

Spring 2002

A Model United States History Developmental Reading Skills Curriculum In Alignment With Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements

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A Model United States History Developmental Reading Skills Curriculum
In Alignment With
Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements

A Project
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Education
Administration

by
Mario Casello
Spring, 2002

A MODEL UNITED STATES HISTORY DEVELOPMENTAL READING SKILLS
CURRICULUM, IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE WASHINGTON STATE ESSENTIAL
ACADEMIC LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

by

Mario R. Casello

May, 2002

The purpose of this project was to develop a model, United States History developmental reading skills curriculum, for resource room students, at Governor John R. Rogers High School, Puyallup, Washington. The model curriculum was designed in alignment with the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR'S). To accomplish this purpose, current research and literature was reviewed. Additionally, related information from selected sources was obtained and analyzed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project could have never been accomplished if it were not for my family: Mother (Beverly), father (Ronald), brother (Gino) and wonderful wife Wendy. Their support and understanding was amazing, and I just want to say thank you!

I would also like to thank Dr. Jack McPherson for his support, encouragement, guidance and assistance during the preparation and organization of this project. I would also like to thank Dr. Stephen Nourse for his instruction and assistance during my thesis work. Additionally, I wish to thank Dr. Gary Shelly and Dr. Frank Carlson for their instruction and participation as a member of my committee. Thank you all!!

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

Introduction

“We are not helping students acquire the strategic reading skills they will need to cope with the ever-increasing demands of the market place. Administrators, teachers, and parents need to make literacy a top priority and reading skills must be incorporated into courses across the curriculum.” (Barton, 1997, p. 22)

As emphasized by Barton in the above statement, educators and parents must give significant attention to helping students acquire reading skills essential for success in today’s rapidly changing world. This authority has further recommended that the instructional strategies utilized to develop reading skills be incorporated throughout all content areas.

According to Stedman & Kaestle (1991), in 1994, one quarter of our nation’s high school seniors and nearly a third of our eighth graders failed to reach even the basic level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading assessment. Most students lacked critical reading skills and few read regularly. Stedman and Kaestle report that “an alarming portion of the population---from 15 to 30 percent---had difficulty reading common text, news articles, maps, report cards, coupons, recipes, even medicine directions.” (p.iii)

In a 1996 study, the Institute for the Study of Educational Policy, described how in today’s society and educational arena, reading difficulties among children has been increasing. Too many children have been struggling to achieve success in reading, especially students with special needs. With all the demands placed on teachers and students, including accountability

pressures imposed by the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), teachers need to focus on the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR's) to help both general education and resource room students, become better readers. Our educational system has created common educational goals with certain academic expectations which require all students to reach equal and specific standards. The Washington State EALR's were created to monitor the requirements students need to complete their education. In March, of 1995, reading, writing, communication and mathematics standards were adopted by the Washington State Commission of Student Learning and incorporated into the EALR's. Today, school board members, central office personnel, and teachers are in the process of deciphering the EALR's and aligning them with curriculum needs. However, alignment of the curriculum is not enough. Integrating state-mandated student learning goals with existing curricula, and, modifying the way these curricula are taught, is the real challenge.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project was to develop a model, United States History developmental reading skills curriculum, for resource room students, at Governor John R. Rogers High School, Puyallup, Washington. The model curriculum was designed in alignment with the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR'S). To accomplish this purpose, current research and literature was reviewed. Additionally, related information from selected sources was obtained and analyzed.

Limitations of the Project

For purposes of this project, it was necessary to establish the following limitations:

Time: The project was designed for implementation during the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 school years.

Target Population: The model curriculum was developed for use in an eleventh grade United States History Special Education resource room.

Scope: The model reading skills developmental curriculum was designed for use by instructional staff at Governor John R. Rogers High School, Puyallup, Washington.

Current Research: The literature reviewed in Chapter Two was limited primarily to research current within the last five (5) years.

Definition of Terms

Significant terms used in the context of this study have been defined as follows:

Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR's): Clear learning targets for students and teachers which detail the specific academic skills and knowledge students will be required to master and demonstrate in the classroom (EALR's Technical Manual, 1997).

Assessment System: New state-level tests used to determine how well students are achieving the higher academic standards. (EALR's Technical Manual, 1997)

Benchmarks: Developmental indicators which may be used to measure student progress. (EALR's Technical Manual, 1997)

Performance Standards: Standards that define degrees of mastery or levels of attainment by students. (EALR's Technical Manual, 1997)

Student Learning Goals: Four broad learning goals for Washington State schools, adopted as part of the Education Reform Act, RCW 28A.150.210, including:

1. Read with comprehension, write with skill, and communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings.
2. Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history; geography; arts; and health and fitness.
3. Think analytically, logically, creatively, and integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgements and solve problems.
4. Understand the importance of work, and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career and educational opportunities (OSPI, 2001)

Washington State Assessment of Student Learning (WASL): A state-wide assessment to be given in grades fourth (4th), seventh (7th) and tenth (10th) (OSPI, 2001)

Resource Room: A classroom designed for students who qualify for special services in reading, writing, mathematics and behavioral issues. (Barton, 1997)

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM SELECTED SOURCES

Introduction

The review of research and literature summarized in Chapter 2 has been organized to address:

1. The Importance of Reading.
2. Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements
3. The Constructivist Approach to Teaching and Learning
4. Focusing on Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Reading
5. An Analysis of Information Obtained From Selected Sources
6. Summary

Research current within the past five (5) years was identified through Educational Resources Information Centers (ERIC) and Internet computer searches. Additionally, related information/materials from selected sources was obtained and analyzed.

The Importance of Reading

“Many students admit they don’t read very much—sometimes not even their required homework. In a long-term assessment of academic progress published in 1997, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) found that nearly half of the 9-, 13- and 17-year-old students they surveyed reported reading 10 pages or less each day, including pages read in school and

for homework! The same report revealed, however, that 36 percent of 9-year olds, 48 percent of the 13-year-olds and 39 percent of the 17-year-olds did find time to watch 3 to 5 hours of television per day (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997).” (Billmeyer & Barton, 1998, p. iii)

As noted by Billmeyer & Barton in the above statement, children are finding more time to view a television than read a book. Many students admit that they don't read that much, even when it's required homework. In the survey conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, half of the children admitted to only reading ten pages of literature per day. Lyon (1996), as cited by Billmeyer & Barton, contended that one's monetary status is predicted by their intellectual ability, and one's intellectual ability is determined by their ability to read. Said Lyon: “Learning to read is critical to a child's overall well-being. If a youngster does not learn to read in a literacy-driven society, hope for a fulfilling, productive life diminishes.” (p. iii)

Cunningham & Stanovich (1992) alluded to the powerful role that reading has played on our lives. Great importance has been placed on the ability to read, and, without this skill, one's life is affected in a negative fashion. These authorities stated:

“Reading has cognitive consequences that extend beyond its immediate task of lifting meaning from a particular passage. Furthermore, these consequences are reciprocal and exponential in nature. Accumulated over time-spiraling either upward or downward-they carry profound implications for the development of a wide range of cognitive capabilities.” (p.8)

Allington & Biemiller (1978) linked reading to the concept known as the “Matthew effects”. Cited in the Biblical passage that describes a rich-get-richer and poor-get-poorer

phenomenon. According to Allington & Biemiller (1978), as cited by Cunningham & Stanovich: "If we apply the (Matthew effects) to the reading concept, one can see that at an early stage in the reading process, a poor reader who experiences greater difficulty in breaking the spelling-to-sound code, begins to be exposed to much less text than their more skilled peers." (p. 8)

Cunningham & Stanovich explained how less-skilled readers often find themselves confronted with materials that are too difficult for them. The combination of deficient decoding skills, lack of practice, and difficult materials has resulted in unrewarding early reading experiences that further discourage young readers. These authorities concluded: "If a child doesn't have a good experience reading at an early age, then the negative affect is going to last a life time. If you don't read well at school or work, then why would you want to carry the exercise or experience over into leisure time or pleasure reading." (p. 14)

Daggett (1990) estimated that once a student leaves high school, 90 percent of his reading will be devoted to acquiring information; only 10 percent will be for pleasure. Planning instruction so that students obtain the skills they will need throughout life has become essential. Improvements in higher level reading skills cannot come about simply by an emphasis on reading instruction in isolation from other work students perform in school. Said Daggett: "Students must learn to read in all content areas, and every teacher must be a reading teacher." (p.57) According to Chall (1983), as cited by Cunningham & Stanovich, for an individual to become a good reader, they must not only read for school, but they must read for pleasure. An individual's reading volume has an effect on his/her cognitive skills. Chall stated: "The disparity in the reading experiences of children of varying skill may have many other consequences for their future reading and cognitive development." (p.8)

Echols et al (1996), observed that a student with high reading volume develops his skills early on and word recognition later becomes less demanding. The only limiting factor therefore, would be background knowledge, familiarity with complex syntactic structures and more general language. The sheer volume of reading one engages in has the potential to develop an individual's reading skills and knowledge bases.

Guthrie et al (1991), described how avid readers tend to be different from nonreaders on a wide variety of cognitive skills, behavioral habits and background variables and, the theoretical reasoning to expect positive cognitive consequences from reading volume. For example, vocabulary is a case in point. Miller & Gildea (1987), observed that "The bulk of vocabulary growth during a child's lifetime occurs indirectly through language exposure rather than through direct teaching." (p. 96) Hayes (1988), found that many researchers were convinced that reading volume, rather than oral language, was the prime contributor to individual differences in a child's vocabulary." (p. 582)

Anderson et al (1988), as cited by Cunningham & Stanovich, contended that an individual's vocabulary is acquired outside of their formal schooling, and they acquire vocabulary through written and oral language. Printed materials provide many more word learning opportunities than does oral language and, "differences in lexical richness between speech and print are a major source of individual differences in vocabulary development." (p. 10) These investigators demonstrate the amount of vocabulary a fifth grade student is exposed to when reading sixty-five minutes each day outside the school day. Their research indicated a typical fifth grader would read 4, 358,000 words each year. On the other hand, a student who read only four minutes each day would read 282,000 words each year. This dramatic gap creates a large vocabulary difference among children. These authorities concluded: The amount of

reading volume outside of school by students is a prime example of the rich-get-richer and the poor-get-poorer philosophy.” (p. 11)

Cunningham & Stanovich observed that students who get off to a fast start in reading are more likely to read more over the years and, this very act of reading “can help children compensate for modest levels of cognitive ability by building their vocabulary and general knowledge.” (p. 14) Accordingly, young children who read a lot will enhance their verbal intelligence; that is, “reading will make them smarter.” (p.14) Fountas & Pinnell (2001), indicated agreement with Cunningham & Stanovich when stating:

“The gift of creative reading, like all natural gifts, must be nourished or it will atrophy. And you nourish it, in much the same way you nourish the gift of writing—you read, think, talk, look, listen, hate, fear, love, weep—and bring all of your life like a sieve to what you read. That which is not worthy of your gift will quickly pass through, but the gold remains.” (p.357)

Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements

“Children are growing up in a world that has changed dramatically since the days of our own youth. Technology and other forces are rapidly transforming the ways we live and work. The forces of change are also re-shaping what it means to have the knowledge and skills necessary to lead a successful life now and in the 21st Century.” (Washington State Commission on Student Learning, 1998)

As noted above by The Washington State Commission on Student Learning (1998), in today's educational arena, teachers and students have been pressured to achieve at a higher level. The world that today's children have adapted and adjusted to, is much different from the world that most Americans grew up learning. Society has become so competitive, and there are many factors that children must learn to master, in order for success to prevail. In order for our society to prosper and continue to climb the ladder of the future, we must continue to challenge and force our youth to become more intelligent. Accordingly, the State of Washington has developed an innovative program to improve public education for all. In 1995, the Washington State Commission on Student Learning adopted higher standards for public education in the areas of reading, writing, communication and mathematics. In 1996, science, social studies, arts, and health and fitness were added to the adoption.

According to a report published by the OSPI (2001), growing numbers of citizens interested in education have been collaborating to create changes in the state's educational system that have demanded higher academic standards. In prior years the attempt to establish state standards fell short, therefore leaving individual school districts to develop their own standards, which resulted in an inconsistent attempt to measure achievement. (p. 1)

With the creation of the Commission on Student Learning in 1993, an effort was undertaken to develop an assessment system that assured the State of Washington that school districts and its employees and clients would perform at a higher level. Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR's) were developed to establish new standards for educators and students. As noted by the OSPI (2001):

“The Essential Academic Learning Requirements are clear targets for students and teachers across the state. Setting higher standards calls for better

methods of measuring student and teacher performance. On a parallel course with the Essential Academic Learning Requirements, The Commission on Student Learning is developing an assessment system that holds students, teachers, schools, and districts accountable for better performance and results.” (OSPI, 2001)

Additionally, the OSPI developed a vision for all schools in the State of Washington that stated “OSPI is a respected leader and trusted partner in developing schools and programs that prepare each student for the 21st century.” (OSPI, 2001) With this vision in mind, The Commission on Student Learning developed the following four learning goals for students to reach their highest potential.

1. Read with comprehension, write with skill, and communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings.
2. Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history; geography; arts; and health and fitness;
3. Think analytically, logically, and creatively, and to integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgements and solve problems; and
4. Understand the importance of work and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect career and educational opportunities.

Dr. Terry Bergeson, Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction, in the field of education, has led an educational reform movement to ensure that learning is occurring. Therefore, the State of Washington has developed an assessment tool to determine the validity of the EALR's, known as the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). Students in grades four, seven and ten are tested in the areas of reading, writing, listening and mathematics. The WASL requires students to choose right answers and to demonstrate subject content

knowledge, but also to explain their thinking, to write essays, and solve complicated problems in mathematics. (p. 1) As stated by Dr. Bergeson: “The great news for 2001 is the hard work of teachers, students and parents is paying off: Our students, on the whole, are growing in the kinds of skills they will need to succeed later in life as demonstrated by their work on the WASL.” (p. 1)

The Constructivist Approach to Teaching and Learning

“Constructivism stands in contrast to the more deeply rooted ways of teaching that have long typified American classrooms. Traditionally, learning has been thought to be a “minnetic” activity, a process that involves students repeating, or miming, newly presented information... Constructivist teaching practices, on the other hand, help learners to internalize and reshape, or transform, new information. (Maxim, 1999, p. 189)

In the above statement, Maxim (1999), has explained how Constructivism guides learners to build their own information and knowledge base, thereby steering away from the traditional approach where adults transfuse information into a child and the child repeats the information. Vermette et al (2001), observed that the field of education has undergone a significant shift in thinking about the nature of human learning and the conditions that best promote the varied dimensions of human learning. While many instructional changes have not directly touched the classroom and affected the interaction of teachers and students, one change in particular has made an impact—constructivism. Vermette stated: “The rebirth of constructivist strategies and philosophy, has led many practitioners to rethink their fundamental approaches and to change

their basic teaching patterns.” (pg. 87) Vermette further explained how contemporary constructivists can be linked to the educational philosophies of John Dewey and the progressive movement in the 1930’s. Constructivist perspectives on learning have become increasingly influential during the past twenty years and can be said to represent a paradigm shift in the epistemology of knowledge and theory of learning. Said Vermette: “Constructivism now appears to dominate the view of learning articulated in the educational literature, at least of the Anglo-Saxon academic world, and especially in the domain of teacher education.” (p.23)

According to Applefield et al (2001), “Constructivism proposes that learner conceptions of knowledge are derived from a meaning-making search in which learners engage in a process of constructing individual interpretations of their experiences.” (p. 36) Research related to the issue of constructivism, conducted by Prawat (1992) identified several interpretations of what constructivist theory means. However, most authorities agreed that it involves “a dramatic change in the focus of teaching, putting the student’s own efforts to understand at the center of the educational enterprise.” (p. 38) Four major characteristics associated with the constructivist theory have become fundamental to the learning process. These are: 1. learners construct their own learning; 2. the dependence of new learning on students’ existing understanding; 3. the critical role of social interaction; and, 4. the necessity of authentic learning tasks for meaningful learning. If these four characteristics exist within the student’s educational environment, he/she will develop knowledge through an active construction process and they will build their own understanding.

Applefield suggested that the constructivist theory weighs heavily on the student’s ability to utilize prior knowledge. Regardless of the nature or sophistication of a learner’s existing schema, “each person’s existing knowledge structure will have a powerful influence on what is

learned and whether and how conceptual change occurs.” (p. 37). Along with prior knowledge, Brown & Campione (1994), expressed the importance of learning communities. These authorities indicated that the concept of learning communities has been offered as the ideal learning culture for group instruction, as they focus on helping group members learn, “by supporting one another through respectful listening and encouragement.” (p. 38)

Applefield et al (2001), emphasized the importance of cooperative learning being intermixed within the constructivist learning theory. Said Applefield:

“When these two concepts are blended together, teachers build a learning community in which inquiry and problem solving, along with careful attention to the ways of teacher-student and student-student interaction, are subtly arranged to promote deep and enduring learning.” (p. 42)

Brooks & Brooks (1993), contended the learning process is one that must challenge individuals to reflect upon their interactions with objects and ideas and make sense of their world by synthesizing new experiences into what one already knows or understands. When an activity or lesson is relevant and engaging for students, learning takes a positive turn for the better. These researchers reiterated that a constructivist classroom greatly enhances the learning process.

Brooks & Brooks stated:

“When the classroom environment in which students spend so much of their day is organized so that student-to-student interaction is encouraged, cooperation is valued, assignments and materials are interdisciplinary, and students freedom to chase their own ideas is abundant, students are more likely to take risks and approach assignments with a willingness to accept challenges to their current understandings.” (p. 10)

Jonassen (1991), explained how a constructivist believes that meaningful learning or knowledge that is worth a purpose may be promoted by a learning environment that has three features. First, one should use authentic problems that relate to the real world. Second, the learning environment should represent the natural complexity of the real world and avoid oversimplification of the task. Third, a constructivist learning environment should support collaborative knowledge construction through social negotiation. (p. 8)

Perkins (1991), concluded that the constructivist learning theory holds true to the motivational perspective that problem-based, inquiry learning environments simulate real world situations. Real world scenarios stimulate student curiosity, and learners find their learning experiences to be more interesting, more engaging and more relevant. Problem-based environments make higher cognitive and resource management demands upon the learner. Perkins concluded that “these high level demands encourage learners to develop expertise in how to learn as well as in learning to construct useful knowledge. (p. 20)

Focusing on Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Reading

“The greater our life experiences the broader our knowledge of the world, the richer the meanings we take from subsequent experience. Reading is the construction of meaning, without understanding, there is no reading. Everything about reading is directed toward making meanings that are infused with active curiosity, emotion, and satisfaction.” (Fountas & Pinnell, 2001, p.322)

In the above quotation, Fountas & Pinnell have confirmed the vital role that reading plays in life. Without reading, one cannot construct meaning, nor survive in today’s literate world. If

one cannot read, he/she cannot comprehend what is required in life. Fountas & Pinnell further stated: “without reading, there is no understanding. Without the ability to read, one does not understand life’s journeys.” (p. 322)

Daneman (1991), as cited by Rupley et al, contended that vocabulary is partially an outcome of comprehension skills, and reading comprehension is partially an outcome of vocabulary. Research conducted by this authority indicated a student’s volume of vocabulary directly effected their ability to comprehend what they read. A student with strong vocabulary will read faster. When a student has good fluency, he/she will demonstrate better reading comprehension. Therefore, teachers and students must focus attention on vocabulary specific to the content area. John Laflamme (1997), suggested “vocabulary instruction must be formalized, structured, and related in a meaningful way to the content that students are learning.” (p. 378)

Anderson & Nagy (1992), agreed there is a strong correlation between word knowledge and reading comprehension. Noting that the average student in elementary and high school learns approximately 2,000 to 3,000 new words each year, vocabulary instruction is not only beneficial, but necessary. Ediger (1999) concluded that “developing students’ vocabulary skills correlates with success in all areas of curriculum.” (p. 5)

Long (2000), contended that students develop vocabulary skills primary through direct instruction and regular practice. The more students read, the more words they encounter, and the more familiar they become with new words in various contexts. Harmon (1999), agreed by stating “incidental word learning refers to the construction of word meanings as a function of independent reading.” (p.305)

LaFlamme (1997), affirmed that for reading to be a successful exercise, there has to be a solid connection between vocabulary and comprehension. A poor vocabulary will be evident by

an individual's reading comprehension. Research on vocabulary instruction identified vocabulary knowledge as "a major factor influencing reading ability where comprehension was improved as a result of teaching vocabulary." (p. 14) Blachowicz (1999), asserted that when we focus on vocabulary instruction, a student's comprehension will definitely increase. Said Blachowicz: "When we examine the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension, we typically find a very high correlation." (p.213)

According to Harmon, reading comprehension occurs before, during and after reading the text. During this process, an individual taps into their prior knowledge, and makes a connection with what they already know, which leads to a new learning process. Long (2000), agreed with Harmon by stating, "Helping students make connections and associations between what they are learning and their prior knowledge will enhance their retention of what is learned." (p.22)

Rupley et al (1999), described how reading unlocks the door to a new and exciting world. As a reader, one experiences adventure, action, drama, joy, sadness, history, and future. Regardless of the reader's journey, the ultimate goal of reading is comprehension. Without comprehension an individual will never enjoy the adventure and, without vocabulary, comprehension cannot exist. The true effects of an abundant vocabulary will carry throughout a student's academic career.

An Analysis of Information Obtained From Selected Sources

For purposes of comparison and contrast, the writer (Mario Ramon Casello) obtained and analyzed sample United States History curriculum units utilized by special education instructional staff at three other Puyallup School District high schools, including:

1. Puyallup High School
2. Emerald Ridge High School
3. Governor John R. Rogers High School

An analysis of information obtained from the above schools revealed that five (5) characteristics were generally common to all curriculum units. These were:

1. Technology: All units required some form of instructional technology (e.g., computers, Internet, power-point presentations).
2. Groups: Each instructional unit utilized cooperative learning teams (e.g., small groups of 3-5 students; group presentations; and peer group partners).
3. Themes: Resource room teachers structured curriculum units around “learning themes” (e.g., war, economics, societal, music, people).
4. Reading: Emphasis was placed on developmental reading skills (e.g., students read aloud in groups, and time was provided for individual silent reading).
5. Individualized Projects: Teachers provided opportunities for students to pursue/study a subject, project, or topic of personal interest requiring outside investigation.

Summary

The research literature, and information summarized in Chapter Two supported the following themes:

1. If a child does not learn to read in a literacy driven society, hope for a fulfilling productive life will diminish.
2. The Essential Academic Learning Requirements are a destination that requires higher academic standards for all Washington State teachers and students.
3. Constructivism is a concept in which individuals gain knowledge in a new area by utilizing prior knowledge and engaging in a process of constructing their own interpretations of their experiences.
4. Understanding the correlation between word knowledge and comprehension is fundamental in the development of student literacy skills.
5. An analysis of information obtained from selected United States History instructional units identified five (5) characteristics that were generally common to all, including: technology; groups; themes; reading; and individualized projects.

CHAPTER THREE

PROCEDURES

The purpose of this project was to develop a model, United States History developmental reading skills curriculum, for resource room students, at Governor John R. Rogers High School, Puyallup, Washington. The model curriculum was designed in alignment with the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR's). To accomplish this purpose, current research and literature was reviewed. Additionally, related information from selected sources was obtained and analyzed.

Chapter 3 contains background information detailing:

1. Need for the Project
2. Development of Support for the Project
3. Procedures of the Project
4. Planned Implementation and Assessment of the Project

Need for the Project

The need for this project was influenced by the following considerations:

1. The writer (Mario R. Casello), a certified K-12 Special Education teacher at Governor John R. Rogers High School, Puyallup, Washington, has been teaching United States History to resource room students since 1998. During this time, the Puyallup School District has undergone a period of educational reform and has

searched more effective ways to raise the level of learning by each student. The writer believed that aligning the United States History curriculum with the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements, would assist special needs students in the development of their reading skills.

2. The review of related literature conducted for purposes of this project confirmed the importance of reading as a basic skill necessary for success in life.
3. Adoption of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) Standards and, Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR's) by the Washington State Academic Authority and Accounts Commission (Formerly the Commission on Student Learning), further generated a need for this project.
4. Undertaking this curriculum development project coincided with the writer's graduate studies in Educational Administration at Central Washington University.

Development of Support for the Project

During the 2001-2002 school year, the writer worked with teacher colleagues at Governor John R. Rogers High School to develop a format for a United States History developmental reading curriculum to meet the needs of special education students. The following Puyallup School District employees individually and collectively encouraged and influenced the writer to undertake this project while contributing their expertise:

Puyallup School District-Central Office Employee:

Mrs. Pamela Minchue, Curriculum Specialist

Governor John R. Rogers High School Employees:

Mr. Dave LaBounty, Assistant Principal

Mrs. Judy Moomaugh, Librarian

Mr. Steve Gendreau, Social Studies Teacher

Procedures of the Project

The writer undertook the following procedures to develop the model United States History reading developmental curriculum which was the subject of this project.

1. Information and materials current within the last five (5) years, were identified through Educational Information Center (ERIC) and Internet computer searches. Various other online resources and selected materials were used to conduct research.
2. A review of the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR's) for Reading, Social Studies, and Writing was conducted.
3. Related Information obtained from the following schools was reviewed and analyzed. These schools included:

Puyallup High School
Puyallup, WA

Emerald Ridge High School
Puyallup, WA

Governor John R. Rogers High School
Puyallup, WA

Planned Implementation and Assessment of the Project

It was the writer's intention to present the final draft of the model United States History reading developmental curriculum unit to selected Puyallup School District administrators and teachers for their study, review, evaluation, and feedback during the 2001/2002 school year. The model curriculum will be modified, based on input and advice received from these professional colleagues on an ongoing basis. Further assessment of the model curriculum will occur after students and staff have worked with and used the curriculum throughout the 2001-2002 school year. Revisions will be made annually based on feedback from students, teachers, and administration.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROJECT

The Model United States History Developmental Reading Skills Curriculum designed for resource room students at Governor John R. Rogers High School, Puyallup, Washington, which was the subject of this project, has been presented in Chapter Four, in three (3) units, to coincide with Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements and guidelines, including:

Unit One: World War I

Unit Two: World War II

Unit Three: The Vietnam War

A MODEL UNITED STATES HISTORY DEVELOPMENTAL READING SKILLS
CURRICULUM IN ALIGNMENT WITH WASHINGTON STATE ESSENTIAL ACADEMIC
LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

Governor John R. Rogers High School
Puyallup School District
Mario R. Casello

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Unit One

World War One

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World War One

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World War One

Unit Overview

The World War I Unit introduces the student to the first World War in American history. In this unit, students will learn how the American role in the world changed in the early 20th century. They will understand the causes of World War I and why the United States intervened. They will discover the impact at home and abroad of the United States involvement in WWI. Students will learn the cause-and-effects of the war, and be able to compare and contrast interpretations of events and understand how it effected social change.

Student Learning Objectives

Student will be able to...

- understand historical time, chronology, and causation
- analyze the development of the war
- examine of the influences of the war and decisions made
- explain the causes of World War I
- analyze the impact of American public opinion on the Wilson administration
- examine Wilson's leadership
- explain U.S. military for the war and evaluate the role of labor, including women and African Americans.
- understand the importance of allied powers
- evaluate Wilson's fourteen points, his negotiations at the Versailles Treaty talks

- understand what the League of Nations was about
- explain the impact the war had on society

Performance Criteria

Students will complete each assignment with 80 percent or better accuracy and will progress through their individualized contract.

Learning Activities

Activities will be consistent with unit student learning objectives.

Activities include:

- Conduct research
- Write research papers
- Take lecture notes
- Analyze and interpret videos and draw information
- Participate in discussions/debates
- Complete tests: essays, multiple choice, true/false

Teaching Strategies

Strategies include:

- Cooperative Learning
- Independent study
- Teacher Centered Instruction (Lectures)
- Student centered instruction (Peer Tutoring, presentations, oral reports, etc.)

Instructional Materials

Resources include:

Biller, E.L. & Reich, J.R. (1988). *United States History*. Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

Beyer, B.K., Craven, J., McFarland, M.A., & Parker, W.C. (1990). *United States And Its Neighbors*. MacMillan Publishing Co.: New York.

The Peoples Publishing Group, Inc. (1997). *For the People By the People: A History of the United States Vol. II 1870 to the Present*. The Peoples Publishing Group, Inc.: New York.

Assessment

Exams (Short/Long Essays, Multiple-Choice, True/False, Oral)

Presentations (Oral and Computer Generated)

Research Papers

Role Plays

Formal/Informal Measurement

Performance Assessment

Unit Two

World War Two

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World War Two

Unit Overview

The World War II Unit introduces the student to the Second World War in American history. In this unit, students will learn the causes and courses of World War II, the character of the war at home and abroad, and its reshaping of the United States role in world affairs. Students will understand the international background leading to the war, how the allies prevailed, and how the war affected the home-front.

Student Learning Objectives

Student will be able to...

- Analyze the factors contributing to the rise of fascism, socialism, and communism in the inter-war period.
- Analyze the reasons for American isolationist sentiment in the inter-war period and its effects on international relations and diplomacy.
- Evaluate American responses to German, Italian, and Japanese aggression
- Explain major turning points of the war
- Understand the Holocaust and Hitler's regime
- Understand Pearl Harbor and nuclear weapons
- Compare and contrast Allies vs. Axis powers
- Understand the purpose of the United Nations organization
- Explore how the war fostered cultural exchange and interaction at home

-Evaluate how minorities gained access to wartime jobs and dealt with discrimination.

-Analyze the effects of WWII on gender roles and the American family.

Performance Criteria

Students will complete each assignment with 80 percent or better accuracy and will progress through their individualized contract.

Learning Activities

Activities will be consistent with unit student learning objectives.

Activities include:

-Conduct research

-Write research papers

-Take lecture notes

-Analyze and interpret videos and draw information

-Participate in discussions/debates

-Complete tests: essays, multiple choice, true/false

Teaching Strategies

Strategies include:

-Cooperative Learning

-Independent study

-Teacher Centered Instruction (Lectures)

-Student centered instruction (Peer Tutoring, presentations, oral reports, etc.)

Instructional Materials

Resources include:

Biller, E.L. & Reich, J.R. (1988). *United States History*. Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.

Beyer, B.K., Craven, J., McFarland, M.A., & Parker, W.C. (1990). *United States And Its Neighbors*. MacMillan Publishing Co.: New York.

The Peoples Publishing Group, Inc. (1997). *For the People By the People: A History of the United States Vol. II 1870 to the Present*. The Peoples Publishing Group, Inc.: New York.

Assessment

Exams (Short/Long Essays, Multiple-Choice, True/False, Oral)

Presentations (Oral and Computer Generated)

Research Papers

Role Plays

Formal/Informal Measurement

Performance Assessment

Unit Three

The Vietnam War

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The Vietnam War

Unit Overview

This Unit introduces the student to the Vietnam war and its place in American history. Students will learn the foreign and domestic consequences of the United States involvement in Vietnam. They will learn of the role played by three different presidents in this war and of the decisions they made. Major chronological events will be highlighted along with the wars impact on American society.

Student Learning Objectives

Students will be able to...

- Assess the Vietnam policy of the Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon administrations and the shifts of public opinion about the war.
- Explain how the American forces were recruited to fight the war.
- Evaluate how Americans and Vietnamese experienced the war and how the war continued to affect postwar politics and culture.
- Analyze the constitutional issues involved in the war and explore the legacy of the Vietnam war.
- Understand American opposition

Performance Criteria

Students will complete each assignment with 80 percent or better accuracy and will progress through their individualized contract.

Learning Activities

Activities will be consistent with unit student learning objectives.

Activities include:

- Conduct research
- Write research papers
- Take lecture notes
- Analyze and interpret videos and draw information
- Participate in discussions/debates
- Complete tests: essays, multiple choice, true/false

Teaching Strategies

Strategies include:

- Cooperative Learning
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Assessment

Exams (Short/Long Essays, Multiple-Choice, True/False, Oral)

Presentations (Oral and Computer Generated)

Research Papers

Role Plays

Formal/Informal Measurement

Performance Assessment

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of this project was to develop a model, United States History developmental reading skills curriculum, for resource room students at Governor John R. Rogers High School, Puyallup, Washington. The model curriculum was designed in alignment with the Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALR's). To accomplish this purpose, current research and literature was reviewed. Additionally, related information from selected sources was obtained and analyzed.

Conclusions

Conclusions that were achieved as a result of this project were:

1. Research has confirmed that without the ability to read well one's life is affected in a negative fashion.
2. The Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements have essentially mandated that students meet the highest possible reading skills standards.
3. Constructivist learning and teaching strategies guides learners to build their own information and knowledge base.

Recommendations

As a result of this project, the following recommendations have been suggested:

1. To assure greater success in life, educators should design curricula dedicated to the development of strong reading skills.

2. To strengthen student reading skills, school reading programs should incorporate Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements.
3. To help students build a strong knowledge base, constructivist learning and teaching strategies should be utilized.
4. Schools/school districts seeking to utilize Social Studies curricula to develop reading skills in the resource room setting may wish to adapt information contained in this study for their use or, undertake additional related research to meet their unique needs.

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