



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
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A DIFFERENT APPROACH FOR A SPECIAL CHILD

Curriculum Unit 89.05.05
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Introduction

The students I work with are Spanish speaking, very slow learners, diagnosed as learning disabled (LD), educable mentally retarded (EMR). and/or socially maladjusted (SMA). These children exhibit disorders in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language. These disorders manifest themselves in the students' listening, thinking, talking, reading, writing, spelling, and/or arithmetic. Most of them also exhibit accompanying problematic behaviors: they dislike school, are disobedient, disruptive, destructive, lazy, moody, negative, unmotivated, etc. Such conditions prevent the students from achieving academically; this in turn creates a lot of frustration and in consequence a very low self-esteem. Thus a cycle is created which requires a very well structured behavior management program to correct these problematic behaviors and a very well planned curriculum designed to focus on the specific disabilities encountered in these students.

My students also have a great degree of cultural deprivation since most of them come from illiterate parents or parents who did not pass the fourth grade in their native Spanish. Having come from rural areas primarily in Puerto Rico, most have not been exposed to cultural events—only to limited regional dances at the most; nor have they been taken to places where they could acquire some knowledge of their past, such as museums, theaters, libraries, etc. Added to these problems are a high degree of migration and the difficulty of coming to live in a country completely different in language, climate, race, and culture in general. Because these children have little or no ability to cope with new life situations, all these factors make the teaching and learning process very difficult.

Facing this reality in my classroom, needing to improve my students' level of competency, and looking always for new strategies and techniques that will help me to motivate my students, I decided to prepare a curriculum by which the students will experience new activities in a different environment from the school setting.

I have called this curriculum "A Different Approach for a Special Child." With this unit I hope to help my students through different activities that will motivate them to participate more actively in classroom discussions, reading, and writing. I hope also to create in my students some inner motivation to discover things around them and enable them to observe from different sources the changes that occur over time. Such sources include the people (themselves) and things around them—for example, costumes, houses,

building structures, schools, heating systems, transportation, parks, etc.

Beginning with the Indians in Puerto Rico and in the United States of America, we will analyze their style of life, housing, clothing, food, entertainment, sports, etc. Before analyzing the customs and life style of the Indians of America, I decided to initiate the students' learning about their own country as a basis for a new learning experience. It is very difficult if not impossible for these students to face new experiences and learn new things if they have not been exposed to similar previous learning situations and acquired some prior knowledge.

Next we will look at the first white settlers in America and see how these people interacted with and learned from the native Americans. Finally, we will look at the Africans who came to America as slaves. We will discuss their culture and artistic expressions, their dances, masks, etc.

In order for the students to understand and enjoy the lessons, I will take them to museums and galleries where they can observe, touch, and enjoy the beauty created by different people of different cultures at different times.

Students will be encouraged to talk about their observations and experiences and to write about them.

Objectives In order to help the students improve in reading, oral and written expression skills, my main goal is to help the students learn new things from the present by having them learn things from the past about the Tainos, the American Indians, the English settlers, and the Africans.

Activities Students will

- a. read passages about Puerto Rico before the discovery of America
- b. read passages and short stories from the Indians of Connecticut
- c. read passages about the first white settlers in Connecticut
- d. read passages about the African slaves and their civilization
- e. look for topics, main characters, places, etc. in their reading
- f. participate in class discussions
- g. describe pictures
- h. search in the library
- i. take note of things that catch their attention during trips to museums
- j. watch films
- k. complete written assignments
- l. draw pictures related to the reading matter

Materials

reading books
dictionary
film strips
paper and pencil

crayons
water colors and brushes

Places to be Visited

school library
The Peabody Museum
The Yale Art Museum, African Gallery, 2nd floor

This curriculum unit will cover four weeks:

1st week: study of the Taino Indians of Puerto Rico

2nd week: brief study of the Connecticut Indians. Visit to the Peabody Museum to compare the life style of the Indians of the Caribbean islands to the American

3rd week: study of the immigrants from Europe and American peoples.

4th week: study of African costumes and masks. Visit to the African Gallery, 2nd floor of the Yale Art Museum

A Different Approach For a Special Child

When developing a curriculum unit for learning disabled students whose reading skills range from zero to third grade, with independent reading levels even lower and with very poor or no reading comprehension, the teacher must remember not to include many reading materials. Rather, the teacher should include short passages which will interest the students, using familiar words in such a way that the students understand and enjoy the reading. These reading passages can be prepared by the teacher or selected very carefully from different sources according to the subject. Of course, the teacher should include new vocabulary words for study and the improvement of dictionary skills.

I consider the use of audiovisual and manipulative materials of great importance. I agree very much with the statement of my two colleagues Barbara Banquer and Amy Alledort in their curriculum unit entitled "Literature and the Special Education Student": "We find that the showing of films is highly received by our students. The second viewing could be behaviorally rewarding as well as educationally sound. It would give the students the

opportunity to refocus, to pick up conversation that was previously missed or misinterpreted, and could be an appropriate ending activity.”

Week One: The Tainos

Objectives that the students learn about the Taino Indians, their life style, costumes, etc. in order to compare this later with the life style and costumes of the Indians of Connecticut

The students will improve in their

- ¥ reading skills
- ¥ oral and reading comprehension
- ¥ oral and written expression skills (by enlarging their vocabulary)
- ¥ participation in class discussion

In this unit I intend to teach the students about the Indians living in Borinquen (Puerto Rico before the arrival of Christopher Columbus). Things studied will include their life style—families, nutrition, housing, entertainment, clothing, etc, and some explanation of their economic and political situation.

During the development of this unit the students will:

- ¥ read passages
- ¥ make comments
- ¥ describe pictures
- ¥ read maps
- ¥ search in the library
- ¥ complete written assignments
- ¥ draw villages of the Indians’ style in order to compare with the housing of the Indians of Connecticut later.

The reading passages are taken from *Reading Exercises on the History and Culture of Puerto Rico* and *Historia de Nuestros Indios*.

Procedure The teacher will prepare dittos with the passage for each student in the class. In order to help the students to have a better understanding of the story, a model reading story will be recommended. The teacher will read the story, asking the students to read with him/her, but silently.

The teacher will comment briefly, mentioning the most important aspects of the story, such as: main characters, setting, characteristics of the Indians, etc. Later the teacher will ask the students to read one or two paragraphs each. When the reading is finished, the teacher will initiate a discussion by asking questions such as these:

1. What was the name of Puerto Rico before the arrival of Christopher Columbus on the island?
2. What kind of Indians were living on the island at that time?

After analyzing the first reading the teacher will tell the students: the Tainos, like any other people in the world, had their own culture, life style, food, clothing, housing, music, entertainment, etc. Let us learn about them, because they are our ancestry.

The teacher will write the word *ancestry* on the blackboard, ask the students to look for the meaning in their dictionaries, and explain this term clearly.

The teacher will continue analyzing the rest of the passages during the week.

Related activity: The bulletin board will be decorated with the drawings, written tasks, and other materials prepared by the students as an artistic expression of their feelings and understanding of the lessons.

ASPECTS OF INDIAN LIFE IN PUERTO RICO BEFORE COLUMBUS

Family: The Indians in Borinquen (Puerto Rico) lived in groups of individual families just as we do. The family was made up of the father, mother, and children. The father's job was to teach the boys the tribe's history, as well as respect and obedience towards their cacique or chief. The father would also teach the boys how to hunt, fish, and make weapons in case of war.

The mother's job was to teach the girls how to prepare the family's meals. She also taught them how to make utensils using clay, as well as how to make hammocks for sleeping. The mother and daughters also cultivated the fields.

The small children's job was to keep the birds from eating the fruits and vegetables in the fields. Every member of the family had a job to perform.

Government: The cacique was the highest authority in the political, social and religious life of the tribe. He was assisted by a group of warriors and old wise men from the tribe called "Nitainos." The cacique distributed all the duties that were needed in order to keep the tribe running in an organized, prosperous manner. To some he assigned the cultivation of the land; to others, the fishing or hunting, etc.

When the tribe was in danger, the cacique would get together with the group of men that assisted him and they would decide on the best way to act.

When a cacique died, the oldest son of his sisters would inherit his position.

Agriculture: The main occupation for the Indians was agriculture. They cultivated a number of fruits and vegetables, as well as tobacco and cotton. The Indians used a long stick of wood to make holes in the ground to plant the seeds. Each tribe had its own fields which the women would start working early in the morning supervised by the cacique and his assistants. During harvest time the Indians celebrated with big feasts to give thanks to the gods for protecting their land.

Fishing: Fishing was another occupation for the Indians. On the beach they would gather clams, oysters, shells, etc. In the water they would use a fishing rod, which they made out of wood and cotton thread.

Turtles were another favorite food for the Indians. They would catch the turtles when they came on the beach to lay their eggs.

Clothing: The Indians wore very little clothing, and generally walked about almost naked. Married women wore small pieces of clothing resembling an apron tied around the waist; they were called naguas and were made of cotton woven by them. It was also the custom for both men and women to wear strings of cotton tied around the ankles and forearms.

Indians also liked to paint their faces and bodies with white and black colors which they obtained from plants and minerals. This served a double purpose, as an adornment and to keep the mosquitoes away.

On their head, Indians wore brightly colored feathers from birds that inhabited the island during that time. They also wore jewelry which they made out of shells, stones, and bones as well as small figures representing their gods or animals, which they believed brought them protection and good luck.

Hunting: The Indians did not have a lot of the domestic animals we have today. Horses, cows, goats, chickens, cats, etc. were brought over from Spain after the island was discovered by Christopher Columbus. The Indians had, however, a great variety of birds including parrots which were a favorite dish, and some small animals which they caught using a bow and arrow.

Transportation: The canoe was the only means of transportation for the Indians to travel across rivers and lakes. The Indians made the canoes out of hollowed tree trunks. Some tree trunks were long enough to carry seventy men plus provisions. Inland the Indians would travel on foot, except the cacique, who had a special chair with handles for the others to carry him.

Furniture: The Indians had very little furniture in their homes or "bohios." The most important piece of furniture was the bed, a hammock, which was made of cotton threads woven together or from fibers from a plant called "maguey." The Indians hung the hammocks from beams on the ceiling of their bohios.

The chief of the tribe and other important men in the tribe also had stools to sit on. They were made out of stone or wood and were called "dujos".

Entertainment: The favorite form of entertainment for the Indians was playing softball. The Indians gathered into two teams; they could be from their own tribe, or from a neighboring tribe. The ball was made from the roots of small plants which they covered with resin from some trees, which, after it dried, would make the ball bounce. The Indians made up rules and whichever team dropped the ball the most, lost the game.

Each of these aspects of Indian life will be studied separately, one day apiece, giving time enough to analyze the reading, get into class discussions, have film presentations, visit the museum, and participate in other activities related to the unit.

Words to learn: migration, wigwams, hereditary, tradition, till, rite, trapped

WEEK TWO: THE ALGONQUINS OF CONNECTICUT

The primary sources for the Indians of Connecticut are *The People of Connecticut* and *Land of Steady Habits: Connecticut, U.S.A.*

The Indians who lived in Connecticut were of tribes of the Algonquins who came from the South. They lived east of the Mississippi, from Hudson Bay in the North to Tennessee and Virginia in the South. Some of the tribes in Connecticut were the Quinnipiacs, Pequots, Mohegans, Hammonassets, and Ponduks. Each tribe was proud and independent; they fought one another for land on which to hunt. The winner of these battles decided which tribe would rule the other. The many tribes of the Algonquin Indians were similar in the way they lived. Besides being good hunters with the bow and arrow, they trapped and tracked animals in winter when the ground was covered with snow. The skins of deer, bear, beaver, and otter were used for clothes. The Indians traded furs for goods including tools, utensils, and clothing. The native Americans did little farming since the land was worked by hand; the only tools were wooden spades or large shells fastened to wooden handles. For this reason, help was always needed to till the soil. This was especially true when a family wanted to break up a new field. Men, women, and children worked together.

The Quinnipiac Indians were a small and somewhat scattered tribe speaking the Algonquin language and found by the Europeans. When the Quinnipiacs were found by the English, they seemed to have had several camps on each side of the harbor located on high ground above the meadows. We know this because of the relics found—shell heaps, stone implements, etc.

During the seventeenth century the Quinnipiacs added as much as possible to the traditional ways. They engaged in gardening, fishing, and hunting much as before the arrival of the English. The office of sachem remained intact and on several occasions the Quinnipiacs participated in or hosted ceremonial gatherings that included Indians from other places.

Questions for Discussion:

1. The teacher asks the students to identify Virginia, Tennessee, and other places of the South on the map.
2. Ask the students to identify the different tribes of Connecticut on the Indian map.
3. Ask the students to explain the major reason that the Indians did not do much farming.

FAMILY AND TRIBAL RITES

Words to Study: freedom, lead, wisdom, bravery, spoiled, ignore, agreement, aprons, wise

The family of the Connecticut Indians was similar to our family of today. Parents treated their children with great love. Sometimes the children grew spoiled because few were ever disciplined. Boys were more likely to enjoy their freedom than girls. They held a superior position to that of the girls because, as adults, men ruled women.

As a result, men were always chosen to lead. The highest position a male could hold was that of sachem. The sachem headed a body of men called sagamores. These men helped the sachem to rule the village. The dressed in caps and colorfully beaded aprons. The position of the sachem was hereditary, descending from father to son. The sachem was responsible to rule his people with wisdom and bravery. The wise sachem, therefore, was careful not to ignore the wishes of his people. He was also bound to welcome strangers and ambassadors who came from other tribes. This practice was a tradition that was to play an important role in the early history of Indians' relations with whites.

The Indians used wampum, which is a white and purple dishshaped bead fashioned from clam shells. They gave wampum as a gift to be exchanged on ceremonial occasions and at every sort of agreement and invitation. Indians also built public squares and large wigwams to be used for tribal dances. Many of the dances were just for fun; others were to celebrate an important event such as war victory, birth, a good hunt, or a rich crop.

Questions for Discussion:

1. The teacher provides the opportunity to compare the Connecticut Indians and the Tainos from Puerto Rico.
2. What do you think was the relationship between parents and children among the Indian tribes?
3. What type of duties were assigned to the children of the Connecticut Indians? What type of duty was assigned to the children of the Tainos?
4. What did the Connecticut Indians call their chief? What did the Tainos call their chief?
5. Mention some type of ceremonies celebrated by the Indians of Connecticut.

HOUSING

Works to Study framework, platform, ceremonies, ground, bark, plentiful, fastened, amusements

The American Indian had to move where food was the most plentiful. In a matter of hours the Indian could construct a home for himself and his family. The teepee or wigwam was built from an oval framework of poles set in the ground and fastened to the framework. A fire was built in the center and a platform around the sides provided a sleeping space above the earth floor. Finally they were covered in bark. The Indians also used the skin of deer, bears, beavers, and others for the outer covering of their homes.

The Indian houses were simply furnished. These homes had wooden bowls, spoons, baskets, and floormats. Sturdy baskets were woven by the Indians of splints of maple, white oak or ash. Rushes and long grasses were also used. Juice from pokeberries, cranberries, huckleberries, and blueberries were used to paint colorful designs on the baskets.

The houses were placed together, forming a circle of protection against the outside. These circles were also built as places for amusement and ceremonies.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is a wigwam?
2. What type of materials did the Indians use to cover their houses? Why?
3. In what way were the houses of the Indians from Puerto Rico similar to the houses of Connecticut Indians?
4. Draw a group of wigwams with a fire in the center.

FOOD

Indian tribes often moved from one place to another. This migration allowed them to enjoy the seacoast in the summer and the shelter of the wooded valleys in the winter.

Along the coastline there were all kinds of shellfish. They caught and ate shellfish, lobster, clams, and bass. Other fish that were a part of their diet were bluefish, carp, catfish, cod, halibut, salmon, and mackerel. They fished in canoes and carried hooks, spears, and nets.

The men traveled the winding footpaths through the forests in which strawberries, blackberries, and blueberries grew wild.

They also hunted many animals: wolves, bear, moose, deer, wildcats, otters, foxes, raccoons, woodchucks, and minks. Ducks, geese, pigeons, and teal were game birds for the Indians. The Indians' dogs were not pets but reserved food supplies to be eaten when game was scarce.

The women and children did most of the cultivating, planting, and harvesting of the crops, corn or maize and beans, which were a large part of their diet. They ate corn in a porridge and unleavened cakes. They boiled the corn and ate it as we do corn on the cob. They ate a succotash, which is corn and beans cooked together. They also ground the corn and made it into a cornmeal and hominy. This food was sometimes seasoned with fish. Cornmeal cake was another favorite. The food was prepared by wrapping the meal in leaves and roasting the cake in ashes.

Questions:

What kind of food did the Indians of Connecticut eat?

The teacher will go to the blackboard and say: "Let us make a list of foods according to the principles: vegetables and animals." The teacher could also make this task more difficult for the students in order to give them experience in systematic work. The teacher could prepare in advance dittos with the nature of the food eaten by the Connecticut Indians and ask the students to classify the foods in the following categories:

birds seafood vegetable fruits

The teacher will also ask the students to compare the food eaten by the Indians of Connecticut and the Tainos from Puerto Rico.

The teacher can ask the students to prepare two separate lists: one with the food of Indians of Connecticut, and another with the food of the Indians from Puerto Rico.

CLOTHING, GAMES, AND TRANSPORTATION

Words to study: tanned, ornaments, moccasins, cured, sewn, wore out, pliable, garment, birch bark, pitch, waterproof

Clothing: The Indians' clothing was mainly of animal skins that were tanned and cured. When a skin was cured, it became soft and pliable. Shells were used for ornaments and sewn onto the garments. Moccasins were made from moose skin or deer skin. One Indian wore out as many as twenty pairs of moccasins a year.

Transportation: Birch bark was used to make strong, light weight and fast-moving canoes. Strips of wood were used to construct the framework of the canoe. Roots from trees were used to attach the bark to the framework. Pitch, a sticky, gummy substance taken from the pine trees, was used to waterproof the canoe. They also used a mixture of spruce resins, animal fat, and charcoal to protect their canoes.

Entertainment: Games were a popular pastime. Some were similar to cards and games of dice. Another amusement was sports. Most sports were games for fun; some, however, were taken seriously. Sometimes, men lost all their property by betting. Indians also enjoyed dances to have fun and to celebrate special events.

(Review here family and ceremonies.)

Questions for discussion:

1. What do you think about the clothes used by the Connecticut Indians as compared to the clothes in use today?
2. Were the clothes of the Connecticut Indians similar to those used by the Tainos in Puerto Rico? Why?
3. What about the transportation? Do you like canoes? Can we use canoes now to get from one place to another? Was this way of transportation similar to that of the Tainos in Puerto Rico?

Word Search

All the words below are hidden in the puzzle. They are names of foods the Indians ate. Circle each word that you find.

BEANS

BEAR

CARP

CATFISH

COD

CORN

CORNBREAD

CORNMEAL

DEER

LOBSTER

MACKEREL

MAIZE

POPCORN

PORRIDGE

SALMON

SUCCOTASH

SXNJPORRIDGEUPCCPR

UQIOLDCOBEANSSA000

CTSYCORNBREADMTRPP

CAABLIDMAIZELAFNCF

OYLROCECORNENCIMOV

TWMVBUEBZNZEIKSERB

AIOWSWRCARPACEHANH

SINRTASDFJCDLRKLSW

HSIFELBEAROCXEZPOJ

CARERRLOBTDOPLACMN

How many words did you find? _____

4. What kinds of entertainment did the Connecticut Indians have? Name some similarities between the entertainment of the Indians of Puerto Rico and the Indians of Connecticut.

The teacher will go to the blackboard and prepare two columns:

Tainos Indians of Connecticut

Related Activities:

¥ Visit the Peabody Museum, third floor

¥ Film presentation

Recommended Films from the Audio Visual Materials Catalogue, 1983, New Haven Public Schools:

1. American Indians (fsr) (im n)
2. Northeast Indians Salish (im)
3. Indian Tales Footsteps Upon the Water
4. Where did the Indians live? (i,m) (pi) (fsc)
5. Huron Indians Christmas Carols (i,m)

WEEK THREE; STUDY OF THE IMMIGRANTS FROM EUROPE AND ENGLAND, THE PILGRIMS, AND THE FIRST THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION

Objectives During this week the students will learn about the first people from another country who made contact with the Indians—first in the South and later with the Indians of Connecticut. The students will learn about the relationships between the Indians and the visitors, especially the Pilgrims, about how they helped each other, and about the first Thanksgiving celebration.

The teacher will introduce the unit by talking about the first English settlements in Virginia. (The illustration of immigration will become a basis for another subunit about slavery.)

Words to study: settlement, landed, natives, trifles, colony, friendship

Materials

- ¥ world map
- ¥ map of the United States of America
- ¥ films, if possible

FIRST PASSAGE: ENGLISH SETTLERS IN THE SOUTH

An Englishman named Raleigh sent 400 people to explore America. These men landed on an island named Roanoke near the coast of North Carolina. Tribes of Indians were living there when the Englishmen arrived. One of the Englishmen wrote that the natives made great and horrible cries. He also said that the Indians felt better when the English gave them glasses, knives, dolls, and other trifles, which were exchanged for food, corn, and fur.

Other people from England came to what is now called Virginia. Many of them died because they did not have enough food supplies; but after they landed, they found other kinds of food that they had never eaten before.

The most important Indian food was corn. The Indians taught the white men how to prepare different cornmeals. Here in America the English saw their first pumpkins, white potatoes, and tobacco. Sir Walter Raleigh started smoking and carried tobacco with him back to England. When he started smoking there, his servants threw a pitcher of water on him. They thought he was on fire!

Tobacco leaves soon grew valuable. They took the place of money. Even teachers were paid with leaves of tobacco. Because more men began smoking at this time, the demand for tobacco rose. Soon more tobacco plantations opened up in the New World, and that brought more and more people from England to farm the tobacco. More housing was needed for the immigrants, too. Soon whole towns appeared; the largest and most beautiful town in Virginia was Williamsburg.

Several important leaders of this country came from Virginia. Among them were George Washington, the first President of the United States, and Thomas Jefferson, who wrote the *Declaration of Independence* of this nation. (Here the teacher should try to instill in the students a motivation to read and learn more about other aspects of American history. The teacher should build a classroom library with a variety of easyreading books.)

Some settlers became very rich. They did not want to farm the plantations any more and decided to bring men from Africa to work planting tobacco and performing other duties.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Why do you think that the Indians cried and were afraid of the Englishmen?
2. Why do you think that the Indians were happy with the gifts, especially the knives, that the white men gave them?
3. Who taught the white people to smoke tobacco and to eat cornmeal?
4. Can you find on the map Virginia, North Carolina, and Williamsburg?

SECOND DAY; WEEK THREE

Words to Study (Write these on the blackboard): planks, axes, weather, religious, supplies, land, warship, courage, fort, outsiders, neighbors, pilgrims, strict, storm

The teacher will say that while one group of Englishmen were coming to the South (pointing to this area on the map), other people from England were coming to the North (again the teacher should indicate the northern coast of the country on the map). They came during the winter; the weather was very cold, and it was very difficult to explore the land. They were a small group of English who called themselves “Pilgrims.”

THE PILGRIMS

The Pilgrims were good people who decided to come here because they were very religious and did not like the Church of England. They brought their families and some priests with them. They were looking for a place where they could worship God in their own way.

They went first to Holland, another country in the north of Europe. But they did not like that the people there were carefree and the children played, sang, and laughed too much. They were very strict; they did not want other people living next to them, and they did not allow their children to laugh and play on Sunday. They had heard of the settlement in Jamestown, Virginia, and they thought that they could live in the wilderness, too. These people had a lot of courage and hope that in America they could be free.

They tried on several occasions to land in America, but they were forced to go back to England looking for food and other supplies, and their ships were in bad condition. Finally in September of the year 1620, they sailed in the only ship that was in good shape, named the *Mayflower*. This was a small ship, able to carry only 102 pilgrims, including 22 children.

The Pilgrims wanted to go to Virginia, but there was a heavy storm on the ocean, and the wind took them to New England, to a place called Plymouth. (The teacher will show this place on the map, and identify Connecticut, emphasizing that this is the land where we live now.)

The Pilgrims began to work very hard in groups to build their houses. Many of them had to live on board of the ship for many weeks.

On Christmas, December 25, the Pilgrims were working very hard all day cutting planks with their axes. There were no presents, good foods, or celebrations. The children had plain food and had to say a lot of prayers.

When the houses were finished, the Pilgrims moved from the ship. They also constructed a fort with cannons. A group of them served as soldiers to defend themselves from outsiders. A Captain Miles Standish was the leader of the group.

The first winter was very difficult for the Pilgrims; many of them got sick and died. At the end of the long winter, only half of the colony was alive. When Spring came, the remaining Pilgrims were in good health, and they were working very happily.

One day, a tall and friendly Indian came and said hello to them. Oh! the Pilgrims had Indians as neighbors!

Questions for Discussion:

1. What was the name of the white people who came to New England?
2. What was the name of the ship that brought them here?
3. Were the Pilgrims a happy people? Why not?
4. In which season of the year did the Pilgrims come to New England?
5. Discuss the difficulties encountered.

FRIENDSHIP between the PILGRIMS and the NATIVE INDIANS of CONNECTICUT: THANKSGIVING

Words to Study: fisherman, warriors, goodies, preserve, captured, robes, difficulties, fertilize, crest, harvest, soil, pact, feast, collection

The Pilgrims were very happy when they saw a redskinned Indian who came and welcomed them in English. They had seen several Indians working in the woods, but they had not noticed that they could speak in English.

The Indian's name was Samoset. He came from Maine (point to Maine on the map), where he had learned to speak a little English from the fishermen who came to this part of the coast.

Samoset brought another friend who spoke English very well. His name was Squanto. This Indian had been captured by some white men years ago and had been sold as a slave in England. Later he had been allowed to come back to his land.

Squanto liked the white men, and the Pilgrims liked him. They asked him to move in with them. They were very happy. This Indian helped the Pilgrims on the farm, teaching them how to fertilize the soil with fish before planting the corn. Thanks to him, they had much more food to eat during the winter than before.

Sometime later another Indian came to Plymouth where the Pilgrims lived. His name was Massooit. He was accompanied by 50 warriors; they wore robes of beaver, deer, and other wild animals. Massooit had a crest of turkey feathers on his head. When Captain Miles Standish saw the warriors, he was worried that the white men would have problems with them, but Massooit said not. They were good Indians. The white men and the Indians formed a pact and were very good friends for many years.

But there was a problem: these Indians ate too much, and the Pilgrims did not have enough food for themselves. At this time the Pilgrims were not familiar with all the foods from the sea. (Here the teacher will recall to the students all the food that the Indians ate from the sea and the wilderness.)

These Indians taught the Pilgrims how to hunt and fish, how to grind the corn, and how to cook the beans. The Pilgrims also tasted maple syrup. The Indians also taught the white men how to grow pumpkins and squash

and how to prepare the food. The Pilgrims also learned how to preserve the deer meat and the fish, so the meat would not spoil.

The first Thanksgiving was after the Pilgrims learned all these things about farming and preparing food. The leader of the group had the idea of having a harvest feast. He decided to celebrate the feast in October after the collection of the fruits. At this time of the year they had good corn. Many men went into the woods to hunt wild turkeys. They brought enough turkeys to last for several weeks. They invited Massoioit, who had taught them all these good things, and his friends, the warriors. The Indians brought some Indian food, and together they had a great feast.

We celebrate our Thanksgiving in November. We add to this dinner other goodies, such as: cranberry sauce, apple sauce, ice cream, etc.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Name some of the things that the Indians taught to the white men.
2. Who attended the first Thanksgiving celebration?
3. When was the first Thanksgiving celebrated?
4. When do we celebrate Thanksgiving today?

Related Activities:

1. Go to the library and look for some Indian recipes.
2. Decorate the bulletin board with turkeys colored by the students, and with pictures of fruits and vegetables grown by the Indians and Pilgrims.

Recommended Films:

1. Mary's Pilgrim Thanksgiving (p,i,m)
2. Indians for Thanksgiving (pi) (f sr)
3. The First Settlers: the Pilgrims and Puritans
4. The Thanksgiving Story (pi) (fsc)
5. Early Explorers and Pioneers (i,m)
6. Establishment of Social Life in a Wilderness
7. Establishment of New England Colonies (im)

FOURTH WEEK: AFRICAN SLAVES, THEIR ORIGINS, COSTUMES, AND MASKS

Objectives With this unit I intend that the students will learn about African slaves, how they came to America and to the Caribbean Islands. The students should come to understand the reason that people from these islands looked different to the white men. We will talk about differences in skin color, costumes, music, food, etc.

During the development of this unit the students will

- ¥ read passages
- ¥ describe pictures of African people, costumes, and masks
- ¥ make comments
- ¥ draw and color African masks
- ¥ visit the African collection in the Yale Art Gallery, second floor
- ¥ watch films and discuss them

Words to Study: prosperous, refuse, feature, merchandise, punishment, mulatos, free, relax, Mestizos

Procedure The teacher will write on the blackboard the words: Africa-African, and will explain that Africa is a large continent located very far from America, and that Africans are the people from Africa. The teacher will also raise the following questions for discussion: If Africa is very far from here, how do you think the Africans came to America? Why?

The teacher will review briefly the past lessons about the white men coming to America and about how many of them became prosperous, especially by planting tobacco. They would send ships full of tobacco and other merchandise to England and other countries in Europe; in that way many farmers became very rich and needed other people to work for them.

African chiefs heard of these goods coming from Europe on these ships, especially guns, and decided to trade these items for people who could work in Europe and in America They called these people slaves because they belonged to the people who paid for them. They were not free, and they had to do all the kinds of work assigned to them without refusing. They had very little food, very little free time to relax, and no pay. If they were slow or refused the job, they were punished.

Women were the first to be sold to the white men to work in the house: cooking, cleaning, taking care of the children, etc. Later the white people started buying men to work on the farms. This was the reason the slaves came to America.

The slaves came from West Africa. This is the part of Africa closest to America. (The teacher will show West Africa on the world map.) This trading of slaves became so popular that millions of Africans were sold.

The teacher will ask the students: Do you remember the first settlers in America? Those who came to Jamestown and Williamsburg, Virginia in the South? The slaves who came from Africa came to work on the plantations there (pointing to those places on the map.)

African slaves were taken to the Caribbean also, where European people were the leaders. They also needed men to work the land.

There were African slaves in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, which was named Hispaniola at that time, and other places. The people from Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico do not look totally black because the Africans who were living there married white men or women or people with Indian blood. The children of these families have lighter skin, different features, and different types of hair, and receive the name of mulatos or Mestizos.

Questions to discuss:

1. Whom do we call African?
2. What were the first Africans coming to America called?
3. What kind of work were the slaves asked to do?
4. Show on the map the place they came from.
5. Why do the peoples from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic look a little different from the African people?

SECOND DAY: AFRICAN CIVILIZATION

Words to Study southern, civilization, chiefdoms, Sahara, antiquity, fertile, stretch, empires, flourished, domain, throughout, vast

Introduction From the southern Sahara to the top of southern Africa stretches the domain of hundreds of civilizations, many of which find their roots in antiquity. Throughout the continent great empires and small chiefdoms have flourished side by side over the centuries, giving rise to artistic, musical, and poetic traditions of extraordinary power and beauty.

Africa is a very big continent with very good, fertile soil, red mountains, dry, large deserts, and vast plains of vegetation with many kinds of birds and wild animals. The different nations of Africa have different gods, different languages, different costumes, etc.

In some parts of Africa the boys who help working in the fields and with the cattle, etc., live in separate camps of villages. They make their own social life even though they continue to form a part of the family, eating with the family and sharing everything. When the boy becomes old enough to marry, the village takes on a new character. Its houses become larger and farther apart; and the young men begin to cultivate the adjacent

land.

There were other tribes living in the mountains whose villages centered on ceremonial wrestling. Every boy who is physically fit spends his youth mastering the rules of the movements of this sport, preparing himself step by step for the championship matches that mark the culmination of a wrestler's career. When the boy is about 13 or 14, he is sent to an all male camp several miles from the village. He has high hopes of earning glory and his place in the tribe. The boy leaves the sport of wrestling when he is ready to get married.

Procedure the teacher will prepare dittos with a map of the western part of Africa and will give them to the students.

Pointing to Beni on the map, the teacher will say: we will concentrate our study on the people from Beni. This is a very important commercial center, and this is the place from where the slaves were taken to America.

Beni merchants deal with ironwork, weapons, farm tools, wood carving, etc. Their currency consisted of cowrie shells and metal rings called manillas. They were a wellorganized people and very hard working. At least once a month they celebrated great festivities. They celebrated with wine made of bamboo, dances, games, etc. At many of these celebrations were the sacrificial execution of people convicted of felonies.

Hunting was very important to the people in Beni. The most exceptional boys would become hunters. They had to learn to track game on every type of terrain, how to move swiftly and silently through the thorny underbrush, and how to survive in the forest for days without food. If the boy proved to be an outstanding student, he might be fortunate enough to become not only a hunter but an elephant hunter. This was very dangerous work.

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION OF THE AFRICANS

Words to Study concerned, concentrate, mainly, puberty, spiritual, enlivens, sculpture, popping, convictions, clicking, carved, dramatize, underlie

African artists are concerned mainly with the spiritual content of their work. In sculpture, music, songs, dancing, and in telling stories, they try to express and celebrate the moral and religious convictions that underlie their daily life. Most of the art of Africa has had this consciously religious function.

For Africans, the most important art is dancing. Dance concentrates the two most important concerns of African life: religion and community relationships. Their dance is sometimes ceremonial, marking the start of a hunt or the end of a harvest, sometimes ritual in observance of a birth and death, puberty and marriage. Sometimes the dance is festive, honoring the special days of the gods and spirits who guard the village. Dancing generally involves the whole village—men, women, and even little children.

The source of the rhythm is almost invariably drums, for drumming is the music of Africa. The drums of Africa have many different sounds and are played in many different combinations. A good African drummer can literally make his drums speak. It has been written that African people can send messages from one village to another at a distance of over 100 miles in less than two hours.

African people also enjoy story telling. The story teller, usually the oldest person in the village, enlivens his tale with all sorts of sound effects. He changes the pitch and pace of his voice to suit the characters and the

action, and adds all sorts of popping, clicking, and clapping noises to dramatize what is happening. The members of the audience respond in kind rather like a chorus.

Africans especially enjoy folk tales about animals and insects. Because they did not have written languages, these stories would tell people about their traditional history and would teach morality and social customs.

MASKS

The first African art consisted of ritual masks and figurines carved of wood. Although much African sculpture was immobile and communicated its energy by a sense of arrested movement, masks were meant to be seen in action. Many important ceremonies, funerals, festive religious rites, and other occasions were always accompanied by dancing and masks. Different materials were used to construct these masks:

- ¥ wood with paint
- ¥ copper
- ¥ animal teeth
- ¥ fiber
- ¥ iron blades

After studying this background on the masks, the students can enjoy more the beauty of the exhibition in the Yale Art Gallery. Now the teacher takes the class to see the African exhibition.

Questions for discussion:

1. Can you show on the map the place from which the slaves came to America?
2. Can you name some activities in which African boys were involved?
3. Can you tell what the masks are used for?
4. What materials are they made of ?
5. What other things do the African people enjoy?
6. Can you name an African instrument?

- After having studied Africa, can you name some differences and similarities between that
7. country and Puerto Rico? The teacher will go to the blackboard and prepare two columns: similarities/differences

Films Recommended (from the Audio Visual Catalogue 1983, New Haven Public Schools):

1. Part I African Enslaved (2fs2c)
2. Africa, A Noble Heritage (3fs3c)
3. From Africa to America (i, m, h)

4. African Legends: the Three Tasks (fsc)
5. The Bird Who Sought Wisdom (p, i)

LESSON PLAN # ONE

Theme Indians of Connecticut

Objectives 1. to make the students aware that before the arrival of white people in America, there were Indians living here. 2. that they had many things in common with the Taino Indians but were different people with different costumes, foods, and different life styles in general as influenced by their climate, the soil, and other natural and geographic conditions.

Activities Students will

- ¥ study new vocabulary words
- ¥ read passages
- ¥ make comments
- ¥ read maps and compare the map of the Indians of Connecticut with the map of the tainos in Puerto Rico (Review. When working with this type of student, a lot of repetition is necessary)
- ¥ describe pictures
- ¥ complete written assignments

Materials

- ¥ blackboard with the new vocabulary words
- ¥ dittos with reading passages
- ¥ map of North America to look for Virginia, Tennessee, and other places in the South

Words to Study migration, spades, wigwams, till, proud, spoil, fought, freedom, wisdom, bravery, ignore, lead, agreement, village, bead, hereditary, aprons The students will give the meanings, and the teacher will write them on the blackboard.

Procedure using dittos with map of the Connecticut Indians

The teacher will explain that Now we will learn about the American Indians, specifically the Indians of Connecticut. The teacher tries to motivate the students into the need for discovering, comparing, and drawing conclusions.

The teacher will have in advance the new vocabulary words written on the blackboard, and will ask the

students to read the words, to write them out, and to look for their meanings in the dictionary. (The teacher can assign one word to each student in the interest of time.)

Because the students are poor or nonreaders, a model teacher reading is recommended, in order to illustrate to the whole group about the story.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why did the Indian tribes fight each other?
2. Why did the American Indians not do much farming?
3. What do you think the relationship between the parents and the children was?
4. How was the chief of the Connecticut Indians elected? Do you remember how the chief of the Taino Indians was elected?
5. What did the Connecticut Indians call their chief? What did the Tainos call their chief?
6. Mention some ceremonies celebrated by the Indians of Connecticut.

LESSON PLAN # TWO

Theme Housing of the Connecticut Indians

Objectives By continuing to teach the different aspects of the Indians of Connecticut, I intend that the students realize that the differences between people and their costumes, etc. depend a great deal on the climate and resources available.

I also want to help enable the students to gather information through reading and observation, through analyzing the information and drawing their own conclusions.

Activities Students will

- ¥ study new vocabulary words
- ¥ read passages
- ¥ make comments
- ¥ describe pictures
- ¥ compare pictures and look for similarities and differences
- ¥ color pictures of the Tainos and Connecticut Indians
- ¥ complete oral and written questionnaires

Materials

- ¥ blackboard with new vocabulary words
- ¥ dittos with written passages
- ¥ dittos with pictures of houses of the Tainos and Connecticut Indians to be colored and described later
- ¥ crayons
- ¥ paper and pencil

Procedures

- ¥ study of the new vocabulary words
- ¥ model reading made by the teacher
- ¥ student reading
- ¥ comment
- ¥ drawing, coloring, and describing pictures

Questions for Discussion:

1. What is a wigwam?
2. Do you remember the name of the Tainos' houses? (Review.)
3. Do you see some differences between these two types of houses? Name them. (Here the teacher can go to the blackboard and write in two columns the similarities and differences)
4. What type of materials did the Connecticut Indians use in construction? What materials did the Tainos use?
5. Why do you think these houses were of different materials?

Students will write the similarities and differences, copying them from the blackboard.

LESSON PLAN # THREE

Theme The African Influence in America and in the Caribbean Islands and Study of the African Artistic Expression

Objective With this lesson I intend to make the students aware of the great influence that the African people left in our lives. Using a clear and simple manner, I will explain how the African heritage is very visible in our physical features, skin color, music, musical instruments, and even superstitions.

Activities Students will

- ¥ study new vocabulary words
- ¥ read passages
- ¥ make comments
- ¥ describe pictures
- ¥ play drums
- ¥ compare pictures of people from Africa (taken from book) with pictures of people from North America and the Caribbean Islands taken from newspapers
- ¥ write a short story on their own or describing their favorite things

Materials

- ¥ blackboard with new vocabulary words
- ¥ dittos with reading passages
- ¥ dittos with pictures of Africa
- ¥ pictures of white men (pioneers)
- ¥ newspapers
- ¥ records with Latin music (salsa)
- ¥ paper and pencil
- ¥ film of Africa if available

Procedure The teacher will ask the students to read the words from the board, writing them down and looking for the meanings in the dictionary. The teacher will distribute the dittos with the passages to the students, explaining that after having studied Africa, African costumes, slavery, and how Africans came to America, we will now look for the things that we inherited from them—the great influences in our costumes and tastes, especially the music and dance. (A model reading is recommended.)

After the students read the passage, the teacher will provide opportunity for discussion by asking:

1. Can you name some of the artistic expressions of the African people?
Can you name some of the occasions when the African people dance? Can you name some
2. occasions when we dance? (birthdays, weddings, Christmas, and other religion festivities.) Are we celebrating more or less the same festivities?
3. What kinds of instruments do the African peoples use? Do we use these instruments also?
Let us look at our skin: do we look like the people who came from England? (Review and show pictures of the Pilgrims and first pioneers.) Ask the students to describe these pictures: color
4. of the skin, hair, complexion, etc.—Show the students the pictures of the children of Africa. Compare the pictures with the features of the students. Ask the students: What do you think? Do we look like them?

Notes

Ted L. Miller, Earl E. Davis, *The Mildly Handicapped Student*. Grune & Stratton, pg. 56.

Ibid., pg. 85.

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