

## **Ancient Egypt: Inquiry-based Research and Writing Project**

The purpose of this project is to engage students in their exploration of daily life in ancient Egypt. Students are encouraged to choose a research topic and to develop questions that they want answered.

Through this learning experience, students develop important research, literacy, and technology skills. Students also determine what's important to know and understand about the topic.

Through both their ELA and Social Studies classes, students learn about the craft of writing and illustrating a children's book. This project works well when students have a sufficient amount of background knowledge about the civilization of ancient Egypt. I chose to complete this learning experience as a culminating project. In Social Studies students are also taught by a local artist about the role illustrators' play in the creation and telling of a children's story. Finally, students apply what they've learned through their research and about the craft of writing by producing their own children's book set in ancient Egypt.

### **Social Studies Essential Questions**

1. Why do people move and live where they do?
2. Why do people live the way they do?
3. How and why do human societies organize the way they do?
4. How does technology affect people's lives?
5. How has conflict and cooperation shaped human history?
6. How do we know what we know about human history?

### **GLE's**

#### **Reading: Students.....**

R-7-4 demonstrate initial understanding of elements of literary texts.

R-7-5.2 analyze and interpret elements of literary texts, citing evidence where appropriate by describing characters' traits, motivation, or interactions, citing thoughts, words, or actions that reveal characters' traits, motivations or their changes over time.

R-7-5.5 explain how the author's message or theme is supported with the text.

R-7-6.1 demonstrate knowledge of use of literary elements and devices.

R-7-7 demonstrate initial understanding of informational texts.

R-7-8.2 synthesize and evaluate information within or across text.

R-7-14.3 read multiple texts for depth of understanding of an author, theme, subject or genre.

R-7-15.2 evaluate information presented in terms of relevance.

R-7-15.3 gather, organize, analyze, and interpret information.

R-R-15.4 demonstrate initial understanding of elements of literary texts.

## **GLE's**

### **Writing: Students.....**

W-7-4 use expressive writing by creating a story line.

W-7-5 apply narrative strategies.

W-7-8 write reports procedures, or persuasive writing using elaboration strategies.

W-7-9 apply rules of grammar, usage and mechanics.

W-7-10 use a recursive process including prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and critiquing to produce final drafts of written products.

### **Objectives:**

1. Students will use research skills to answer inquiry-based questions they develop about a topic of interest related to daily life in ancient Egypt.
2. Students will embed historically accurate events, names, and setting into their creatively written children's story.
3. Students will analyze children's literature.
4. Students will incorporate the fundamental elements of a children's story into their own final written products.
5. Students will use illustrations to further explain their story.
6. Student will use technology skills to produce a final product.
7. Students will read their stories and explain what they learned from this experience to an authentic audience.

### **Materials:**

1. Hardcover Blank Books (See Bare Book Catalog)
2. 75-100 library books on a cart...
3. List of appropriate websites.
4. Laptop computers (three carts to be used in two classrooms)
5. Copies of graphic organizers, bibliography organizer, and rubrics.
6. Copy paper, colored pencils, No. 2 pencils

### **Preview Week: Social Studies**

- Provide students with an overview of the project and show them examples of the final product.
- Explain that this is a long-term project that will be completed in both ELA and Social Studies.
- Review Objectives, graphic organizers...
- Allow students to peruse the library books to generate research topic ideas.
- Students choose a topic and are provided with the appropriate graphic organizer.
- Students develop inquiry questions about their topic choice.
- Students begin research....

### **Week One: Social Studies**

- Students research topic and conference with teacher daily.

### **Week One: ELA**

- Students examine, analyze, and evaluate children's books
- Lessons focus on the elements of the craft of writing a children's book.
- This would be a good time to invite a local author to discuss the process of writing a children's story.

### **Week Two: ELA and Social Studies**

- Plan/Outline/Write children's story set in Ancient Egypt
- Teachers should conference with students daily to provide them with feedback on their story ideas, to clear up any misconceptions, or to direct them to further resources.
- Invite a local artist or illustrator to give students a lesson about drawing facial expressions, appropriate backgrounds, or objects.
- Send home invitations for book reading event.
- In Social Studies class read King Tutankhamen's Gift (see book annotations) (It would be beneficial for each group to have their own copy as you read it aloud. Students can also analyze how the illustrations help the reader to further understand the story).

## **Weeks Three and Four: ELA and Social Studies**

- Continue writing.
- Teacher conferences with students daily.
- Work on illustrations.
- Revise, edit, and complete final product.
- Plan celebration.
- Share books and reflections on this learning experience with an authentic audience.
- Students complete written reflections.

### **King Tutankhamen's Gift ( Book Annotations)**

#### **Craft of Writing:**

- One part to a page
- Good sense of the main character
  - Physical description
  - Thoughts
  - Personality traits
- Shows problem-pushed into adulthood
- Overcame Problem (resolution)
  - brings happiness to people
  - restores religious beliefs
- Historically accurate
- Includes facts about daily life (in setting on every page)

#### **Illustrations:**

- Character: alone/sad look on face
- Difference in clothing, hairstyles, jewels
- Illustrator makes each character stand out/show differences
- Main character wears the same clothing and hairstyle throughout the book
- Depicts daily life in ancient Egypt
- Illustrations match words on page