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8TH GRADE EXPEDITIONS

EXPEDITION 1: ON MY PLATE

Guiding Question: What nourishes us?

OVERVIEW:

On My Plate is a cross-curricular expedition that asks students to answer the question “what nourishes us?” The coronavirus pandemic has shown us the importance of physical, socio-emotional, and spiritual nourishment, while exacerbating the inequitable access to food and resources in communities across the country. This expedition seeks to teach students to question the root causes of this inequity and to imagine the ways that we can improve the health and nourishment of our own city.

KICK OFF:

Students complete interconnected activities related to the expedition theme in each of their classes. In science, they make observations about food nutrition labels. In English, they discuss food deserts and view the trailer of *A Place at the Table*. In history, students study cookbooks from across eras in American history and make inferences about what citizens were able to put on their plates. Then, they come together as a grade to make predictions about what they expect to learn over the course of the expedition.

EXPEDITION ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

For the assessment of learning, students explore a problem in our society that connects to the expedition theme and long term learning target, “I can advocate for the nourishment of my community.” They will seek to answer the questions, “why is access to healthy food inequitable across our city (or the country?) and “how can we make access to more nourishing food equitable in NYC?” Students will study the history of food inequity in history class and through viewing the documentary *A Place at the Table* in ELA. Using what they learn in Living Environment about hydroponic farming and the local food movement they will create a social media campaign that proposes how we can solve this problem in our community.

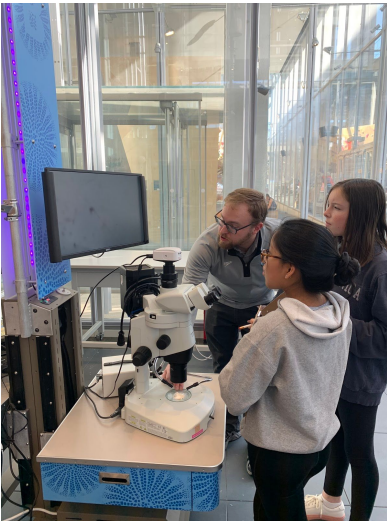
PRESENTATION OF LEARNING:

Families and community members are invited to WESS to visit and shop at our Hydroponics Farmers Market! Over the course of the expedition, students grow fresh herbs and vegetables in their Living Environment class. At the

farmers market, they share with visitors what they have learned about the urban farming process, and how it could positively impact our city. Additionally, guests listen to speeches about justice that were written in ELA, and view the social media campaigns created in the Assessment of Learning

MODIFICATIONS FOR REMOTE LEARNING LEARNING:

Students are working with Take 2 Film Academy to create short films around their social media campaigns that will be watched at a Zoom Viewing Party. Students have been provided individual hydroponics kits and are growing their own vegetables and herbs at home! We went on a “virtual” fieldwork experience via the Biobus.



English Language Arts

Case Study 1:

Long Term Learning Targets:

Guiding Questions: What nourishes us?

1. As individuals
2. As a community
3. Physically, emotionally

Assessment of Learning:

1. Poem: Least favorite/Favorite food/dish or emotion/feeling rhyming poem
2. Project: Relating the documentary A Place at the Table with current events
3. Speech: Justice as nourishment: Why do we need it? Students select which case they want to learn about and research information on it and create a speech that persuades the audience (should evoke an emotion)
4. Ice Cream Truck Companies letter: The song (maybe)
Joy 4all Project
The NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital message of appreciation
Food drive?

Case Study 2: Justice

Long Term Learning Target(s): I can evaluate whether *12 Angry Men* represents Justice.

Not confirmed yet: Students read and analyzed *12 Angry Men* and watched various videos of summation speeches. Students were given various articles that went to trial where the verdict could be deemed just or unjust.

- After reading about a case the student selected, he/she/they wrote a speech to convince the jury (their peers) that their view of the verdict is correct with an explanation of why. It must be a speech that evokes emotion.
- After writing their speech, students practiced delivering it using the speaking and presentation skills we've worked on while reading "*12 Angry Men*"

U.S. History

Case Study 1: Hungry for More

Long Term Learning Target: I can analyze the ways in which Reconstruction left the African American community hungry for more.

Guiding Question: In what ways did Reconstruction leave the African American Community hungry for more?

Assessment of Learning: Reality of Reconstruction Social Media Post

In this case study students faced the challenging history of Reconstruction and came to the conclusion that it ended with many unfinished promises. This case study had students rewrite history by creating their own textbook excerpts on Black Codes - an often underrepresented section in textbooks. Students were able to articulate what the Black Codes entailed and how they impacted the Black community. Additionally, students created a magazine feature which described and elaborated on how the Reconstruction Era was more like an era of Restoration using primary and secondary sources as their evidence. Ultimately, the case study culminated in a Social Media campaign of how the African American Community was left Hungry for More after the Reconstruction and in today's time. Students used the virtual platform Canva to create this social media campaign.

Case Study 2: I Feel It in My Bones

Long Term Learning Target: I can evaluate the impact industrialization had on the bones of American society.

Guiding Question: How did industrialization impact the bones of American society?

Assessment of Learning: Industrialization in New York City Walking Tour

In this case study, students work to investigate how the process of industrialization changed the bones of American society in regards to the physical landscape of the nation and peoples social opportunities. After determining the changes brought about by industrialization, students will evaluate if the “bones” or foundations of society are set up for a well-nourished, productive community.

Living Environment

Long Term Learning Target: I can investigate human impact on ecosystems and how that affects our food supply.

Case Study 1: Farm to Table

Guiding Question: Where does food come from?

Assessment of Learning:

We kick off this case study and expedition by foraging in Central Park to discover where food comes from, and to learn about invasive species. Students also participate in a scavenger hunt at Whole Foods where they investigate the types of food and learn about food sustainability.

Case Study 2: Chesapeake Bay

Guiding Question: How has human activity affected the Chesapeake Bay Food Web?

Assessment of Learning: Chesapeake Bay Food Web Analysis

Students analyze historic and present-day food webs and graph historic and present-day Chesapeake Bay data to learn how food web complexity is easily overlooked, and why that complexity is important for healthy ecosystems.

Case Study 3: Food Waste

Guiding Question: Why is a healthy and sustainable ecosystem important?

Assessment of Learning: Food Waste Social Media Campaign

Students create a meme or GIF about food waste. They include a resources page and an explanation of why food waste is a problem, and suggestions for solutions.

Case Study 4: Urban Farming

Guiding Question: How can urban farming increase access to healthy food for New Yorkers?

Assessment of Learning: Hydroponics WESS Farmer’s Market

Students host a farmer’s market at WESS as part of the expedition Presentation of Learning. They sell herbs and vegetables grown in our classroom and explain the process to the customers. During the farmers market, they advocate for increasing access to local foods by implementing urban farming in New York City.

Math

Case Study 1: Building Blocks of Algebra

Long Term Learning Target: I can write expressions in multiple ways so that they are equivalent.

Guiding Question: How do you simplify algebraic expressions?

Assessment of Learning: Building Blocks of Algebra Assessment

Students will be able to evaluate and simplify algebraic expressions. They will understand mathematical properties. They will add, subtract and multiply polynomials.

Case Study 2: Linear Equations

Long Term Learning Target: I can solve for an unknown variable in linear equations.

Guiding Question: How do you solve for an unknown variable in linear equations?

Assessment of Learning: Linear Equations Assessment

Students will be able to use a variety of strategies to solve for an unknown variable, building up to equations with a single variable on both sides of the equations. Students will also be able to solve for a range of a variable in an inequality. This work will expand to include students writing and solving equations and inequalities based off of real life situations (word problems) and using a variety of mathematical notations to state solutions to equalities and inequalities.

Spanish

Case Study 1: Spanish Food

Long Term Learning Target: I can identify traditional dishes from the Spanish speaking countries.

Guiding Question: What are some traditional dishes from the Spanish speaking countries?

Assessment of Learning: Menus

Students will be able to identify traditional dishes from the Spanish speaking countries. They will also compare and contrast the food they eat with the food that people eat in different Spanish speaking countries. Students will also be able to observe how food can reflect our culture.

Case Study 2: El Mercado

Long Term Learning Target: I can compare El Mercado with the Supermarket.

Guiding Question: How can we compare El Mercado with the Supermarket?

Assessment of Learning: El Mercado vs. Supermarket

Students will learn about El Mercado. They will identify the food products that are sold in different mercados in the spanish speaking countries. After learning about El Mercado, they will be able to compare El Mercado with the Supermarket.

EXPEDITION 2: LIVING A LEGACY

Guiding Question: How do we leave a legacy?

KICK OFF:

Students were introduced to the idea of facing a legacy at a screening of the movie *42* at the Times Center. They then explored thoughtful questions about their own legacy and what kind of mark they want to leave behind through a deeper exploration of the themes of *42* across classrooms.

PRESENTATION OF LEARNING

In English, students read the memoir *Facing the Lion: Growing up Massai on the African Savanna*, written by Joseph Lemasolai Lekuton, and watched the documentary *God Grew Tired of Us*, directed by Christopher Dillon Quinn

and Tommy Walker. Inspired by the Legacies of the memoir's author and the documentary's subject, students then formed different groups to design and carry out a fundraising project to raise money for the Kenya Education Fund and John Dau Foundation. They broke out into filmmaking, social media, marketing, graphic art, and web design teams and engaged in a fundraising effort culminating in a charity auction organized by students and attended by representatives from the Kenya Education fund, parents, and other community members.



Case Study 1: Lost Boys

Long Term Learning Target: I can use details from a text to determine its theme or central idea.

Guiding Questions:

1. How do you live a legacy?
2. How can you keep your cultural traditions alive?
3. Why do people migrate and immigrate?
4. *Where did the term "The American Dream" come from?

Assessment of Learning:

The learning expedition explores the life of Joseph & 3 Lost Boys of Sudan and their difficult journey. The themes retaining cultural identity, cultural shock, poverty, racism, being a refugee, forming relationships, family and loss. The men immigrated to the U.S. in the 90s. The learning expedition is centered around how do you create a legacy based off of your life experiences.

Case Study 2: My Legacy

Long Term Learning Targets:

1. I can craft well supported arguments.
2. I can develop my writing by planning, revising, or trying a new approach.

Guiding Questions:

1. How does a theme develop over the course of a novel?
2. How does a character develop over the course of their novel?

Assessment of Learning:

Using the memoir Facing the Lion: Growing Up Maasai on the African Savanna written by Joseph Lemasolai Lekuton and the documentary notes on God Grew Tired of Us directed by Christopher Dillon Quinn & Tommy Walker, students responded to the following prompt and a guiding question of their choice: A legacy is a gift or a bequest, that is handed down, endowed or conveyed from one person to another. It is something descendible one comes into possession of that is transmitted, inherited or received from a predecessor. A legacy does not have to be something tangible or monetary. A legacy can be a life lesson or moral that can sometimes withstand the test of time. It can come from an author or just learning something from someone else's story.

U.S. HISTORY

Case Study 1: The Clash of Prosperity and Depression

Long Term Learning Target: I can compare and contrast aspects of prosperity and depression in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s.

Guiding Question: How did the clash of prosperity and depression leave a legacy in American culture?

Assessment of Learning: Prosperity and Depression Comparative Podcast

In this case study students compared and contrasted the 1920s and 1930s. This exploration culminated in the creation of a podcast in which groups created interviews between one individual from the 1920s and one from the 1930s. The podcasts were recorded and the students enjoyed taking a day to listen to each others' podcasts!

Case Study 2: America at War

Long Term Learning Targets:

1. I can compare the main differences between the World Wars
2. I can describe how they changed the idea of American citizenship.

Guiding Question: How did the idea of an American citizen change throughout the World Wars?

Assessment of Learning: Regents DBQ Essay

In this case study, students explored the World Wars and worked on their Document Based Essay skills. They were specifically thinking about how the wars shaped individual experiences of American citizenship. Throughout the case study we worked to improve our document analysis skills by exploring primary source narratives and images from this important historical time period.

Case Study 3: The Cold War

Long Term Learning Target: I can analyze the issues faced by the United States throughout the Cold War.

Guiding Question: How did the Cold War shape the U.S. postwar foreign relations?

Assessment of Learning: Regents Thematic Essay

In this case study students sequentially analyzed the various events that comprised the tense period of the Cold War. Students simultaneously practiced tackling a Regents Thematic Essay. As their final assessment students practiced a timed, full Cold War-related Thematic Essay.

LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Case Study 1: Henrietta Lacks

Long Term Learning Target: I can investigate how science advances. I can understand the structure and function of cells.

Guiding Question: Who should own our cells?

Assessment of Learning: Who owns our cells? Socratic Seminar

Students read experts of the Henrietta Lacks book to understand how scientists used her cells to make scientific advances, and to understand and debate scientific ethics. Students also learn why Henrietta's cells were so special to begin with. Students conducted fieldwork at the Biobase Harlem where they investigated single celled and multicellular organisms. For the Socratic Seminar, students gathered research from several sources and found evidence to support their claim about who should own our cells.

MATH

Case Study 1: Functions

Long Term Learning Target: I can identify and analyze functions represented in multiple ways.

Guiding Question: How do I identify and read information from functions?

Assessment of Learning: Introduction to Functions Assessment

Students will be able to define the rules that qualify a function, and identify examples and nonexamples of functions. Students will then graph different types of functions, and use those graphs to analyze/determine different pieces of information. Further along, students will be able to evaluate functions, using specific function vocabulary, and then use these evaluations to calculate the average rate of change of a function.

Case Study 2: Linear Functions and Special Types of Functions

Long Term Learning Target: I can represent and interpret linear functions and special types of functions as equations, tables, graphs and stories.

Guiding Question: How do I represent linear functions and special types of functions as equations, tables, graphs and stories?

Assessment of Learning: Linear Functions and Special Types of Functions Assessment

Students will be able to graph linear functions in slope intercept form . They will write the equation of a line when given coordinates and calculate the slope. They will graph linear inequalities and determine the solution set. They will graph square root functions, absolute value functions, and exponential functions. They will evaluate and create explicit and recursive sequences.

CASE STUDIES

U.S. HISTORY

Case Study: Globalization

Long Term Learning Target: I can explain the range of implications of the 9/11 attacks on modern American history.

Guiding Question: How did 9/11 shape American modern history?

Assessment of Learning: Globalization Map

Students explore ways in which our society has changed economically, politically and socially since the 9/11 attacks. Students conclude this case study by mapping effects on different countries and drawing connections between them.

LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Case Study: Dolly the Sheep

Long Term Learning Target: I can understand the relationship between DNA, heredity, and genetics.

Guiding Question: What makes you who you are? Should cloning be allowed?

Assessment of Learning: Inherited Traits Lab

Dolly the Sheep was the first clone of an adult mammal. In this case study, students learn about the development of cells, reproduction, and how genetic information is passed along. They also learn about genetic engineering. We complete fieldwork at the Biobase and also the Sackler Lab in the Museum of Natural History.

MATH

Case Study: Systems of Equations

Long Term Learning Target: I can interpret and represent systems of equations in multiple ways.

Guiding Question: How do I solve for multiple variables in a system of equations?

Assessment of Learning: System of Equations Assessment

Students will be able to graph and read a graph to solve systems of equations (primarily linear equations). Students will then be able to use the substitution and elimination methods to algebraically solve a system of equations for multiple variables. Students will then begin their work with systems of inequalities, using graphs (with proper symbolization and shading) to solve systems of inequalities. Furthermore, students will use these skills to model and solve real world problems that contain multiple variables.

EXPEDITION 3: PASSAGES- THE PATHWAY TO PROGRESS

Guiding Question: How do we make progress?

KICK OFF: “ESCAPE THE ROOM”

Students participate in an “Escape the Room” style game in each of their classes. They are given folders of problems to solve and each time they solve it, they move on to the next problem. After each solved problem they get a piece of a clue. If they get all the clues, they might have enough information to escape the evil test proctor!

PRESENTATION OF LEARNING - PASSAGE PRESENTATIONS

Students gave presentations that examined their three years of middle school at WESS and how they’ve grown. They explored their own passage from 6th grade through to the end of 8th grade by examining four distinct pieces of work from the past 3 years and explained their process of learning and how they have grown. Additionally,, students explored one non-academic skill and how the growth of that skill contributed to their personal growth. Finally, students wrote a personal narrative and presented all of this in a 30 minute speech followed by a panel discussion to their family, teachers, and chosen students.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Case Study 1: The House on Mango Street

Long Term Learning Target(s): I can evaluate how the *House on Mango Street* explores personal identity.

Guiding Question(s): How does *The House on Mango Street* tell a story of personal identity?

Assessment of Learning:

Students wrote a thematic essay about The House on Mango Street responding to one of the following prompts. (1) You must know who you are to find your inner strength is a theme that runs through The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros. Use the story elements to provide evidence and analysis to support this theme. (2) Using different story elements of the text, please explain the mood and tone in the novella. (3) How is the following statement made by Sandra Cisneros a positive and/or a negative comment? “Some people don’t have any contact with Latino life except maybe this book. The most intimate relationship they have with the Latino community is reading this book.” (4) The author uses various poetic techniques to share her views. How does figurative language enrich the text?

Case Study 2: Passages

Long Term Learning Targets:

1. I can evaluate my progress and process of learning over the past 3 years at WESS.
2. I can present my passage to an authentic audience using speaking and listening skills.

Guiding Questions:

1. In what way did you approach your work differently than other students and adults?
2. What one thing do you particularly want people to notice when they look at your work?
3. How did consider different problem solving strategies?
4. In what ways have our school’s core values contributed to your work?
5. Did you view failure as an opportunity to learn? Why or why not?

Assessment of Learning:

Using the way personal identity was examined through The House on Mango Street as a model, students developed their own personal narratives and wrote their passage presentations. Using the above guiding questions as well as other, more work-specific questions, students embarked on a deep exploration of their academic and personal selves and how they have developed as students and people during their time at WESS.

U.S. HISTORY

Case Study: Regents Review

Long Term Learning Target: I can prepare for my U.S. History Regents exam.

Assessment of Learning: U.S. History Regents Exam

Students reviewed all of the content from 7th and 8th grade US History in preparation for the Regents exam.

LIVING ENVIRONMENT

Case Study 1: Making Connections

Long Term Learning Target: I can understand how scientists look for patterns and make connections.

Guiding Question: How does science advance?

Assessment of Learning: Making Connections Lab Report

Students design and conduct a class experiment investigating the connection between activity level and clothespin squeeze rate. At the end, they write the lab up in a lab report.

Case Study 2: Mock Regents Analysis

Long Term Learning Target: I can use data from my mock Regents to make progress toward the final Regents.

Guiding Question: How can we use strategies and our knowledge and apply it to Regents questions?

Assessment of Learning: Mock Regents Analysis Packet

Students analyse their mock Regents in order to determine what targets they still need to master. Students conduct fieldwork when the Biobus comes to visit and focuses on lab skills and Regents prep.

MATH

Case Study: Factoring Polynomials

Long Term Learning Target: I can factor polynomials.

Guiding Question: How do you factor polynomials?

Assessment of Learning: Factoring Polynomials Assessment

Students will write polynomials in standard form. Students will be able to factor polynomials by taking out a GCF. They will factor trinomials when $a=1$ and $a>1$. They will factor polynomials that are a difference of perfect squares. They will factor completely until all polynomial factors are prime. Students will choose the best method for factoring based on the problem.

Case Study 2: Quadratic Equations

Long Term Learning Target: I can analyze and solve quadratic equations.

Guiding Question: How do I find the zeroes of a quadratic function and what does that represent in the context of the problem?

Assessment of Learning: Quadratic Functions Assessment

Students will be able to use the basic skills they learned in the previous functions unit to graph quadratic equations, and identify the key features of a quadratic function. Students will then use the factoring skills they learned in the previous unit, as well as a variety of new strategies, to identify the zeroes of a quadratic function. This work will be extrapolated heavily to modeling and solving real world problems that are modeled through quadratic functions.