INTEGRATED KINDERGARTEN THEMATIC UNIT

A Project

Presented to the faculty of the Graduate and Professional Studies in Education
California State University, Sacramento

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

in

Education

(Curriculum and Instruction)

by

Whitney Ueltzen

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Graduate and Professional Studies in Education
Abstract

of

INTEGRATED KINDERGARTEN THEMATIC UNIT

by

Whitney Ueltzen

This Project is an Alternative Culminating Experience for a Master of Arts in Education: Curriculum and Instruction. A personal journey of developing as an early childhood education is documented in this study. The path of study included research of No Child Left Behind, full day kindergarten, Common Core Standards, thematic units, student motivation and online resources.

The study process confirmed the value in teaching with a thematic approach. Students are more interested, engaged and teachers are able to teach science standards through other subject areas.

________________________________________, Committee Chair
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Date
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview

Imagine a group of five-year-old Kindergarten students, entering their classroom that has been turned into an underwater adventure. The display of their accumulated work has created the environment. These students are no longer students. They are scuba guides, leading the way to showcase everything in the ocean and explain the sea creatures that they have learned about. On the walls are starfish with tentacles made from Cheerios in groups of fives. The children have created informational paragraphs telling about specific sea creatures. Crabs are displayed with a subtraction story telling how many fish they ate and how many are left. Sharks and whales are being compared and contrasted. There are fact and fiction statements told from the perspective of a whale. The showcase and explanations are coming out of mouths of enthused Kindergarten students. Each student is excited about learning, engrossed in the common core standards and able to retell scientific information in his or her own words. These are characteristics of a successful thematic unit. This is an example of a unit of teaching where students are able to make connections across subject areas. Ownership of the learning is in the hands and minds of students.

A national trend in elementary school education is the movement toward an integrated curriculum. In such a curriculum, traditional subject categories such as math, science, social studies, and English language arts are no longer taught as separate entities.
Instead, the content areas are taught in the context of central, broad themes in what is termed thematic instruction. Gonser (1992) notes that science and social studies are the two curricular areas most conducive to building thematic instruction because they are so rich in content and provide many opportunities for organizing skills and experiences.

**Purpose of the Project**

The purpose of this project is to develop an example of an engaging, meaningful, thematic curriculum unit centered around the Kindergarten Life Sciences California standards. Additionally, this curriculum will meet the Kindergarten Common Core Standards in several subject areas. This curriculum will promote student academic advancement in science, reading, writing, math and the arts in a motivating way. It is also intended to provide a complete, thorough, well-rounded approach to teaching where students can make connections across subject areas.

**Statement of the Problem**

Commercially developed basal reading programs are used in most elementary school classrooms in the United States. Yet, often neither the publishers developing these programs nor the members of textbook adoption committees selecting programs are able to take advantage of the best available knowledge about the reading process and reading instruction (Dole, Bolt, & And, 1986). A study done in Mississippi compared student test scores using three different basal reading programs and one school who did not have a basal reading program. The findings in this study also indicated that students who were taught using no basal reading program scored significantly higher on the
Mississippi Curriculum Test in reading in 2006 than students taught using Reading Program One, Reading Program Two and Reading Program Three (Bluitt, 2009).

Students do not need state adopted curriculum to reach grade level standards. Students need a developmentally appropriate curriculum that makes sense. Students need a learning program in which they can make connections across subject areas and be motivated and engaged in what they are learning. Disjointed activities result in confusion and do not always lead to mastery of a given concept. By supplying a developmentally appropriate Kindergarten unit of study, integrating the arts, making connections across subject areas, students will be more likely to be actively engaged, motivated and reach higher achievement results.

**Significance of the Problem**

Currently, I work at a charter school that is not required to use state adopted text curriculum. The teachers at our school have the freedom to utilize a variety of resources to meet the current needs of their students. While some teachers embrace the freedom, others have a difficult time finding lessons for their classroom that are meaningful and engaging for their students. On our Kindergarten team, there is no concrete established approach for teaching science standards. What we do in our classrooms is constantly changing year after year. When looking at purchasing a science curriculum, many come with teacher manuals, some hands on learning experiments but mostly delivered in the form of direct instruction with workbook pages. It has been difficult to find a curriculum that teaches science standards and encompasses all the subject areas.
Thematic curriculum is about students constructing their own knowledge. This approach lends itself to a cohesive curriculum, helping the teacher avoid implementation of disjointed activities found in basal reading programs that often have little relation to the world of our students. It is difficult for students to find comparisons to real life situation when they are only being exposed to the concept in one isolated reading lesson. The ideal situation is one in which students can build on one another’s experiences (Loughran, 2005). Implementing a thematic curriculum will provide a solid foundation for our Kindergarten students, while providing them the opportunity to make connections across subject areas. Activities are engaging, designed using manipulatives, chunking information when possible, with ownership in the hands and minds of students. This project will also provide my Kindergarten team with a concrete, cohesive curriculum that meets a variety of academic standards and is meaningful to our students.

**Limitations**

The use of Interactive White Board (IWB) technology has become more widespread over the country, showing increase in student motivation. One study assessed student motivation using classroom-observation methods. In lessons that used mathematics software in conjunction with the IWB, students were observed in two IWB-assisted classes at different grade levels, with 16 students in one class and 13 students in the other. The observers reported that students were highly attentive in IWB-assisted lessons, and also that classroom disruptions became less frequent (Torff & Tirotta, 2010). Incorporating IWB into this thematic unit would be a notable contribution to
student motivation. However, my current school does not have access to this technology because of the expense of IWB. Therefore, the design of this thematic unit will not be incorporating Interactive White Boards. Technology availability in my classroom is a limiting factor in the integrated thematic curriculum.

Implementation of this project might be prohibited due to the time constraints within the school day. Not all activities may be effectively carried out because much time is taught teaching new systems, modeling appropriate use of manipulatives and time on task. Time devoted to integrated teaching might be spent on behavior management if rules, routines and procedures for activities have not already been established. Also, some teachers are hesitant to implement thematic units. Creating and finding the resources take time. Kim Hewitt, a fourth-grade teacher, stated, “The amount of time it would take to recreate math worksheets to go with the Social Studies theme would be too time consuming. It is easier to follow the math curriculum and teach Social Studies concepts through literature” (K. Hewitt, personal communication, October 17, 2012).

Schools might have a difficult time implementing themes because of the lack of teacher training. Some teachers might not know how, where to begin or how to find the resources to successfully implement thematic units. Also, there could be overlap among grade levels. Kindergarten and first grade, for example, have very similar science and social studies standards. At Westlake Charter School, teachers find the same themes are being done in both Kindergarten and first grade. It takes time and careful planning to
distinguish the difference between grade level themes in order to ensure that students are building upon what they already know.

Definition of Terms

**Basal Program**

A set of textbooks with accompanying student workbooks.

**Chunking**

Diving larger concepts into smaller teaching parts.

**Common Core State Standards**

The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them.

**Constructivism**

A learning theory where meaning is derived from meaningful connections and the interactions with people.

**Effort**

Devoting effective learning time to task at hand.

**Integrated Thematic Unit**

The process of integrating and linking multiple elements of a curriculum in an ongoing exploration of many different aspects of a topic or subject.

**Motivation**

The desire to want to learn.
Organization of the Project

This project consists of four chapters. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the project, defines the problem and expresses a need for an Integrated Thematic Unit. Chapter 2 contains the literature review that examines educational theories, as well as, discusses research and writings that provide the foundation of Thematic Instruction. Chapter 3 briefly restates the problem before explaining the components of the Integrated Thematic Unit of Instruction. The standards and lessons alignment are included within this chapter. Chapter 4 contains the synopsis of the project, discusses limitations of the curricula and providing recommendations for further research. The final section consists of the Appendices, which contain the lessons, worksheets, manipulatives, and additional resources.
Chapter 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The review of research and literature demonstrated a need for a developmentally appropriate curriculum, with a positive impact of implementing integrated thematic units of instruction. The first section explores the implications of No Child Left Behind, finding not enough instructional minutes in the day to teach all the standards. Implications of a full day Kindergarten program cover more material, with a positive impact on English Language Learners. The second section explains the Common Core State Standards, showing that many state adopted texts are not designed with these standards in mind. The third section reviews the development of the brain and shows that tactile learning has had definite impacts on learning for students ages four and five years old. Key factors of motivation and successful implementation of thematic units are also explored in this section. The fourth section explores the growing popularity of online resources. Many teachers are looking toward outside resources such as blogs and curriculum sharing websites for supplemental curriculum. The entire review indicates that implementing an integrated thematic unit in a full day Kindergarten program that is developmentally appropriate, aligned with the Common Core State Standards, will have a positive impact on student achievement and classroom curriculum.

No Child Left Behind

A push for higher standards and more retention of information came from the No Child Left Behind. The congressional act, signed by former President George W. Bush,
was a push for high standards with a goal that 100% of students would be proficient in reading and mathematics by the year 2014. As we grow closer to the 2014 deadline, 82% of America’s public schools are at risk or failing to meet proficient standards (“United States,” 2011).

A five-year study in The Economist (“United States,” 2011) reported more time was devoted to tested subjects such as math and language arts. Other subjects, such as science and art, were being cut by an average of 30 minutes a day. Many teachers have devoted their instructional minutes to language arts and math instruction. Those are the areas on which students are tested. Science and social studies are left out of testing and often not taught at all. Why not teach science and social studies through language arts and math? Instructional minutes will be better utilized where students are reaching those tested standards while also mastering others. There just is not enough time in the day to teach one subject at a time. This is where thematic units have shown great impact and success.

NCLB expresses the need to raise standards, requiring more instruction time in core subjects. According to Brannon (2005), “More than half of U.S. students now attend full-day Kindergartens” (p. 2). Why has this become increasingly popular? There is conclusive evidence showing how beneficial full-day instruction is for students. In a full day-Kindergarten program, material is taught in less of a hurry, students make academic gains early on and English Language Learners become fluent at a quicker rate.
Full-day Kindergarten

A full-day program offers more hours of instruction to teach rigorous content standards. Full-day Kindergarten provides more time on task in less of a hurry. There are challenging standards and high expectations for students at such a young age, there should be no surprise that starting in Kindergarten, there needs to be more time allotted in the school day.

As cited in an article by Viadero (2005),

While full-day programs typically double the number of hours that young children spend in school, they expand students’ actual instructional time by about a third. Much of the rest of students’ days may be occupied by recess, music or art lessons, or other activities that he described as beneficial to children's social development. (p. 11)

The learning is stretched out into an entire day, instead of crammed into a short half day. Each student is given the opportunity to be exposed to other areas of instruction that might be missed in a shortened day.

Students in full-day Kindergarten out perform their peers in half-day Kindergarten by the end of the year. According to Viadero (2005), these early gains do not last long. “Children starting in full-day programs made faster learning gains in Kindergarten, the children in the half-day programs outpaced them from 1st grade to 5th grade. By 3rd grade, both groups performed at about the same levels in reading and math” (p. 11). The article also gives reasoning to this phenomenon. It states, “The children in the half-day
programs, by and large, came from more advantaged households offering more stimulating home environments” (p. 15). Even though the full-day Kindergarten students eventually get outperformed, it still helps the achievement gap early on. According to Deuhy (2010), “For some struggling students, it will prove an initial boost that, when coupled with other interventions initiated in later years, can help them overcome deficits that otherwise would be predictive of academic failure” (p. 18). Imagine if the disadvantaged students did not have the opportunity to attend a full-day Kindergarten class. These students would be outperformed from the minute they start school. The full day helps these students have a solid educational foundation to lessen the achievement gap among students. Regardless if the achievement gains are long-term or short-term, it is readily agreed upon at the end of the Kindergarten year, children who attend full-day programs perform better on tests of academic achievement than children who attend only half-day programs (Cannon, Jacknowitz, & Painter, 2011). This allows students to be better prepared and set up for success when entering first grade.

A full-day program has proven beneficial for English Language Learners. Students who would otherwise be at home, immersed in their primary language, have more hours exposed to the English language. This instruction has proven to be beneficial for reading and retention outcomes. Cannon et al. (2011) states, “ELs benefit from full-day kindergarten for kindergarten reading and retention outcomes. Additionally, we originally conjectured that extra time in a kindergarten classroom speaking and hearing English would help ELs gain English fluency faster than students in shorter classes” (p.
12). This comes from a longitudinal study conducted on EL students in the Los Angeles Unified Students. In my own classroom, I have also seen the positive gains in specifically English Language Learners. Students who come in speaking little English, progress at an exponential rate and are able to learn to speak and read the English Language with their peers. If the EL students were only getting three hours of English instruction and the rest in their primary language at home, they would be at a disadvantage compared to native speaking students. All these advantages to a full-day kindergarten do nothing but increase the learning of the student and positive results are reflected in their academic learning gains.

**Common Core State Standards**

Even with the push of NCLB, increased time in class and focus on tested areas such as math and language arts, the United States as a whole continues to fall significantly behind other leading countries in education. The new Common Core State Standards were developed to solve three national problems: a demand for better-educated workers as the job opportunities for unskilled laborers shrink; a high number of students needing to take remedial courses at the college level; and a difference in expectations across the country that made switching schools difficult on students who moved (Mulhere, 2012). Before Common Core, each state had a separate set of standards, which resulted in different learning outcomes. What was expected in Kindergarten in California, varied from what was expected in Kindergarten in another state. When
compared to other countries, the United States is looked at as a whole. Therefore, what teachers are teaching and how students are assessed should be done as a whole country.

The Common Core State Standards provide a consistent, clear understanding of what students are expected to learn, so teachers and parents know what they need to do to help them. The standards are designed to be robust and relevant to the real world, reflecting the knowledge and skills that our young people need for success in college and careers. With American students fully prepared for the future, our communities will be best positioned to compete successfully in the global economy (National Governors Association, 2011). Supporters say the Common Core Standards better prepare students for college or the workforce, and are important as the U.S. falls behind other nations in areas such as math proficiency (Banchero, 2012). The unique backwards design of the standards started at the college level looking at what students need to know by the time they get to college. They then worked backwards, formulating instructional goals for every grade level K-12 that build on each other. They provide a roadmap for parents, teachers and students. Schools have slowly been educating teachers and transforming instruction to meet the goals of the Common Core Standards. All students will be tested on these standards starting spring of 2015 (Mulhere, 2012).

**Thematic Units**

Current state-adopted curriculum has not yet revised instruction to match the new Common Core Standards. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH) has developed a comprehensive Common Core Transition Model, which provides teachers and
administrators with resources and guidance in three key areas – Professional Services, Instructional Materials; as well as Assessment and Data Management (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010). However, with the current budget crisis, districts are not adopting curricula as often as previous years. The California Education Code (EC) has been revised from the previous requirement of adopting two times every six years in the core subjects: reading/language arts, mathematics, social science and science. EC Section 60200.7, effective July 29, 2009, delayed all instructional materials adoptions and the development of curriculum frameworks and evaluation criteria until the 2015-16 school year (California Department of Education [CDE], 2012). When students are tested on the new set of standards, many schools will not have a curriculum that teaches to the Common Core Standards. Therefore, many teachers are going to have to use their own supplemental resources.

The California Department of Education (2012) says current state adopted instructional materials meet basic requirements of a full year of study. Therefore, teachers who want to teach basic curriculum and bring life to learning in the classroom need to seek out other resources. As educators adjust curriculum to go beyond basic instructional materials and align with the Common Core Standards, there will be a critical need for easy-to-use tools that pinpoint exact needs, identify successful practices, measure student progress, and align data with curriculum (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010). Where do teachers find supplemental resources? Many purchase subject based
activities from publishing companies such as Scholastic. These are outlined by grade level and provide worksheets and lessons to complement core curriculum.

A thematic approach would help teach science and social studies concepts through language arts and math with a constructivist approach. Research by Yorks and Follo (1993) suggested that children learn more from thematic, integrated teaching than from traditional, single-subject curriculum. Thematic teaching is about construction of one’s own knowledge. Piaget and Vygotsky were supporters of the constructivist approach. Piaget (1926) believed that knowledge is built in a slow, continuous construction of skills and understanding that each child brings to each situation as he or she matures. He also emphasized the cognitive growth that takes place when students cooperate and interact with one another. Piaget’s Theory of Cognitive Development shows that children need interaction with real experiences. It also shows that depending on the age, children are at different readiness levels. Readiness concerns when certain information or concepts should be taught. According to Piaget's theory, children should not be taught certain concepts until they have reached the appropriate stage cognitive development (McLeod, 2009). Vygotsky (1997) suggested social interaction and collaboration were powerful sources of transformation in the child's thinking.

Motivation

Motivation is a key component in developing engaging curriculum and improving student learning. Very little, if any, learning can occur unless students are motivated on a consistent basis. The five key ingredients impacting student motivation are: student,
teacher, content, method/process, and environment (Williams & Williams, 2011). How
do we know when students are motivated? They pay attention, they begin working on
tasks immediately, they ask questions and volunteer answers, and they appear to be
happy and eager (Palmer, 2007). The teacher must be well trained, must focus and
monitor the educational process, be dedicated and responsive to students, and be
inspirational. The content must be accurate, timely, stimulating, and pertinent to the
student's current and future needs. The method or process must be inventive,
encouraging, interesting, beneficial, and provide tools that can be applied to the student's
real life. The environment needs to be accessible, safe, positive, personalized as much as
possible, and empowering. Motivation is optimized when students are exposed to a large
number of these motivating experiences and variables on a regular basis. Students ideally
should have many sources of motivation in their learning experience in each class
(D'Souza & Maheshwari, 2010; Debnath, 2005; Palmer, 2007).

Teacher enthusiasm contributes to the overall success of the thematic unit
triggering motivation within the environment. The teacher serves as the facilitator,
reading books and facilitating meaningful discussions to let students synthesize and
construct their own learning. An article from Thematic Teaching in Action (Loughran,
2005) states,

It is not possible to overemphasize the importance of the teacher's role in
recognizing and building on the spark, the idea, and the excitement in the
students' voices. An alert teacher knows those moments and fuels them by
showing genuine enthusiasm, adding props, making simple changes in a center, or bringing in an item to add more energy. (p. 3)

As the brain develops in early childhood, one learns best through sensory and tactile mediums.

The main difference in the stages of learning was the forms of representation available to the learner for use in constructing knowledge. Learning in early childhood is largely grounded in the senses and thus instruction at this level would make use of concrete objects. (Efland, 2002, p. 58)

Meaningful instruction during which the student’s minds are engaged with concrete objects, will make a unifying relationship with the brain and a positive impact on learning. Currently, Kindergarten classrooms continue to use basal reading programs. Basal reading programs are text-based programs that have reading books and practice books. There are little tactile involvement and movement. Programs that require students to stay still for long periods of time fail to make learning fun. Starting in Kindergarten, students are required to sit, listen and work for extended lengths. Students lose interest and motivation, which leads to less retention of information. A study by Henning, Jacques, Kissel, and Sullivan (1997) found that frequent, short breaks from work actually increased productivity and well being. The type of break that proved most effective included some stretching or physical activity. Therefore, teacher’s need to supplement adopted curriculum with supplemental curriculum to increase activity, engagement. This will lead to increased retention of material.
**Online Resources**

Becoming increasingly popular are online teaching blogs and a website entitled Teachers Pay Teachers. Currently, there are as many as 30,000 education blogs on the Internet. Some focus on policy, others on practice. Many link and comment on daily newspaper articles and other blog posts as well as provide a forum for other users to do the same (Petrill, 2009). Thousands of teachers are sharing pictures, experience, worksheets that work for them in their classrooms to also be easily implemented by teachers all over the world. Teachers Pay Teachers.com is a website where teacher’s publish their original work for other teachers around the world to purchase and use in their own classrooms. It is the world’s first open marketplace for lesson plans and other teacher-created materials. Teachers Pay Teachers.com has over 250,000 product listings and 900,000 registered users (Teachers Pay Teachers.com, 2012a). Teachers use this resource to supplement their current curriculum, innovate new ideas and implement best teaching practices. It has provided inspiration, creativity and a new outlet for curriculum collaboration. One user stated,

Teachers Pay Teachers has allowed me to tap into my creativity that is too often squashed during the times of core instruction, standards and assessments. It has not only given me an outlet to share my creativity but also provided me with a place to find creative, yet meaningful ways to teach my students what they need to learn. In short, TPT has changed my teaching and my life! (Teachers Pay Teachers.com, 2012b)
The website has also shown monetary benefits for its contributors. Teachers are now able to add a supplemental income to the basic teaching salary. Contributors are getting paid for uploading and sharing what they already do in their classrooms. One user has hit the one million dollar mark in earnings by selling 161,000 copies of her thematic units, selling for an average of eight dollars each. To be fair, no one else on teacherspayteachers.com has been as wildly successful as Jump, but at least two other teachers have earned $300,000, and 23 others have earned over $100,000, according to site founder Paul Edelman (Winter, 2012).

With a newly adopted set of standards, curriculum that is now incomplete, teachers are now looking to teaching blogs and supplemental resources to use for instruction in their classrooms. This integrated unit of instruction will be another resource for teachers to use, around the world, to meet the new set of standards and be able to easily implement with any group of Kindergarten students.
Chapter 3

**METHODOLGY**

This project is a culminating experience for Masters of Arts in Education: Curriculum and Instruction. It uses activities adapted from selected teacher resources, and changed to match teaching style, student interests and needs. This project of curriculum development is to be implemented in a general education Kindergarten classroom. It integrates Common Core standards in language arts and math as well as current California State adopted content standards in science. Visual art assignments, a list of fiction and non-fiction read-alouds and music integration are included to provide teacher choice and enriching student experience.

The sources of information presented in this project included Common Core standards, California content standards for Kindergarten, teacher resource books, online teacher experience blogs, thematic units posted on Teacherspayteachers.com, collaborative work with colleagues, as well as a collection of children’s music and literature. All these outside resources have been adapted to create a thematic unit that has been implemented in my Kindergarten classroom. My goal is for this unit to also be implemented by other Kindergarten teachers around the country. I will be posting this unit on Teacherspayteachers.com for others to use.

Chapter 3 tells the story of this project and the professional journey I have taken to develop a unique type of curriculum. Chapter 4 is also written in first person to explain the success I have had in my classroom.
**Personal History**

Students enter Kindergarten with a wide array of experiences. Some have had preschool, while for others Kindergarten is their first school experience. These early childhood years set a foundation for their educational career. Attitudes and feelings about school are often formed. This first school experience should be a positive experience and give each student the tools, skills and abilities that they can build on as they progress through the grade levels.

When I think back to my Kindergarten experience, I remember dramatic play in the kitchen, puppet shows, an art center, free choice painting projects, songs and stories. I remember having teachers who enriched my experience by embracing creativity. I remember the writing center, where I could create anything I wanted. I loved Kindergarten. I believe much of that was because of the choice and freedom I had to direct my own learning.

As I entered Kindergarten 17 years later as a teacher, it was a different experience. Students are no longer in the classroom for three hours each day. The day is extended to a full six hours. Although the kitchen I fondly remember is present, there is no time for dramatic play. Students are given math and language arts workbooks. Science and social studies have a few worksheets to be used to show that the standard has been taught. Although some read alouds and manipulatives are provided, the organization of the curriculum does not make sense to me as a teacher. In language arts, students are learning about nursery rhymes. In math, students are learning about patterns.
In social studies, students are learning about state symbols. In science, if we have time, we are discussing seasons. Activities and subject areas seemed disjointed. There seemed to be no unifying concept connecting the learning that was happening all day long. Students are no longer in charge of their own learning. The teacher is no longer the facilitator of learning. Much of the day is spent on direct instruction.

When I first started teaching at Westlake Charter School, I taught using the provided workbooks and pacing guide that was in place. Although it worked for some teaching styles, it did not work for mine. It was painful to have my five-year-old students sit for 40 minutes at a time to listen to the directions of the workbook book pages and complete the guided and independent practice. Most of my time was spent on keeping the focus of the students and explaining the directions. I did not feel like students were getting the most out of the learning at hand. I wanted a curriculum that wasn’t painful for the students to complete, that kept their focus and was a joy for me to teach. At this point I started a thematic teaching approach.

**Professional Experience**

My grade-level teaching partners and I met together and developed major themes to be covered throughout the year. We used science and social studies standards as well as holidays during the month as a basis for our themed units. We used the pacing guide of our adopted language arts and math curriculum to map out the skills to be covered in each unit. We put together a year long Kindergarten Curriculum Calendar that was devised of themed units, with specific skills that needed to be covered for students to
work towards mastery of Common Core language arts and math standards and the California content standards for science and social studies.

The Ocean Unit is one of my favorite units to teach. It explores the underwater universe of which many students don’t have any previous knowledge. The animals introduced are so different from the animals that five-year-olds have had experience with up until now. Starting with only the standards, I searched for pictures of actively engaging activities. I looked at classroom where this thematic underwater journey has taken place. I used activities that have been successful in my classroom and adapted them to the Ocean theme. I recreated worksheets using my favorite “DJ Inker” clipart on PowerPoint. Once I had outlined activities in each subject area, I mapped it into a three-week thematic unit plan to implement in my own classroom.

This project includes the activities, standards and directions for an integrated thematic Kindergarten Ocean Unit (see Appendices). It combines developmentally appropriate hands on learning, with the rigorous standards. The unit provides teachers with relevant content standards and instructions for easy implementation. The unit provides unity amongst subject areas, all revolving around an Ocean Animal theme. The thematic unit is sectioned into subject areas. This is for easy implementation in any Kindergarten classroom, regardless of your daily schedule. I have also included a sample of my unit plan, and how I implement the unit in my classroom on a weekly basis. I hope this unit provides sufficient teacher interest to facilitate engagement, curiosity and motivation for students to learn.
In conclusion, the curriculum development process is the journey that emerged from my personal experience as a Kindergarten teacher at a Charter School. I am fortunate to have the flexibility in my curriculum to teach the way I feel appropriate for my students and me. The curriculum tells the story in the quest for a curriculum that makes sense and is unified amongst the subject areas. Less time is spent on forcing students to focus while explaining directions to them and more time on the learning at hand. I find students are having more fun learning concepts with activities that are engaging and that is what Kindergarten is supposed to be about.
Chapter 4

REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This project in curriculum development has allowed me to grow as a professional educator and has enriched my own teaching experience. I have learned that teachers need to enjoy what they are teaching. If it is painful to teach, it is going to be painful for your students to learn. A teacher’s enthusiasm has a direct effect on student engagement and motivation. This project has been successful because I enjoy what I am teaching and I get to see students taking charge of their own learning. It is so empowering to see five-year-old students speak, read, write, sing and draw about ocean animals they previously didn’t know existed. All of this learning has come from a successful implementation of an integrated thematic unit. I know I will be changing this unit over time. There are bound to be many changes, revisions, and reflections on what works and what needs to be improved along the way. Changing instruction based on needs of students is what makes good teachers and meaningful instruction.

The development and implementation of the unit has not only brought joy and life into my teaching, it has brought knowledge. I now have more confidence in the research behind how students learn. Theory and research studies have now been integrated into the way I teach in order to build the best possible developmental curriculum.

The process of the curriculum development was challenging at times. As much as I enjoyed gathering activities and resources for the unit, it was very time consuming. I recreated many of the activities I found to suit my teaching style. To recreate each
activity it easily took at least an hour. These are hours that were spent on top of my contracted teaching hours. I have put in more 12-hour workdays than I ever thought possible. I have also spent many holidays and vacation days working on developing curriculum. I know I am not the only teacher who is experiencing the same time-consuming battle. I’ve heard my grade-level partner’s say, “I like that idea but I don’t want to do it because it takes too much time to create.” I hope the time I put into developing the units can save other teachers time in developing curriculum in their classrooms.

My recommendation for using the curriculum is to put the accumulation of work together for an end of the unit display. Create a portfolio of the skill-based work. Put student artwork and projects on the wall to create an ocean environment. Invite families into the Ocean and have your students be the scuba guides. Students will lead their families around the classroom sharing what they’ve learned and expressing the synthesized knowledge to their families. It is a great way to involve the parents and have students demonstrate the learning that they have constructed.

My recommendation is to also work collaboratively with coworkers to develop integrated units. Sharing the responsibility of looking for different activities and bringing life to the curriculum is better with more than one person. It brings more ideas to the table. It is also less of a time burden.

Unfortunately, there are still many schools that forbid their teachers to stray away from the state-adopted curriculum. I’ve experienced schools where teachers need to
submit lesson plans with outlined standards and page numbers from the teacher’s edition of adopted textbooks. I hope teachers, who are passionate about thematic curriculum, can show their principal the lessons taught with an integrated approach directly relate to the standards. It is more cohesive for both students and teachers. The administration at my current school believes in flexibility in curriculum because they trust our teachers. I believe that more schools need to adopt this attitude. Teachers are educated professionals. Trust what they are doing in the classroom. Give them the flexibility to teach the way they feel is best for their students.

As a resource for teachers, I hope this unit can generate a love for learning in their classrooms. I hope that teachers can see the joy it has brought to my students and use it as an inspiration. The early childhood classroom must allow opportunities for exploration and provide children the ability to construct their own meaning. I hope that the activities are found to be fun and engaging, and are not restricted by administration.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

Overview
kindergarten

INTEGRATED COMMON CORE THEMATIC UNIT OVERVIEW

By: Whitney Ueltzen
# Ocean's of Fun

## An Integrated Kindergarten Thematic Unit

**Kindergarten Life Sciences Standards**
- Students know how to observe and describe similarities and differences in the appearance and behavior of plants and animals.
- Students know stories sometimes give plants and animals attributes they do not really have.
- Students know how to identify major structures of common plants and animals.

## Appendix A: Overview

## Appendix B: Read Alouds

## Appendix C: Music Song List

## Appendix D: Math Activities
- Money
- Time
- Addition
- Greater Than/Less Than
- Subtraction
- Measurement

## Appendix E: Language Arts Activities
- Silent E segmenting
- Silent E read and draw
- Word Families
- Compare/Contrast Whales and Sharks
- Fact vs Fiction Whale Tales
- Emergent Readers

## Appendix F: Writing Activities
- Sea Turtles – Graphic Organizer
- Crabs – Graphic Organizer
- Whales – Graphic Organizer
- Fact Book of Ocean Animals

## Appendix G: ART Activities
- Ocean Animal Sketch Book
- Shark Directed Draw
- Dolphin Directed Draw
- Sea Turtle Directed Draw
- Fish Directed Draw
- Sea Star Directed Draw

## Appendix H: Animal Take Home Project
APPENDIX B

Read-alouds
### Fiction

- Down to the Sea with Mr. Magee - Chris Van Dusen
- Shark in the Dark - Peter Bently
- Way Down Deep in the Deep Blue Sea - Jan Peck
- Mister Seahorse - Eric Carle
- The Pout-Pout Fish - Deborah Diesen
- The Pout-Pout Fish in the Big-Big Dark - Deborah Diesen
- Fidgety Fish - Ruth Galloway
- Smiley Shark - Ruth Galloway
- Clumsy Crab - Ruth Galloway
- Hooray for Fish! - Lucy Cousins
- A House For a Hermit Crab - Eric Carle
- My Visit to the Aquarium – Aliki
- The Magic School Bus on the Ocean Floor - Joanna Cole
- One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish - Dr. Seuss
- Fish Eyes - Lois Ehlert
- The Rainbow Fish - Marcus Pfister
- The Tickle-Octopus - Audrey Wood
- Fish is Fish - Leo Lionni
- Swimmy - Leo Lionni
- My Very Own Octopus - Bernard Most
- Is This A House For Hermit Crab? - Megan MacDonald
- A B Sea - Bobbie Kalman
- Hello Fish - Sylvia Earle
- Baby Whales Drink Milk - Barbara J. Esbensen
- What Lives In A Shell? - Kathleen W. Zoehfeld
- What’s It Like To Be A Fish? - Wendy Pfeffer
- A Swim Through the Sea - Kristin J. Pratt
- How To Hide An Octopus and Other Sea Creatures - Ruth Heller
- The Ocean Alphabet - Jerry Pallotta
- Alphabet Sea - Carolyn Spencer
- The Seashore - Gallimard Jeunesse
- The Magic Fish - Freya Littledale
### More Fiction

- Sea Shapes - Suse MacDonald
- A Beach Day - Douglas Florian
- At the Beach - Eugene Booth
- If All the Seas Were One Sea - Janina Doamnska
- Under the Sea - Eugene Booth
- Who Lives In the Sea? - Alice Low
- Ten Little Fish - Audrey Wood

### Non Fiction

- 101 Questions About the Seashore - Sy Barlowe
- Exploring an Ocean Tide Pool - Jeanne Bendick
- The Ultimate Ocean Book - Maria Mudd-Ruth
- Ocean Mammals - Elaine Landau
- Dolphins - Margaret Davidson
- Pebble Plus: Whale
- Pebble Plus: Shark
- Pebble Plus: Dolphin
- Pebble Plus: Sea Turtle
- Pebble Plus: Crab
- Pebble Plus: Sea Stars
- Pebble Plus: Jellyfish
APPENDIX C

Music Song List
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song Title</th>
<th>Tune</th>
<th>Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over the Deep Blue Sea</td>
<td>(tune: Merrily We Roll Along)</td>
<td>Author Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Merrily we sail along,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sail Along, sail along</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Merrily we sail along,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over the deep blue sea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ocean liners go on a cruise,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>On a cruise, on a cruise.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ocean liners go on a cruise,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Over the deep blue sea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>continue verses with:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pelicans will dive for fish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fishing boats go out at dawn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dolphins leap into the waves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean</td>
<td>(tune: My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean)</td>
<td>Author Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My bonnie lies over the ocean.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My bonnie lies over the sea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My bonnie lies over the ocean,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oh bring back my bonnie to me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bring back, bring back,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oh bring back my bonnie to me, to me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bring back, bring back,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oh bring back my bonnie to me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish Are Swimming</td>
<td>(tune: Frere Jacques)</td>
<td>Author Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fish are swimming, fish are swimming,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In the sea, in the sea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A-splishing and a-splashing,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A-splishing and a-splashing,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look and see, look and sea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Take Me Out to the Ocean**  
| (tune: Take Me Out to the Ballgame)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Take me out to the ocean,  
| Take me out to the sea.  
| There goes a starfish and sand dollar,  
| I'm having such fun, I've just got to holler.  
| Oh, it's swim, swim, swim underwater,  
| Catch a ride on a whale, don't fear,  
| For the sea animals are our friends,  
| Let's give a great big cheer! |

| **I'm A Fish**  
| (tune: I'm A Little Teapot)  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| I'm a little fishy, I can swim.  
| Here is my tail, here is my fin.  
| When I want to have fun with my friend,  
| I wiggle my tail and dive right in! |

| **Five Little Fishes**  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author Unknown</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Five little fishes  
| (show 5 fingers)  
| Swimming in the sea  
| (wave hand sideways)  
| Teasing Mr. Shark,  
| "You can't catch me!"  
| (shake pointing finger)  
| Along comes Mr. Shark,  
| Quiet as can be  
| (hands like open mouth)  
| Snap!!  
| (slap hands closed)  
| Four little fishes  
| (show 4 fingers)  
| Swimming in the sea! |
APPENDIX D

Math Activities
ocean's of fun

An Integrated Kindergarten Thematic Unit

Kindergarten Life Sciences Standards
• Students know how to observe and describe similarities and differences in the appearance and behavior of plants and animals
• Students know stories sometimes give plants and animals attributes they do not really have.
• Students know how to identify major structures of common plants and animals

Math Activities

• Money
• Time
• Addition
• Greater Than/Less Than
• Subtraction
• Measurement
Directions:

Students will choose a sea turtle. Color the sea turtle on their paper to match the one they choose. Then count the money and write the total in the box below the sea turtle they chose.

Prep:
Copy each sea turtle card page on a different color of construction paper. Laminate the construction paper. Cut out sea turtle. The sea turtle cards make two sets.
Sea Turtle Money

Pick a sea turtle. Count the money. Write the amount in the box.
Sea Turtle Cards
Sea Turtle Cards
Sea Turtle Cards
Sea Turtle Cards
Sea Turtle Cards
Sea Turtle Cards
Sea Turtle Cards
Sea Turtle Cards
**Directions:**
Students will choose a fish. Color the fish on their paper to match the one they choose. Then tell the time on the clock and write the time in the box below the colored fish.

**Prep:**
Copy each fish card page on a different color of construction paper. Laminate the construction paper. Cut out each fish. The fish cards make two sets.
It’s Fishy Time!

Choose a fish. Color the fish to match. Write the time in the box below.
Fish Cards
Fish Cards
Fish Cards
Fish Cards
Fish Cards
Fish Cards
Fish Cards
Fish Cards

[Diagram of fish-shaped cards with clocks on them]
Fish Cards
Fish Cards
crabby addition

Common Core Standards:

K.CC – 3. Write numbers from 0 to 20. Represent a number of objects with a written numeral 0-20.

K.CC – 4. Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality.

K.OA – 1. Represent addition and subtraction with objects, fingers, mental images, drawings, sounds, acting out situations, verbal explanations, expressions, or equations.

Directions:

Addition: Students will match the same color crabs. Write a number sentence and find the sum using fingers, mental images, or drawing.

Prep:

Copy each of the crab cards on a different color of construction paper. Laminate the construction paper. Cut out each crab. The crab cards make two sets.
Crabby Addition

Match the same color crabs. Color. Write a number sentence using the numbers. Find the sum.

1. \( \square + \square = \square \)
   \( \square + \square = \square \)

2. \( \square + \square = \square \)
   \( \square + \square = \square \)

3. \( \square + \square = \square \)
   \( \square + \square = \square \)

4. \( \square + \square = \square \)
   \( \square + \square = \square \)

5. \( \square + \square = \square \)
   \( \square + \square = \square \)
Crab Cards
Crab Cards
Crab Cards
Crab Cards
Crab Cards
Crab Cards
Crab Cards
shark or whale? tell the tale!

Common Core Standards:
K.CC – 6. Identify whether the number of objects in one group is greater than, less than, or equal to the number of objects in another group, e.g., by using matching and counting strategies.1

Directions:

Choose a card. Color to match. Count how many of each. Write the number. Then show which has more by writing the greater than or less than sign.

Prep:

Copy each of the cards on a different color of construction paper. Laminate the construction paper. Cut out each card.
Shark or Whale? Tell the Tale!

Choose a card. Color to match. Count how many of each. Write the number. Then show which has more by writing the greater than or less than sign.
sharks on the loose

Common Core Standards:
K.CC - 3. Write numbers from 0 to 20. Represent a number of objects with a written numeral 0-20.
K.CC - 4. Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities; connect counting to cardinality.
K.OA - 1. Represent addition and subtraction with objects, fingers, mental images, drawings, sounds, acting out situations, verbal explanations, expressions, or equations.

Directions:
Page 1 (Easier) - Put an X on the shark you are taking away. Count how many are left over. Write your answer.
Page 2 (Harder) - Draw pictures to solve the subtraction problem. Put an X on the picture you are taking away. Count how many are left over. Write your answer.

Prep:
Copy worksheets. Two difficulty levels can be used for differentiated instruction.
**Sharks on the Loose!**

Put an X on the shark you are taking away. Count how many are left over. Write your answers in the boxes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equation</th>
<th>Solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$3 - 3$</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3 - 2$</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$4 - 1$</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$4 - 4$</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5 - 4$</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5 - 2$</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6 - 4$</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6 - 3$</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$6 - 2$</td>
<td>________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Sharks on the Loose!

Draw pictures to solve the subtraction problem. Put an X on the picture you are taking away. Count how many are left over. Write your answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 - 2</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 3</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 4</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 2</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 3</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 1</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 2</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 2</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 1</td>
<td>______</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
measuring madness!

Common Core Standards:
K MD 1. Describe measurable attributes of objects, such as length or weight. Describe several measurable attributes of a single object.

Directions:
Students will use a ruler to measure each ocean animal using inches. Then will write the amount on the line.
____ inches

____ inches
_____ inches  _____ inches

_____ inches  _____ inches
APPENDIX E

Language Arts
ocean's of fun
An Integrated Kindergarten Thematic Unit

Kindergarten Life Sciences Standards

- Students know how to observe and describe similarities and differences in the appearance and behavior of plants and animals.
- Students know stories sometimes give plants and animals attributes they do not really have.
- Students know how to identify major structures of common plants and animals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Arts Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Silent E segmenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Silent E read and draw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Word Families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Compare/Contrast Whales and Sharks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fact vs Fiction Whale Tales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Emergent Readers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
swimming with bossy e

Common Core Standards:
K.RF - 3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
   a. Demonstrate knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondence by producing the primary sound or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant.
   d. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

Directions:
Students will choose a fish. Color. Use stretchy snake to write all the sounds heard in the word. Don't forget to add a silent "e" at the end to make the first vowel say its name!

Prep: Copy each page of fish on a different color construction paper. Laminate the construction paper. Cut out each fish.
**SWIMMING WITH BOSSY “E”**

Choose a fish. Color. Use stretchy snake to write all the sounds you hear in the word. Don’t forget to add a silent e at the end to make the first vowel say its name!

Write a sentence using one or two of the words above!
bossy e crabs

Common Core Standards:
K.RF - 3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
   a. Demonstrate knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound corresponding by producing the primary sound or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant.
   d. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

Directions:
Students will choose a crab. Color. Read the word. Write the word. Draw a picture to match. Challenge - Choose a crab. Color. Write a sentence using the word that is on the crab.

Prep: Copy each of the crab cards on a different color construction paper. Laminate the construction paper. Cut out each crab.
Choose a crab. Color. Read the word. Write the word. Draw a picture to match.
Choose a crab. Color. Write a sentence using the word that is on the crab.
Common Core Standards:
K.RF - 3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
   a. Demonstrate knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound correspondence by producing the primary sound or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant.
   d. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

Directions:
Students will sort the pictures by word family. Then they will sound out the words and write them under the correct word family. Another option is to cut each letter apart and have students put it together like a puzzle. Then write under the correct word family.

Prep: Copy the ocean animal cards on construction paper. Laminate the construction paper. Cut out animal.
**Ocean Families**

Put each ocean animal together to make a word. Write the word in the correct word family.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>it</th>
<th>in</th>
<th>ing</th>
<th>ick</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Write a sentence using a word from above.

---

---
Common Core Standards:
K. R.I. 3. With prompting and support, describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.

Directions:
Discuss similarities and differences between sharks and whales. Have pre written cards with facts about whale and sharks. Sort them as a class. Have students write facts on their own Venn Diagram. Display class Venn Diagram on the wall like sample below.
Fact vs Fiction Whale Tales

California State Standards:
Students know stories sometimes give plants and animals attributes they do not really have.

Common Core Standards:
K. L. 2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
   a. Capitalize the first word in a sentence and the pronoun I.
   b. Recognize and name end punctuation.
   c. Write a letter or letters for most consonant and short-vowel sounds (phonemes).
   d. Spell simple words phonetically, drawing on knowledge of sound-letter relationships.

Directions:
After reading several fiction and nonfiction books about whales, complete a shared writing activity with your students by passing the pen. Brainstorm a fact sentence. Have one student write one word of the sentence. Then, pass the pen to another student to write the next word. As the teacher, facilitate phonetic spelling, punctuation, spacing, and capitalization. Complete four fact statements and four fiction sentences.
Common Core Standards:
K.RF – 3c. Read common high frequency words by sight.

K.RF – 3. Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.
   a. Demonstrate knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound corresponding by producing the primary sound or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant.
   d. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

Directions:

Students will read the emergent reader, pointing to each word as they read. Then they will color the illustration to match the words.
Big Hungry Whale, What Will You Eat?

Name: ____________________

Big Hungry Whale, What Will You Eat?

Name: ____________________
Big hungry whale, will you eat one red fish?

No!
I do not eat red fish.

Big hungry whale, will you eat one red fish?

No!
I do not eat red fish.
Big hungry whale, will you eat two blue fish?

No!
I do not eat blue fish.

Big hungry whale, will you eat two blue fish?

No!
I do not eat blue fish.
Big hungry whale, will you eat three yellow fish?

No!
I do not eat yellow fish.

Big hungry whale, will you eat three yellow fish?

No!
I do not eat yellow fish.
Big hungry whale, will you eat four green fish?

No! I do not eat green fish.

Big hungry whale, will you eat four green fish?

No! I do not eat green fish.
Big hungry whale, will you eat five pink fish?

No!
I do not eat pink fish.

Big hungry whale, will you eat five pink fish?

No!
I do not eat pink fish.
Big hungry whale, will you eat six purple fish?

No!
I do not eat purple fish.

Big hungry whale, will you eat six purple fish?

No!
I do not eat purple fish.
Big hungry whale, will you eat seven orange fish?

No!
I do not eat orange fish.

Big hungry whale, will you eat seven orange fish?

No!
I do not eat orange fish.
Big hungry whale, what do you eat?

I do not eat fish. I do not have teeth. I eat plankton!

Big hungry whale, what do you eat?

I do not eat fish. I do not have teeth. I eat plankton!
**Common Core Standards:**

**K.RF - 3c.** Read common high frequency words by sight.

**K.RF - 3.** Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills in decoding words.

a. Demonstrate knowledge of one-to-one letter-sound corresponding by producing the primary sound or many of the most frequent sounds for each consonant.

b. Distinguish between similarly spelled words by identifying the sounds of the letters that differ.

**Directions:**

Students will read the emergent reader, pointing to each word as they read. Then they will fill in the missing sight words.
DIVER, DIVER,
WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Name:__________________________

DIVER, DIVER,
WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Name:__________________________
_________ whale under the sea.
Whale, whale, what ____ ____ ____ ____?

Whale, whale, what ____ ____ ____ ____?
Shark, shark, what ____ ____ ____ ____?

Shark, shark, what ____ ____ ____ ____?
____  ______  ____ jellyfish under the sea.

____  ______  ____ jellyfish under the sea.
Jellyfish, jellyfish, what

____  ____  ____  ____?

Jellyfish, jellyfish, what

____  ____  ____  ____?
Crab, crab, what ____  ____  ____?

Crab, crab, what ____  ____  ____?
school of fish under the sea.
APPENDIX F

Writing Activities
Writing Activities

• Blank Graphic Organizer
• Sea Turtles – Graphic Organizer
• Crabs – Graphic Organizer
• Whales – Graphic Organizer
• My Book of Ocean Animals
Common Core Standards:

K.W – 2. Use combination of drawing, dictation and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

Directions:

First, read a non-fiction book about each animal. Students will use the graphic organizer to write about what the animal practice reading whole class and individually. Blank graphic organizers have been included for students to write their own facts.

Prep:
Copy one page per student.
I know many things about

have

can

eat

This is what I know about
I know many things about sea turtles.

Sea turtles

eat

This is what I know about sea turtles.

can

have
I know many things about sea turtles.

Name:______________

Sea turtles

This is what I know about sea turtles.
Let me tell you about crabs.

Crabs

eat

can

have

This is what I know about crabs.
I know many things about crabs.

Crabs

This is what I know about crabs.
I know many things about whales.

Whales

eat

This is what I know about whales.

can

have
I know many things about whales.

This is what I know about whales.
Common Core Standards:

K.W – 2. Use combination of drawing, dictation and writing to compose informative/explanatory texts in which they name what they are writing about and supply some information about the topic.

Directions:
Publish student writing by taking the information from the graphic organizer and write a paragraph on the provided writing paper. Compile all student writing and bind to make a book.
SEA TURTLES

By: _______________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________
crabs

By: _______________________

[Blank lines for writing]
APPENDIX G

Art Activities
Ocean's of Fun
An Integrated Kindergarten Thematic Unit

Kindergarten Life Sciences Standards
- Students know how to observe and describe similarities and differences in the appearance and behavior of plants and animals
- Students know stories sometimes give plants and animals attributes they do not really have.
- Students know how to identify major structures of common plants and animals

ART Activities

- Ocean Animal Sketch Book
- Shark Directed Draw
- Dolphin Directed Draw
- Sea Turtle Directed Draw
- Fish Directed Draw
- Sea Star Directed Draw
ocean animal sketch book

California State Standards:
Students know how to identify major structures of common plants and animals

Directions:
Use the provided paper to make a sketch book. For each animal, lead a directed draw lesson. The teacher will draw one step at a time and the students will follow. When finished, label major structures.

MY OCEAN ANIMAL SKETCH BOOK

DOLPHIN

- tail
- flipper
- eye
- mouth
MY OCEAN ANIMAL SKETCH BOOK

By: ___________________________

MY OCEAN ANIMAL SKETCH BOOK

By: ___________________________
DOLPHIN

DOLPHIN
Sea Turtle
Sea Star

Sea Star
Shark directed draw

Shelves
Question answered on page 62

1. 

2. 

3. 

4.
Dolphin

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Sunlit Open Ocean

Question answered on page 62
Flowing Water

Question answered on page 42

Turtle

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

Sea turtle directed draw
Deep Water

Fish

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

Question answered on page 42
Teaching Tip on page 64
Rocky Tidelands

Starfish (Sea Star)

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6.
APPENDIX H

Animal Take-home Project
ANIMAL REPORT
HOMEWORK PROJECT

Each student will choose one of the animals from the list below to create an animal report showing his or her selected animal in a three-dimensional representation of its environment (where it lives). To create the animal report, a shoe box or other small box will be used as the space for the animal’s environment. Students may use craft materials such as clay or model magic to mold their animal. Materials such as silk or plastic plants, popsicle sticks, toothpicks, glue, construction paper, and other craft items may be used to create its environment. Be creative!

The following are suggested requirements for each animal report:

- A 3-D model of the selected animal.
- A recreation of the environment of the selected animal.

Please return your child’s animal project to school on ____________.

ANIMALS TO CHOOSE FROM:

- Shark
- Dolphin
- Whale
- Sea Turtle
- Crab
- Tropical Fish
Animal Model Project

Each student will choose one of the animals from the list below to create an animal replica showing his or her selected animal using model magic. Students may use craft materials such as clay or model magic to mold their animals. Materials such as silk or plastic plants, popsicle sticks, toothpicks, glue, construction paper, and other craft items may be also used. Have your child use toothpicks with a label attached to label the parts of the animal (head, eyes, body, etc.)

Be creative!

The following are suggested requirements for each animal report project:

- A 3-D model of the animal selected.
- Label the parts of the animal.
- Place the completed animal model on the provided card that has your child’s name on the index card.
- Completed graphic organizer about the chosen animal

Place the completed animal model on top of the provided card and place it inside of a shoebox to transport it easily to school.

Please return your child’s animal model to school on

Animals to choose from:

- Shark
- Dolphin
- Whale
- Sea Turtle
- Octopus
- Sea Horse
- Crab
- Tropical Fish
REFERENCES


*Education Week*, 25(8), 1-16. Retrieved from EBSCOhost.


