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Social Studies Methods

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Inquiry Lesson Plan

INTRODUCTION

Grade Level: 1st Grade

Learning Activities:

- Students will produce a KWL with their whole class and their teacher.
- The teacher will read *On the Town* by Judith Casely.
- Students will develop a class hypothesis about the various areas in their local community.
- Students will tour their local community (i.e., their school, neighborhood, and downtown area) through a teacher-made slide show.
- Students will take notes about what they see during the teacher-made slide show about their local community.
- Students will revise the class hypothesis as they take notes.
- Students will fill out a Venn diagram with the differences and similarities of their school, neighborhood, and the downtown area in small groups.
- Students will tell the teacher what they learned about their community as they help their teacher produce the “L” part of their KWL.

Purpose of the lesson: Students are studying about their local community (i.e., neighborhood and school). To help them develop a greater understanding about their local community, the teacher has decided to give an inquiry lesson about the similarities and differences of various areas students see in their local community (i.e., neighborhood, school, and downtown area).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Utah Core Standards: “Students will recognize and describe how schools and neighborhoods are both similar and different” as they “recognize and describe examples of differences within school and neighborhood” (Utah Core Standards for First Grade Social Studies, Standard 1, Objective 1).

Content Goal:

- Students will be able to analyze data sets as they write information about various areas in their local community in their journals individually.
- Students will be able to compare and contrast various areas in their local community from these data sets as fill out a Venn diagram in small groups.

INTEGRATION

Reading: The teacher will read *On the Town* by Judith Casely. Students will apply the activity they see in the book as they tour their local community in a teacher-made slide show and take notes about what they see.

Writing: Students will take notes about what they see in their local community as they apply their knowledge of making sentences (i.e., a sentence begins with an upper-case letter and ends with a period). Students also use their knowledge of making lists as they fill-out a Venn diagram (i.e., a list has a title, things on the list do not begin with an upper-case letter or end with a period, and things on a list are usually numbered).

RESOURCES

Time allotted: Two class periods

Materials:

- *On the Town* by Judith Casely
- White Board
- White Board markers
- Projector
- Projection Screen
- Slide Show
- 26 Pencils
- 26 Notebooks
- 8 Venn diagrams (1 per small group)

Room Setup: Students are in their normal groups of five, with one group of six, in desk clusters during the KWL and slide show presentation. However, for the small group work, students will move their desks to make 6 groups of three and 2 groups of four.

ENGAGEMENT

- The teacher will ask her students “What is a community?”
- Students will produce a KWL with their whole class by telling their teacher to write on the white board what they know about their community and what they want to learn about their community (the “L” portion of the KWL will be left for the conclusion part of the lesson).
- The teacher will read *On the Town* by Judith Casely.
- The teacher will ask, “Are their different areas in the same community?”
- Students will chorus: “Yes.”
- The teacher will also ask, “Are all these areas in the community the same or are there differences between them?”
- Some students will say: “Yes,” while others say: “No,” or “I don’t know.”
- Students will be able to analyze data sets as they write information about various areas in their local community in their journals individually.
- Students will be able to compare and contrast various areas in their local community from these data sets as fill out a Venn diagram in small groups.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

- The teacher will say: “We are now going to decide what our hypothesis will be about the different areas in our community. Remember a hypothesis is our best guess, so what is our best guess about all the areas? Are all the areas of our community the same or are there differences between them?”
- The teacher will write one the board the class’s hypothesis (i.e., either that students think all the areas in a community are the same or there are differences between them).

DATA SETS

- Teacher assistants will pass out journals and pencils to each student in the class.
- Students will write the title *Hypothesis* on the first page of their journal and under the title write the class hypothesis that is on the board.
- The teacher will reference the book *On the Town* by Judith Casely, and students will view the teacher-made slide show and write notes in their journals about what they see (on the

slide show there will be four data sets: an oral history from a person in their local community, a map of all the areas discussed in their community, newspaper articles about each area discussed in their community, and pictures of all areas discussed in their community).

HYPOTHESIS REVISION

- After viewing each data set in the slide show, the teacher will ask if the students want to revise their hypothesis (since there are four data sets, students will have a chance to revise their hypothesis four times).
- If any revisions are made, the revised hypothesis will be written on the board for students to write in their journals under the title *Revised Hypothesis*.

CONCLUSION

- The teacher will ask, “From our data collection and analysis, are all the areas of our community the same or are there differences between them?”
- Students will fill out a Venn diagram with a small group to show the similarities and differences between their neighborhood, their school, and the downtown area.
- Students will tell the teacher what they learned about their community as they help their teacher produce the “L” part of their KWL.

DIFFERENTIATION

Activity Simplified: Those students who find it hard to take notes on their own will be given Essential Questions to glue in their journal to help them take notes during the teacher-made slide show.

Essential Questions:

- On a walk to school, what do you see in your neighborhood?
- At school, what do you see?
- When you are downtown, what do you see?
- How are your neighborhood, school, and downtown area the same?
- What is different about your neighborhood as compared to your school?
- What is different about your neighborhood as compared to the downtown area?

- What is different about your school as compared to the downtown area?

Also, after the teacher-made slide show, students will help each other fill out the Venn diagram in their small groups.

Activity Challenged: Those students who need more of a challenge will be required to produce at least three essential questions about their local community and write them in their journal before the teacher-made slide show. During the teacher-made slide show, these students will write the answers to their essential questions in their journal.

ELL Considerations: Those students who are English Language Learners will be asked to only write down the hypothesis written on the board, any hypothesis revisions written on the board, and draw what they see during the teacher-made slide show.