



Quiet Time: An environment for school success

Curriculum Unit 01.06.06
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Goal

The goal of this unit is to develop a "Quiet Time" curriculum that can be used as a tool to better connect students' inner selves and experiences to their outer learning process, while reducing situational stresses. "Quiet Time" can increase the students' school and life success. Objective I is to provide a technique that students can use to "quiet" their inner selves and reduce their individual situational stresses, thereby reducing the effect of those stresses on their academic learning potential.

Objective II is to use the class which takes place right after "quiet time" to have students reflect on their selves and to interact in a positive way with the outside environment while practicing reading and writing skills.

Objective III is to provide students with an optimum mental state for creative activity And higher order thinking skills that can be applied to reading, discussion, and art activity extensions.

Introduction

Today's, stressful, and chaotic for children. The value of quiet reflective time in which children can calm their inner selves, reduce stress, integrate their experiences and start their school learning with an ideal "mental palate" is now being explored. Music and body exercises (stretching, yoga, Tai Chi) are being used to bring children, through their different senses, to a state of mind where they can be in touch with more of themselves. "Quiet Time" can be defined as a time when children can approach their inner selves through guided imagery, meditation, and reflective reading and writing.

So many of our children in New Haven, Connecticut come to school with extensive external stresses and traumas. Activating their brains and inner motivation, so that they can receive the most from learning experiences, is very difficult. The Rationale section for this unit will start with a brief survey of the research that has been done on the negative elements in the environment of some of our most "at risk" children and how these elements affect the children's intelligence, testing, and school performance. A short overview of current research on intelligence will follow. Aspects of newer thinking concerning intelligence will be

discussed, especially Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Model and Sternberg's Triarchic Intelligence Model. New Western models of intelligence will be compared with Eastern models of the mind, and how these two models together might lead to a broader understanding of how a child develops will be explored. If these two models are connected and used to help students access their "inner selves," we might create a better environment for all kinds of learning. For example, enhancing Gardner's intra-personal intelligence in children through "Quiet Time" techniques, and reading and writing extension activities, might give children a better internal environment for learning in more traditional arenas such as reading, decoding, and comprehension. Finally, the current research on how meditation affects brain integration and function will be discussed.

Current model programs in schools that employ inner disciplines, such as meditation, music, guided imagery, yoga, and reflective reading and writing, will be explored. These models have been used successfully and their effect on learning and intelligence is promising. Several different pilot projects in private and public schools will be discussed.

The concrete Curriculum Unit Plan will involve formulating a developmentally appropriate practice that can be taught with K-12 students and used in public schools, specifically a 4/5-grade curriculum. This unit can be used and modified according to the developmental needs of each child. The unit will be based on a combination of different methods and techniques, with an emphasis on the groundbreaking work of the Progressive School of Long Island, a private school in New York. Their approach will be modified to make it appropriate for a public school setting. The unit can be piloted with a small, diverse group of students; or a grade level, and expanded later. This unit will include character building, literature-based activities, high order thinking activities, and subtle aesthetic comprehensive arts activities.

Rationale

Those of us who work with disadvantaged students in the inner city have both intuitive and practical knowledge that children are not fully able to access their academic potential. According to McLoyd (1998), the access deficit starts even before the child is born into their socioeconomically disadvantaged environment. McLoyd discusses how inadequate nutrition and lack of prenatal care starts infants in an already "at risk" state for a number of physical problems. She goes on to discuss how the environmental stresses of hazardous physical environments (such as lead paint), harsh inconsistent parenting, lack of medical care, and less home based intellectual stimulation can lead to "diminished cognitive functioning" in children living in poverty. By the time these children arrive at school, all of these factors arrive with them. The vernacular used in the schools is "emotional baggage." A traditional view on academic achievement and how it is accomplished requires a new approach that can relieve the burden of this "emotional baggage."

Traditional views on intelligence have undergone tremendous change and growth in recent years. Sternberg has been one of the leading writers in this area (e.g., Sternberg, 1999). He states that there is probably more to intelligence than just the traditional "general factor" theory. The g-factor theory postulates one basic overriding form of intelligence that permeates all abilities. In this Triarchic Theory, he outlines three aspects of intelligence, namely, analytic, creative and practical. He defines analytical intelligence as "abilities involved in analyzing, evaluating, critiquing, and comparing and contrasting things." Analytic intelligence approximates the g factor. When analytical intelligence is used internally, it correlates somewhat with Gardner's intra personal intelligence. Gardner's intrapersonal intelligence has the added component of emotions and feelings. Second, he defines Creative Intelligence as abilities that involve "creating, exploring, discovering, inventing

and imaging." Thirdly he defines Practical Intelligence as "applying, using, implementing and putting into practice." Sternberg discusses not only Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences, but also the notion of Emotional Intelligence first popularized by Goleman. Though Sternberg criticizes Gardner's theory for lacking empirical bases and also Goleman's theory of emotional intelligence for inconsistencies in research, he overlaps some aspects of their theories in his own Triarchic Theory of Intelligence.

Gardner bases his theory of Multiple Intelligence on previous brain research. He differs from Sternberg and the many g theorists in that Gardner does not conduct empirical research to support his theory, but rather draws from only existing data and evidence. In this sense, there is no direct testing of his ideas, by him or by anyone else. Gardner's theory suggests that intelligence be based on "multiple intelligences". He defines eight different criteria or areas of intelligence, which have distinct qualities and are independent abilities, from a brain function perspective. For the purposes of this unit, the focus will be on improving personal intelligence, which includes inter-personal and intra-personal intelligences, through "Quiet Time" activities. Gardner talks about intra- and inter-personal intelligences as being connected to each other in their relationship to frontal lobe activity. Gardner (1983) defines inter-personal intelligence as the ability to be aware of and make discriminating observations of other individuals with regards to their moods, dispositions, motivations and goals. He defines intra-personal intelligence as the ability to access one's own range of feelings or emotions; the ability to immediately discriminate among these feelings and to use them to guide one's behavior. He discusses how the frontal lobes seem to process two kinds of information of particular importance, namely inter- and intra-personal intelligence. Inter-personal intelligence is our ability to know other people, to react appropriately to them; and to engage in activities with them. Intra-personal intelligence is our sensitivity to our own feelings, our own wants and fears, and our own personal histories. Gardner gives examples of studies that show the effects of injury to this area of the brain and their effect on personal intelligence. An example would be an injury to the orbital area of the frontal lobe, which he states, " is likely to produce hyperactivity, irritability, and insouciance."

Eastern views on intelligence are fundamentally very different from traditional Western views and can differ also from contemporary views like Sternberg and Gardner. According to Kesson (2002), the Eastern model of the psyche encompasses the entire mind/body system of the human being, including the material body, subtle energies and the energy field outside the body. This model calls on one to suspend deeply ingrained dualistic models of body and mind.

An Eastern view of intelligence is the searching for a "pure intelligence or pure knowledge " (Das, 1994). Ordinary knowledge is "tainted" due to each person's present life situational stresses or their individual desires. The mind's cruder activities interfere with accessing pure knowledge. The mind is likely to be inconsistent, inhibited, and erratic and a discriminating intelligence is needed in order to penetrate to a pure state. Practicing a technique to develop this discriminating intelligence and to help one to form some objectivity, even with one's self, is thought of as extremely important for the attainment of pure intelligence. Witnessing the activities of your own mind in order to attain this pure knowledge is fundamental to the Eastern view. Hence techniques like meditation and yoga that quiet the physical body and the mind are a natural outflow of this thinking. Eastern views of intelligence have some similarities to Gardner's ideas about intra-personal intelligence and can be even stretched to connect with Spearman's g factor if thought of as a general "energy" in the mind. If you can improve access to this "energy," then you can improve overall brain functioning.

If yoga, guided relaxation, meditation, and visualization affect the brain in a positive way, thereby fostering an enhanced personal internal environment for learning, then what is happening to the brain during this time?

Does "turning down" stress and the outside environment, in order to give students access to an internal "Quiet Time", affect their chemical metabolism and their brain? Does it affect frontal lobe activity? Why is that important?

Some researchers suggest that the frontal lobe function is what makes humans unique (Shimaura, 1994). Frontal lobe function is seen as primary in intellectual reasoning including tasks such as decision-making and problem solving. One currently popular notion in the research literature is that the frontal lobes serve executive functions by organizing and integrating mental components or processes. It explains why patients with frontal-lobe damage appear to act impulsively or without forethought. There is brain chemistry for optimal prefrontal cortex cognitive function (PFC) according to Arnsten (1998). Stress releases a family of neuromodulators called catecholamines, which in effect slow, or shut down, prefrontal cortex brain function. This is the area of the brain that, according to Arnsten (1998), enhances planning organizing, and "working memory". Stress releases too much of these neuromodulators and diminishes prefrontal lobe function. It is believed that people with ADHD do not produce enough of these neuromodulators. The effect of too much or too little neuromodulators is the same. There is a delicate balance of catecholamines necessary for efficient frontal lobe function; whereby too much or too little can cause impaired functioning. The brain chemistry must be just right.

Shimarua (1994) differs from traditional views on intelligence, stating that "parts of the cerebral cortex contribute to different aspects of intellectual function and that general intelligence cannot be attributed to any single area of the brain." This strongly supports Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligence. Shimarua and Gardner are reaching the same conclusions based on the research Shimarua further states that a " more effective supervisor (i.e. frontal lobe) can facilitate the organization and integration of intellectual functions." Some g theorists have supported the idea that frontal lobe mechanisms serve as an informational bottleneck and that working memory capacity is synonymous with g since it permeates all of our abilities. The recent meditation/brain research studies are looking carefully at what effect meditation or relaxation response training is having on all aspects of the brain, including frontal lobe activity.

Herzog, Lele, Kuwer, Langen, Kops, and Feinendegen (1990) found that frontal lobe regional glucose metabolism during yoga meditative relaxation response was increased and that there was a more pronounced reduction in primary and secondary visual centers. Lazar, Bush, Gollub, Fricchiione Khalsa, and Benson (2000), cited fMRI studies showing that during meditation there were increases in activity of the prefrontal and parietal cortices, hippocampus/parahippocampus, temporal lobe, pregenual anterior cingulate cortex, striatum, and pre- and post-central gyri. The results indicated that the practice of meditation activates neural structure involved in attention and control of the autonomic nervous system. Both of these studies emphasize the changes in the frontal lobe regions of the brain. If techniques like the relaxation response method or a simple children's meditation can in fact bring about positive changes in the frontal lobe region, then they might help increase not only access to the important functions of this region but overall brain function. A key question that remains unanswered is whether these meditation "state" changes have any lasting benefits on brain and cognitive functioning.

The research evidence is strong that balanced brain chemistry is important to good brain functioning, and stress clearly has an effect on frontal lobe "brain chemistry" by decreasing that functioning. There is also strong evidence that meditation can have a positive effect on frontal lobe activity and overall brain functioning. If we want our students to get the best "access" to their brains, then it is important to give them techniques like "Quiet Time". These techniques could reduce stress and help them gain access to their already existing feelings of peacefulness and caring inside themselves, giving them an optimal internal environment

for good brain functioning. Most educators and parents want students to get the most out of their schooling, and these techniques have been tried, with success, in several pilot programs.

Curriculum Model Programs

Students in very stressful home environments as well as all other students might benefit from training that gives them optimum access to their brains and intellectual potentials. There are some schools, public and private, that are piloting some very innovative relaxation and "Quiet Time" approaches. This unit hopes to provide a curriculum that could be used in the public schools for the benefit of all children. The main focus here will be on the Progressive School of Long Island, though two other programs will be discussed.

The Transcendental Meditation (TM) meditation technique has been available to adults for the past 30 years in the United States of America. There has recently been a movement for applying the meditation technique to children in educational settings. The National Center for Consciousness-Based Education is now training teachers to train students in the TM meditation technique. Numerous studies (e.g., Elias and Wilson, 1994) have cited the positive effects of TM meditation. There is a new movement to bring this technique to public school students. So far, no formal studies have been done to measure the effects. Dr George Ruthoford first introduced the TM program at Fletcher-Johnson School in Washington D.C. five years ago to help reduce the stress of inner city students. He is quoted in the latest Consciousness-Based Education pamphlet as saying "We had amazing results. I used to have to be in the streets all the time to stop the fighting but after starting the TM program, I didn't have to go out there. You walk into the school and you feel it's tension-free, a stress-free school right in the heart of the inner city, right around where we had plenty of violence." He has since started a similar program in Baltimore. He began by training a small number of teachers and then expanded the program to the whole school population. There are limits to testimonials and there is a need for blinded outcome studies with reliable measurement techniques in this area, but this type of result is nonetheless very encouraging.

At Harvard University, since the late 1960's the Mind/Body Institute has been studying the effect of the relaxation response on adults in all types of ways. The effect this response has on the brain is cited earlier. They have started reaching out to middle and high school students with their techniques. One such program has been piloted at Horace Mann Middle School in Los Angeles, California. Benson (2000) and his team have studied the effects of their program on academic achievement with middle school students with positive results. The program targeted an inner city school with an economically disadvantaged population. The teachers and students were trained in the relaxation technique, which consisted of a breathing and imagery exercise. The study lasted three years and measured students' academic performance, work habits and cooperation. Students who had two or more exposures to the training in school had an increase in Grade Point Average (GPA), work habits and cooperation between 1995 and 1996. There was a significant group-by-time interaction in GPA. Work habit results were similar with a highly significant group-by-time interaction. Both these findings show that there is increased benefit with longer exposure and practice with the technique. Moreover, cooperation significantly increased among the students. One of the important aspects discussed was the importance of many exposures to the training and the technique practiced over a long period of time. The Education department of the Mind/Body Institute has now held training sessions in seventeen public schools in cities and towns in Massachusetts (including Boston) and eight cities and towns five other states including California.

Being taught just stress reduction might not be really palatable to all young children. They may not want to be reminded of the stress and fear and loneliness in their lives. This unit hypothesizes that the way to help children to relax and use their whole selves is through a "Quiet Time" that not only gives them a technique to reduce stress, but is positive, and gets them back in touch with feeling peaceful and loved. Children can relate to love, yearn for it, and search for it. When children are joyful and at peace, perhaps their brain chemistry is at the optimal, and they may be able to learn closer to their full capacity.

Neo Humanist Education, an international network of schools, incorporates this approach into its curriculum. At Europe's Neo Humanist Education Conference, summer 2000, teaching love was discussed. Referenced from notes from this Conference, Madhavi Mertz, the Directress of a kindergarten in Holland, talked about teaching universal love as a natural process. She said that as educators, what they are doing is bringing out the love that is already there within each child. Most children are loved and cared for first at home. She discussed some approaches that help to enrich that experience, including instilling the spirit of social service, teaching yoga and "Quiet Time" meditation, the loving example of the teacher, character building concepts such as forgiveness, and teaching the children the sense of one universal family as well as others.

The Progressive School of Long Island, a K-7 school, uses a "Quiet Time" approach in which children are taught stretching, yoga body exercises and songs with themes of peace, kindness to all living things, love, and our connection to the entire world and beyond. The founder and director, Eric Jacobson, developed the program based on the Neo-Humanist Education philosophy of P.R. Sarkar. The students start their "Quiet Time" with simple stretching and yoga exercises. The students are taught simple songs that incorporate themes of love, peace, and their connection with their world outside and inside. The songs incorporate the use of a mantra with the meaning "love is all there is." They are lead into a simple meditation technique that is developmentally appropriate. Students in higher-grade levels write their own songs and learn a more complex meditation. The students also have extension activities throughout their curriculum. The literature program is a reading, discussion, and writing program in which stories are picked with themes of peace, service, love, universalism, ecology and social justice.

There are many aspects to the program. One such unique aspect is Jacobson's (2001) program of "applied learning". The goal of this program is to apply acquired academic skills and concepts into "real life" situations. The program has three phases. At the K/1 level the students are exposed to a variety of activities and careful observation is made of their interests and talents. They call it "free time." In grades 2 and 3, students are encouraged to pursue their interests after work is completed through "enrichments". In grades 4 and above, students design their own projects called "electives". Some examples of electives are adopting a school in Santo Domingo, a school radio station, adopting and cleaning up a local park or stream, running a business whose profits help others, and participating in a bus conflict resolution committee. In the seventh grade they offer an expanded program including community apprenticeships and independent study courses. The students at the school are highly successful and boast the highest scores on standardized tests given to all private schools on Long Island, NY.

The formal research using these "Quiet Time" methods is in its infancy and consists of several master's theses at Chiangmai University in Taiwan. In one study, N. Thawepkul (1999) looks at the effect of neo-humanist meditation and visualization practices on the thinking processes of preschool children. She finds that the children with the meditation and visualization training had higher creative thinking development with fluency and originality and also elaboration. N. Niyomka (1999) compares the academic achievement and study-related anxiety of the students who were trained by Neo-Humanism's Alpha State Motivation technique. She found that academic achievement of an experimental group of students increases significantly at p 0.01 level

of statistical significance. Clearly, much more research needs to be done in order to determine what benefit and effect on learning this technique has on children.

Curriculum Unit Plan

Introduction

The Curriculum Unit will consist of two parts. The first part will be between a fifteen and thirty lesson program on how to teach children "Quiet Time," starting with stretching and yoga exercises led by a teacher. The structure and format of the "Quiet Time" will be based on the one used by the Progressive School of Long Island, though the types of yoga, songs, and "quiet" reflective time will be taken from many different sources. Students will then sit on the floor on mats and sing simple songs with positive messages of peace, caring and love led by a teacher. The students will then be led through a "Quiet Time" activity that will consist in the early lessons of a guided imagery activity and later on of a simple meditation exercise. This technique will continue throughout the year with new stretching and yoga exercises, new songs, and meditations.

The second part of the unit consists of extension activities that are completed right after "Quiet Time". They will include reflective reading and writing activities, higher order thinking activities, and art activities. The connection between guided imagery and art is a natural one. To draw or paint what you imagined and then to talk or write about it will be a way to start connecting the students' inner selves with the outer world. The books children are reading and their verbal and written responses about those books can be powerful tools. There will be a list of books at different grade levels that will be used for reading, discussion, and reflective writing. The books chosen will help enhance emotional and interpersonal skills and the children's view of the inner self and interactions with the outside world.

A short section on parent involvement and permission will be included with some resources for how to introduce this concept to the general public. Many additional sources will be used including books about teaching yoga to children and teaching guided imagery and meditation to children. Stories and children's books that could enhance these experiences will also be included in the lessons and teacher resources.

The culminating product is a built-in morning quiet time at arrival time for approximately 15 to 20 minutes every day. This will be followed by an extension activity that will include either reflective reading or writing activities or an art activity.

Unit

Gardner (1983) states "it is an unusual individual who does not try to deploy his understanding of the personal realm in order to improve his own well being or his relationship to the community." This may be the key to accessing, that which is potentially inside of us and which affects how we use ourselves and our intelligences or competencies in the world, specifically for school children under the constant stress of testing, achievement, evaluation and performance.

Introducing a unit on Yoga, music and "Quiet Time" relaxation techniques and meditation can seem challenging in the public school arena. Unlike in previous decades, these techniques have become more and more mainstream. Many athletes and famous people are using these techniques in their psychology of

success. The head coach of the Los Angeles Lakers, Phil Jackson, is one example. The recent explosion of brain research has led to research on the effects of meditation and the brain. Correspondingly schools are now looking for new approaches to help create the best environment for learning. In this endeavor, it is critical to define what we are teaching. We are teaching a tool, a technique to help reduce stress, increase self-esteem, and create an optimal internal learning environment. Public school teachers can teach a technique, not a religious or New Age practice. These techniques can be introduced slowly to the school population. My suggestion is to start with a small group of parents or teachers and train them in the technique on a voluntary basis. Then train or teach a small group of students, the children of your set of parents or another small group. Parental permission should be obtained in either case. If this small group meets with positive result, bring the program to a larger workshop, teacher meeting or parent meeting. The support of your administrator is vital. You can then expand the program to a grade and go from there. This unit is geared towards a 4/5-grade level, but all the techniques and resources can be adapted for any grade level.

Setting the stage for the unit can be accomplished through already existing curriculum. In the fifth grade in New Haven, the students learn about the parts of the human body. Healthy living and nutrition are introduced and there is a social development course throughout the K-12 curriculum, which emphasizes problem solving and stress reduction. The teacher could start with a mini unit on the heart and the relationship between stress and life style and heart health. A mini unit on the parts of the brain and the effects of stress on the brain could also be a great introduction. A class discussion on the actual technique can be helpful. The part of the "Quiet Time" technique that is the most challenging to get students comfortable with is closing their eyes and practicing an exercise with their minds. *Brain Gym* (Dennison, 1994) has some wonderful warm-ups that can be tried in class ahead of time.

Teaching the technique

The teaching of the "Quiet Time" technique itself is divided into three sections. There are four parts to each section. The basic structure is the same for all three sections. Each of the four parts of the technique is developed over time. The first part of "Quiet Time" includes the teaching of simple stretching and yoga exercises. The second part involves teaching and singing simple songs with positive messages of peace, caring, and love. The third part consists of teaching relaxation, imagery, and finally a simple meditation technique. The fourth part is a separate extension activity, which consists of art, writing, and literacy activities. Each section is developed slowly over the course of between 5 to 10 days depending on how often the "Quiet time" activity is taught. The ideal method would be for students to have their "Quiet Time" first thing in the morning almost every day.

The first group or section of lessons is the introduction to the "Quiet Time" techniques. The first lesson plan is an introduction to the first series of lessons. The structure of this format is taken from the Progressive School of Long Island, even though the relaxation and guided imagery sections are not taught there and the meditation technique has been modified here to make it appropriate for public school. The yoga exercises are five very basic stretching positions. The same basic five should be used for the first section. The music should be very simple and easy to learn. Just singing the one same song for the first part is fine. The relaxation technique is designed to give students a directed way to become more in touch with how stress is stored in their bodies, how to release that stress and relax the body, and be ready to then relax the mind. In this section, consistency and a positive attitude are important. The students are learning the format and the techniques. The students should write or draw about their experiences and then share with each other. The atmosphere should be positive and calming. Having more than one adult to quietly redirect students during this time is essential. If you find that a whole class has difficulty focusing, try half of the class. There must be

provisions made that are positive for students who do not obtain parental permission. The leader should have some experience with yoga or meditation. The teacher can try to take a yoga class themselves first or at least try out the exercises themselves first.

The format for the second section is just an extension of the first section. The second lesson plan is an introduction to this second series of lessons. The teacher can add one or two new yoga exercises. Adding a second song or a new song is also desirable. The guided imagery must be carefully selected to be appropriate in the public school arena. There are many books on guided imagery and meditation included in the bibliography and the exercises must be reviewed for their appropriateness. I have not selected any passages that contain phrases that included moving or feeling energy, or concentrating on any specific area of the body. An example would be having the children moving their feelings like light through their hearts. First of all, New Age jargon may be very offensive to some parents; also these techniques may elicit strong reactions from children. The idea is to help children relax and feel peaceful and positive about themselves, improve concentration, and imagination. The teacher/leader should try the exercises in this section for about two weeks or 5-10 times.

The structure of the third section is the final technique that can be used for the remainder of the year. The teacher/leader can keep a few yoga exercises that are the same but periodically teach and rotate in new ones to keep the students' interest. The songs should also change with an invitation for the students to also make up their own songs or change words to songs they know with the themes of peace and caring or love for one and others. The words to be used for the concentration meditation technique are just one example. Each school must decide on this themselves. The students can use similar phrases or words. The meaning of the phrase should be loving and positive.

The extension activities are important because the time right after "Quiet Time" is prime time when the best effects of the technique can be utilized. The extensions are of two types. Writing and art activities that relate to the "Quiet Time" experience and separate literacy activities

Extensions

Writing or art activities in the beginning can help children to integrate their experience and utilizes their creativity. These activities are ideal for the first relaxation section of lessons and also as extensions to the guided imagery section of lessons. They are simple to do and can be very short. To make the lesson more interesting for the student, the teacher/leader can mix up the art activities. The art teacher in the school could help with this. Just changing the materials can keep it fresh. Crayon, Craypas, Paint crayons, Magic markers, watercolors, and acrylics are just some examples. Writing and sharing with a partner or a group can be a supporting activity. Writing a letter, or in a journal, writing on special paper or the student's own drawings can make the writing more motivating. Sharing their writing or art is also reinforcing. As with any art or writing activity, it is important for the teacher to report to school mental health personnel any individual student's negative strong emotional responses to any of the exercises.

Literacy activities can be combined with character building exercises to build a nice bridge between internal experiences and academic work of the school day. The teacher can use younger age books as writing story starters such as in Lesson two with *The River that Gave Gifts* by Margo Humphrey. The teacher can also select books that not only integrate with the Social Studies or Science unit, but also have some important developmental character issues. There are some suggestions in the bibliography. The students should not just read the stories, but write and discuss about the issues brought up by the books. The teacher can use short guided imagery activities after starting the third meditation section of lessons as an extension after lunch. For

an example, the teacher can use the snorkeling guided imagery in *Earthlight* (Garth 1997), as a beginning introduction to a science lesson on marine life. If using the imagery lesson after lunch, the teacher can do a "Mini-relaxation" by having the students close their eyes, slow their breathing, and listen to the imagery and to soft music. I would also advise against overusing these techniques-they should be special.

Resources for parent and school information

The most important aspect of teaching relaxation or "Quiet Time" techniques is educating parents, staff and the community about research, benefits and reasons for the techniques. The Mind/Body Institute in Boston has experience teaching these techniques to a variety of public schools. They do charge for their program, but also have worked with schools in order to appropriate funds. They have research backing up their claims and have worked with a variety of ages of children. They have a packet of information, available to the general public, which has good resources to share with parents. The meditation technique they teach is similar to the one proposed. They first train and teach the teachers the technique and then the teachers use the technique in their classes. They have training available and video and audiotapes for sale. Their website is www.mbi.org.

The Progressive School of Long Island is a private school. The school has an enormous diversity among its students in cultures and backgrounds. The "Quiet Time" is part of an integrated, comprehensive Neo-Humanistic curriculum. This unit has used their structure for "Quiet Time" and modified their techniques. They boast of the enormous success of their students in all curriculum areas. There are many Neo-Humanistic schools around the world. Many are public schools in their countries. There are some other initiatives to teach relaxation and meditation techniques in the public schools for example in Italy. Not all their curriculum is suitable for American Public Schools. There will be a CD released with songs from around the world soon from Innersong. The general Neohumanistic education website is www.gurukul.edu/nhe.

The resources for schools and parents for yoga books, guided imagery, and meditation are numerous. This bibliography gives recommendations that are all available through www.amazon.com. The literature and writing extension suggestions have been extensively teacher-tested. For more information, you can contact Linda Baker at Vish2Vishaol.com.

Lesson Plans

The lesson plans are set up sequentially as the basic structure for each of the three sections of the unit. Slight changes and expansion for each section are up to the teacher's discretion, even though large deviations are not advised in order to keep the consistency of format.

Lesson Plan One

Introduction

The students should be briefed about the "Quiet Time" procedure beforehand. Parental permission should be obtained. The teacher/leader can discuss with children that they are being taught a technique that will help reduce stress and help them feel peaceful and good. They should understand what stress is in terms of some of the effects to the body, and the relationship to brain chemistry. A unit on the brain and how it works and perhaps a unit on the heart are good precursors but a simple explanation is also fine. There should also be an explanation that reducing stress and feeling good could help them do their best in school.

Objective

Seventy five percent of the students will perform yoga exercises, sing songs, attempt relaxation, and complete extension exercise within a five to ten session training period in two weeks as measured by teacher-made observation sheets.

Materials

Tape player that can be heard by all students

Quiet music tape- Hap Palmer's Quiet Places or similar tape

Yoga for Children - Book by Mary Stewart and Kathy Phillips

Spinning Inward -Book by Maureen Murdock

A small rug piece sample or mat for each child

Procedure

1. Students enter space. They should be wearing comfortable clothing. Girls that are wearing skirts or dresses could bring a loose pair of slacks or sweat pants and keep them at school to put on under their skirts or dresses. Each student takes a mat and finds a space on the floor in rows and columns. The leader/teacher should be in the front of the class or space.

2. There should be quiet music playing. When enough students have entered the teacher/leader will start with the following Yoga and stretching exercises taken from *Yoga for Children* (Stewart and Phillips, 1992). The teacher should feel comfortable with the exercises ahead of time or get someone with experience in yoga to help. Stewart and Phillips' simple explanation is given here, see book for a full illustration.

A. Mountain Pose- Stand with your feet slightly apart and parallel. Keep your legs straight, weight on your heels, and toes spread out. You are anchored to the floor by your legs and heels, which allows your spine to straighten and you stretch up.

B. Rag Doll Pose- Stand straight with your shoulders down, head straight and the back of your neck long. With your heels down and the back of your knees straight, breathe out and bend from the hips so that your arms flop down. Keep your weight even on both feet. Breathe out as you come up.

C. Standing Twist Pose- Stand straight. Place your right foot one step forward, keeping your weight on your back foot. With your toes still pointing forwards, breath out and turn to the right extending your arms sideways. Try not to lift your heel off the floor as you turn. Turn more and look at your right hand. Keeping your left heel down and your shoulders relaxed, stretch your spine as far as you can. Breathe out as you come up. Repeat on the other side.

D. Half Butterfly Pose- Sit up very straight with your legs in front of you. Stretch your heels and the backs of your knees. Bend the right leg. Bring your foot to the inside of your left thigh. Let the right leg drop. Breathe out and keeping both buttocks on the floor, stretch forward and upward from the right hip and catch your left foot with your right hand. If you cannot, then stretch as much as possible without pain. Breathe out and stretches further, letting your spine grow longer, but do not pull yourself forward by hanging on to your foot.

Repeat with the other knee bent

3. After completing the yoga/stretching exercises, students are to sit cross-legged on the mats. The teacher should demonstrate how. A few varieties should be given such as the lotus position. One or two songs should be sung. The theme of the song should be peace. R. Tamminga has an example in his book, but there are examples in the children's song resources section of the bibliography. The songs can be taught by the call and response method using one line at a time. One new song a week is good in the beginning. The music teacher in the school may be willing to help teach the songs.

4. Students are then guided through initial relaxation exercise. The script used is from the first relaxation exercise in *Spinning Inward* (Murdock, 1987). The teacher/leader needs to try the script out ahead of time. Maybe teams of teachers can try it on each other. A teacher could try it out on a family member or have a family member try it on them.

Script for teacher - The following is a short introduction. See book for full text.

"Close your eyes and sit very quietly. Take a couple of moments and notice how your body feels. Are you holding your breath, or do you breathe evenly? Notice if you feel any tension or stress in any part of your body. Now you are going to relax your body as you relax your breath.

Breathe in... and ... out... and.... in... and ... out, and allow yourself to let go of any thoughts or worries. Gently continue to breathe in... and.... out... and focus your attention on your feet. Just notice you have put all of your attention on your feet. Now, as you take a deep breath, tense or squeeze the muscles in your feet... hold it... and now release the tension in the muscles of your feet as you breathe out. And now continue breathing gently and calmly."

The teacher/leader continues through all the areas of the body the same way all the way up through the body, even to the head and mind. The children are slowly brought back to opening up their eyes.

In Class Extension

Students are dismissed quietly to their classrooms or in classrooms ask children to quietly go to their seats. The teacher/leader can set up each desk or table ahead of time. The children should have watercolors and paper and be asked to paint their experience. The pictures can be just colors or designs or the students can paint pictures. They can write about their paintings if they want.

Lesson Plan Two

Introduction

Students should have practiced variations of the first technique for at minimum of five times within a two-week period. The students can have "Quiet Time" up to five times a week. At the beginning of school is the best time. Lesson two is an introduction to the second step of the process. This is the bridge between relaxation exercises and meditation. The students should be informed ahead of time that they will follow the same format for "Quiet Time" and just add something. The students in this class are studying water and marine life, so yoga positions, guided imagery, and extensions have been selected with this theme in mind. Two examples of a guided imagery and extension selection are offered. There are other yoga positions, guided imageries, and extensions that are available for other themes

Objective

Seventy five percent of the students will be able to perform the "Quiet Time" exercises and complete extension exercises with some positive results as measured by teacher made feedback forms.

Materials

Yoga for Children (Stewart and Phillip, 1992) and *Imagine That* (Cohen, 1983) *Starbright* (Garth, 1991), *Moonbeam* (Garth, 1992)

The River that Gave Gifts (Humphrey, 1987)

The Island of the Blue Dolphins (O'Dell, 1990)

Mats for children, Tape recorder, Guitar or small electric piano

Quiet Places tape - Hap Palmer (1992) or other quiet music

Procedure

1. The students should enter silently, get an individual mat and sit on the floor cross-legged with their hands on their lap. There should be some quiet music playing and no talking. The teacher/leader should be at the front of the room. The students will start with the following exercises from *Yoga for Children* (Stewart and Phillip, 1992) and *Imagine That* (Cohen, 1983).

Mountain Pose, Rag Doll Pose, Standing Twist Pose, Half Butterfly Pose, the Sea Shell Pose, and the Fish Pose

2. The students can sit up cross-legged on their mats. The teacher will then teach and sing a song with the students. If the teacher is not comfortable with this, then playing a tape and having the teacher and students sing along is also good. You can combine classes if one teacher is comfortable singing or have the music teacher help or make a tape for you. The music teacher can even rehearse the songs with the students ahead of time. Any quiet song with the themes of peace, love, or caring for you or others is fine. You can make up new words to a song they already know. The bibliography has resources. You want to create a positive relaxed environment.

3. The students then will be asked to go through the following short relaxation breathing exercise and then guided imagery. The teacher/leader should start with a shorter version of the original relaxation. Ask students to close their eyes, watch and quiet their breath, and relax their bodies. If they see any areas of the body that are tense, then use the technique of breathing in and tense those muscles, and then breathing out and relaxing those muscles. They should then tell the students to bring their awareness to their minds and relax and quiet their mind.

The teacher/leader should now tell the children she/he would take them on a journey of their imagination to a place that is special. The teacher/leader now will read one of the guided imageries to the children. These should be short and open-ended. After the teacher/leader is done, they should let the children have a minute or two where they can be quiet in their own thoughts. They should then bring them quietly back to normal waking consciousness, telling students it is time to come back to start their day. Tell them to come slowly back and gradually open their eyes. Students should be dismissed quietly in small groups either to their desks or to their rooms.

Example one

"The Pool of Reflection"-Starbright (Garth, 1991)

Example two

"Dolphins and Whales"-Moonbeam (Garth, 1995)

Extension

Example one extension: the students can immediately go to their seats or tables and write about what they imagined. They can also draw or paint. The book *The River That Gave Gifts* (Humphrey, 1987) is a wonderful connection to this exercise. The book could be read to the students as a writer's workshop story starter. The students could be asked to think about a time when they received a special gift. What was it? What made the gift so special to them? Was it the gift itself that was so wonderful or was it the person who gave the gift that made it so special to them? Be sure to remind the students that the story of Yanave tells them that the most precious things we receive are not always wrapped up in a beautiful box with ribbons. The students should have time to write, edit, and share this story.

Example two extension: The students can immediately go to their seats or tables and write about what they imagined. They can also draw or paint.

The book, *The Island of the Blue Dolphins* (O'Dell, 1990) is a wonderful book for fifth graders. The students can connect their imagery about the dolphins and the themes in this book. They can also relate it to their own experiences in their lives and their own cultures. Doing a chapter from this book right after "Quiet Time" is a great way to utilize the benefits for literacy goals.

Lesson Plan Three

Introduction

The students should try the guided imagery version for around two weeks for three to five times a week. It is important not to dwell too long on this "bridge" or it will be harder to transition to the next technique, which is more individual. The teacher/leader needs to explain that we have imagined many wonderful, peaceful and loving places in our exercises and now the students are ready to add a new technique. They should inform the students that we will still use guided imagery at other times during the day, but that we will replace it with a technique to help quiet our minds. They should feel peaceful and good, but these techniques will also help them to concentrate.

Objective

Seventy-five percent of the students will be able to perform the techniques of "Quiet Time" and complete extensions with some positive results as measured by teacher made observation sheets and feedback forms.

Materials

Yoga for Children (Stewart and Phillip, 1992), *Imagine That* (Cohen, 1983), and *Children's book of Yoga*, (Luby,

1998)

Mats for children, tape recorder, guitar or small electric piano

Music tapes from Bibliography or others

Procedure

1. Students enter room or classroom quietly and get a mat to sit on. They wait without talking until teacher/leader begins. Quiet music should be playing. The teacher/leader should be in front of the room. The students will start with the teacher leading them in selected stretching and yoga. At this point, it is important to keep a few yoga positions that are the same and routine with perhaps a total of around five or six. The first four should be the same, with the fifth being familiar and perhaps a new sixth one that is taught every week or so.

2. The students can sit up cross-legged on their mats. The teacher will explain that today we are learning our final technique that we will be using from now on. The explanation of the technique and the way imagery is going to be used from now on is important to discuss beforehand during class time. Explain that today they are going to use their own minds and imagination to relax and feel good and help them concentrate. They are ready to learn this technique because they have been doing a really good job with "Quiet Time". The students need to know that using the phrase or mantra is a way to calm their minds, but that other thoughts will enter their minds. They need to know that they are to let those thoughts gently pass through their minds, like thoughts passing down on a stream and then gently start the phrase again. This distraction of thoughts is normal and forcing them away will only make the mind more agitated. The teacher will sing with them and then they will sing a phrase over and over that will help them go to the peaceful and loving places that they have been during their previous "Quiet Times". You can teach the song line by line in a call and response way. In this initial lesson in this technique, it is better to have someone that can play the guitar or piano and can lead in teaching the song. The song will end with the same melody and singing the words "Love is all there is" over and over. You can change the song week to week or whenever feels comfortable and end the song with "Love is all there is". At a latter time, the words "Love is all there is" can be taught in Spanish or French or tried in other languages. The song below from the Progressive School of Long Island is one example or a song sung directly before meditation. The song should end with whatever phrase is going to be used to meditate. One way to enhance this technique is to combine the sound and the word meaning. A language can be used in which the sound of the words have been developed carefully. Sanskrit is one such language. "Love is all there is" in Sanskrit is Baba Nam Kevelam. These words can be used the same way as "Love is all there is" with the children saying the words and thinking of the meaning at the same time. Doing these two things simultaneously can enrich the meditation with practice.

Song

The Earth below And the power of Love is all there is
And the Sky above the force of love Love is all there is
I start to glide I start to feel it Love is all there is
On the road inside All around and in my mind

Meditation Technique

Continue with the melody and sing "Love is all there is" over and over

Step 1- Sing softly

Step 2 -Sing whispering

Step 3- Mouth the words with no sound

Step 4- Hear the words in their minds coordinated with breath

Step 5- Stop the music completely and have them just hear it in their minds

Let students sit and meditate for around three minutes and then extend it to five minutes as students get use to the technique. End the meditation with singing the words "Love is all there is" and then tell the students to slowly open their eyes when they are ready. The students need to remain quiet and be dismissed to their class or seats in small groups.

Extensions

1. The teacher/leader can create a nice transition by doing a short "imagery" exercise later in the day. There are several in *Spinning Inward* (Murdock, 1987) I would suggest "Sanctuary" or "The Ally Within".

2.Literacy extension: *Morning Girl* (Doris, 1992) is an excellent book for this topic. The character element is about the love of the world. This book would blend nicely after "Quiet Time".

Brain research and intelligence

Austin, J ((2000), Consciousness evolves when the self dissolves, *Journal of Consciousness Studies* , Vol7 (11-12), 209-230 Article on the relationship of Zen meditation and brain function

Benson H., Wilcher M., Greenberg B., Huggins E., Ennis M., Zuttermeister P.C., MyersP. Friedman R (2000), Exposure to a relaxation response curriculum, *Journal of Research and Development in Education* Vol33: No.3 The relationship between exposure to a relaxation response curriculum and academic achievement was examined among middle school students.

Elias, An, Wilson, AF, (1995), Serum hormonal concentrations following transcendental meditation-potential role of gamma aminobutyric acid, *Medical Hypotheses* , 44(4), 287-91. This study examined the effects of TM meditation on the pituitary hormones, which is similar to synthetic tranquilizing agents such as benzodiazepines.

Garner, H (1983) *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* , Basic Books: New York, 3-30 and 237-276 This book gives an in depth overview of Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences. Particular importance to this unit is the chapter on personal intelligences.

Goleman, D (1995), *Emotional Intelligence* , Bantam Books, New York, 3-17 Chapter relates emotions to brain evolution and biophysical aspects of emotions

Herzog H, Lel, VR, Kuwert, T, Langen, KJ, Kops, ER, Feinendegen, Le, (1990-1991), Changed pattern or regional glucose metabolism during yoga meditative relaxation, *Neuropsychobiology* , 23(4), 182-7 This article examines the possible changes of brain metabolism due to Yoga meditation.

Lazar SW, Bush G, Gollub RL, Ricchione GL, Khalsa G, Functional brain mapping of the relaxation response and meditation, *Neuroreport* 2000 ,11(7), 1581-5 This study looked at the effects of a simple form of meditation on functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI). The study found that the practice of meditation activates neural structures involved in attention and control of the autonomic nervous system.

Miller.J, Nakagawa,Y., (Editors),(2002), *Spirituality and Education, Foundation for the Educational Renewal* , Brandon, VT "Tantra: the quest for the ecstatic mind" Kesson, K This article discusses the relationship of "Tantra" to education.

McLoyd VC. (1998), Socioeconomic disadvantage and child development. *American Psychologist* , 53(2), 185-204 This article discusses the link between socio-economically-disadvantaged children and poor school achievement and IQ. Especially relevant is connection between socioeconomic disadvantage and the children's socioemotional functioning.

Niyomka, N. (1999, *Effects of Neo-humanist's alpha state motivation technique on academic achievement and learning anxiety reduction for Chiangmai university students, Master's Thesis* , Chiangmai University, Taiwan Study showed meditation methods' effect on students' anxiety and academic achievement.

Sternberg, RJ (editor), (1994), *Eastern Views of Intelligence, Encyclopedia of Human Intelligence* , and New York: McMillan Publishing CO., 387-391 This chapter discusses the difference between Eastern and Western views of intelligence

Sternberg, RJ (editor), (1994), *Encyclopedia of Human Intelligence* , and New York: McMillan Publishing CO. "Biological Measures of Intelligence." Matarazzo, Jd "Brain" Shimamura AP& Shimamura, JW These two articles discuss the functional systems in different areas of the brain.

Sternberg, RJ (1999), and Successful Intelligence: Finding a balance. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* , 3(11), 436-442 This article has an introduction of an overview on various newer ideas about intelligence with a summary of Sternberg's own theories and the relationship of theory to research.

Thaweepkul N (1999), *The Effects of Neo-Humanist Meditation and Visualization Approach on Development of Pre-school Children's Creative Thinking, Master's research* , Chiangmai University, 1999 This research studied the effects of Neo-Humanist meditation on creative thinking in preschool children.

Meditation and Yoga and Music Teacher Reading Resources

Anandanivedita, Avk, *Teach me to Fly "Insights into Early Childhood Neo-Humanistic Education"* , Gurukula Publications, Anandanagar, India, 1999 This book focuses on the education of children from birth to 8 years of age and highlights some of the major components of Neohumanistic education such as meditation, universalism, teaching values, and importance of the teacher.

AnandaRama, *Neo-Humanist Education* , Gurukula Publications, Germany, 2000 This book provides a colorful picture of the Neo-Humanist Education system world wide, with over 40 articles and 260 pictures from NHE schools around the world. A teacher working in the schools write the articles, giving a first hand look into the NHE classroom. Holistic self-development, universalism, environmental ecology, yoga and meditation, and teaching values through literature, art, music and play are the cornerstones of this philosophy of education.

Alister, K, Why are we teaching Baba Nam Kevalam Meditation, www.gurukul.edu/nhe, 1998 This is an article from a journal/newsletter, which describes the philosophy behind teaching children meditation

Cohen, K, *Imagine that: A child's guide to Yoga* , Integral Yoga publications, Buckingham, VA, 1983 This is a book of illustrated poetry and a complete instruction guide for a child's study of Hatha Yoga. The intention of each poem and illustration is to fill young minds with a sense of inner harmony and with the inspiration of nature.

Dennison P., Dennison G., *Brain Gym*, Educkinesthetics publishers, 1994 This is a guide for whole brain exercises with children.

Jacobson, E. *Applied Learning*, www.gurukul.edu/nhe, 2001

Fontana, I, *Teaching Meditation to Children* , Element Books, Boston, MA, 1998 This is a practical guide to the use and benefits of meditation techniques.

Garth, M, *Earthlight, new meditations for children* , Harper Collins Publishers, NY, 1997 Simple visualizations for parents and teachers to help children release creativity, be free from fears, and develop inner peace and strength.

Garth, M, *Moonbeam, a book of meditations for children* , Harper Collins Publishers, Australia, 1992 Simple visualizations for parents and teachers to help children develop concentration, awaken creativity, and sleep peacefully.

Garth, M, *Starbright, meditations for children* , Harper Collins Publishers, NY, 1991 Simple visualizations for parents and teacher to help children to awaken creativity, develop concentration, and learn to quiet themselves.

Lubu, T, *Children's Book of Yoga* , Clear Light Publishers, Sante Fe, NM, 1998 This book contains a variety of yoga poses for children that imitate animals or objects in the environment, along with learning new ways to develop deep, healthful breathing.

Morley, T, *Star Power for Preschoolers* , Readleaf Press, St. Paul, MN, 1997 This is a book, which offers physical games, and exercises, which offer a setting in which to develop concentration, self-esteem, relaxation, cooperation, and imagination.

Murdock, Maureen, *Spinning Inward, Using Guided imagery with children for learning, creativity and relaxation* , Shambhala Publication, Boston, MA, 1987 This is a book, which provides exercises in guided imagery for children. The authors use guided imagery as a method for "whole brain" learning.

Stewart, M, *Yoga for children* , Simon and Schuster, NY, 1992 This is a book, which demonstrates simple movements and games adults, and children can do together to help promote strength and flexibility, good coordination and posture. The yoga exercises

teach children how to relax how to concentrate how to be quiet and still.

Tamminga, R., *Yoga Stories* , East West Book Co., 2000 Stories and relaxation exercises for children

Children's music tapes

Jacobson, E, *Songs for Children's Meditation*, Progressive School of Long Island, Merrick, NY, 2001 CD of Songs for children's meditation

Fossum, C., *Deep in My Heart*, Innersongigc.org, 2001 CD of Neo-Humanist Songs for Children

Palmer, Hap, *Quiet Places*, www.Amazon.com, October 1992 Quiet instrumental music designed for children.

Children's Resource List

(Adapted from Middle school writing program Conte West Hills Magnet School)

Seuss, D, *Oh, The places you'll go* , Random house, New York, 1990 Summary: A wonderful Dr. Sesus tale in which characters imagine all the wonderful things they will see and do in their lives. This is a story that is a wonderful writing story starter, especially for a student's last year in a school whether it is fifth, sixth, or eighth grades.

Locker, T, *Home* , Voyager books, New York1998 Summary: Whether it means playing on the front stoop or hiding under the back porch, writing in a comfortable chair or sitting around your Grandmother's kitchen table, each of us has a special vision of home. This is a wonderful writing story starter for students to think of a special place where they feel safe, comfortable and happy. This is a good extension for intermediate or Junior High students for after a guided imagery. This story lends very nicely to art activities.

Humphrey, M., *The River that Gave Gifts* , Children's Book Press, San Francisco, 1987 Summary: This is a revealing story about the importance of respect. The character Yanave works with her mind and spirit to give the gift that makes it possible for another to genuinely receive the gifts of others. This is a wonderful discussion starter and writing starter with all ages. This is also a great art activity starter.

Scholes, K. *Peace begins with You* , Little Brown, Boston, 1990 Summary: Excellent writing starter. How do you make peace? Can it happen? Do you have peace in your life? Can be used to relate the issue to current events. Remind student the theme is PEACE. Can be personal peace or international peace. Good for intermediate and Junior High.

Children's Resource Book list

(Adapted from reading list from Progressive School of Long Island)

Pfister, M, *The Rainbow Fish* , North-South Books, New York, 1992 Summary; the most beautiful fish in the entire ocean discovers the real value of personal beauty and friendship Character lesson; Sharing

Silverstein, S, *The Giving Tree* , Harper and Row, New York, 1964, Summary: A young boy grows to manhood and old age experiencing the love and generosity of a tree which gives to him without thought of return. Character Lesson: Love for the environment, sacrifice for love ones

Lottridge, C. *The Name of the Tree* , M.K. McElderry Books, New York, 1990 Summary; when the other animals fail at the task, the slow but wise turtle finds a way to obtain the bountiful fruits of a magic tree. Character lesson: patience

Curtis, Ch., *All I See Is Part of Me* , Illumination Arts Pub. Co., Bellvue, WA, 1994 Summary; A little boy discovers that all of creation is a part of him and he is part of all creation. Character lesson: universalism

Stephoe, John, *Mufaro's beautiful daughters an African tale* , Lothrop Lee and Shepard Books, New York, 1987 Summary: Mufaro's two beautiful daughters, one bad tempered, one kind and sweet, go before the king, who is choosing a wife. Character lesson: Physical aspects of a person are less important than internal characteristics

Seattle, Chief, *Brother Eagle, Sister Sky* , Dial Book, New York, 1991 Summary: A Suquamish Indian chief describes his people's respect and love for the earth, and concern for its destruction. Character lesson: Respect and love for the earth

Connelly, B. *Follow the Drinking Gourd* , Simon and Schuster, New York, 1997 Summary: A young slave girl sets off north with her brother and mother, following the star in the Drinking Gourd or Big Dipper that points to freedom. Charter lesson: Determination, courage to reach a goal

Pingry, P, *The Velveteen Rabbit* , Candy Cane Press, Nashville, TN, 1999 Summary: By the time the Velveteen Rabbit is dirt, worn out, and about to be burned, he has almost given up hope of every finding the magic called Real. Character lesson: Love conquers all

White, E.B., *Charlotte's Web* , Harper and Row, New York, 1952 Summary: Wilbur, The pig, is desolate when he discovers that he is destined to be the farmer's Christmas dinner until his spider friend, Charlotte, decides to help him. Character lesson: Universalism, caring for all beings

Saint-Exupaery, A., *The Little Prince* , Harcourt, San Diego, 2000 Summary: An aviator whose plane is forced down in the Sahara desert encounters a little prince from a small planet who relates his adventures in seeking the secret of what is important in life. Character lesson: Classic finding love

Doris, Michael, *Morning Girl* , Hyperion Books for children, New York, 1992 Summary: Morning Girl, who loves the day, and her younger brother Star boy, who loves the night, take turns describing their life on an island in pre-Columbian America; in Morning girls' last narrative, she witnesses the arrival of the first Europeans to her world. Character lesson: Love of the world

O'Dell, S., *The Island of the Blue Dolphins* , Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1990 Summary: Left alone a beautiful but isolated island off the coast of California, a young Indian girl spends eighteen years, not only merely surviving through her enormous courage and self-reliance, but also finding a measure of happiness in her solitary life. Character lesson: Empowerment of women.

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