

Overview

Planning

Colonial Perspectives
Project

Assessment

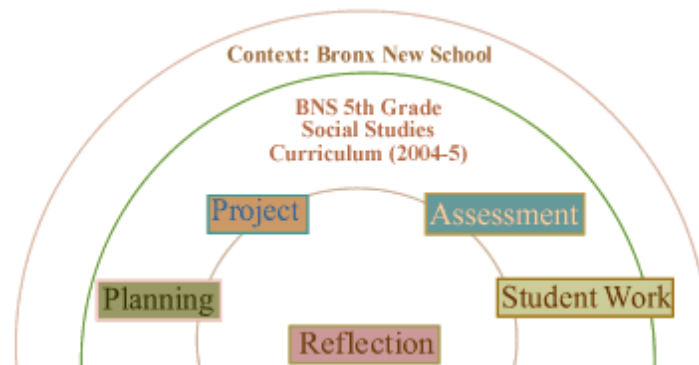
Reflection

Martha Andrews
5th Grade5th Grade Social
Studies Curriculum

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A 5th Grade Unit on Colonial New York: Developing Perspectives through Historic Role Play



This website documents the evolution of a 14 week project on Colonial New York in Martha Andrews' 5th grade classroom. This project builds on the New York Standards for social studies and focuses particularly on helping students:

- appreciate that different people have different and valid perspectives on a given situation because of their background and life experiences.

- understand that there are a variety of ways to influence the opinions of others.

The website presents Andrew's initial plan for the project, shows how the project unfolds, and documents three days towards the end of the project. The site includes excerpts from interviews and reflections with Andrews and Beverly Falk, a teacher educator who observed several days of the project. Falk is currently a Professor at City College.

Rather than highlighting "best practices", the site seeks to provide an authentic slice of life of a teacher who is continually inquiring about her practice and using what she learns from her inquiry to deepen, develop, and refine her work. While the site captures many aspects of teaching and learning in Andrew's classroom, it focuses on the way that Andrews adjusts, adapts and expands her initial curriculum plan in order to meet her students' needs. It also provides a glimpse of how Andrews' adjustments are informed by formal and informal efforts to assess what her students are learning and to reflect on the progress of the project. This inquiry and planning process serves as a model of the kind of learning she wants her students to engage in. The model involves generating questions that, once investigated, produce judgments based on evidence. It also involves helping students to understand others' perspectives. All of this ultimately leads to the awakening of still more questions for the learner to pursue.

About this website: This website has been created for the purpose of exploring the practice of teaching. It has grown out of work that Thomas Hatch and colleagues started with the Knowledge Media Lab at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and is being continued at NCREST, The National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools and Teaching, based at Teachers College, Columbia University.