

Title of Project: Pen Pals

Subject(s): Language Arts/Social Study

Grade Level(s): 6th Grade

**Abstract:** The purpose of this project is for students to interact with other students in Mexico by using technology and creating a product to be shared with others in the community. The influences for this project will include two different classrooms (in the school and in another country), discussion of different cultural issues in Mexico and America, and fostering an ongoing working relationship with another classroom. The role the students will be participating as are explorer and producer, while the teacher will be a facilitator and co-explorer with the students. The authentic task is how the students will be comparing and contrasting different issues with another place in the world and collaborating on a end product to share with others in the community about the other country.

**Learner Description/Context:** The learning environment is taking place in rural middle school in Trenton, Georgia. The dynamics of the students are 85% free and reduced rate with African-Americans and Hispanic being a very low minority at the school. The middle school has less than 500 students attending from 6-8 and the technology has been non-existent until this year. We have just now been given 1600 Chromebooks for use in the classrooms. This particular area of Georgia seems to be very dated and has not caught up with current timing in relations to things that have been happening in bigger cities. The fund of knowledge for these students is going to be based on the small amount of information the students have received from their other teachers. There can be a prejudice from their homes because of their family members expectations and experiences This prior knowledge or somewhat lack of it will provide an opportunity for the students to look at the project with fresh and untainted eyes. .

**Time Frame:**

The period for this activity will be 6 weeks. There will be 2 class period each week dedicated to this project split between ELA and SS, so 50 minutes per class which equals 100 minutes per week.

**Standards Assessed:**

SS6H1 Explain conflict and change in Latin America

SS6G3 Explain the impact of location, climate, distribution of natural resources, and population distribution on Latin America.

SS6CG1 Compare and contrast various forms of government.

SS6E3 Describe factors that influence economic growth and examine their presence or absence in Brazil, Cuba, and Mexico.

ELAGSE 6SL1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners On grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

ELAGSE 6W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Global Collaborator-ISTE Standard #7 Students use digital tools to broaden their perspectives and enrich their learning by collaborating with others and working effectively in teams locally and globally.

7a Students use digital tools to connect with learners from a variety of backgrounds and cultures, engaging with them in ways that broaden mutual understanding and learning.

7b Students use collaborative technologies to work with others, including peers, experts or community members, to examine issues and problems from multiple viewpoints.

7c Students contribute constructively to project teams, assuming various roles and responsibilities to work effectively toward a common goal.

7d Students explore local and global issues and use collaborative technologies to work with others to investigate solutions.

Learner Objectives: Write a statement of what students are going to know and be able to do as a result of this learning experience and how it will be measured.

The "hook" or Introduction: The students would begin by watching a video on Mexico and completing a written assignment making prediction of what and how life is like there. Then the students will be introduced to the topic by creating a 3-4 minute presentation using the Chromebook and creating a pre-activity presentation to share with others about a particular topic related to Mexican Culture.

Process:

The process is the way you structure the learning to engage students in the project/learning experience goals and objectives. How are they going to accomplish the task? What are the students doing? What is the teacher doing? How are you assessing the process of learning? How is the student directing the learning? A sequence of unfolding events is usually provided and a timeline is often used.

The process will include the following activities:

- Sending home a permission slip for using student's picture for the activity, for filming, and for speaking to another country. It would be a form to cover all my basis and give the parents an idea about what is happening in both classrooms.

- Creating an introduction video or slideshow to send to out corresponding classroom to give them information about Trenton, Georgia.

- Students will complete a K-W-L chart and brainstorm information they already know about Mexican Culture.

- Students will have a choice board to pick between topics for their presentations about Mexican Culture that include: economic growth, favorite pastimes, political issues, Home Life, Schooling, and Sports. The students will also have a free space where they can come up with their own topic, approved.

- The teacher will allow students to work and create on their own, checking on progress with informal assessments , as a facilitator rather than leading the questions/discussions.

- The students will work on creating a presentation (with a subject chosen) to share and communicate with a pen pal through Skype phone calls and emails.

- \_ The students will create a presentation and videotape the result and share with the class.

- The students will present their end result to their counterpart in Mexico.

-At the end, the students will choose a community member to share their presentation with at an ending share night that has been set up with the school and community.

Product: The end product is the students will create a video explaining their thoughts on life in Mexico with issues concerning the possible wall, cultural issues and other topics. The video will consist of more topics than just discussion of the wall so students can share their experiences from the communications with their Skype pals. The students will share the presentation with their parents and others in the community, specifically community leaders (local house of representatives member). The process will include researching the topic, for a period of 4 weeks interacting with a class from Mexico that is of similar age to share their opinions and thoughts and compile a list of pros and cons for the wall, and then come up with their own conclusions for a real-world issue. The product will be meaningful to the students because they will have the opportunity to learn about an issue that could possibly impact their future. The assessment will be based on several different informal assessments. It will be similar to a portfolio of activities with a culminating assessment at the end. The technology is integrated throughout the project and allows students to learn about cultures in a first hand authentic learning experience.

Technology Use: The proposed technology supports the learning for this activity by providing a means of communication between two different cultures. The other technology allows for easy communication and interpretation of results.

#### References and Supporting Material:

List materials that you used to develop this learning experience. List supporting materials that the instructor would need to implement this learning experience. What would need to be made? (Rubrics? Videos? Samples? Books) Include links to existing Web resources that a teacher would use to understand and implement this learning experience. (For example, if students will be using the Little Kids Rock Website, include the URL somewhere in your template.) Use APA 6 Style.

-Contact Education Skype Resources: Ovi Barcelo

-Set up email accounts for each group to use for communication. Teacher will have access to be able to approve of conversation between the respective groups.

-<https://www.penpalschools.com>

-ELA Standards, SS Standards, and Technology Standards

-Chromebooks

-Rubrics for activities: check-ins and overall assessment

-Google Classroom, Google Slides, Skype

-Camera for communication

-Approved list of websites for research

-Graphic organizer to organize project idea and order

What modifications have you made since you submitted your "idea" for feedback? I have broaden the topic and have implemented many of the changes that were suggested by the others.

Which indicators of Engaged Learning will be high in this lesson and Why? The indicators will be co-learner and co-investigator, culturally responsive, challenging, and authentic learning. This activity will allow students to create their own opinion and share it with others.

Which indicators would you like to strengthen? The indicators I would like to strengthen would be ensuring an authentic learning experience for the students.

What LoTI level do you think this lesson would be and Why? The LoTI level would be a 5 because the experience will reach out of the classroom by interacting with another culture and sharing the results with members of our government.