

Muscatine Millennium

by
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INTRODUCTION

*W*ith the approaching new millennium, what a better time for students, teachers and community to reflect on changes that have occurred in their communities and make some predictions about what is to come. Working together, teachers, the library media specialist, the school principal, parents and community leaders can develop a shared vision to promote student learning. Staff development opportunities, collaborative planning sessions between library media specialists and teachers, support from the principal, adequate support staff involvement, and district and community interest and involvement will all combine in providing the best educational opportunities for our students.

A very important component of the program at Washington Elementary School in Muscatine is to provide **user education** – teaching students and staff members to be independent, effective users of information tools and resources. I try to remain current on curriculum units teachers are developing and I am most anxious to collaborate with them on any unit.

Information and technology skills are most meaningful when taught within a subject area, within an inter-disciplinary unit, or within a unit which addresses an authentic, real-life need or problem. Careful planning and cooperation among all teachers and media specialists are essential. *Student achievement* is the bottom line!

The following teaching unit focusing on the history of Muscatine, Iowa provides a concrete illustration of collaboration between the media specialist and the classroom teacher. This unit relies upon inductive teaching methodologies that encourage students to use online resources, local library materials as well as community resources to investigate the history of Muscatine.

INVESTIGATING MUSCATINE HISTORY USING SOCIAL STUDIES, LANGUAGE ARTS, INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS, AND COMPUTER/TECHNOLOGY SKILLS

GRADES 3-5

Library Media Skills Objectives:

- The student will use print reference materials from both the Washington Elementary School Media Center and the Musser Public Library, Internet sources and field trips to research a specific topic of Muscatine history.
- The students will use technology tools and software: digital camera, Internet resources, word processing; Hyper-Studio, Power Point

Language Arts Objectives:

- The student will learn and practice interviewing techniques.
- The students will prepare a script for a video presentation of an oral interview.
- The students will prepare, rehearse and present oral reports.
- The students will discuss journaling techniques and begin journaling activities.

Social Studies Objectives:

- The student will make hypotheses about unknown objects in old photographs.
- The student will make observations about 19th century life using old photographs of local street scenes, buildings and monuments.
- The student will interview older citizens in the community focussing on different issues such as work, family or schools in earlier times.
- The student will study historical maps of the state and community to find evidence of changes in industry, settlement and change from earlier times to today and form conclusions about causes.
- The student will read first hand accounts of historical events and analyze how these accounts enrich the understanding of the historical events.
- The student will research the history of local buildings and popular sites in the community and compare their earlier years with their current status.
- The student will combine research with other students in the class to create a slide show about Muscatine.

Resources:

Print

- Reference books, archival photographs, maps, etc. in the Washington Elementary School Media Center and the Musser Public Library

Non-Print

- Early Settlers Page
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamuscat/settlers.htm>
Discusses name change of town
- "A Letter Home" September 26, 1849
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamuscat/letter.htm>
Woman writing to family in East; describes her family
- Article - January 20, 1899
<http://www.rock-island.org/mnands/train/>
Reprint of Muscatine Journal article describing first run of train

- Welcome to Muscatine County <http://www.iowa-counties.com/muscatine/index.shtml>
This site has MANY links to information about Muscatine including government, historical, schools and towns, and maps.
- The Iowa Civil War Site <http://iowa-counties.com/civilwar/index.shtml> Links to other Civil War sites; photos, letters, journals, diaries, oral accounts,
- History of Iowa <http://iowa-counties.com/historical/index.shtml>
- Muscatine County History <http://iowa-counties.com/historical/index.shtml>
- Name/Date/Source of Origin of Iowa's Counties <http://www.iowa-counties.com/historical/namnum.shtml>
- Cultural History of Iowa <http://iowa-counties.com/historical/index.shtml>
- Today in History <http://iowa-counties.com/historical/index.shtml>
- Muscatine Chamber of Commerce <http://www.muscatine.com/>
- Muscatine Weather <http://www.wunderground.com/US/IA/Muscatine.html>
- Muscatine County Genealogy Home Page <http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/index.html>
- Muscatine County, Iowa Biographies
<http://cgi.rootsweb.com/~genbbs/genbbs.cgi/USA/Ia/MuscatineBios>
- More Muscatine County, Iowa Biographies
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/biomix.htm>
- Muscatine County Abstracts from *Andreas' 1875 Atlas of Iowa*
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/andreas.htm>

- 1875 List of Business Patrons <http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/business.htm>
- History of Muscatine County <http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/history.htm>
- Muscatine and the Pearl Button Industry <http://www.greatriver.com/pearls.htm>
- Muscatine County Newspaper Clippings <http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/clips.htm>
- Letters 1919 <http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/letter2.htm>
- Letters 1840 <http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/letter.htm>
- Current Muscatine County Map <http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/maps.htm>
- 1836 Muscatine County Early Boundary Map <http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/1836m.htm>
- Soldier's Monument http://www.rootsweb.com/~iamusca2/war_mon.htm

Instructional Roles:

- The classroom teachers and the library media specialist work cooperatively on this unit.
- The classroom teacher introduces the students to the millennium and overview of local Muscatine history.
- The media specialist introduces the students to print and non-print resources, instructs the students in the use of the needed technology and tools (HyperStudio, Power Point, digital camera, word processing, video camera, etc.).

- The classroom teacher and library media specialist collaborate in planning, executing and evaluating the activities chosen to celebrate the Muscatine Millennium.
- This unit may be taught over the entire school year celebrating the millennium.

Activities and Procedures:

Activity 1: After the introductory activities/lessons on Millennium, Muscatine history, the students will study old photographs of the community in earlier days. The students will give an oral description of the sights, sounds and smells that surround the scene presenting evidence from the photograph itself and other sources about the time period. These presentations will be videotaped and presented to other students, parents and community.

Activity 2: The students will work in small groups, review and practice interviewing techniques, write an interview script and interview senior citizens of the community focussing on questions about work, schools and families in earlier years. The combined class interviews will be assembled in a historical documentary and presented in either a multi-media, video or online format.

Activity 3: The students will work in small groups and study historical maps of the state and community to find evidence of changes in industry, settlement and change. The students will prepare chronological timelines of important events and changes in the community including industry, transportation, schools, buildings, family life.

Activity 4: The students will read journal articles, biographies, letters and diaries about the earlier residents of the community. They will reflect on how the first-hand accounts give more information about historical events. The students will begin keeping their own journals with an emphasis on including current events topics in their entries.

Activity 5: The students will research historic buildings, parks, cemeteries and/or monuments. They will photograph the structures using a digital camera. The students will compare and contrast the current structures with past descriptions and photographs. The students will create either print reports, hyper-studio stacks or power point slide shows describing the changes.

Activity 6: The students will prepare a time capsule.

Evaluation: Teachers and library media specialist will collaborate in creating rubrics for activities selected.

Follow-Up:

- All-school commitment to read 2000 books during school year
- Individual student research of "Favorite World Figure" during past two millennia. Reasons supporting choice.
- Structured teaching of significant dates in Muscatine history, US history, World history, etc. A timeline framework of significant dates will be established. Weekly (or daily) the teacher(s) or principal will provide a "clue" to some significant event/figure and the class will place the event on the timeline using the new clues and building upon a framework of accumulated information.
- Students divided into small groups. Research, compare, contrast and prepare presentations on what life was like for children in 19th and 20th centuries. Predict what life will be like for children in the 21st century.

Biography

Cherie Viner is Media Specialist at Washington Elementary School in Muscatine, Iowa. In that capacity she works with approximately 400 students grades k-5. She also substitute teaches in the Iowa City Schools.