THE CLASSICAL CIVILIZATIONS: A NEW CURRICULUM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY?
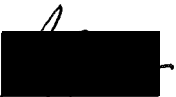
by

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CERTIFICATION OF THESIS/PROJECT CAPSTONE WORK

We, the undersigned, certify that this project entitled THE CLASSICAL CIVILIZATIONS: A NEW CURRICULUM FOR THE 21ST CENTURY? by NICHOLAS QUATTRONE, Candidate for the Degree of Master of Science in Education, Curriculum and Instruction, is acceptable in form and content and demonstrates a satisfactory knowledge of the field covered by this project.

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ABSTRACT

People of the 21st century are becoming more knowledgeable of how to operate modern-day technology. Whether it is at their place of employment or in the comforts of their home, various technological devices are used daily throughout the world. As the majority of the world becomes increasingly technologically advanced, schools have begun to adapt to the changing world. School districts are incorporating various technological devices into their classrooms to aide in the education of our students. This curriculum project proposes the concept adopting a social studies unit that is exclusively technological. Leading up to the proposed curriculum based on the classical civilizations of the ancient world, readers are exposed to the numerous reasons for implementing a solely technological classroom. Some examples as to why an educator should adopt this concept include increased levels of student engagement, student preparedness for their futures in education and the workplace, as well as an overall better comprehension of the content presented to them. The results of the students' work from this curriculum will be beneficial for future unit scoping and sequencing, as well as the overall cognitive growth of students.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Problem Statement

The way that content is delivered to students is often subject to change with the growing number of technologies available to teachers. Far too often educators largely rely on understandings developed as pre-service candidates, personal beliefs, and in the extended, disconnected professional development offered by school districts (Cimbricz, 2002; Kenna & Russell, 2015; Vogler, 2008). Unfortunately for many educators, the services provided by their school districts do not include a concrete curriculum to follow that has been kept completely up-to-date with all of the latest interactive websites, tech-books, and video clips. Depending on the school district's budget, money is not thrown towards subscriptions to state-of-the-art websites that could almost certainly enrich the students overall learning experience. According to Deitering and Huston (2004), technology in education goes beyond the delivery of information and lies instead in the power to create learner-centered educational spaces. Based on this statement, technology in education is a tool for teachers and learners to support and mediate the learning process (Cupita & Andrea, 2017).

The probability that the careers that our current students will pursue once they graduate from high school and college will involve the usage of technology are highly likely. Mareco (2017) stated that, if used correctly, devices and the applications they support, will help prepare students for their future careers. According to Herold (2016), "There was a wide consensus in the studies we reviewed that use of laptops promotes 21st-century learning skills" (p. 2). When mentioning our students' future careers, it is important for teachers to prepare our students for working with their impending peers and their management in a professional manner. Technology gives students the opportunity to enhance the interaction with their classmates and instructors by

encouraging collaboration (Mareco). The earlier we incorporate technology into various

curricula, the better off students will be when they enter the work force.

I believe that eventually all textbooks will be replaced by technological versions

covering the same information but with interactive elements included to captures students'

interests. I am not implying that the hard copy textbook no longer has a place in the classroom,

nor do I think that there is no value in being able to work within the components of a textbook. It

is also important to point out that technology is not always going to be flawless, and that having

a textbook available is safe cushion for teachers to fall back on in case of any technological

malfunctions. However, textbook research has continuously found that history textbooks are not

effective and engaging pedagogical tools and are often boring and unintelligible (Parsons, 1999).

There is no denying that all students are different in regards to the ways in which they

comprehend new content. Most digital textbooks provide that variety that allows teachers to

tailor to the needs of their individual students.

A well-constructed curriculum in any content area is a major contributing factor in the

overall success of the student in any given subject. If created in a thorough manner, a curriculum

may support students' overall growth in the content area, as well as to promote curiosity and

enjoyment in the subject. Students want and need work that stimulates their curiosity and

awakens their desire for a deeper understanding. People are naturally curious about a variety of

things (Strong, Silver, & Robinson, 1995). Student engagement is a critical factor in the learning

process and integrating technology in education helps students stay engaged. Most students

today have been using mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones to play and learn since

they could crawl. Therefore, it only seems logical to align today's classrooms with the way that

your students want and are used to learning (Mareco, 2017).

Social Studies being taught through the use of technology is the ideal route in getting the content to students in a comprehensible fashion. Technology is a proven outlet for various primary and secondary sources, videos, and articles explaining the significance of any point in history. This is beneficial because the state is trending towards asking questions that are more open-ended on the Regents examinations. It is important for social studies educators to teach their students how to identify the common themes that span across many different eras that help to answer the essay questions asked.

We have been living in a technological age for years now. Many students in all venues of education own their own devices for educational purposes, enrichment, and or recreation. Regardless of the way that it is used, there is no denying that technology is here to stay and only advance in the years to come. Digital-based learning is increasingly being used in primary and secondary education, and it is likely to continue (Collins & Halverson, 2010). Therefore, the purpose of this curriculum that I am constructing is to foster high levels of student engagement primarily through the use of technological implementation.

Personal Interest

During my time in middle and high school, social studies had always been my favorite subject in school for reasons that may seem uncommon. The names of famous figures and dates in which significant events occurred weren't the aspect that drew me to love the subject. It was the way that my teachers presented the content that pulled me in. My teachers weren't just standing behind a podium reading PowerPoints and telling us to read and reflect on chapters out of an outdated textbook. They were putting on a show that offered a lot of variety. It was a compilation of plays, song writing, games, field trips, and friendly competitions based on the content. It was theatrical, comical, engaging, relatable, and fun! I can't speak for all of my

former classmates. I remember some despising the classes because of the "boring" content. I just remember it being a great experience because it was enjoyable when compared to other classes I was in.

Becoming a social studies teacher was a dream come true. I had the opportunity to share the joy that I experienced in middle-high school with my own group of students. Unfortunately for me, what I found to be likeable and what my current day students found to be likeable are on completely opposite sides of the spectrum. Sure, some students enjoyed the way I carried out my lessons, but I could tell the vast majority were not engaged caring more about their phones buzzing in their pockets. It finally hit me a few months into the school year. Students want to use technology as much as possible. Using technology was the fun way to get information, and I needed to adjust to them rather than expect them to adjust to me.

In developing the social studies curriculum for the middle - high school where I am currently employed, creating a curriculum that follows the sixth grade New York State Social Studies Framework in a way that fosters student engagement is the underlying goal. Keeping up-to-date on the technological resources used is imperative towards maintaining student's involvement in the course. Fortunately for me in contrast to other schools in the county, the school district that I am currently employed at has a departmentalized sixth grade allowing our students to get a year's worth of social studies instruction. This same district also has the luxury of having classroom sets of Chromebooks readily available for whenever the teacher requires them. Students react very positively to using laptops in the classroom, as studies regularly show higher engagement levels, incentives, and persistence in their work when laptops were accessible to all students.

At the sixth grade level, students are generally interested in social studies. Conversations with some former students of mine taught me that their prior social studies education has been very limited. It is no secret that teachers at the grade-school level have been pushing aside subjects such as science and social studies in favor of the English Language Arts and mathematics. Because of the state's heavy emphasis on high-stakes English Language Arts and Mathematics assessments, schools are doubling up math periods and remedial instruction while also putting a heavy emphasis on test-taking skills (Saunders, 2015). Saunders stated that, because social studies is no longer tested statewide in grades five through eight, elementary educators teach subjects like social studies at the bare minimum, with some time for little more than study of the holidays like Martin Luther King Day and Columbus Day.

Purpose

Therefore, the overall goal of this curriculum project is to methodically construct a unit of study with the majority of the delivered content being through the usage of technology. The technological unit I am piecing together is going to be tied to the content on the Classical Civilizations of the ancient world. According to the New York State K-12 Social Studies Framework, the Classical Civilizations include the Qin Dynasty, Han Dynasty, Greece, and Rome. The primary reason for choosing the Classical Civilizations is that they are have common themes that unify them. New York State Social Studies teachers are also required to teach one inquiry topic during the school year. According to the New York State K-12 Social Studies Resource Toolkit, two of the six inquiry topics that sixth grade teachers can choose from have direct ties to the Classical Civilizations. Those two inquiries are titled *Olympics* and *China and Rome*.

Chapter Two – Review of the Literature

In the previous chapter, I introduced the idea of creating a Social Studies curriculum on the classical civilizations that is primarily technological in terms of the way that the content is delivered. In this chapter, my intention is to review the literature on the benefits of using technology in the classroom and to see the kind of research that has already been done.

There has been a lot of research done on the benefits of the implementation of technology in the classroom. Higher levels of student engagement are linked to the usage of technology in schools. This is the degree of attention, interest, and optimism that students show when they are being taught, which sparks their levels of inspiration to learn and progress in their education. Wardlow (2016), found that technology, when used as a resource helps teachers produce content and instruction that is both exciting and relevant to students. When learning is relevant to students, they then become engaged, active learners. Accessibility to technology when used as a learning resource draws students deeper into a subject than ever before. Students working with technology can result in exposure to content in a way that is desirable, enjoyable, and beneficial in regards to their schooling.

Judging whether or not students are actively engaged through a lessons entirety can be hard to decipher. Active participation during a lesson can serve as an indicator to whether or not students are engaged. Mourning (2010) made the claim that one of the main benefits of using technology in the classroom is due to the traditional teaching approach becoming ineffective. Mourning goes on to state that unlike a teacher-led classroom, students actively required to gather information from the internet, as well as deciding whether the information they acquired is applicable or not towards what they are searching for shows true signs of student participation.

This form of activity supports the student in becoming engaged in the lesson and learning more as opposed to traditional teacher-led lectures.

The teacher-led approach to instruction is not obsolete, nor can a teacher's role in the classroom be overlooked in terms of holding students accountable and making their work and behavioral expectations clear. Markusic (2012) states that direct teaching is great for learning specific ideas or skills. The specificity of the learning objectives also makes it easier for teachers to create assessments of high validity that are reliable. Because of this, most students are not as confused when determining what is and isn't important in the lesson. I am an advocate for a hybrid model of teaching blending both the teacher-led approach to instruction and allowing students the opportunity to be self-taught through internet usage. The teacher-led approach and the incorporation of online resources towards finding valuable information have value in helping students become better learners. After analyzing a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, Jaschik (2009) noted that students who took blended courses that combined elements of online learning and teacher-led instruction appear to do best overall. Having a teacher provide clarity on the importance of specific content while also teaching students how to identify important content and allowing students ample opportunities to go on to the Internet and look for information is only going to aid in the overall development of the students.

Incorporating technology into a curriculum offers an exciting variation when compared with a monotonous teacher-led lecture. Unfortunately, the technology that is available to students varies from school to school, but most districts do have the availability of videos or media content. Movies and other technologically displayed content are often met with praise by students at both the elementary and middle-high school levels. Not only is it amusing to many students, it is also beneficial. Kresse and Watland (2017) stated that watching movies or film

clips have been connected to the integration of course material, increasing students' interest in

the topic, and improving students' opinions of the overall classroom experience. Simply turning

on a movie or video clip is not the best approach for enhancing students' classroom experience.

Kresse and Watland explain that the usage of prompts, questions or surveys to focus the students

on specific elements as well as requiring students to reflect on the film's situation will likely

have a positive impact on the teacher's learning objective.

When a social studies educator implements movies into their curriculum, their students

can see what living in specific eras may have been like. Metzger (2010) stated that movies based

on historic events can bring the past to life, and allows viewers the chance to visualize what a

previous time was like. This allows the viewers to care for people, civilizations, and events that

seem distant and emotionally far-off. More specific to the younger grade-levels, students often

find difficulty comprehending the ways that past people lived their daily lives and fail to see how

vastly different their lives are when compared with earlier mankind. Historical video clips and

movies can offer an understanding of history through observing actors and actresses portraying

men and women of the past. With the incorporation of technology, not only can students watch

others interact in a historically-themed setting, they can also be the ones displaying their

knowledge through the art of cinema. Peck (2012) wrote:

> Making videos is a natural medium for this generation of students. These kids make
>
> videos and post them to YouTube on their down time. So why aren't we bringing video
>
> production into the classroom? Using Animoto, Common Craft or Choose Your Own
>
> Adventure videos can really spice up your classroom and take the pressure off you as the
>
> teacher. Having students make their own videos helps them to be in charge of their own

learning. As an added bonus, using videos in the classroom helps school get just a little closer to a kid's real life. (p. 7)

Allowing the students to work with recording technology to display their knowledge of historical events can be extremely advantageous. Giving students the opportunity to showcase their creativity, collaborate with their peers, and have fun doing so promotes student engagement and help them comprehend the subject to promote cognitive growth.

With all of the important names, dates, events, and vocabulary words, social studies is a subject that teachers have students take notes in at any level of schooling. Note taking is a vital skill for students to learn in order for them to have the important information needed to prepare for various forms of assessment. Traditionally, students have been using notebooks, paper, and a writing utensil to take down their notes, however, technology offers plenty of benefits for the students if they have the access to it. According to Holland (2014), by giving our students technological options for note taking, we can eliminate a number of learning obstacles and create a least restrictive environment. These include text-to-speech tools, recording devices, and the ability to save work and have it in a drive for organizational purposes. Two other key advantages for using technology to take notes are that it familiarizes students with the layout of a keyboard and that allows them extra practice with their typing skills. As mankind continues to progress towards becoming a more technological world, these skills will be even more important in preparing our students for their real-life work experiences.

Students of the 21st-century need a specific set of skills in order to remain competitive when searching for a career. Schools are tasked with ensuring that students are being taught these skills so by the time they are graduated, they are ready to take on the various positions available to them in the work force. Incorporating technology in to the classroom is a step in the right

direction in helping to prepare our students. Beers (2012) indicated that using technology helps students examine, organize, and share their findings and allows students to independently choose the proper tools for particular tasks. She also states that using technology in the classroom helps students make connections between various subjects and concepts in a single class and amongst various courses.

Another theme of 21st century learners is that students need to learn to become self-reliant. Problem solving is becoming a sought after attribute for job applicants of today's world. For this reason, teachers need to start to make the shift from a teacher-centered classroom to a student-centered learning environment. Daggett (2010) explained that educators of the 21st century will be responsible of teaching 21st century skills that students need to be successful, such as leadership, team building, and various types of literacy skills. Teachers will also be tasked with familiarizing students to navigating computerized content while being open to delivering guidance when necessary, and assessing student performance. Daggett argued:

> With this shift from teaching in a way that focuses on facts to pass a test to a more comprehensive student-centered approach that uses the Internet and other resources just described, educators will be in a better position to prepare students for lifelong learning in a technological world. In short, schools need to focus on preparing students for college and a demanding workforce, rather than trying to do a better job of teaching what they have always been teaching. (p. 7)

The overlying reason that students are attending school is to receive an education, and then achieve a diploma or degree so that when the time comes for them to become members of the working population, they will have an easier transition. That readiness stems from teachers allowing their students to facilitate their own learning while also being there for guidance in case

of questions that may arise. Making students self-reliant is an attribute that will carry over to their lives after graduation.

In conclusion, this literature review recommends that teachers implement the usage of technology in the classroom. Student engagement increases with the use of technology which results in a higher comprehension rate amongst students. With the higher rates of comprehension, the students are participating in classroom discussions more frequently. Incorporating technology in a social studies classroom allows students the opportunity to see the past in a variety of different ways rather than trying to imagine what life was like in the past. In terms of preparing students for life after school, exposing students to technology in their classroom is essential towards learning the ways to manage different software that they will most likely be working with in their future careers.

Therefore, the goal of this curriculum project is to create a social studies curriculum that incorporates a lot of technology to raise student engagement, participation, and prepare students for the 21st century careers they will be competing for upon graduating. Through student-centered activities and teacher-led discussions, students will learn the content while also obtaining necessary skills to become adequate 21st century learners and workers. In the next chapter, I will be covering the framework of the technological curriculum. This including the procedures involved, the targeted audience, and the scope and sequencing of the units of study.

Chapter Three – Methodology

Introduction

      The purpose of this project is to construct a curriculum that primarily uses technology to deliver content on the classical civilizations in a Global Studies classroom located at a rural school district in western New York. The reasoning behind favoring a technological approach as opposed to a more traditional-style of teaching is due to the many benefits of implementing technology in the classroom on 21st century students. While the traditional-style of teaching still has a place in a 21st century classroom, the use of technology offers a great deal of benefits that will work in favor of students. This curriculum will promote students to use the technology available to them to explore, answer comprehension questions, and acquaint themselves to a variety of valuable resources only technology can offer. The author of this curriculum project understands the value of assimilating with the ever-evolving technology purchased by school districts, and he hopes that by continuously implementing technological units of study will continue to benefit students to prepare them for their future endeavors.

Conceptual Framework

      When incorporating the usage of technology in a classroom environment, student engagement levels tend to increase. Especially in rural school districts where many students do not have access to the various outlets for surfing the Internet in their home settings, technology is a highly popular alternative in the classroom that students really want to work with. It is because of this desire to work with the equipment that students are more focused, motivated, and engaged in the learning process, therefore, getting more exposure to the information necessary to succeed. When students are engaged in a lesson, student participation also tends to rise due to the content being laid out in front of them in a more exciting outlet. Participation in any given lesson aids

teachers when assessing the content that their students understand. If a student does not understand a topic and is openly discussing it with either another student or the classroom teacher, a teacher is able to step in and correct the students' misguided thoughts, which in turn leads to greater comprehension of the subject.

Technology offers a lot to a student's overall comprehension of any given subject when implemented correctly. In social studies, technology allows students an opportunity to see the past through numerous methods. Instead of trying to visualize the lifestyles during particular eras, seeing educational videos and movies allows students to get a clear view of a living environment, the clothing worn during the time, the tools they used, and numerous other factors that demonstrated the ways in which life was lived in the past. Images are also another great source that technology can provide. Students have access to images of photographs taken, primary and secondary sources, maps, and artifacts. All are readily available to students through search engines available on the Internet.

Not all students are equal in terms of the degree to which they can accomplish the work put before them. Assistive technology can help to level the gaps between various types of students in their abilities to complete the assignments necessary to succeed in the classroom. These include recording devices, text-to-speech tools, and the auto-save software to insure that work completed is safe and easily accessible.

Becoming a proficient typist as well as becoming familiarized with the ways to work with technology is becoming ever more evident in today's society. In a school setting, essays, homework assignments, projects, and assessments are required by many educators to be submitted through devices and or printed rather than the traditional pen to paper methods. It is because of this that elementary students should be exposed to keyboarding early on in order to

build up the skills necessary to become proficient typists. This does not just pertain to schools.

As our world becomes increasingly technological day-by-day, the skills that are necessary to

remain competitive while trying to obtain a job are heightened due to the technology now present

across thousands of different careers. A schools' responsibility is to get students ready for their

lives post-graduation. The implementation of various forms of technology in to the classroom

will help to familiarize students and to give them an advantage over their competition once

applying for a number of career paths.

Audience

The curriculum created for this project is intended for a group of 6th grade students

located at a school district in Chautauqua County, in Western New York. This group of students

has 60 total students with 19 being female and 41 being male. The grade's racial make-up

includes 0 American Native/Alaska Natives, 0 African Americans, 2 Hispanics, 0 Asian/Pacific

Islanders, 56 White Caucasians, and 2 multiracial students.

There are 52 general education students in this 6th grade class with 8 students falling into

the category of having a diagnosed learning disability. Two students formerly had a diagnosed

disability but have been declassified since arriving in to the 6th grade. All 60 students are native

English speakers.

As stated on Startclass education site (2017), 4.5% of students at this school district have

served an in-school suspension and 3.8% have served an out-of-school suspension. The average

graduation rate for this school district is 86%, and the dropout rate averages around 7.0%. The

number of students that have been held back a grade is 2.7%.

Twenty-two students are not categorized as economically disadvantaged in this grade,

and 38 students are categorized as economically disadvantaged. The percentage of the entire

school district's eligibility of receiving a free or reduced lunch is 53.3%. According to the United

States Census Bureau (2016), the median household income is $40,893. None of the students in

this 6th grade class are classified as migrants or homeless. No students are in foster care, and no

students have a parent that is in the armed forces.

Procedure

During the course of creating this curriculum, I took the following steps:

Step One: Author's Background

I grew up in the rural town of Randolph, New York, and was educated at Gail N.

Chapman Elementary School and Randolph Central School. In the year 2008, I received my high

school diploma and decided to continue my education at the collegiate-level. Because of the

impact that some of my teachers had on me over the years, I decided that becoming a teacher

was the career path that I wanted to pursue so that I could potentially influence a child's life the

same way that my former teachers had helped to shape the person that I turned out to be. I chose

SUNY Fredonia for a couple reasons. The school is renowned for having an excellent teaching

program, and that it was an easy commute to go see my family whenever desired. Both of which

were important to me.

SUNY Fredonia was a very positive experience and I learned so much during my years

there. I enjoyed my undergraduate years there so much that I decided to work towards

completing my graduate studies there as well as search for a full time teaching position. After a

few years of substitute teaching, I was hired at a school district located in Chautauqua County,

New York. It is within this school district that the curriculum I am creating will be implemented.

Step Two: Choosing a Topic

When it came to choosing a topic for this curriculum project, I really wanted it to be something that would have a positive impact on my students and their overall development as learners. Incorporating more school-related technology into my curriculum was an idea that really intrigued me because I saw how well students reacted to using devices during my first year of teaching. Initially, I was just going to find some more educational apps and websites to incorporate in to my previously created curricula just to supplement the assignments I had gave students my first year of teaching. It then struck me to expand on that idea and to make the majority of my curriculum based on the usage of technology.

The school district in which I am currently employed made the transition from classroom iPad sets to sets of Chromebooks. I was and continue to be an advocate for this transition because the Chromebooks have a physical keyboard making them comparable to a traditional laptop. I believe that students need typing skills on a traditional-style keyboard as opposed to the touch screen style offered through the usage of iPads. Typing is becoming a mandatory skill that 21st century students will need for educational purposes and for their lives post-graduation. This extra exposure to working with a traditional-styled keyboard is an opportunity to expand on what is becoming a necessary life skill.

Another purchase that was made between school years was the Discovery Education (2018) digital textbook for the social studies department. The great thing about this online tech-book is that it easily accessible for any device with internet accessibility. With the purchase of the classroom sets of Chromebooks, each student would have this tech-book available to them in the classroom. Discovery Education is an excellent source because it is aligned with the standards of New York State, and it offers educators access to lessons, videos, images of primary

sources, and assessments. Overall, subscribing to Discovery Education made the decision to create a primarily technological curriculum that much easier.

Purchasing Discovery Education online tech-books makes the goal of implementing a digitally-based classroom that more achievable; however, because the software is still relatively new, I wanted to try it with a specific unit before expanding the idea to an entire year's worth of curriculum. I decided to start with the Classical Civilizations unit for a few reasons. For starters, the unit takes place later in the school year so that students have the time to be settled in to their new school. These students have just made the transition from the elementary school to the middle/high school at this school district. My philosophy is that the first few weeks of school are for getting acquainted with the procedures, the teachers, class transitions, and managing their resources (including technology). By waiting until the students are settled in to the building and know specific expectations of them that would be better suited to work with the technology necessary to navigate the Discovery Education website.

Applying the concept of a technological curriculum with the Classical Civilizations is also advantageous because of the inquiries that are affiliated with this particular unit. The goals of inquiries are all about students investigating different topics that answer an underlying question. I thought that with the constant access to the Internet, and all of the readily available resources that Discovery Education provides, the information these inquiries require would be easily accessible for students.

Step Three: Identifying the Audience

This district is located in a very rural area in Chautauqua County and out of the 60 students in the 6th grade, 38 of them are considered economically disadvantaged. Even though the majority of them are economically disadvantaged, these students have experience using

computers because they have taken typing classes in elementary school. Not all students will be

proficient typists, but this is significant because it will make the transition to using the

Chromebooks at a higher frequency a lot easier.

Scope and Sequence

The scope and sequence of the curriculum project I am constructing is aligned with the

Integrated Social Studies/English Language Arts Curriculum for sixth grade. The Department of

Curriculum and Instructional Services developed this curriculum at Putnam/Northern

Westchester BOCES (n.d.). The Putnam program is aligned with the Unifying Themes adopted

by the National Council for the Social Studies and the New York State Social Studies

Framework adopted by the Board of Regents. It is also affiliated with the Common Core for

English Language Arts and Literacy in Social Studies/History. All of the social studies educators

at this Chautauqua County school district use this Putnam curriculum as the baseline for their

planning.

The majority of the planning for this curriculum project consists of finding technological

resources that align with the Putnam curriculum. The first step is going through the classical

civilizations unit of Putman's sixth grade curriculum and determining which elements of their

lessons I want to include in to my technological unit. I have determined that the scope and

sequencing will include the content covered in this unit of study, the Common Core State

Standards applied, a list of learning objectives/skills, materials required, and a performance tasks

list that includes homework, projects, quizzes, and unit tests.

Content	Skills	Standards	Assessments	Materials
Unit 3: Classical Civilizations	1. Students will understand that	**9.1** 6.5a.1 B.1 B.3	Chapter Assessments (Tests)	1. Putnam/ Northern Westchester

COMPARATIVE CLASSICAL CIVILIZATIONS IN THE EASTERN HEMISPHERE (ca. 600 B.C.E. – ca. 500 C.E.): As complex societies and civilizations change over time, their political and economic structures evolve. - A golden age may be indicated when there is an extended period of time that is peaceful, prosperous, and demonstrates great cultural achievements. - Vocabulary **Unit Three:** Regional Civilizations **Chapter 9:** Ancient Greece **Concepts:** 9.1 – Geography of Ancient Greece 9.2 – Greek Political Systems 9.3 – Greek Cultural Achievements **INQUIRY** – Olympics	geographic factors influence the development of classical civilizations and their political structures. 2. Students will know that political structures were developed to establish order, to create and enforce laws, and to enforce laws, and to enable decision-making. 3. A period of peace, prosperity, and cultural achievements may be indicative of a Golden Age. **INQUIRY** **Compelling Question** – Are the Olympics about more than just sports?	B.4 F.1 **9.2** 6.5a.1 6.5a.2 6.5b.1 6.5c.1 B.6 D.4 F.3 F.4 **9.3** 6.5a.2 6.5c.1 6.5c.2 B.6 **10.1** 6.5a.1 6.5a.2 6.5c.1 B.1 B.3 B.4 C.4 D.2 **10.2** 6.5a.1 6.5a.2 6.5b.1 6.5c.1 B.1 B.2 B.6 B.7 D.4 F.3 F.4 F.7 **10.3** 6.5a.1 6.5a.2 6.5b.1 6.5c.1 B.1 B.3 B.4 F.1 F.3 F.7 **10.4**	Projects (including inquiry piece) Quizzes Homework Exit tickets	BOCES Integrated Social Studies/ELA Curriculum Project: Grade 6-The Eastern Hemisphere 2. Discovery Education Social Studies Techbook

Chapter 10: The Roman Republic and Empire **Concepts:** 10.1 – Geography and Economy of Ancient Rome 10.2 – Roman Origins and Early Political Structures 10.3 – From Republic to Empire 10.4 – Roman Culture: Life and Legacy 10.5 – A Weakening Empire **Chapter 7:** Ancient China **Concepts:** 7.1 - Geography of China 7.2 – China's Belief Systems 7.3 – Life in the Chinese Dynasties 7.4 – Ancient Chinese Economy	**Supporting Questions** 1. What is the history and mythology of the ancient Greek Olympics? 2. What are the goals of the modern Olympic movement? 3. How are the arts a part of the modern Olympics?	6.5c.1 6.5c.2 B.6 **10.5** 6.5b.1 6.5c.1 6.6a.1 B.1 B.3 B.4 B.6 F.7 **7.1** 6.3b.1 **7.2** 6.3b.1 6.3c.1 6.3d.1 6.4a 6.4b.1 B.1 B.3 B.6 F.7 **7.3** 6.3b.1 6.3c.1 6.3d.1 6.3d.2 6.5a.1 6.5a.2 6.5b.1 6.5c.1 6.5c.2 B.1 B.3 B.4 D.4 F.1 F.3 F.7 **7.4** 6.3d.2 6.7a.1 6.7a.2 B.6 C.4 D.2 D.4		

Standards

These are the standards that correlate to the common themes in the classical civilizations unit.

9.1 - Geography of Ancient Greece

6.5a.1 – Students will locate the classical civilizations on a map and identify geographic factors that influenced the extent of their boundaries, locate their cities on a map, and identify their political structures.

B.1 – Identify ways that events are related chronologically to one another in time.

B.3 – Identify causes and effects from current events, grade-level content, and historical events.

B.4 – Identify and classify the relationship between multiple causes and multiple effects.

F.1 – Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussion and classroom debates regardless of whether one agrees with the other viewpoint. Consider alternative views of discussion.

9.2 - Greek Political Systems

6.5a.1 - Students will locate the classical civilizations on a map and identify geographic factors that influenced the extent of their boundaries, locate their cities on a map, and identify their political structures.

6.5a.2 - Students will compare and contrast the similarities and differences of the Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman classical civilizations by examining religion, job specialization, cities, government, language/record keeping system, technology, and social hierarchy.

6.5b.1 - Students will examine the similarities and differences in the political systems of Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman (Athens, Sparta, Roman Republic, Roman Empire) classical civilizations.

6.5c.1 - Students will examine evidence related to the Qin, Han, and Greco-Roman (Athens and Roman Empire) civilizations and determine if these civilizations have experienced a golden age.

B.6 - Recognize and analyze the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time. Identify the role of turning points as an important dynamic in historical change.

D.4 - Examine the role of job specialization and trade historically and during contemporary times in the Eastern Hemisphere.

F.3 - Identify and explore different types of political systems and ideologies used at various times and in various locations in the Eastern Hemisphere and identify the role of individuals and key groups in those political and social systems.

F.4 - Identify and describe opportunities for and the role of the individual in social and political participation at various times and in various locations in the Eastern Hemisphere.

9.3 - Greek Cultural Achievements

6.5a.2 - Students will compare and contrast the similarities and differences of the Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman classical civilizations by examining religion, job specialization, cities, government, language/record keeping system, technology, and social hierarchy.

6.5c.1 - Students will examine evidence related to the Qin, Han, and Greco-Roman (Athens and Roman Empire) civilizations and determine if these civilizations have experienced a golden age.

6.5c.2 - Students will examine how cultural achievements of these civilizations have influenced contemporary societies.

B.6 - Recognize and analyze the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time. Identify the role of turning points as an important dynamic in historical change.

10.1 – Geography and Economy of Ancient Rome

6.5a.1 - Students will locate the classical civilizations on a map and identify geographic factors that influenced the extent of their boundaries, locate their cities on a map, and identify their political structures.

6.5a.2 - Students will compare and contrast the similarities and differences of the Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman classical civilizations by examining religion, job specialization, cities, government, language/record keeping system, technology, and social hierarchy.

6.5c.1 - Students will examine evidence related to the Qin, Han, and Greco-Roman (Athens and Roman Empire) civilizations and determine if these civilizations have experienced a golden age.

B.1 - Identify ways that events are related chronologically to one another in time.

B.3 - Identify causes and effects from current events, grade-level content, and historical events.

B.4 - Identify and classify the relationship between multiple causes and multiple effects.

C.4 - Identify how the relationship among geography, economics, and history helps to define a context for events in the study of the Eastern Hemisphere.

D.2 - Examine the role that various types of resources (human capital, physical capital, and natural resources) have in providing goods and services.

10.2 – Roman Origins and Early Political Structures

6.5a.1 - Students will locate the classical civilizations on a map and identify geographic factors that influenced the extent of their boundaries, locate their cities on a map, and identify their political structures.

6.5a.2 - Students will compare and contrast the similarities and differences of the Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman classical civilizations by examining religion, job specialization, cities, government, language/record keeping system, technology, and social hierarchy.

6.5b.1 - Students will examine the similarities and differences in the political systems of Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman (Athens, Sparta, Roman Republic, Roman Empire) classical civilizations.

6.5c.1 - Students will examine evidence related to the Qin, Han, and Greco-Roman (Athens and Roman Empire) civilizations and determine if these civilizations have experienced a golden age.

B.1 - Identify ways that events are related chronologically to one another in time.

B.2 - Employ mathematical skills to measure time by years, decades, centuries, and millennia; to calculate time from the fixed points of the calendar system (B.C.E. and C.E.); and to interpret the data presented in time lines with teacher support.

B.6 - Recognize and analyze the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time. Identify the role of turning points as an important dynamic in historical change.

B.7 - Compare histories in different places in the Eastern Hemisphere utilizing time lines. Identify ways that changing periodization affects the historical narrative.

D.4 - Examine the role of job specialization and trade historically and during contemporary times in the Eastern Hemisphere.

F.3 - Identify and explore different types of political systems and ideologies used at various times and in various locations in the Eastern Hemisphere and identify the role of individuals and key groups in those political and social systems.

F.4 - Identify and describe opportunities for and the role of the individual in social and political participation at various times and in various locations in the Eastern Hemisphere.

F.7 - Describe the roles of people in power in the Eastern Hemisphere both historically and currently. Identify ways that current figures can influence people's rights and freedom.

10.3 – From Republic to Empire

6.5a.1 - Students will locate the classical civilizations on a map and identify geographic factors that influenced the extent of their boundaries, locate their cities on a map, and identify their political structures.

6.5a.2 - Students will compare and contrast the similarities and differences of the Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman classical civilizations by examining religion, job specialization, cities, government, language/record keeping system, technology, and social hierarchy.

6.5b.1 - Students will examine the similarities and differences in the political systems of Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman (Athens, Sparta, Roman Republic, Roman Empire) classical civilizations.

6.5c.1 - Students will examine evidence related to the Qin, Han, and Greco-Roman (Athens and Roman Empire) civilizations and determine if these civilizations have experienced a golden age.

B.1 - Identify ways that events are related chronologically to one another in time.

B.3 - Identify causes and effects from current events, grade-level content, and historical events.

B.4 - Identify and classify the relationship between multiple causes and multiple effects.

F.1 - Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussion and classroom debates regardless of whether one agrees with the other viewpoint. Consider alternate views in discussion.

F.3 - Identify and explore different types of political systems and ideologies used at various times and in various locations in the Eastern Hemisphere and identify the role of individuals and key groups in those political and social systems.

F.7 - Describe the roles of people in power in the Eastern Hemisphere both historically and currently. Identify ways that current figures can influence people's rights and freedom.

10.4 – Roman Culture: Life and Legacy

6.5c.1 - Students will examine evidence related to the Qin, Han, and Greco-Roman (Athens and Roman Empire) civilizations and determine if these civilizations have experienced a golden age.

6.5c.2 - Students will examine how cultural achievements of these civilizations have influenced contemporary societies.

B.6 - Recognize and analyze the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time. Identify the role of turning points as an important dynamic in historical change.

10.5 – A Weakening Empire

6.5b.1 - Students will examine the similarities and differences in the political systems of Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman (Athens, Sparta, Roman Republic, Roman Empire) classical civilizations.

6.5c.1 - Students will examine evidence related to the Qin, Han, and Greco-Roman (Athens and Roman Empire) civilizations and determine if these civilizations have experienced a golden age.

6.6a.1 - Students will examine reasons for the fall of the Roman Empire and the development of feudalism in Western Europe, including efforts to restore the empire, the decentralization of political authority, and the role of the Christian Church in providing some measure of central authority.

B.1 - Identify ways that events are related chronologically to one another in time.

B.3 - Identify causes and effects from current events, grade-level content, and historical events.

B.4 - Identify and classify the relationship between multiple causes and multiple effects.

B.6 - Recognize and analyze the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time. Identify the role of turning points as an important dynamic in historical change.

F.7 - Describe the roles of people in power in the Eastern Hemisphere both historically and currently. Identify ways that current figures can influence people's rights and freedom.

7.1 - Geography of China

6.3b.1 - Students will explore at least two river valley societies and civilizations: one in the Middle East (Mesopotamia or Nile river valley), one in South Asia (Indus river valley), or one in East Asia (Yellow river valley) by examining archaeological and historical evidence to compare and contrast characteristics of these complex societies and civilizations.

7.2 – China's Belief Systems

6.3b.1 - Students will explore at least two river valley societies and civilizations: one in the Middle East (Mesopotamia or Nile river valley), one in South Asia (Indus river valley), or one in East Asia (Yellow river valley) by examining archaeological and historical evidence to compare and contrast characteristics of these complex societies and civilizations.

6.3c.1 - Students will explore how the selected complex societies and civilizations adapted to and modified their environment to meet their basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter.

6.3d.1 - Students will compare and contrast the gender roles, access to wealth and power, and division of labor within the political and social structures of the selected river valley societies and civilizations.

6.4a - Civilizations and complex societies developed belief systems and religions that have similar as well as different characteristics.

6.4b.1 - Students will study the belief systems of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism by looking at where the belief system originated, when it originated, founder(s) if any, and the major tenets, practices, and sacred writings or holy texts for

each. (Note: Although not within this historic period, students may also study Sikhism and other major belief systems at this point.)

B.1 - Identify ways that events are related chronologically to one another in time.

B.3 - Identify causes and effects from current events, grade-level content, and historical events.

B.6 - Recognize and analyze the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time. Identify the role of turning points as an important dynamic in historical change.

F.7 - Describe the roles of people in power in the Eastern Hemisphere both historically and currently. Identify ways that current figures can influence people's rights and freedom.

7.3 – Life in the Chinese Dynasties

6.3b.1 - Students will explore at least two river valley societies and civilizations: one in the Middle East (Mesopotamia or Nile river valley), one in South Asia (Indus river valley), or one in East Asia (Yellow river valley) by examining archaeological and historical evidence to compare and contrast characteristics of these complex societies and civilizations.

6.3c.1 - Students will explore how the selected complex societies and civilizations adapted to and modified their environment to meet their basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter.

6.3d.1 - Students will compare and contrast the gender roles, access to wealth and power, and division of labor within the political and social structures of the selected river valley societies and civilizations.

6.3d.2 - Students will examine the unique achievements of each of the selected complex societies and civilizations that served as lasting contributions.

6.5a.1 - Students will locate the classical civilizations on a map and identify geographic factors that influenced the extent of their boundaries, locate their cities on a map, and identify their political structures.

6.5a.2 - Students will compare and contrast the similarities and differences of the Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman classical civilizations by examining religion, job specialization, cities, government, language/record keeping system, technology, and social hierarchy.

6.5b.1 - Students will examine the similarities and differences in the political systems of Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman (Athens, Sparta, Roman Republic, Roman Empire) classical civilizations.

6.5c.1 - Students will examine evidence related to the Qin, Han, and Greco-Roman (Athens and Roman Empire) civilizations and determine if these civilizations have experienced a golden age.

6.5c.2 - Students will examine how cultural achievements of these civilizations have influenced contemporary societies.

B.1 - Identify ways that events are related chronologically to one another in time.

B.3 - Identify causes and effects from current events, grade-level content, and historical events.

B.4 - Identify and classify the relationship between multiple causes and multiple effects.

D.4 - Examine the role of job specialization and trade historically and during contemporary times in the Eastern Hemisphere.

F.1 - Demonstrate respect for the rights of others in discussion and classroom debates regardless of whether one agrees with the other viewpoint. Consider alternate views in discussion.

F.3 - Identify and explore different types of political systems and ideologies used at various times and in various locations in the Eastern Hemisphere and identify the role of individuals and key groups in those political and social systems.

F.7 - Describe the roles of people in power in the Eastern Hemisphere both historically and currently. Identify ways that current figures can influence people's rights and freedom.

7.4 – Ancient Chinese Economy

6.3d.2 - Students will examine the unique achievements of each of the selected complex societies and civilizations that served as lasting contributions.

6.7a.1 - Students will create maps that illustrate items exchanged and ideas spread along the Silk Roads, across the Indian Ocean, and on the Trans-Saharan trade routes.

6.7a.2 - Students will examine how the location of resources helped determine the location of trade routes and the economic impact of the exchange of resources.

B.6 - Recognize and analyze the dynamics of historical continuity and change over periods of time. Identify the role of turning points as an important dynamic in historical change.

C.4 - Identify how the relationship among geography, economics, and history helps to define a context for events in the study of the Eastern Hemisphere.

D.2 - Examine the role that various types of resources (human capital, physical capital, and natural resources) have in providing goods and services.

D.4 - Examine the role of job specialization and trade historically and during contemporary times in the Eastern Hemisphere.

Validity

This curriculum can be used at other school districts if they have the one-to-one technology available to students in their social studies classrooms. School districts that would want to use this curriculum would have to buy a subscription to Discovery Education in order for their teachers and the students of the school to have access to the social studies techbook needed to follow the scope and sequencing. The Discovery Education program can be hard to navigate without training. I suggest that the curriculum coordinators of interested school districts set up an in-service session for the teachers implementing the Discovery Education social studies techbook

to become familiarized with all aspects of the program. This includes the assessment builder, the ways to add students to the program, assigning different work to the students, lesson planning, and bookmarking content for future use. All documents from the social studies techbook are printer friendly. If there are students who struggle with the typing aspect of using a computer keyboard, the teacher can print the same work for them to accommodate all students. Another accommodation that this program offers is a text to audio option. Students who struggle to read can have the text read to them to insure that they are getting the same information as their peers.

Conclusion

I believe that this technological curriculum solves many issues that teachers currently confront in their social studies classroom. By using the Discovery Education (2018) social studies' techbook, educators are granted access to grade-appropriate content, a sufficient number of resources in order to reach various types of learners while following the state standards. For the majority of students, using technology is a preferred method of learning and a gateway to new knowledge. Questions students have can be found using the technology at their disposal, which generates learning and potentially further questions to explore. Most importantly, students tend to be more engaged during class when technology is involved making facilitating a productive and fun learning environment.

Chapter Four – Results

This chapter contains the syllabi, lesson plans, and supplementary materials for the six lessons within the classical civilizations curriculum. These lesson plans focus on the geography, political systems, comparing and contrasting the classical civilizations, cultural comparisons between prominent city-states, defining a golden age, and the contributions these civilizations have had on modern society. The essential questions include:

•   Does geography determine history?

•   Are all classical civilizations similar?

•   Do the innovations of the classical civilizations continue to influence the modern world?

<u>Lesson 1: Geography Influences the Development of Classical Civilization</u>

In the first lesson, students will be shown the geographic features that the Greeks, Romans, Qin, and Han Dynasties adapted to, lived, and thrived in to claim the title of "classical civilizations". The students will be working with images of maps, viewing videos on how geography effected their individual cultures, and comparing and contrasting the geography that each of the ancient civilizations settled upon. Understanding the geography of these civilizations will give students a better understanding of the struggles that these people faced, as well as show how their civilizations were able to flourish due to their locations.

<u>Overview</u>:

● Students will examine where the classical civilizations were located, and how they were influenced by geographic factors, and when in history they occurred.

Unifying Themes:

- Geography, humans, and the environment.

- Time, continuity, and change.

Standards and Social Studies Practices:

- 6.5a – Geographic factors influence the development of classical civilizations and their

  political structures.

- Geographic reasoning.

- Chronological reasoning

- Gathering and using evidence.

Enduring Understanding:

- Geographic factors impact the development of civilization.

Readings and Resources/Materials for this lesson:

- Reading- *Islands and Mountains*

https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/techbook/units/dfc393b8-c5a1-4998-ac87-

4c0f77c902ef/concepts/99aa1148-60d9-4292-af0d-c9f8f28275ff/tabs/759da9a7-2edf-

4cde-9515-7081ca990764

- Reading: The Founding of Rome/Natural Benefits

https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/techbook/units/ab406dc0-c98f-4f53-a97c-

dfda6193bcdc/concepts/498659ff-0ea9-439c-9fbf-eeac82454256/tabs/759da9a7-2edf-

4cde-9515-7081ca990764/pages/d1de3de6-18b7-48f4-bf5a-a1f32d02501d

- Supplementary Materials: *Maps of the Greco-Roman World*

http://www.pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/Unit3_Lesson1_Maps-Greco-

Roman-World.pdf

- Reading: *Ancient China: Where is China Located?*

https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/techbook/units/ad0a1781-a6f0-4bd6-bcdc-

4a2cf3723b93/concepts/185909f2-27c2-4e46-bbf9-1c744c9d4161/tabs/759da9a7-2edf-

4cde-9515-7081ca990764/pages/90ad2c1b-3c86-4fcc-9a2d-0db7caa03ab0

- Video Segment: *The Geography of China*

https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/videos/b80cf492-2b90-4293-b13c-e576c6fdd793/

- Assignment: *The Yellow River*

 https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/player/fecc6358-de5e-4b00-b720-8a42cb4312eb

Lesson Two: Political Systems

The second lesson of this curriculum deals with the political systems by which each of these classical civilizations was governed. Some of the classical civilizations experienced several forms of government during their time of prominence which will be covered over the course of these lessons. The overall learning objective for students is to be able to identify various types of political systems, as well as determine how each type of government system adopted by the classical civilizations affected their citizens.

Overview:

- After learning about the different types of political systems developed during the classical civilizations, students will examine the similarities and differences in the political systems of the Chinese (Qin, Han) and Greco-Roman (Athens, Sparta, Roman Republic, Roman Empire) classical civilizations and their influence today.

Unifying Themes:

- Power, authority, and governance.

- Civic ideals and practices.

- Time, continuity, and change.

Standards and Social Studies Practices:

- 6.5b – Political structures were developed to establish order, to create and enforce laws, and to enable decision making.

- Civic participation.

- Gathering and using evidence.

Enduring Understanding:

- There are many possible types of political systems.

- Government is shaped by the individuals in control and its interaction with its citizens.

Readings and Resources/Materials for this lesson:

- Vocabulary Review Sheet: *Types of Political Systems*

http://www.pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/Lesson2_Types_of_Political_System

s.pdf

- Reading: *Comparative Government in Classical Civilizations*

http://www.pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/Lesson2_Comparative-Govts-

Classical-Civilizations.pdf

Lesson 3: Comparing the Characteristics of Civilizations

In the third lesson of this unit, students are going to see how these four civilizations are

similar to each other in terms of how they rose to prominence during their respective time

periods. Students will be tasked to find corresponding themes that attribute to the success of the

four classical civilizations, as well as charting the several similarities that they share.

Overview:

- Classical civilizations share common characteristics of religion, job specialization, cities,

  and language/record keeping systems, technology, and social hierarchy. Each civilization,

  Qin, Han, Greece and Rome, share some of these characteristics but interpret others to fit

  their society.

Unifying Themes:

- Individual development and cultural identity.

- Geography, humans, and the environment.

- Time, continuity, and change.

- Development and transformation of social systems.

Standards and Social Studies Practices:

- 6.5a – Geographic factors influence the development of classical civilizations and their

  political structures.

- Chronological reasoning.

- Gathering and using evidence.

- Comparison and Contextualization.

Enduring Understanding:

- Classical civilizations share many characteristics and continue to influence modern life.

Readings and Resources/Materials for this lesson:

- Reviewable Supplementary Material: *Characteristics of Classical Civilizations Chart*

http://www.pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/Lesson3_Characteristics_Chart.pdf

- Project: *Classical Civilization PowerPoint Presentation*

Tell students that they are going to become specialists on one of the characteristics of a classical

civilization. They are going to create a Google Slides presentation that includes an image

and a typed paragraph on that characteristic for each of the four classical civilizations.

Lesson 4: Athens vs. Sparta

Lesson four deals specifically with the two most distinguished city-states in Greece.

Students will be comparing Athens and Sparta in all demographics. The point of this lesson is to

show students that two groups of people can be close in proximity to each other but have vastly

different views in terms of government, beliefs, and overall culture.

Overview:

- Students will compare the cultural and ideological differences between the two prominent

  city-states in ancient Greece. The daily life of both men and women are explored as well

  as the education of youth, and the cultural framework/achievements of both Athens and

  Sparta.

Unifying Themes:

- Individual development and cultural identity.

- Development and transformation of social structure.

Standards and Social Studies Practices:

- 6.5a – Geographic factors influence the development of classical civilizations and their

  political structures.

- Civic participation.

- Geographic reasoning.

- Comparison and contextualization.

<u>Enduring Understanding</u>:

- Time and place determine daily life.

<u>Readings and Resources/Materials for this lesson</u>:

- <u>Reading</u>: *Life in Athens*

https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/techbook/units/dfc393b8-c5a1-4998-ac87-

4c0f77c902ef/concepts/166b5c94-0ea6-4c6e-a396-ec5d2eb27a55/tabs/759da9a7-2edf-

4cde-9515-7081ca990764/pages/9b92b375-8cd2-4473-b139-6c3075e46885

- <u>Assignment</u>: *"School of Athens" Journal Reflection*

Looking at the image "School of Athens", students will compare and contrast the ancient

Athenian school to a present day school.

https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/player/3eb8637a-2d4c-42a0-a8ec-c757d9da8549

- <u>Reading</u>: *Sparta: A Military Oligarchy*

https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/techbook/units/dfc393b8-c5a1-4998-ac87-

4c0f77c902ef/concepts/166b5c94-0ea6-4c6e-a396-ec5d2eb27a55/tabs/759da9a7-2edf-

4cde-9515-7081ca990764/pages/094d61ad-e5cf-4e05-8395-1c104ccc0383

- <u>Reading</u>: *Life in Ancient Sparta*

https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/techbook/units/dfc393b8-c5a1-4998-ac87-

4c0f77c902ef/concepts/166b5c94-0ea6-4c6e-a396-ec5d2eb27a55/tabs/759da9a7-2edf-

4cde-9515-7081ca990764/pages/87eb1c50-ae11-4800-9844-f42d834cbecf

- <u>Video Segment</u>: *Spartan Warriors*

https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/videos/3a229e0c-5519-4e8e-ae57-d40f32be29f2/

- Assignment: *Life in Sparta* reading passage and questions

https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/player/8bacc160-ae68-412f-856f-a8aa120fa5f2

Lesson 5: What is a Golden Age?

A more investigatory lesson within the unit, lesson five focuses on each of the classical civilizations contributions to the evolution of technology, philosophy, and other positive changes to determine if they warrant the title of experiencing a Golden Age in their times of distinction. Students will examine the achievements and how they affected the gradual progression of not just their individual civilizations, but for all throughout the course of mankind's history.

Overview:

- Students will review the four classical civilizations we are studying and determine if any of them deserve to have a period of time called a "Golden Age".

Unifying Themes:

- Individual development and cultural identity.

- Time, continuity, and change.

- Development and transformation of social structures.

- Power, authority, and governance.

- Civic ideals and practices.

Standards and Social Studies Practices:

- 6.5c – A period of peace, prosperity, and cultural achievements may be indicative of a golden age.

- Chronological reasoning.

- Comparison and contextualization.

● Gathering and using evidence.

Enduring Understanding:

● A Golden Age is a period of period of peace, prosperity, and cultural achievements.

Readings and Resources/Materials for this lesson:

● Assignment: *Golden Age Worksheet*

Based on the following documents, students will complete the worksheet determining whether or

not the accomplishments of these four civilizations can be classified as having

experienced a Golden Age.

http://www.pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/Lesson5_Golden-Age-

Worksheet.pdf

● Reading: *Achievements in the Qin Dynasty*

http://www.pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/Lesson5_Achievements-Qin.pdf

● Reading: *Achievements during the Han Dynasty*

http://www.pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/Lesson5_Achievements-Han.pdf

● Reading: *Achievements of Rome*

http://www.pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/Lesson5_Achievements-Rome.pdf

● Reading: *Achievements of Athens*

http://www.pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/Lesson5_Achievements-Athens.pdf

Lesson 6: What Do We Owe to Classical Civilizations?

For the final lesson of this unit, students will be looking at how the classical civilizations

contributed to the norms of the present day. Students will be tasked with researching what was

developed and or invented during the ages of each of the classical civilizations, and gain an

understanding how it has been adapted over the years to fit the needs of the modern world. This lesson helps students to bridge the gaps between thousands of years of human existence and innovation.

Overview:

- Students choose an innovation in art or philosophy from one of the Classical Civilizations, formulate questions, and answer them through research.

Unifying Themes:

- Individual development and cultural identity.
- Time, continuity, and change.

Standards and Social Studies Practices:

- 6.5c – A period of peace, prosperity, and cultural achievements may be indicative of a golden age.
- Gathering and using evidence.
- Chronological reasoning.

Enduring Understanding:

- Innovations in the arts and philosophy during the period of Classical Civilizations influence life in the modern world.

Readings and Resources/Materials for this lesson:

- Engagement Activity – *Greek Achievements Continue On*
  https://app.discoveryeducation.com/learn/techbook/units/dfc393b8-c5a1-4998-ac87-4c0f77c902ef/concepts/761c5550-a26f-4e9e-affb-309ed53701a6/tabs/5a1b6f8b-c6bf-4208-87dd-7b3b66692147

- Research Paper: Students will explore and choose an innovation (technological, medical, the arts, philosophy, etc.) from one of the Classical Civilizations and write about how it has affected our modern lives in a 1-2 page research paper.

Unit Assessment

- Assessment:

http://pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/G6_U3_Assessment.pdf

- Student Answer Sheet:

http://pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/G6_U3_Assessment_Answer_Sheet.pdf

- Assessment Answer Key:

http://pnwboces.org/ssela/SixthGrade/pdf_files/Unit3/G6_U3_Assessment_Answer_Key.pdf

Conclusion

The purpose of this curriculum project was to create a technological social studies course based on the Classical Civilizations for a sixth grade class. This curriculum addresses the four Classical Civilizations and how they relate to one another as well as how they influenced modern society. The curriculum I created includes reading passages, homework assignments, projects, and an end of unit test to assess students' understanding of the content. The overlying goal of this project is for students to achieve high scores on the assessment showing that students comprehended the content displayed to them through the online content, while also showing how engaged they were during class because of the usage of technology. I hope that through the implementation of this curriculum that students will yield high quality work on all the assignments and assessments presented to them proving the point that a highly-technological classroom is beneficial.

Chapter Five – Discussion

The overlying goal of this project was to create a curriculum that uses 21st century technological resources to foster learning in a social studies setting. It is my belief that the days of textbooks are dwindling and that computers with Internet access will be the primary resource that both students and teachers will turn to in the future in order to obtain information on any given subject. Using the Internet has become the norm for these students in aiding them with their inquiries; therefore, I am a believer that the creation of a technological curriculum will be beneficial in getting the most out of my students.

Significance

Based on the scope and sequencing of this curriculum, it is clear that technological resources are the primary content source throughout this unit on the Classical Civilizations. It was my intent from the outset of this project to limit the amount of non-technological materials used due to the students' engagement level when working with traditional book work and papers. Aston (2016) stated that technology in today's society is at the core of learning. Aston further noted that studies have shown that student engagement levels are elevated far more often when technology is incorporated into the lessons. However, without proper guidance, students may have difficulties with finding the information that they are looking for when using technology. Aston commented:

Technology has little or no effect on student engagement when it's not used in the right context or in an effective way that stimulates, inspires and encourages students to want to learn, interact and collaborate. (p. 2)

Therefore, it is up to the teacher to orchestrate proper usage before letting the students have free rein on the technological devices.

Again, I am an advocate for a hybrid model of teaching where lessons are mixed between teacher-led and student-led classrooms in which the teacher is there to aid students who are in need of assistance. The student-led classroom is highly effective when implemented correctly. Pakizer (2016) described the student-led classroom as an area that is designed to address the learners' needs. Students in this type of classroom are self-aware and need to advocate for their own needs. This is beneficial because it is teaching students a very valuable life skill: that being able to take care of themselves and to become problem solvers. However, without guidance and proper training on how to work the device, students may struggle to obtain the information that they are looking for or may have difficulties with the way to begin their research through the devices' various outlets.

As students move on from grade to grade continuing their educations, the work that they receive is bound to present more challenging content as they progress. The importance of challenging students is critical in their development to becoming competent members of society after their time in school. Nichols (2013) believes that we must prepare our students for the unknown once they leave school and enter the realm of adulthood. Different technological resources are being used in the majority of businesses, factories, and other workplaces all across the globe. Emma (2018) stated that technology allows members of a workplace to be more productive, efficient, and organizationally sound. As an educator, preparing our students for their lives after school is our primary objective. Students need to feel comfortable with the technology that their future employers expect them to use. Teachers need to incorporate various

technological resources in to their lessons in order to, at the very least, give students some experience with the devices.

The classical civilizations curriculum that I constructed uses the hybrid teaching model allowing for both teacher-led instruction and student-led exploration. The majority of the unit is conducted through the Discovery Education techbook while also supplementing a few other outside sources to bridge some gaps in the curriculum. Because the Discovery Education techbook is a resource completely foreign to this group of students, the teacher is responsible for touring students through the initial navigation of the website. For example, in the opening lesson, students are required to read the passage "Islands and Mountains" from the Discovery Education techbook. The teacher has to show students how to get to the assigned passage because students have never used this techbook before. This process includes giving the students their usernames as well as their passwords to login to the website. From there, the teacher instructs students to click on the tab labelled "My Assignments" and then proceed to find the reading passage that the instructor has assigned to their students prior to class.

The techbook offers various articles, worksheets, videos, and assessments for teachers to pick and choose from that best fit the needs of their students. According to Nichols (2013), accessing and analyzing information are 21st century skills that our students need to have in order to find a career where the competition for jobs can be rigorous. The information that is needed in order to find success for these various lessons I chose for this technological curriculum require the use of the techbook and the various links to other sources that Discovery Education has embedded into their website. These sources rely heavily on students finding their own information that best answers the questions that I, as the teacher, present them with without much intervention from the teacher. The overlying goal is to help students become self-

sufficient, as well as having as much experience with a computer at their fingertips as possible to ready students for whatever their futures hold for them.

Limitations

While this curriculum holds tremendous potential, as I have detailed above, there are also some limitations with this curriculum that need to be addressed before a teacher decides to use it to teach about the classical civilizations in their social studies classes. If a teacher desires to use this curriculum I have pieced together, their school district would have to first purchase a subscription to Discovery Education as well as have enough devices for each individual student in their classroom readily available to them each class session. It is up to the discretion of the curriculum coordinator and the district to concede whether or not a subscription granting access to the Discovery Education techbook is worth the expense, while also providing one-to-one devices for students. Those two elements alone are an expensive endeavor, especially for smaller public school districts. Another hurdle that teachers may face when incorporating this curriculum into the scope and sequencing of their school year is making sure all students are adequate with their typing abilities and online navigation skills. Because this curriculum is heavily technological, students will be required to type a lot of their assignments as well as to be knowledgeable on the ways in which to navigate their way to specific articles, assignments, and assessments. This may be quite time consuming and repetitive for teachers before they see students understand the ins-and-outs of the techbook and online classroom used in this curriculum.

The curriculum that I put together for my 6th grade class isn't tailored to be beneficial for just my own students at the school of which I am currently employed, but rather is suitable for all districts that choose to use it. The implications of this curriculum are to provide teachers with an

outlet to numerous resources when covering the classical civilizations that heavily favors

technology as the primary source of the information. As I have stated before, student engagement

is a necessity for students and teachers seeking success. Martin and Torres (2000) proclaimed

that,

> Engaged students are more likely to perform well on standardized tests and are less likely
>
> to drop out of school. The conditions that lead to student engagement (and reduce student
>
> apathy) contribute to a safe, positive, and creative school climate and culture. (p. 2)

Keeping students' interest throughout the grind of the school year is a challenge all

teachers face.

Educators need to understand that our society is vastly enveloped in a technological era

without the slimmest chance of regression. It is also safe to assume that students in various

educational settings deal with technology to various degrees almost on a daily basis. Providing

the opportunity for technological usage while in a learning setting will help to relinquish the

resentment of classwork. Students tend to enjoy working with various devices. Giving them that

chance to learn the content from not just social studies, but for any course of study through the

use of a computer, tablet, or another smart device will spark excitement amongst most students.

A cognitively engaged student is one that will absorb information ultimately helping them on the

path towards success.

Further Investigation

The unit that I constructed which is based on the classical civilizations, is obviously a

small sample of the potential that this idea can blossom into. Technology is a tool that can be

used across all subject areas and implemented into any curricula. An educator that welcomes the

use of technology into their learning environment instantly becomes more versatile in the ways that they carry out specific lessons, and to appease their students.

There can always be more added to this specific curriculum that would surely aide the students in their comprehension of the content. With the use of scanning technology, great worksheets that are not found online can be converted to a digital version of the same resource where students can complete assignments using whatever devices are available to them in their classroom setting. This curriculum currently only required the usage of two separate websites. With additional exploration, it is highly - likely that there are websites that might offer some more content that would be fitting for specific types of learners.

Conclusions

To conclude, this curriculum was designed in a way that offers students the opportunity to use technology in a social studies classroom for extended periods of time in an interactive manner. I believe in the technological approach to teaching for multiple reasons. Two of those reasons for backing the idea of a technologically-oriented classroom are to raise student engagement levels in order to produce better results, and to ready our students for their future lives after graduation. Success in any capacity comes from practice, consistency, and a willingness to want to achieve. Technology in the classroom brings excitement as well as offers a plethora of opportunities to explore and create. In a world that is becoming increasingly advanced in terms of technological usage and obsession, teachers need to be open to the 21st century's brand of learning.

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