes.”
Oscar Wilde

Overview: Students will read books 1-2 aloud in a circle to experience “The Odyssey” as is appropriate for epics generated from oral traditions.

Objectives: Students will:

1. Read Books 1 and 2 in class out loud while sitting in circle.
2. Discuss vocabulary, cultural, and governmental differences.

Activities/Procedures:

1. Complete journal entry
2. Review all vocabulary words before reading.
3. Arrange students so they are facing the center of the room in a circle.
4. Allow volunteers to begin reading from the book in a clockwise manner.
5. Discuss vocabulary as difficult words appear in the literature.
6. At the end of the reading, discuss the cultural and governmental differences between modern society and the world of Ithaca.
7. Ask the students questions to check comprehension
8. Add vocabulary and literary devices used in Books 3-4 if time permits.

Assessment:

Although participation and listening skills are difficult to assess at the end of this lesson, this will allow me to an opportunity to expose them to concepts required for proper comprehension of “The Odyssey”. This activity should allow each student to learn in his or her own style. When students turn in their homework on Friday, I can assess their comprehension level and can adjust future lessons to suits their needs.
Journal topic: “There is something frightful in the way in which not only characteristic qualities but particular manifestations of them are repeated from generation to generation.” – Oliver Wendell Holmes

Overview: Students will read books 3-4 aloud in a circle to experience “The Odyssey” as is appropriate for epics generated from oral traditions.

Objectives: Students will:

1. Read Books 3 and 4 in class out loud while sitting in circle.
2. Discuss vocabulary, cultural, and governmental differences.

Activities/Procedures:

1. Complete journal entry
2. Arrange students so they are facing the center of the room in a circle.
3. Allow volunteers to begin reading from the book in a clockwise manner.
4. Discuss vocabulary as difficult words appear in the literature.
5. At the end of the reading, discuss the cultural and governmental differences between modern society and the world of Ithaca.
6. Ask the students questions to check comprehension
7. Add vocabulary and literary devices used in Books 5-6 if time permits.

Assessment:

Although participation and listening skills are difficult to assess at the end of this lesson, this will allow me to an opportunity to expose them to concepts required for proper comprehension of “The Odyssey”. This activity should allow each student to learn in his or her own style. When students turn in their homework on Friday, I can assess their comprehension level and can adjust future lessons to suits their needs.
Journal topic: “Learning is ever young, even in old age.” Aeschylus, c. 490 B.C.

Overview: Students will read book 5 aloud in a circle to experience “The Odyssey” as is appropriate for epics generated from oral traditions.

Objectives: Students will:

1. Read Book 5 in class out loud while sitting in circle.
2. Discuss vocabulary, cultural, and governmental differences.

Activities/ Procedures:

1. Complete journal entry
2. Arrange students so they are facing the center of the room in a circle.
3. Allow volunteers to begin reading from the book in a clockwise manner.
4. Discuss vocabulary as difficult words appear in the literature.
5. At the end of the reading, discuss the cultural and governmental differences between modern society and the world of Ithaca.
6. Ask the students questions to check comprehension
7. Add vocabulary and literary devices used in Book 6 if time permits.

Assessment:

Although participation and listening skills are difficult to assess at the end of this lesson, this will allow me to an opportunity to expose them to concepts required for proper comprehension of “The Odyssey”. This activity should allow each student to learn in his or her own style. When students turn in their homework on Friday, I can assess their comprehension level and can adjust future lessons to suits their needs.
Journal topic: “There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle, or the mirror that reflects it” – Edith Warton

Overview: Students will read book 6 aloud in a circle to experience “The Odyssey” as is appropriate for epics generated from oral traditions.

Objectives: Students will:

1. Read Book 6 in class out loud while sitting in circle.
2. Discuss vocabulary, cultural, and governmental differences.

Activities/Procedures:

1. Complete journal entry
2. Arrange students so they are facing the center of the room in a circle.
3. Allow volunteers to begin reading from the book in a clockwise manner.
4. Discuss vocabulary as difficult words appear in the literature.
5. At the end of the reading, discuss the cultural and governmental differences between modern society and the world of Ithaca.
6. Ask the students questions to check comprehension
7. Add vocabulary and literary devices used in Book 7 if time permits.

Assessment:

Although participation and listening skills are difficult to assess at the end of this lesson, this will allow me to an opportunity to expose them to concepts required for proper comprehension of “The Odyssey”. This activity should allow each student to learn in his or her own style. When students turn in their homework on Friday, I can assess their comprehension level and can adjust future lessons to suits their needs.
Journal topic: “I don’t know the key to success, but the key to failure is to try and please everyone.” – Bill Cosby

Overview: Students will read book 8 aloud in a circle to experience “The Odyssey” as is appropriate for epics generated from oral traditions.

Objectives: Students will:

1. Read Book 8 in class out loud while sitting in circle.
2. Discuss vocabulary, cultural, and governmental differences.

Activities/ Procedures:

1. Complete journal entry
2. Arrange students so they are facing the center of the room in a circle.
3. Allow volunteers to begin reading from the book in a clockwise manner.
4. Discuss vocabulary as difficult words appear in the literature.
5. At the end of the reading, discuss the cultural and governmental differences between modern society and the world of Ithaca and compare to the cultures of book 8.
6. Ask the students questions to check comprehension

Add vocabulary and literary devices used in Book 9 if time permits.
APPENDIX B

POWERPOINT LESSON PLANS AND RUBRICS
POWERPOINT LESSON PLANS AND RUBRICS

Overview: Students will create a Powerpoint presentations based on “The Odyssey” (4 days)

Objectives: Students will:

1. Choose a character or theme to research from “The Odyssey”.
2. Research the character using internet and print resources.
3. Use MLA standards to complete a Works Cited Page
4. Complete a Powerpoint presentation of 7-10 slides explaining a character or theme from “The Odyssey”.

Activities/ Procedures:

1. Assign each student a character or theme from “The Odyssey” based on their interest or choice.
2. Use the MLA worksheet to explain proper citation or research.
3. Research the character at the library.
4. Research the character online.
5. Use the computer lab to create Powerpoints (3 days)

Assessment:

Students will be graded using the rubric for the Powerpoint and content.
MLA Worksheet

Name: __________________________

Date: __________________________

Period: _________________________


4. Grant, _________________________________. The Classical Greeks. _______________: Scribner, ________________________.


7. Walter, _________________________________. Mythology. _________________, N.Y.: Barnes and Noble, ____________.

8. Find another book by each author and write down the proper information for the Works Cited page: Michael Grant, Edith Hamilton, and Bulfinch. Use the other side if necessary.

9. Write down three more books in MLA standard for a Works Cited page. Use the other side if necessary.
MLA Worksheet

Name: __________________________

Date: __________________________

Period: _______________________


8. Find another book by each author and write down the proper information for the Works Cited page: Michael Grant, Edith Hamilton, and Bulfinch. Use the other side if necessary.

9. Write down three more books in MLA standard for a Works Cited page. Use the other side if necessary.
Powerpoint Presentations

Develop a Power Point slide show consisting of a minimum of 5 slides and a maximum of 10 slides. The first slide should be an introductory slide. There must also be a conclusion slide. The last slide should be a works cited slide. Use the advanced features of power Point including at least one hyperlink to a Web site, slide, or email. Incorporate graphics, sounds, music, transitions and animation effects.

Slide shows will be evaluated on content, creativity, interest generated and attractiveness as well as including each of the required elements.

GRADING CRITERIA: Each of the following is worth 10 points.
Consisted of 5-10 slides with introduction & conclusion
Design templates must be altered
Included at least one hyperlink
Included effective use of graphics (web pictures)
Included effective use of transitions and animation
Included five quotes with line reference
Included Works Cited slide with at least three citations
Rubric for Power Point

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<td>5pts each additional slide</td>
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<td>Altered Design Templates</td>
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<td>Two or more hyperlinks</td>
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<td>Web pictures</td>
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<td>Transitions/animation</td>
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APPENDIX C

COMPARISON LESSON PLANS
COMPARISON LESSON PLANS

Overview: Students will compare different cultures in "The Odyssey" to different modern cultures.

Objectives: Students will:

1. Compare the cultures in the books to modern cultures travelers encounter.

2. Discuss vocabulary, cultural, and governmental differences.

Activities/Procedures:

1. Complete journal entry

2. Arrange students so they are facing the center of the room in a circle.

3. Allow volunteers to begin discussing different cultures travelers encounter in a clockwise manner.

4. Compare these cultures to the ones in "The Odyssey"

5. Ask students to create short answer response in small groups examining the different customs, foods, and traditions of different cultures, Ancient Greece, and modern times.

6. Discuss vocabulary as difficult words in the literature.

7. Ask the students questions to check comprehension

Assessment:

The short answer responses will demonstrate effective completion of the assignment.
CREATION MYTH LESSON PLANS

Overview: Students will write a 1.5 pages typed original creation myth. Duration 4 days

Objectives: Students will:

1. Create an original creation myth that is at least 1.5 typed pages in length according to specific pagination requirements.

2. Work in groups to complete the assignment.

Activities:

1. Read several creation myths.

2. Remind them to avoid the following:
   a. Contractions
   b. Run-on and fragment sentences
   c. Misspelled words

3. Place students into groups

4. On day 2, Students present the oral outline of their story.

5. Day 4, Final typed version is due and they must read it to the class.

Assessment: Based upon the completion of the assignment

25 pts -- Oral version

25 pts -- Final Version
APPENDIX E

7TH CYCLE LABRINTH LESSON PLANS
7th CYCLE LABRINTH LESSON PLANS

Overview: Students will create a seventh cycle labyrinth and relate parts of the maze to the Odyssey.

State Standards: 2.2, 2.4, 2.6

Objectives: Students will:

1. Create a seventh cycle labyrinth.
2. Relate the layers of the maze to the story line from the Odyssey

Activities/ Procedures:

1. Complete journal entry
2. Complete FOA’s
3. Review seventh cycle labyrinth
4. Go to Basketball courts
5. Give class chalk and allow them to self organize to create the seventh cycle labyrinth.
6. Each student will quietly walk through the maze and reflect about the journey.
7. Each student will discuss the feelings and relationships noted between the Odyssey and the maze. (tomorrow)

Assessment:

This activity should allow each student to learn in his or her own style. This lesson was also used as a reward for successful completion of Books 1-9. This should also help the physical learners to comprehend some of the reading. Also, this should help them discover and appreciate an ancient Greek maze. Perhaps this will enable them to identify more with the literature.
APPENDIX F

MOVIE FINAL LESSON PLANS
MOVIE FINAL LESSON PLANS

Overview: Students will watch "O Brother Where Art Thou" and identify portions of the movie from Homer's "The Odyssey"

Objectives: Students will:

1. Identify sections of the movie that directly correspond to the text
2. Correctly recognize allusions to different characters and scenes from the Odyssey

Activities/Procedures:

1. Complete journal entry
2. Watch movie
3. Allow students to identify characters and situations that directly pertain to the book "The Odyssey"

Assessment:

Students will turn in their notes identifying different sections of the movie that parallel portions of "The Odyssey". They will receive credit based on the number of allusions they correctly identify.
REFERENCES


