Developing Place and Culture-Based Curriculum

Grand Ronde Basketry
Presented at InField, University of Oregon, June 29-July 2 2010
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Culture and Place-Based Goal: Foster community connections to traditional lifeways

Objectives (outcome hopes):

• Introduce basketry to children and adults to foster respect for traditional lifeways and to carry them into the present and future.

• Children and adults will be given the opportunity of gathering, processing, and weaving with traditional materials.
What is a Thematic Unit?

According to www.funderstanding.com - “Thematic instruction is the organization of a curriculum around macro “themes”. Thematic instruction integrates basic disciplines like reading, math, and science with the exploration of a broad subject, such as communities, rain forests, river basins, the use of energy, and so on.

Sample Themes: Vessels, Journeys, Sustenance, Water, Ceremony, Oral tradition, Governance, Land, Animal life
5 Reasons to Use Thematic Units

1. Demonstrates the interdisciplinary nature of learning
2. Increases student interest in learning
3. Expands your assessment strategies
4. Utilizes collaborative and cooperative learning
5. Focuses the learner on the mastery of objectives

This thematic unit model is based on those found in Ch. 13, “Literature and the Curriculum: A Thematic Approach,” of Legacies: Using Children’s Literature in the Classroom by Liz Rothlein and Anita Meyer Meinbach.
A Curriculum guides us in deciding:

- What to teach
- The sequence of our lessons
- The timing of our lessons
- The activities we will use
- The materials (people, resources needed)

Excerpt from Designing Curriculum Handbook 8

Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series
What is Place and Culture-Based Curriculum?

Definition 1

A place-based educational approach grounds curriculum and lessons in students’ experiences in local events and places, and acknowledges that learning happens not only in formal educational setting but also outside of school in families and communities. This reinforces connections to one’s home, family, community and world. Included components can be the cultural, historical, social, religious and/or economic relevance of specifics locations or areas. (Note that the terms place-based and culturally/community-based overlap; we use place-based as a cover term here.)
What is Place and Culture-Based Curriculum Continued...

Definition 2

Several distinctive characteristics can be used to describe to this developing field of practice:

(a) it emerges from the particular attributes of place,

(b) it is inherently multidisciplinary,

(c) it is inherently experiential,

(d) it is reflective of an educational philosophy that is broader than “learning to earn”, and

(e) it connects place with self and community.

What is Place and Culture-Based Curriculum Continued..

With the standardization of curriculum across the United States, place and culture-based curriculum is a means of incorporating local communities into school curriculum. Indigenous people risk the loss of their traditional ways of knowing and doing due to a larger non-indigenous dominant culture.

Because each community is unique, the creation of place and culture-based curriculum may take different forms.

What would culture and place-based curriculum be for you in your communities?

Here are some things to consider:

The sample basketry curriculum presented here assumes that those working with it are literate in the language (Chinuk Wawa in this case) and have access to technology – computers, cameras and video equipment.

1. What if your language is not written?
Things to consider:

2. and your access to technology is limited?

3. What if your community is decentralized making it difficult to meet as a group for classes and activities?

*Pair work: Discuss: What is your situation?*
How to get started

Pick a team
Brainstorm
Pick a theme
Establish goals
Decide on topics
Brainstorm!
Brainstorm!
Brainstorm!
Picking a Team

Language Teachers
Elders
Master teachers from the community
Language Specialists
Education Specialists (Science, math, literature, stories, art, music, etc.)
Technology Specialists (Documentation, materials development)
Public school administrators and teachers
Parents

Excerpt from Designing Curriculum Handbook 8 Pg. 6
Awakening Our Languages: ILI Handbook Series

Pair Work – Who would be on your team?
What is Brainstorming?

• A method of shared problem solving in which all members of a group spontaneously contribute ideas.

• A similar process undertaken by a person to solve a problem by rapidly generating a variety of possible solutions.
Brainstorming Grand Ronde Basketry for School Curriculum

Math
Counting weavers
Counting sticks needed for a weaving project.
Understanding concept of “every other one.”
Geometric basket designs
Estimation
Even / Odd

Social Studies / History
Use of baskets in earlier times.
Current use of baskets.
Basket weavers past and present
Influence of outside communication on traditional basketry
More Brainstorming

Stories / Literature
- Pictorial biography of a basket weaver - Hattie Hudson
- *We Go Gather*
- Story about giving back to nature when taking from it
- *Basket woman* (traditional story)

Art
- Symmetry
- Form and function
- Traditional design
- Present day design

Music
- Gathering Song

NILI - Developing Place and Culture-based Curriculum
http://pages.uoregon.edu/nwili/resources
More Brainstorming

Science

Where to harvest
When to harvest
How to harvest
Charring sticks for bark removal
Best harvest management practices for guaranteeing future basket materials
Leaching
Boiling
Dyeing
Processing materials
Why some materials work and others don’t for basketry
Experiment with materials

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Basketry is part of the theme “Vessels.”

Hazel is a unit to be studied under the theme of basketry.

A unit is a collection of topics related to one another.

Gathering, processing and weaving are topics under the hazel unit.

An activity is what you have your students do to learn about hazel.
Brainstorming

- Brainstorm a theme.
- Brainstorm the theme goals.
- Brainstorm the topics that support the theme.
- Brainstorm the activities that support the topics.

In the field of education, brainstorming may be organized in a graphic web.
Getting Support Grants/Funds

- What resources do you need to make it happen (people) (materials)?
- Where will the funds come from?
- Who will benefit from the curriculum?
- What will the final products be?
- What learning outcomes are desired? Short and long term
What is a Unit? Topic? Activity?

- Basketry is part of the **theme** “Vessels.”
- Hazel is a **unit** to be studied under the **theme** of basketry.
- A **unit** is a collection of **topics** related to one another.
- Gathering, processing and weaving are **topics** under the hazel **unit**.
- An **activity** is what you have your students do to learn about hazel.

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Sample Activities for the Hazel Unit

**Topic - Gathering hazel**
- Recognize hazel in the winter without its leaves.
- Identify branches that are ready to be harvested.

**Topic - Processing hazel**
- Soak branches in the river.
- Scorch the branches.
- Peel hazel branches
What is a Scope and Sequence?

It is a plan that includes the content of what will be taught, when it will be taught and the activities used for the teaching.
Hazel and Juncus Scope and Sequence

Year 1 - Gather/Process

Gathering Activities

February

- Read the storybook about gathering different materials (K-5)
- Invite tribal elder to tell the story of the first cedar basket (K-5)
  - Read story about giving something back, illustrated by kindergarteners (K-5)
- Gather hazel with children
- Read the gathering hazel storybook after having gathered
- Gather hazel with adults
**September**
- Gather juncus with children
- Gather juncus with adults
- “Trial and Error Materials” lesson K-5
- “Fading Grass” lesson K-5

**Processing Activities**

**February**
- Peel hazel with children
- “Singe and soak hazel” with adults
- “Dyeing Pipe cleaners” lesson
Year 2 - Weave

**Weaving activities**

*November December January February*

- Moisture causes flexibility lesson K-5
- Construction paper weaving with the children
- Paper cup weaving with children (plaiting)
- Pot holder plaiting
- Make pipe cleaner baskets with children (twining)
- Weave cattail coasters with children (plaiting)
- Practice plaiting on large spoke weaving board with rope
- Make pipe cleaner baskets with children (twining)
- Weave cell phone juncus pouches with Canoe Family (twining)

* If there are materials on hand, a 2 year sequence would not be required
Lesson Plans

Simple Lesson Plan Form

**Objectives:** What do you want students to do/learn by the end of this lesson?

**Outline:** What are you and the students going to do for each part of the lesson?

**Cultural Component:**

**Assessment:** How can students show what they’re learning?

**Materials/Preparation:** What advance arrangements need to be made?

**Necessary Vocabulary:** What vocabulary will you have to teach or review?
Objectives: What do you want students to do/learn by the end of this lesson?

- Understand that baskets are an important part of Grand Ronde culture.
- Know what materials are used in creating a traditional basket.
- Be able to identify a few different weaving materials.
- Understand that non-indigenous materials are used in making baskets too.
- Be able to recite the little mnemonic about materials
  
  sedges have
  
  grasses grow round
  
  hazel sticks are zig-zaggy whips

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Lesson Plan Outline

Outline: What are you and the students going to do for each part of the lesson?
1. Show traditional Grand Ronde baskets of both juncus and hazel.
2. Show a coastal basket made from sweetgrass sedge
3. Show a Grand Ronde basket made with rattan.
4. Introduce the concept that different materials have different merits.
   Hazel is strong but lots of work to gather
   Juncus is not as strong but easy to weave and easy to gather
   Rattan is purchased, foregoes gathering, and very uniform.
5. Show strength difference
   gather bundles of juncus and hazel, 12 sticks ~16 inches long
   grasp the bundles firmly with both hands ~2 inches apart
   demonstrate how much stronger the hazel is than the juncus
   let students try for themselves.
6. Introduce the mnemonic:
   - sedges have edges
   - grasses grow round
   - hazel sticks are zig-zaggy whips

7. Identifying materials
   - Take 1 stick of Sweetgrass, Juncus (grass), and unpeeled Hazel and put in a bag.
   - Reach into the bag without looking and grasp 1 stick.
   - Say the mnemonic, feel the stick, and announce which stick you have.
   - Pull stick out of bag to show if you were right.
   - Have students do the same.
Cultural Component:
Talk about baskets being made for sale to tourists. Explain why rattan was often used because it is cheap and doesn't require gathering.

Assessment: How can students show what they're learning?
Have students recite the materials mnemonic.
Materials/Preparation: What advance arrangements need to be made? Hazel sticks, Juncus, Sweetgrass, and Rattan samples. Bags for concealing the sticks.

Chinuk-wawa vocabulary:
- upqwəna
- taqwəla-stik
- upqwəna-tipsu
- munk-upqwəna
- skukum
- munk-upťliki
Sample Storybooks

- Gathering Hazel Shoots
- ntsayka Ɂatwa xuqʰən
- Gathering Hazel
Basketry Storybooks

- Storybooks, created by students and elders, enhance classroom materials and place-based curriculum. The following 3 examples show 2 books illustrated by an elder and one with photographs of actual plants and places on the reservation.
Gathering Hazel Shoots

Jeanne Johnson

Funding for this book was provided by a grant from the Spirit Mountain Community Fund 2009
kʰapa chxi-wam-iliʔi hayash win chaku. uk win mash nayka tipsu-pulali kʰanawi-qʰa. alta hayu tənas łaska ũap nayka. ixt munk-kəmtəks-tilixam yaka munk-nanich łaska nayka chxi stik-lima. yułqat pi dret łaska.
ntsayka ḥatwa
χυʔhәn

Pam Cardenas, Jeanne Johnson,
Misty Thorsgard, Jerome Viles
kʰapa chxi-kʰul-ilíʔi ntsayka ḋatwa kʰapa tsəqʷ pus iskam upqwəna-tipsu.
Gathering Hazel
taqwəla-stik kʰapa
katsaq
wam-iliʔi

miłayt pʰil
łuchmən-tatis,
pus chxi chaku
chxi-wam-iliʔi
makwst chxi taqwəla kikwəli kʰapa iɫwəli-skin


tənəs ɬluyma uk bastən-iliʔi taqwəla-stik, nim "filbert". kʰapa uk "filbert", taqwəla-iɫwəli miłayt kʰəpit sitkum-ipsət kikwəli kʰapa iɫwəli-skin. pus ukuk shawash taqwəla-stik pi ukuk bastən-iliʔi taqwəla-stik miłayt ixt-ixt, ałqi kʰanumakwst ɫaska munk chxi "sitkum-shawash" taqwəla-stik.