



Content Area Learning: Teaching in an Online World

**Trees and Place: Science and Social Studies Content
in Reader's and Writer's Workshop**

(Is there "too much to cover" in your classroom? Learn how

To make your reading/writing workshops enhance content learning.)

Jerri Fischer

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Kindergarten

Lindbergh Elementary School

Jerri.Fischer@sjsd.k12.mo.us

Every year more and more subjects and objectives are added to an already bursting at the **seams** curriculum. It can be very overwhelming. The secret is to integrate other content areas into Reader's and Writer's Workshops. Not only does it give the teacher a chance to fit everything in, it also enhances the workshops. When students read and write about fascinating events, happenings, observations, and feelings, they become very engaged and excited about their work.

The following is a yearlong study of "Place," a Social Studies unit of study. This unit of study is integrated with other content areas such as math and science but is taught within the Reader's and Writer's Workshop. Many of the lessons discussed have already been taught in my classroom but the other lessons will be integrated as we continue through our yearlong study. Take a look at the integration and see how it might work with the content areas and objectives required by your district.

This lesson is a compilation of activities and experiences that span over time and includes several objectives in different content areas.

Objectives

The students will learn that the area outside our classroom windows is a place within our community of Lindbergh School in St. Joseph, Mo. This place has a few trees that were planted in honor and memory of my mentor, Robin Grayson, who lost her battle with cancer in the summer of 2003. We will observe, monitor, and record the changes of the trees throughout the seasons during the school year. As we become writers we will begin to use descriptive language to describe "our place." We will write in

various genres throughout this observation time. Using our scientific observations we will work through the writing process and “Publish”, three times during the school year. We will create a Label Book for our autumn tree, a List Book for our family’s special places, and by the time we release our butterflies, next to our spring tree, we will be writing personal narratives about the experience.

Reading:

KRS-3.3 Develop vocabulary by listening to and discussing stories.

KRS-3.5 Develop an awareness that text and pictures provide information and/or tell a story.

KRE-11.4 Identify important information in text.

Science:

SC-1 Properties and principles of matter and energy.

SC-3 Characteristics and interactions of living organisms.

1.1 Develop questions and ideas to initiate and refine research.

1.2 Conduct research to answer questions and evaluate information and ideas.

1.3 Design and conduct field and laboratory investigations to study nature and society.

Social Studies:

Standard V. TSW apply knowledge of the major elements of geographical study and analysis (such as location, place, movement, regions) and their relationship to changes in society environment.

VI. Recognize elements of landscape in his or her own environment.

VIII. Describe appropriate clothing for a given season.

IX. Clarify ideas related to the seasons of the year.

Writing:

CA 4 1.5 2.1

CA 4 1.5 2.1 The students will study basic writing forms/genre and produce writing modeled after the forms/genre under study.

KWF-21 The student will write primarily narrative pieces.

KWF-21.3 The student will write from own experiences.

KWF-23 The student will write pieces that include the components of descriptive form.

KWF-22 The student will write pieces that include the components of expository form.

Activities:

The experience will begin in late summer-early fall. We will take a small field trip outside our classroom windows to our special place. As a class, we will vote on a name for our special place. In our special place on various occasions we will think like readers, writers, scientists and members of a community.

- I. Writer's Workshop with a Science focus- Students will take their clipboards, paper, pencils, and crayons. We will sit in our special place and observe our surroundings for ten minutes. Students will write about our special place in drawings or text. We will take a photograph of our special place at this time to create a bulletin board.
- II. Interactive Writing- We will read Trees and discuss the parts of a tree. Our discussion will focus on the parts of the tree we could not see during our observation. On chart paper we will draw our tree and label the parts. (This will be part of the bulletin board).
- III. Reader's Workshop- We will read Tulip Sees America. During the reading we will discuss the descriptive language in the text. Next we will go back outside and discuss the sensory details about our special place.
- IV. Shared Writing- We will create a chart of descriptive words about our special place. Example: We see... We smell... We hear... We feel...
- V. Interactive Writing- Students will work through the writing process to publish their own Label book about our special place. At this point in kindergarten the students will create an ideas page, an organizer, and their published book s. (They are not ready for rough drafts, revising, and rewriting their final piece).
- VI. Writer's Workshop- Each day during Writer's Workshop students will be encouraged to write freely about places that are special to them. They are required to have name, date, words, and picture. The topic is the student's choice. The teacher conferences daily with students about their writing.
- VII. Reader's Workshop with a Social Studies Focus- We will read A Chair for My Mother. As a class we will create an anchor chart about special places we have in our families. Example: Special Place... What it looks like... What we do there...
- VIII. Interactive Writing with a Social Studies Focus- I will send home a paper for students to complete with their families. The paper will then be used to help begin the writing process of our second published book.

Name _____

Date _____

Our Families' Special Place

It looks like...

It smells like...

It sounds like...

It feels like....

It tastes like.... (If there is something to taste.)

- IX. Interactive Writing- We will work through the writing process to create a class list book about our special place.
- X. Interactive Writing- Students will work through the writing process to create their own List book about their family's special place. The student will create an ideas page, an organizer, a rough draft, and then fancy up their writing (write neater) for their published book.
- XI. Writer's Workshop- We will continue to spend time writing freely in our special place. We will continually discuss our observations about how our place has changed since the beginning of school. At this time students will be working on writing small moment stories. Each day the teacher will provide a mini lesson and conference with students as they write about topics of their choice.
- XII. Interactive Writing with a Science focus-In the spring we will hatch butterflies. We will keep an observation journal about the process. We will return to our special place and observe living organisms. Then we will release our butterflies at our special place.
- XIII. Interactive Writing- We will work through the writing process to create a personal narrative about our butterfly experience. Students will also have the opportunity to create their personal narrative about a subject of their choice. At this time they will create an ideas page, organizer, rough draft, they will edit (add punctuation, and fix any uppercase letters that should be lowercase, they will also make sure they have finger spaces between words), revise and then create their final published piece.

I am very excited this year to focus on the idea of "Place". I think even though it will be a year long journey, the students will be very interested in the changes that will happen in our special place. I think the idea will enhance the topics we teach in our curriculum and bring many ideas to life for my students.

Gallery Walk Presentation

Trees and Place: Science and Social Studies Content in Reader's and Writer's Workshop.

1. What new strategies have I learned that I can use in my classroom?
2. Interesting ideas I am going to try.
3. Problems I might encounter.
4. Questions I have.