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Writing Across the Curriculum: Integrating Writing into Daily Elementary Math, Science, and Social Studies Lessons

Emily Lundh

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Writing Across the Curriculum: Integrating Writing into Daily Elementary Math, Science, and Social Studies Lessons

Abstract
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WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM: INTEGRATING WRITING INTO DAILY ELEMENTARY MATH, SCIENCE, AND SOCIAL STUDIES LESSONS

By

Emily Lundh

A Senior Thesis Submitted to the

Eastern Michigan University

Honors College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation

with Honors in Teacher Education

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Abstract

There is a significant lack of time spent writing with students in the primary grades, namely writing informationally. By using research done by experts in the fields of writing and literature in the elementary grades I have created lessons that integrate informational writing into the daily lessons in math, science, and social studies in first, third, and fifth grades. These lessons are individual, pair, and small group plans that can be completed in just one day or a few days where students are engaging with the content in a different way.
Literature Review

There is a large push in the elementary curriculum to increase informational writing at all grade levels, but what does that look like? When thinking of ways to include more informational writing into daily lessons for students it can be daunting, especially when the curriculum may not clearly have places where it is a priority. The National Commission on Writing (2003) argued that writing needs to be “squarely in the center of the school agenda and that writing needs to be taught in all subjects and all grade levels” (p. 3). The time spent writing during the school day in all subject areas is too low for students to grow as writers and “writing to learn” is a tool that should be implemented in all subject areas. Writing to learn is the idea that when students write it is similar to the speaking, thinking, and learning processes (Gammill, 2006; Bangert-Drowsn, Hurley, & Wilkinson, 2003). This means that a personal transaction is made where students take ownership of their own learning and meaning is built (Gammill, 2006; Mayer, Lester, & Pradl, 1983). Writing to learn helps students think in deeper ways about what they are learning and deepens their connections to the content.

In a random sample of elementary teachers in grades 4-6 across the United States, teachers reported only spending 15 minutes a day teaching writing on average (Gilbert & Graham, 2010). There is also a relationship found between the text that students are exposed to and the types they are able to write well. Therefore, it is important to expose children to more informational text and the writing of it more often to sharpen their skills writing it well (McLurkin, 2003). Taking these findings into consideration there need to be easier ways for writing to be integrated into all subject areas for daily writing practice to increase these relationships teachers seem to be missing. The writing students do doesn’t have to be a classic
research essay; there are many different ways to engage students in informational writing, and lessons to have students practice that skill daily are outlined in this thesis. “It is no longer adequate to provide writing instruction that is a fill-in-the-blank, skill-and-drill curriculum for children in the US. Teachers need to provide all students with a ‘thinking curriculum, with writing workshops, research projects, and debates’ (Calkins et al., 2012, p. 9)” (Hawley et al. 2014). This means that students not only need to be writing more informationally, students also need to be given opportunities to do that in a variety of ways. The earlier students begin writing informationally and in a variety of ways, the better off they will be as they continue in their school life.

Students are capable of producing informational writing in the primary grades as well as the upper grades. A classroom teacher did research on this theory with her first and second graders. She introduced more informational writing because she found that, “common instruction in the primary grades may be underestimating the ability of these students to comprehend informational texts and to produce informational writing of their own” (Read, 2005). Students should be given the opportunity to showcase their understanding of the material through informational writing equal with other methods of demonstrating their knowledge. The lessons in this thesis were created to help teachers easily mix more informational writing into their daily lessons, even when they don’t have time for a designated writer’s workshop each day. This style of “low stakes writing” allows students to focus more on what they are trying to say, rather than how they are saying it and the structure of a formal writing piece (Campbell, 2004).

As early as kindergarten and first grade, students are capable of writing informationally within content areas and the more they practice, the better they’ll be as they get older. One of the
ways Read (2005) suggests increasing students’ ability to write informational pieces, based on what she saw with her own students, is to have them collaborate. She found that many students were naturally talking to one another and having friends in the class read over their sentences, and built that into the lessons. Students not only need to be exposed to many forms of writing, they should be exposed to different processes to finish a writing piece. In this thesis, some of the lessons are done in a small group, some in pairs, and some independently. By giving that type of variety of application to students they are more able to use the strategies they have learned in the future.

Not only is more informational writing something that students are capable of doing, it is a requirement in most states with the adoption of the Common Core State Standards. Within the Common Core Standards there is an increase in the amount of informational texts students are expected to read, and with that comes writing more informationally as well. While the Common Core Standards are a point of debate among teachers, the standards are still something that need to be prepared for and taught well in the classroom. The standards build on one another in each academic year so it is important to make sure each grade level is receiving quality instruction, even if that means some changes need to happen. Common Core utilizes “Anchor Standards” to tie standards in each grade together. They are described as, “...the former (Anchor Standards) providing broad standards, the latter (grade specific standards) providing additional specificity—that together define the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate (Common Core Standards Initiative, 2010). The standards in each grade level give more detail about what aspects of the anchor standard students are demonstrating at that time. The standards
focus a lot on "College and Career Readiness", which has been a big factor that led to the increase in informational reading and writing.

In order for students to be ready to tackle the standard expectations when they enter middle school, the standards in the elementary grades need to be taught in completion. Students are expected to do things in the Common Core Standards that were not part of the standards previously, which requires a shift in how teachers think about writing. Students as young as kindergarten are expected to compose texts where they inform the reader about information related to their topic. A kindergarten writing standard reads, "Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic" (Common Core Standards Initiative, 2010). This standard is asking students in kindergarten to use a variety of methods to give information on a topic to a reader, which is informational writing in a nutshell. By starting students in the early grades explaining their thinking with pictures and some writing, students are building on this foundation in each grade. The Anchor Standard then builds in first and second grade, where the standards containing informational writing begin to ask students to give more details in their descriptions. This is the foundation of informational writing that students will grow into as they continue on through their education.

By third grade, students are expected to use definitions, details, linking phrases, and concluding statements. This has been scaffolded with standards in each grade to build such abilities in students. While Writers Workshop is a useful tool for large writing projects, having students write to explain their thinking related to facts and using evidence in daily lessons
reinforces their skills and knowledge and makes them better writers in the long run. The lessons in this thesis were modeled with the scaffolding in mind.

By fifth grade, the students are building on what they have been working on since kindergarten and are still writing informative texts, but with many more details. Some of the standards have students using headings and specific formatting, quotes from resources they have found, and domain specific vocabulary, all while linking the information logically and composing solid conclusions. These standards are difficult to achieve if informational writing is not a skill that students are working on throughout their school years and feel confident with. By having students build on their informational writing skills in regular lessons starting in kindergarten students are always working towards the goals set forth for them in the Common Core Standards.

The skills built by having students write informationally in a variety of ways will grow with them as they continue through their schooling. The following lessons will help students practice writing informationally in meaningful ways that will help them become ready for the next set of standards in each grade.
Lesson Plans

The following lessons in this thesis are examples of integrating more informational writing into daily lessons in all content areas. There are Math, Science, and Social Studies lessons for first grade, third grade, and fifth grade. I created lessons in three different grade levels to show how the standards are scaffolded as students move through the grades. The writing progressively increases in length and difficulty as the students go from grade to grade. For the Writing and Math standards I used the Common Core Standards so that these lessons would be applicable in any state where they are adopted. The Science standards came from the Michigan Next Generation Science Standards that were adopted by the State of Michigan in 2015. The standards themselves connect literacy to science so continuing that theme by adding writing to the lessons takes them to the next level. The Social Studies standards in these lessons come from the proposed Michigan K-12 Social Studies Standards. These standards implement the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework developed by the Michigan Department of Education and 27 other states. The goal of these new standards is to create responsible citizens and encourage more active participation in the classroom. This goal pairs well with connecting writing to Social Studies because by having students write and explain more of their thinking they deepen their understanding of the material and are able to apply it in lifelong learning situations. These lessons are meant to connect informational writing and the core content areas in ways that are quick and easy for teachers to do daily. This is not to say that these lessons replace a Writer’s Workshop block, they simply give students more chances during the day to write. By having students write more and in different ways they become more confident in their writing abilities and use content knowledge in different ways to deepen their understanding of the
material. The lessons are outlined and any templates or worksheets necessary for the lesson are included, so they are ready to use as a resource for all teachers.
Math Lesson Plans

Super-Shapes Trading Card

Grade & Subject:

- First Grade
- Math

Standards:

- CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.G.A.1
  - Distinguish between defining attributes (e.g., triangles are closed and three-sided) versus non-defining attributes (e.g., color, orientation, overall size); build and draw shapes to possess defining attributes.

- CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.G.A.2
  - Compose two-dimensional shapes (rectangles, squares, trapezoids, triangles, half-circles, and quarter-circles) or three-dimensional shapes (cubes, right rectangular prisms, right circular cones, and right circular cylinders) to create a composite shape, and compose new shapes from the composite shape.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.2
  - Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

Supplies:

- Super-Shapes Trading Card worksheet
- Pattern blocks
- Colored pencils
• Crayons
• Shape reference sheet

Objectives:

• Students will be able to draw the shape they choose correctly
• Students will be able to describe the shapes used to create their superhero
• Students will be able to manipulate smaller shapes to make a larger object
• Students will be able to write three sentences about their superhero shape

Summary of tasks:

• Start the lesson by going over the names of the shapes of the pattern blocks and having students name them.
  ○ Done as a large group just as a refresher - students should be introduced to each of the shapes individually in previous lessons & understand their properties
• Show students an example of a superhero made out of the pattern blocks.
• Make a list on the board of some superpowers the superhero could have (super speed, invisibility, super strength, etc). Each superhero needs a superpower.
• Explain to the students that the superpower has to be connected to a shape (ex: out of the triangle foot the superhero shoots 3 lasers out of each side)
• Remind students that the color of the superhero doesn’t have to do with the shape (defining v. non-defining attributes)
• Let students do the activity and complete the worksheet!
  ○ Walk around and provide assistance when necessary but let the students be creative with the types of super-shapes they can create
• When complete, have students share their final product with the students at their table to see the different kinds of powers their classmates came up with

Extension Activities:

• Could then use 3-D shapes to continue the character theme and make a city for them to protect or even a sidekick/villain to go along with them.
SUPER-SHAPES TRADING CARD

Use pattern blocks to draw and color a superhero in the box below. Then, fill out your superhero's trading card information!

Super-shape name: ________

Shapes used: ________

Shape superpower (pick one!): ________

Biggest enemy: ____________________
Comic Quest

Grade & Subject:

- Third Grade
- Math

Standards:

- CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.OA.A.1
  - Interpret products of whole numbers, e.g., interpret $5 \times 7$ as the total number of objects in 5 groups of 7 objects each. For example, describe a context in which a total number of objects can be expressed as $5 \times 7$.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2
  - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.A
  - Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.

Supplies:

- Comic strip worksheet
- Pencils
- Drawing and coloring supplies

Objectives:

- Students will be able to communicate well in a small group
• Students will be able to write a story in comic book form to convey information to a reader
• Students will be able to present their ideas and story to the class clearly
• Students will be able to use pictures to expand on their thinking and reasoning

Summary of tasks:

• In small groups students will work together to create a story where they are explaining a multiplication problem in “real life.”
• Groups will be given a series of multiplication problems that they have to show in their comic story (ex. 5x2, 5x3, 5x4, and 5x5 all need to be represented in the story and their relationship shown)
• Each group will get a different set of three sequential multiplication facts for their comic strip story
• Students will be given two class periods to work on their stories to make sure they are well thought out and that the relationship between the multiplication facts is clear in their story
• Students should have at least 5 comic strip images in their story with dialogue or thought bubbles to explain their reasoning
• Students will get a chance to share their stories with the class
• All of the stories will be laminated and bound in a class book that will be in the library for students to use and read to better learn the topic, and see the work of other students.
Write a comic strip story showing the relationship between three multiplication facts.

My facts are ________, ________, ________
The Great Fraction Mystery

Grade & Subject:

- Fifth Grade
- Math

Standards:

- CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.5.NF.A.2
  - Solve word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions referring to the same whole, including cases of unlike denominators, e.g., by using visual fraction models or equations to represent the problem. Use benchmark fractions and number sense of fractions to estimate mentally and assess the reasonableness of answers. For example, recognize an incorrect result $2/5 + 1/2 = 3/7$, by observing that $3/7 < 1/2$.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2
  - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.D
  - Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

Objectives:

- Students will be able to solve real world problems using addition and subtraction of fractions and assess the reasonableness of other solutions
• Students will be able to write a news story where information is provided in an engaging way

• Students will be able to solve the problem they create and then write out a solution/conclusion report with their reasoning explained clearly

Summary of Tasks:

• In pairs students will come up with an imaginary mystery story where fractions are being added or subtracted and brainstorm some ideas where problems like these occur in daily life

• Before this lesson, students will need to be familiar with what a news article looks like and how they are set up so they can use that formatting in this assignment

• Students will type out a newspaper article detailing a “crime” and drawings and other images to aid in their reporting

• The “crime” will remain open at the end of their article and they will say that they will update the public when a solution has been found

• Students will then swap stories with another reporting team and try to solve each other’s crime with the evidence in the article

• Once the other reporting team thinks they have come up with a solution to the other team’s crime story they will write up a summary to update the public on the crime

• Students will then share what they thought the solution was with the other team and see if they are correct

• If they are correct, they get to print and “publish” their conclusion
• If they aren't correct, they have to make revisions to make sure the public has the correct updates on the mystery but can ask the other group for assistance so students are all working together
THE GREAT FRACTION MYSTERY

THE CRIME:

_________________________________________

_________________________________________

_________________________________________

_________________________________________

_________________________________________

_________________________________________
Science Lesson Plans

The Light Show

Grade & Subject:

- First Grade
- Science

Standards:

- 1-PS4-3
  - Plan and conduct an investigation to determine the effect of placing objects made with different materials in the path of a beam of light.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.2
  - Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

Supplies:

- Portfolio description worksheet (one for each object students photograph)
- Objects to photograph
- iPad, tablet, or other device that lets them take and print pictures
- Flashlights

Objectives:

- Students will be able to determine if an object allows light to pass through it
- Students will be able to draw conclusions about why certain objects let light through them and others don’t
• Students will be able to work together to take pictures of the objects and the light that passes through them or doesn’t to use in their “portfolio”

• Students will be able to write a sentence under their pictures of the objects to describe the art

Summary of tasks:

• Students will be exploring light and why certain objects let light pass through them and some block the light

• Each group of students (3-4 students per group so they all have a job to do) will receive their investigation kit which includes the flashlight, colored paper, and disposable camera

• The groups will be walking around the room using objects around the room to shine the flashlight at. The groups will see if they let light pass through them or if the objects block the light

• The classroom lights will be off or dimmed so that students can really see the flashlight behind the objects on their colored paper

• The colored paper helps give a background for students to be able to see the beam of light on if it passes through more clearly

• Make sure that students are rotating roles so each is the photographer, in charge of the flashlight, and is holding the paper for the group

• By walking around the room students will choose everyday objects to use for this assignment. Suggestions such as the chairs students sit on, white paper, book pages, etc can be given to guide students to choose better objects
• Once students have found enough objects around the room and have taken all of the pictures on their camera they'll print the pictures they took.
  ○ This part of the lesson is dependent on the technology you have available to you.
    If you don’t have iPads or tablets that print you could use disposable cameras, polaroid cameras, or have students draw the pictures.

• Once the pictures are printed, pass them back out to the groups and have them paste them into the portfolio worksheets
  ○ This may be day 2 of the lesson or in the afternoon depending on how quickly you can print the images in your school setting

• Students should label the objects and write if light passes through the object or not and why in sentence form

• An example should be done for the class and displayed so students understand what the expectation is for their writing in this lesson

• After they are done with their portfolio worksheets students will share one object that they photographed around the room. Students will name their object and tell the class if the object let light pass through it or not.
THE LIGHT SHOW

AN EXHIBIT FEATURING OBJECTS THAT LET LIGHT PASS AND SOME THAT DON'T

BY:
Object:

Does light pass through?:

Climate Travel Brochure

Grade & Subject:

• Third Grade
• Science

Standards:

• 3-ESS2-2
  ○ Obtain and combine information to describe climates in different regions of the world.

• CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2
  ○ Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Supplies:

• Climate Brochure template
• Computers
• Books for research
• Brochure examples

Objectives:

• Students will be able to use online resources to research information about their region and its climate
• Students will be able to use books and magazines to research information about their region and its climate
• Students will be able to choose relevant information to be presented in a brochure
• Students will be able to present the information about their climate clearly and correctly

• Students will be able to present information that is factual to the class

Summary of tasks:

• Day 1 - Pairings & Research
  o This lesson will start with students being put into pairs to work on this project
  o At random, pairs will be assigned one of the following climate types
    ■ Tropical Wet
    ■ Tropical Wet & Dry
    ■ Humid Subtropical
    ■ Mediterranean
    ■ Marine West Coast
    ■ Humid Continental
    ■ Subarctic
    ■ Tundra
    ■ Ice Cap
    ■ Arid
    ■ Semiarid
    ■ Highland
  o This is a self-led exploration so once given their topic students will be allowed to research in their pairs to get the information for the brochure.

• The goal told to the students is to use their brochure to “sell” their climate as a place to visit
- Day 2 - Putting the brochure together
  - Using the research students had from the day before they will now put together the brochure
  - The template will be available as a reference but students will be able to use construction paper and other art materials in the class to put the brochure together
    - This template could be replicated in a Google Docs Drive to become an editable document students could all access and use as an online resource.
  - Students will place their brochures on their desks and then do a walk-around of all of the brochures. This allows students to read and see everyone's brochures and learn about the different climate regions in a fun way
TESTIMONIAL FROM A HAPPY TRAVELER:

**Make up a fun, but informative, quote from someone who has traveled to the climate you’re assigned recommending it to other travelers**

---

Travel to:

---

EYE-CATCHING PICTURE TO GRAB ATTENTION

---

A TRAVEL GUIDE BY:
WHAT IS THE CLIMATE LIKE HERE?

**Descriptive language**
**Facts about the climate should be used**

WHAT SHOULD I PACK?

**Examples of a packing list to make weather & temperatures realistic**

WHERE CAN I FIND THIS CLIMATE?

**Give examples of places around the world where this climate occurs**

PICTURES

**Caption image with location**

WHAT ARE THE BEST THINGS ABOUT THIS CLIMATE?

**Factual pros about the climate such as good weather conditions, seasons, etc.**

WHAT SHOULD I BE CONCERNED ABOUT IN THIS CLIMATE?

**Factual cons about the climate such as natural disasters, extreme weather, etc.**
Photosynthesis Love Poem

Grade & Subject:

- Fifth Grade
- Science

Standards:

- 5-LS1-1
  - Support an argument that plants get the materials they need for growth chiefly from air and water.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2
  - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.7
  - Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

Supplies:

- Paper
- Pencils/Pens
- Supplies to decorate the page/make a border

Objectives:

- Students will be able to use poetry to explain the connection between air, water, and plant growth.
• Students will be able to work individually to come up with a creative way to show the connection.

• Students will be able to share their poem with the class and have others understand their poem.

Summary of tasks:

• This lesson will be taught at the same time or closely after students learn about writing poetry as part of an English lesson

• Students will be able to choose any type of poem they wish but it must have a “love poem” theme

• Students will have already been taught about photosynthesis in a class activity and lesson; this will be used as a summative assessment of their knowledge

• Students will write their love poem on lined paper as a rough draft and then write it on thicker paper that they can cut out and paste to a border page

• Students will check with a partner to edit their poems before they write their final copy

• The poems should contain facts about the process of photosynthesis accurately and the reader should be able to understand the relationship clearly

• The poems will be displayed in the room or in the hallway to show all of the students’ hard work
Social Studies Lesson Plans

National Holiday Party Invitation

Grade & Subject:

- First Grade
- Social Studies

Standards:

- 1.H2.0.6
  - Identify the events or people celebrated during United States national holidays and why we celebrate them (e.g., Independence Day, Constitution Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day; Presidents’ Day).

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.2
  - Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

Supplies:

- Construction paper
- Books about holidays
- Invitation example
- Holiday note sheet

Objectives:

- Students will be familiar with United States National Holidays and why we celebrate them
- Students will be able to write short descriptions about their holidays
• Students will be able to take information from books, other sources, and their previous knowledge to make an accurate and clear invitation

• Students will be able to write in short sentences and use pictures to give information to a reader

Summary of tasks:

• Students will be given a holiday to research with books at a reading level they can understand

• There will be multiple students with the same holiday so they can work together at a table, but students must make their own invitation

• Before students make the invitations the class will brainstorm together what information an invitation would contain and look like

• Students will fill out a simple information sheet as they do their research so they have all of their information before they start the project that will be checked by the teacher

• Students will handwrite the invitations and draw pictures to help with the information they present

• Students will then turn in the invitations and they will be hung up in the classroom on a holiday bulletin board so all of the students can see the different invitations their classmates made.

• This may be a multi-day project where research is done one day and creating the invitation is done the next day depending on your class
My Holiday Invitation

My holiday is ________________________.

It is on ____________________________

______________________________

We celebrate this holiday because

______________________________

______________________________
Let's Celebrate
Veteran's Day
EVENT DETAILS

Who: The United States of America

Why: To honor all American veterans and thank them for their service

When: November 11th

Picture:
Community PSA Skit

Grade & Subject:

- Third
- Social Studies

Standards:

- P4.2 Citizen Involvement: Act constructively to further the public good
  - 3 – P4.2.1 Develop and implement an action plan and know how, when, and where to address or inform others about a public issue.
  - 3 – P4.2.2 Participate in projects to help or inform others
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2
  - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2.B
  - Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.

Supplies:

- Script worksheet
- Computers or internet access
- Recording device (camera or ipad, etc)
- Any props students may want to use

Objectives:

- Students will be able to write a simple script with information on a public issue
- Students will be able to work in a small group to create something to present together
• Students will be able to record a 2 minute video that contains all of the required information and is easy to understand by their audience

Summary of tasks:

• To start off the lesson students will brainstorm as a group ways that they think they could improve their community

• These public issues should be ones students see every day but may not think of all the time or that directly affect them

• Once students have brainstormed a list (the teacher can give ideas if they are struggling to come up with some of their own or ask guiding questions) students will pick one that they feel the most passionate about in small groups
  o The groups will be assigned by the teacher and then by randomly drawing group names groups will be able to choose a topic off the board that they are passionate about

• The teacher will then explain what a PSA or informational video is to the class and how they can teach others in the community about the public issue using an engaging video

• Students will be allowed to research their public issue on computers to get more information on the topic and then create a skit to inform the public in their own PSA

• Students will work together as a group to complete a written script for their skit on the worksheet provided

• The scripts will be turned in to the teacher and then students will be able to record their video once they are complete and approved
• Students will then film their skits that are approximately 2 minutes in length and submit them to the teacher

• Once all videos are submitted students will watch all videos in class and discuss the different public issues presented
Community PSA Skit Script

Public Service Announcement Topic: ________________________________

Characters:
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

Script:

Set the scene: ____________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

Dialogue:

______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
Causes of the American Revolution Script

Grade & Subject:
- Fifth Grade
- Social Studies

Standards:
- 5 - U3.1.2
  - Describe the causes and effects of events such as the Stamp Act, Boston Tea Party, the Intolerable Acts, and the Boston Massacre.
- 5 - U3.1.3
  - Using an event from the Revolutionary era (e.g., Boston Tea Party, quartering of soldiers, writs of assistance, closing of colonial legislatures), explain how British and colonial views on authority and the use of power without authority differed (views on representative government).
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2
  - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.7
  - Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

Supplies:
- Script format sheet
- Computers/iPads
Objectives:

- Students will be able to teach the class about one cause of the American Revolution
- Students will be able to work as a group to come up with a script to efficiently describe the cause
- Students will be able to choose parts and read the script to the class (readers theatre style)

Summary of tasks:

- This will be part of a larger unit on the American Revolution so the students should have some background knowledge on the colonies and the initial conflicts between the colonists and the king
- The groups will be assigned and should all be as equal as possible with different personality & academic levels represented
- This will be a multiple day lesson
  - Day 1:
    - Assign one of the causes of the American Revolution to each group and have students research the topic. Provide resources through the school curriculum, sites online, or books for students.
      - Stamp Act
      - Boston Massacre
      - Intolerable Acts
      - Boston Tea Party
      - Townshend Act
Day 2:

- Give students time to write out their scripts. The scripts should be only a few minutes when read, but must make sure all of the important parts of the cause are outlined. They should be set up like a debate or argument between the British and Colonists where both sides are arguing their stance on the issue.

- Scripts should be color-coded and there should be multiple parts so each student can read. If necessary, 2 students can split being narrator, but only if totally necessary.

- All students will handwrite their group’s script on their template so they are all engaged and have a copy.

Day 3:

- Present! The students will each have a copy of their scripts and will read them to the class.

- After each group presents, the class will have to provide feedback (positive, improvement, positive).

  - This helps to cushion the things other students felt the group could have improved between two positive comments. It keeps the mood positive in the classroom and ending on a positive helps the students who just presented gain confidence talking in front of a group.
After all of the presentations, the teacher will fill in information gaps where necessary and then lead a class discussion. Students should be led to discuss what was similar about all of the causes, what was different, and what they think could have been done differently.
CAUSES OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION SCRIPT

- Scene (cause):
  
- Characters:
  - 
  - 
  - 
  - 
  - 
  - 

- Background on the scene:
  

- Dialogue
  - 
  -
Works Cited


