



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
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Integrating the Craft of Writing into Physical Education

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A colleague at Vincent Mauro School offered this fellowship opportunity to me, and I immediately thought how in the world could I write a Physical Education curriculum that integrated the craft of writing. At first, the task seemed impossible, but with some help from my team members and past fellows, the process became somewhat easier. Including myself, there are currently three members from Vincent Mauro that are taking part in this fellowship. Part of our collaborative project is to display our work in the school. Our projects also intertwine by introducing various ways to deal with students who have anger management problems. Fellow teachers will be able to view these curriculums via the Internet to utilize the activities that are included in the curriculum. The focus of my curriculum unit is to integrate various writing styles and themes into Physical Education. However, before any writing or even reading of the material can take place we must familiarize ourselves with students of Vincent E. Mauro Elementary School. The school population contains roughly five hundred highly energetic students. The majority of those students are either African-American or Hispanic. Also, there is a very small percentage of the population that contains students from various ethnic backgrounds. This presents a challenging task for teachers at Vincent Mauro. As teachers at Vincent Mauro School we are dedicated to teaching our young students not only about math, science, reading, and writing, but also enrichment areas such as Art, Music and Physical Education. The integration of all these subjects in the curriculum gives our students the opportunity to attain a well-rounded education.

There are many reasons why I wanted to integrate the craft of writing in Physical Education. First off it is going to be a tremendous challenge. There are Physical Educators who've integrated other subject matter into the Physical Education class, but developing a curriculum that marries the two subjects is going to be unique. Many people think of Physical Education as "play time," or "controlled recess." As a Physical Educator this offends me because we are here to teach the children about the science of how and why their bodies work the way they do. Also, we teach the students socialization skills, cooperative play, respect, and teamwork. These are some of the most important areas of Physical Education. The behavior of children these days is unimaginable. I can remember being an elementary student and I had the utmost respect for every teacher that I had. It was unthinkable to disrespect a teacher; these days it's commonplace.

Some of the lessons that are presented in the curriculum incorporate teamwork, respect, and cooperation. Students need to be able to work together and set aside their differences. Many times in the classroom students would rather settle their difference by using their hands rather than their words. The problems that arise in class can almost always be avoided because part of the problem comes from what the students see at

home or in the neighborhood. Parents truly need to take an active role in their child's life. The students need to be disciplined properly at home, because if they are not disciplined at home they bring the bad behavior to school thinking they can get away with it. If there is collaboration between teachers and parents as to what discipline measures have been done, then the student will realize that their behavior must change.

Many of the activities that I teach involve cooperative play. Cooperative games require the students to work together toward a common goal. This means no one is captain and everyone on the team is of equal importance. These cooperative games also incorporate socialization skills as well as respect. I tell the students that when they get older and get a job, they might not like everyone that they work with but they have to respect them.

Students love to socialize with each other, granted it maybe at the most inappropriate time, but they love to talk. Physical Education class is completely different from any other subject. In my class students are moving immediately, in order to release that initial burst of energy. I found that trying to explain the class activity first is suicide. So a quick game is played first and then the actual lesson is explained. After the explanation of the activity then the students may socialize with each other. This is very important because students find out things about their classmates that they may not have had a chance to do in the regular classroom. Most of the time the students find out that each student has very similar likes and dislikes. For example, students may share the same favorite NBA team, or baseball team or their favorite cartoon show and not know it. In these cooperative activities the students are able to share this knowledge.

Another purpose of Physical Education is to teach students about the sports of various cultures and the impact these sports had on the world. Soccer is an example of a sport that is known worldwide. Each individual country may have adopted their own style of play through the years, but the basic rules of the sport have remained the same for centuries, and one of the most important facts about soccer, is that it still is a bona fide team sport. It's truly amazing to me that a single sport can find its way into so many different cultures and influence the peoples' way of life so enormously. I mention the fact that soccer is a team sport that is played worldwide because most of the activities that I plan to do with the students are team-oriented activities. I believe it is very important that students have the ability to play together.

Students must also be taught that each sport has its own set of rules that need to be followed, so it is of extreme importance that students have the ability to follow directions. The Physical Education classroom is also a place where directions need to be followed all of the time. There have been some instances in the Physical Education classroom where students thought they didn't have to listen or follow directions. As soon as the activity started those students didn't know what to do or where to go. It becomes aggravating when there are twenty-seven students in the class and three or four students don't listen to the directions. That means the class is stopped so the students can be put out, because if students don't want to listen the first time, then they can sit and watch. I try to stress that listening the first time is the best thing a student can do.

A sometimes forgotten part of Physical Education is personal health. It is especially important for young students to be taught the importance of proper nutrition and personal hygiene. Proper nutrition for these young students should be of paramount concern for parents and for teachers to a lesser degree. Too many times I've seen students eating potato chips, candy, and other unhealthy snacks for breakfast. Then throughout the day I always see students eating junk food. I tell them that their body is like an engine, and the engine needs good clean fuel for it to run properly. If the fuel is dirty and unhealthy then the engine is going to struggle and not work efficiently. Proper nutrition for inner city students is a tough battle. The student's family background plays an important role in what the student eats. Many of the families just don't have the

financial means to purchase the proper food. Also, many students come from families where both parents work, or they are from single parent homes where siblings take care of them. Usually in these instances the older siblings feed their younger brothers or sisters, and what's the easiest way? Mom or dad gives them money to get fast food. Also, have you noticed who the fast food spokesmen are lately? They are using star athletes like Shaquille O'Neal to promote these greasy, valve-clogging burgers. When the students see Shaq eating that type of food they think he got big and strong from eating Burger King, so I'm going to do that too. If the students are taught at a young age about these topics, hopefully they will practice these lifetime skills, as they grow older. The activities in my curriculum require energy and brain power; if the students aren't getting the proper nutrition to feed their bodies and their brains, then the activities are going to be more difficult to complete. That is why I spoke about personal health and nutrition.

The curriculum that I intend to write will harmonize the craft of writing with Physical Education. The unit will include lessons on poetry, journals, fiction stories and interviewing skills. The curriculum unit will be geared toward Fifth grade students. I chose the Fifth graders because these students have a bigger base of reading and writing skills than the younger students do; hopefully teachers will be able to modify the unit in order to include younger students.

Projected Curriculum Outcomes

Students will acquire an expanded vocabulary relating to Physical Education.

Students will gain more exposure to poetry and some of the different styles of poetry.

The students will be able to gather and process information more efficiently.

Students will develop the social skills in order to work in groups.

Physical Education Objectives

There are a few basic Physical Education objectives that I have chosen for this unit. The objectives that I am using are in alignment with the New Haven Public Schools Physical Education Curriculum Unit Guide. Even though the curriculum unit contains writing activities within it, having the students perform physical activities is still a very important aspect of the class.

My first objective to have the students physically active for at least 20 out of the 30 minutes of class.

My second objective is to “develop the concept of playing together in an atmosphere of trust and freedom.”¹ These games are new to the students and require teamwork, cooperation, and communication. It’s vital to the class and to the teacher that the students are able to work together. The Physical Education Performance Standard 4.2 states: “Students will develop skills to participate productively and safely in a group in both cooperative and competitive activities.”² My third objective is to have the students perform the various locomotor movements properly during the different activities.

The objectives that I am using will incorporate the three domains of learning, which are Psychomotor, Cognitive, and Affective. Each of these three domains must have conditions and criteria that must be met in order to measure success. Each of the examples provided below are taken from the lessons plans included in the curriculum. The Psychomotor domain deals with the physical and perceptual, and the action or performance of the skill. An example of a Psychomotor objective would be as follows:

Students will be able to perform the variety of locomotor movements with basic competency. Some examples of basic locomotor movements include skipping, hopping, sliding, walking, and running. The conditions for evaluating the proper form of the locomotor movements are during any class activity involving these movements. An easy way to see if the criteria are met is that the teacher can visually check each student to see if they are performing the given movement properly.

The Cognitive domain deals with knowledge, thinking, and the ability to acquire, evaluate and synthesize information. An example of a Cognitive objective would be as follows:

Students will demonstrate their unscrambling and spelling capabilities in the activity called “Make a Word.” The conditions are during the “Make a Word” activity. One measurable criterion is to see which group was first to unscramble and spell the given word correctly.

The Affective domain deals with the student’s thoughts, feelings, and values. This domain is the hardest one to measure. An example of an Affective objective would be as follows:

Students will demonstrate proper manners during any Physical Education class. The criteria are congratulating classmates, shaking hands, and cheering their classmates on during any activity. The teacher can visually observe these acts during class.

Writing Objectives

The main goal of this curriculum is to show students a very different approach to writing from the regular classroom instructional environment. The curriculum incorporates fun activities along with different writing styles. I have developed a few basic objectives for the unit. I am not a trained English teacher, so I plan to focus on the students being able to write their thoughts down first, and then concentrate on the grammar. This curriculum needs to be fun and interesting in order to keep the students focused on the task at hand. If students come to class expecting to play basketball, and then I tell them that they will be writing poetry instead, there will be a war in my classroom. So I've tried to develop some strategies and objectives that will allow the classes to be active and fun. In developing my objectives I used the reading and writing Content Standards of the New Haven Public School system as a guide.

My first objective is that the students understand the material that they are reading. I have chosen material that the students should be familiar with. In order for the curriculum to be successful appropriate material is crucial. The books I intend to use are *Casey at the Bat*, *The Gym Teacher from the Black Lagoon*, and *American Sports Poems*. The students' level of understanding of this material will be determined by utilizing the reading and writing Content Standards of the New Haven Public School system. Performance Standard (Reading) 1.2 states: "students will demonstrate strategic reading skills before, during, and after specific reading tasks."³ This standard says that students will be able form questions about the reading selection. The standard also shows that students will be able to identify what type of writing was used in the selection, such as poetry, or story telling. This standard is an important piece because students need to be able to identify what they are reading. Through this standard students will be able to identify the main idea, characters, and the setting of the piece. These are vital skills for readers if they are going to be able to put their thoughts into words on paper about what they just read. My second objective is to expose students to the various styles of writing, such as poetry, journalism, and story telling. Our young students need to be taught specific writing skills to become successful young authors. Performance Standard 2.1(Writing) states: "Students will develop strategic writing skills that ensure successful communication."⁴ This is another important piece because it's saying that students will be able to formulate their thoughts into proper sentences using correct grammar and punctuation. Now as we know, in the various writing styles there many different ways to piece together a sentence. All that I am concerned with is that the students can successfully convey their ideas in words.

My third objective is to tie the reading and writing selections to Physical Education. Students will be exposed to stories, poetry and other reading selections that are about Physical Education and sports. One of the main focuses of my curriculum is the journal writing. Students will have time during class to write in their journals. Students will be able to write about the activity of the day or a sporting event they may have seen or participated in.

My fourth objective is to have students collaborate and come up with a mock interview of an athlete or a sports figure. I came up with this idea while watching Sportscenter on ESPN. I thought it would be a fun project for the students to be able to interview each other. The process of interviewing also helps students in the gathering and processing of data. I have chosen these few objectives to try to ensure success for the students.

Strategies

My approach to this daunting task will be to provide lessons that students can easily understand, and then slowly progress to more difficult tasks. I intend to read certain selections to the students and then ask for their feedback orally. Then students will be required to read the selections and provide written feedback. I hope to collaborate with the classroom teachers with regard to ideas and strategies in planning and implementing this curriculum. It is very important that the Physical Education teacher knows the level of reading ability of the students before these activities can be done. Once the reading level is known the material can be changed to ensure success for all students. Collaboration between the Physical Education teacher and the classroom teacher often doesn't take place. Hopefully, the classroom teacher could assist in following up on some of the student's progress.

I plan to show some video of athletes getting interviewed, so the students have an idea of how to interview somebody. Also students will have a journal in which they will write any ideas, thoughts, or feelings about the activity of the day. The journal writing will become a creative outlet for the students. I plan to use the empowered writer's technique to assist students in the creative writing aspect. The Empowered Writers program is a writing program that is currently used by the teachers in our school. The basic premise of the program is to teach the students basic skills before they even begin to write. The skills are presented in a logical order so students build upon the previous lessons. The basic framework of the program is called the "Writing Diamond." The diamond is broken down into six sections that flow in a logical order. The first part of the diamond is called entertaining beginnings; this is where the writer must "hook" the reader so that they want to continue to read the story. The next section describes the setting; this is where the ordinary setting is left behind, and the students use their creative side to bring the reader somewhere interesting. The next section is where the suspense is built if the story is suspenseful. The most important part of the story is the main event; this is what the whole story builds up to. The main event should be very descriptive, well thought-out, and it should contain definitive actions by the characters. The following section is the solution or conclusion of the story. This where the main event comes to a close, or the conflict is resolved. The final section is called the extended ending sequence. This is where the characters reflect on the main event, which might include their feelings, thoughts or decisions in respect to the main event. When a story gets broken into smaller sections it becomes easier for the students to write out their thoughts. This program will be introduced in the fourth week of the unit during our short story portion of the curriculum. During week four we will be reading *Casey at the Bat* and *The Gym Teacher from the Black Lagoon* and I will have the students come up with their own version of *Casey at the Bat* or *The Gym Teacher from the Black Lagoon*, or create a story of their own. For example, the students may choose to have Casey hit a monstrous home run instead of striking out, or I will ask them to create a short story about the class activity or a sport they might have seen on TV or even a sporting event they may have attended. This program makes telling a story relatively easy: I want the students to be successful in their first writing attempt. The students will be able to work on their stories in class and then the rest will have to be done at home. I will ask for volunteers to share their stories.

Curriculum Timeline

Week 1: In the first week the students will be introduced to the unit and be given a brief overview of the activities involved in the unit. The first week will be primarily devoted to the journal specifications and what topics are acceptable for inclusion in their journals. The specifications that I want the students to follow are the following: each entry must be relative to Physical Education or sports. If the students write about the activity of the day, I want them to write about what they liked and disliked about the activity. This will help me fine-tune the activity to make it work for everyone.

Week 2: At the beginning of the second week we will review the journal process, in order to square away any problems that the students may have. During the second week I will have a list of words posted in the gymnasium that relate to Physical Education and sports. I will make copies of the words for the students to read over at home, and when they come to class we will use some of those words in a class activity. The class activity is called make a word; this is where students are split up into small groups and the groups must work together to unscramble the letters to make a word. This activity requires that the students work together and spell the word correctly; and it may be a word that they can use in their journals, when they reflect about this activity, or it may be used in their short stories.

Week 3: During this week the students will read the poems *Patrick Ewing Takes a Foul Shot* by Diane Ackerman and *Analysis of Baseball* by May Swenson. I chose these poems because they are relatively easy to follow as well as easy to read. After reading these poems the students will each get a piece of construction paper and crayons, and then they will proceed to make an acrostic (See Lesson #2). An acrostic is a poem that reads vertically as well as horizontally, the students will use their last name to make an acrostic that relates either to a poem or to Physical Education itself. These poems can be found in *American Sports Poems* by R.R. Knudson and May Swenson. I believe these short acrostic poems are a good way for students to show their creative side and all of the work will be posted for everyone to see. The students will also be required to write a journal response.

Week 4: During week four I will read the two short stories to the students. The stories are *Casey at the Bat* and *The Gym Teacher from the Black Lagoon*. I chose these two stories because they are easy to read and most students are familiar with *Casey at the Bat*. After reading the stories I will explain to the students the various sections of a story such as, main characters, setting, and theme. The activity that goes with these two stories is called "Name that Part." The students will be put into small groups, and the object for each group is to have one person at a time retrieve a laminated card from the other end of the gym. When the runner returns the group has to figure out what part of the story it is and hang the card under the proper heading on the wall. This is repeated until all sections of the story are retrieved. Students will write a journal response.

Week 5: In week five the students will be practicing their data collection and processing skills. They will need these skills in order to participate in the Sportscenter interviews, which will be coming in the following weeks. The activity for this week is called "Scavenger Hunt." In this activity each student will have a pencil and a sheet of paper, and each student must move inside the designated playing area until the signal to stop is given. Once the stop signal is given, each student will find a classmate that is close to them and write down their name and one or two facts about them. This process will be repeated until each student has information on at least five different classmates. At the end of the class the students will volunteer to share some of the information they collected about their classmates. Students will write a journal response.

Week 6: In week six the students will participate in an activity called “Sportscenter Interviews.” I will show the students a few taped interviews from the television show “Sportscenter,” on ESPN. The students will be put into groups of two or three, and practice interviewing each other. They will write out a few questions and the students will also record the responses. I intend to have this activity going on at the same time as a school wide tournament. This is because I want the students to interview the athletes from the other classes after the tournament is over. I will pick the two students whose interviewing skills are the best, and then have those two students conduct their interview of the tournament Most Valuable Player during the morning announcements. Students will write a journal response.

Implementation

I have developed a curriculum that is four to six weeks in length to start. This curriculum can always be lengthened, as the students grow accustomed to the activities. The lessons are geared toward developing the students’ ability to put their thoughts into words and to keep the students physically active.

Journal Entries: The journals are the centerpiece of the curriculum. Students will be given time at the end of class to write in their journals.

Purpose: To have the students put their thoughts about the activity/ game into words. The journals will a practice tool for processing ideas/information and then putting those ideas into complete sentences. The teacher may want to have a journal of their own to put their own thoughts or ideas on how each lesson can be changed or improved. Students may also respond in positive way, when they see the teacher sharing with the class something that is special to them.

Materials needed: 1 pencil and 1 writing tablet per student.

Description of Activity: At the end of every class each student will be required to write in their journal about some aspect of physical activity or sport. Students may write about the activity the class just played or they may write about a game they saw on television. I want to have the students to become creative in their writing style. For example, a student might have watched the Yankees on television and a player hit a home run. I want the students to be able to describe that event in vivid detail. Instead of saying Giambi hit a home run, students will present it like Giambi hit a towering blast into the third deck of Yankee stadium, you could almost hear the ball scream as the bat connected with the ball. The more practice the students have writing, hopefully the more proficient they will become.

Assessment/Evaluation: I intend to evaluate the student’s work by having it read by their peers and by me. This will give the writer two points of view on their work. The evaluation process is going to be a tough one because students progress at different speeds when learning new skills. I have other ideas on how to evaluate the students. I plan to give them a checklist to see if they can identify key elements of a story, such as setting, main character, and theme.

Lesson 1

Every day when students come to school they have much more on their minds than academics. Many students wonder who is going to pick on them today or if their mother or father will be home when they get out of school. Our job as teachers is try to make the safest environment possible for our students; often times this job is very difficult one. Cooperative activities can be an excellent way for students to break the ice and work together as team. The following activity is a cooperative activity that involves physical activity, teamwork, cooperation, and basic spelling skills.

Title: ***Make a Word***

Content: Language Arts

Purpose of Activity: To have students work together to unscramble letters that will form words that relate to physical education. Once students become familiar with the words they will be able to use them in their journal writings and maybe in other activities. This activity will assist in the practicing of spelling words. Also students will be practicing cooperation and teamwork as well as various locomotor movements as they move from the starting line to the area where the scrambled letters are.

Materials Needed: At least 10 full sets of laminated letters. 1 cone per group. Hula hoops (Depending on the number of groups)

Prerequisites: Students will be given a list of possible words prior to implementation of activity. These words will relate to physical education.

Physical Activity: Locomotor skills such as running, hopping, skipping, sliding, and bounding.

Description of Activity: Students are placed in small groups (5-6 students) behind a cone at one side of the gym. The scrambled letters are placed face down inside the hula-hoop at the other end of the gym. When I say, "go," one person from each group will travel to the hula-hoop in the way that is designated by the teacher (running, skipping). Each student will retrieve one letter and bring it back to their line. Once all of the letters are retrieved, the students must unscramble the letters to form a word in the shortest amount of time. Each scrambled word will be the same word for every group.

Variations: Students may travel to the hula-hoop as a whole group and unscramble the word at the hula-hoop. The students have to arrange themselves properly with the letters, however, without talking to spell the word.

Assessment Ideas: I will have the students use the word in a proper sentence. I will have the students define each word. Try to find words that have at least five letters in length. Students may also focus different strategies, such as getting all of the vowels first.

Lesson 2

People watch athletic events for many different reasons. Some people watch for the pure sake of competition; others watch because it's their favorite sport or athlete. Many people may not realize it but they also might be watching because the athletes are so good and their movements so fluid. When the expression "poetry in motion" comes to mind I tend to think of Walter Payton or Barry Sanders. When either person touched the football something exciting always happened. I believe John Madden said of Barry Sanders, "I've never seen a run for a loss of five yards be so exciting." When you watch these two athletes run the ball your eyes see what they do, but sometimes your brain doesn't believe it. The movements of their body are so fluid and fast, and then they can change speed and direction so fast just like poetry. There is beauty in movement and sport, and there are authors who have captured this beauty and motion and they have put these movements into words. Students will be read a variety of poems that relate sports or Physical Education. The book that is going to be used is called *American Sports Poems* by R.R. Knudson and May Swenson. The poems that the students will be exposed to are *Patrick Ewing Takes a Foul Shot* and *Analysis of Baseball*. These two poems were chosen because they deal with two of the most popular sports in school, basketball and baseball. These two poems are also easy for the students to understand. This book contains a multitude of poems relating to many different sports. After certain selections are read, I will ask the students for their feedback orally, as well as a written response in their journals.

Title: **Action Poems**

Content: Language Arts

Purpose of the Activity: To reinforce the students' knowledge of Physical Education terminology. Another purpose of the activity is to enhance the students' creativity with words.

Materials Needed: Paper, pencils, crayons

Description of Activity: This activity will be used as a cool-down exercise for the students. Each student receives one blank sheet of paper and a box of crayons. Next have the students write their last name **vertically** down the left-hand side of the paper. Encourage the students to be creative and used different colors for each letter.

Next after each letter of their name is written, they must spell out a word that is related to Physical Education, sports, or athletics **horizontally**. So each letter of their last name will be the first letter of the word that is spelled out.

Variations: Students may use their first name instead of their last. Once the students are used to the format of the poems I will have a central theme that the students need to follow. For example, everything must relate to baseball or hockey. Post the students' work so administrators and parents can see what they have done.

Example:

J ogs

O outside

E very day

Lesson 3

It's not only important for students to be able to read a selection; it's also important for the students to be able to pick out major parts of the selection. Students should be able to identify parts such as theme, setting and the main characters. The following exercise is one that combines parts of Physical Education with classroom objectives such as identifying the setting, theme, and main characters. It is up to the teacher to decide on the selection that they want their students to study: it might be a poem or a short story. Whichever one it is, the students should be allowed plenty of time to become familiar

with it. Some of the books that I intend to use are *Casey at the Bat* by Ernest Lawrence Thayer and *The Gym Teacher From the Black Lagoon* by Mike Thaler. I chose these selections because they are easy to read and they are enjoyable stories for the students to study.

Title of Activity: **Name that Part**

Content: Language Arts

Purpose of Activity: This activity is specifically geared towards students being able to identify the main idea or theme, as well as main characters, and setting.

Materials Needed: Hula-hoops, cones. A large piece of poster board for each group of students. At least six sets of laminated cards that say setting, theme, and main characters that can be hung on the poster board. Also, at least six sets of laminated cards with the specific main character, theme, and setting for each story or poem that the class has been studying.

Description of Activity: Students will be put into groups of five or six students that are in a single file line behind a cone. At the other end of the gym there is a hula-hoop with the laminated cards inside of it. The first student in line runs down to the hoop, picks out one of the cards and runs back to his team, and then the team has to figure out what part of the story or poem it is, such as theme, setting or main character. When they figure out which part it is they hang the card on the board under that heading, and then the next student would repeat the process.

Variations: Hopefully I will be able to incorporate more specific tasks such as identifying supporting characters and multiple settings. There should be enough cards so that every student gets a chance to run down and collect a card.

Lesson 4

In order for the upcoming Sportscenter interviews to be successful the students are going to have to get to know their classmates better. The students will also have to practice gathering and processing data. The students will participate in an activity that will assist in both aspects.

Title of Activity: *Scavenger Hunt*

Purpose of Activity: This activity will help students with the process of organizing, gathering and processing data.

Materials Needed: Pencil and paper for each student. Large open area or gymnasium.

Description of Activity: With their pencil and paper each student will find their own personal space inside the designated play area. When the signal is given the students will perform the given locomotor movement inside the play area. When the signal is given to stop the students will find the closest classmate and then they will write their name down on their paper and one or two facts about them. An example might be their age and favorite sport. This continues until each student has collected information from at least 5 different classmates.

Variations: I intend to use music as starting and stopping signals. At the end of the class a list of facts can be made and then have the students try and guess which student goes with each fact. Also the teacher may have each student read the list of facts that they collected, so each student becomes used to talking in front of their peers.

Lesson 5

“The first recorded Olympic contest took place in 776 B.C. at Olympia in western Greece. The first winner was Koroibos (Also spelled Coroebus), a cook from Elis.”⁵ People have been enthralled with sporting events for some time, and since the first Olympic games there have been people at the events to record what happened. “The first modern Olympic games took place in 1896 in Athens, Greece.”⁶ Even at the first modern games there was a Secretary named Timoleon J. Phileman to record all of the action at the games. The media is a powerful force that can make a hero out of someone or make a person never want to show his face again. Humans have this urge to know what other people think and feel in very stressful situations. We’ve all seen the coverage of the Superbowl; there is a reporter at every possible location, and I wouldn’t be surprised if there were live updates from the mile long lines outside of the restrooms. The point is the media can greatly influence our views on people, especially athletes. That is why students need to understand that this lesson should be done in a professional way.

Title of activity: ***Sportscenter Interviews***

Content: Language arts/Interviewing skills

Purpose of the Activity: The purpose of this activity is to get the students to work together in teams of two or three and interview each other. Students will practice the interviewing process by asking each other questions and writing down the responses. The interviewing process enables students to practice their listening, writing, data processing skills. Videotape of Sportscenter interviews will be shown to the students to give them an idea of how an interview is given. Also students get to know their classmates better; they can find out what they like, what sports they play, and who their favorite team is.

Materials Needed: 1 Pencil and writing tablet for each student.

Description of Activity: This activity could be done at the end of every class. However, it may work better when it is done during a school tournament. Students who have been practicing the interviewing process will choose 2-3 students to interview who are participating in the tournament. After the tournament the students can interview their classmates to get their feelings and thoughts on the tournament. As a culminating activity the students may present their interviews on the morning announcements, like a Sportscenter broadcast. Students must come up with three to five questions that can be answered easily. The teacher should review all questions before the activity can be done.

Variations: The teacher may want to conduct the interview first, to get the students accustomed to the process. The students should interview someone as well as getting interviewed by someone else. Students should also try to interview different people, in order to get more experience at the process.

Notes

1 New Haven Public Schools Physical Education Curriculum Unit Guide. Pg. 6, 2001

2 www.nhps.net/curriculum/html/PhysEd-5-8.asp 2001

3 www.nhps.net/curriculum/html/LangArts-5-8.asp 2001

4 www.nhps.net/curriculum/html/LangArts-5-8.asp 2001

5 www.Worldbookencyclopedia.com/olympicgames. 2002

6 www.forthnet.gr/Olympics 1996

Bibliography

Teacher's Resources:

Auray, Dea Paoletta, and Mariconda, Barbara. *Empowering Writers*. Easton, CT: 1997. This source provides an excellent layout to construct descriptive stories, which is also very easy to follow.

Brewer, Jo Ann. *Introduction to Early Childhood Education*. 4th ed. Massachusetts: Allyn & Bacon, 2001. This is a professional source, which details various teaching styles and strategies.

Lynch-Brown, Carol, Carl M. Tomlinson. *Essentials of Children's Literature*. 4th ed. Massachusetts: Allyn & Bacon, 2002. Provides the reader with ideas and examples of appropriate literature for children.

Wood, Margo. *Essentials of Elementary Language Arts*. 2nd ed. Massachusetts: Allyn & Bacon, 1999. This book provides a wealth of knowledge that concentrates on language arts. This book discusses how children learn the structure of language, oral communication, and writing inside the classroom.

Children's Resources:

Costain, Meredith. *Olympic Summer Games 2000*. Puffin Books: New York, 2000. Provides an excellent history of the Olympics, as well as a detailed account of the 2000 Olympics in Sydney.

Knudson, R.R., and May Swenson. *American Sports Poems*. Orchard Books: New York, 1988. This book is an excellent source for teachers and students. This book contains hundreds of poems that meet all reading level abilities on a very wide variety of sports.

Thaler, Mike. *The Gym Teacher from the Black Lagoon*. Scholastic Inc.: New York, 1994. This is an easy book for students to read, and it directly relates to Physical Education

Thayer, Ernest Lawrence. *Casey at the Bat*. PaperStar: New York, 1988. This classic book is a must for teachers integrating sports into the classroom. The book tells the tale of mighty Casey's misfortune that day.

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