

## A Unit for Collaborative Learning Based on the Topic of Horses

### **Rationale:**

**Part One:** Literature regarding 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning lists the ability to collaborate as a skill that is increasingly recognized as essential to being successful in life. As well many developmental learning theories emphasise that social interaction is fundamental to how we learn and why we learn.

**Part Two:** Constructing knowledge is best done on a subject that is a shared passion for the students involved.

**Part Three:** Choosing to focus on a student's abilities, strengths, and interests rather than on their deficits, allows students to be more fully integrated into a community of peers.

**Educational Plan:** As part of a school-wide initiative to explore 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning teachers at our school will be teaching four one hour lessons based on their passion. I have chosen to design a unit about horses based on a passion of a student with whom I work with.

<b>Ideas</b>	<b>Theories</b>	<b>Connections to Unit Plan</b>
Role of Culture	Social interaction with peers is a fundamental facilitator in developing cognition through extending a child's Zone of Proximal Development. (Vygotsky)	"Learning should be inclusive, allow group settings for collaboration and provide opportunities to develop community." (Allen)
Sociocultural Aspects	The social implications of a person with a disability can be countered through focussing on strengths and searching for positive capacities. (Vygotsky)	To overcome peoples own attitudes about their disabilities requires enormous self belief based on positive experiences. Finding a 'tribe' who shares your passion can be validating, inspiring, and can develop synergy. (Robinson)
Shareable Customs	We require common procedures to construct reality in a shareable way (Bruner)	Provide opportunities for community building tasks that teach sharing, interdependence, and respect using authentic learning experiences. (Kluth)

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**Unit Length:** Four one hour sessions

**Students:** Fifteen students grades 1 through 5 who choose 'Horses' as the topic they want to study

**Big Idea:** to provide opportunities for collaboration based on a topic of interest

**Unit Objectives:** The students will:

- demonstrate the ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams
- exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal
- assume shared responsibility for collaborative work, and value the individual contribution made by each team member

**Lesson #1 Objective:** The students will: learn about each other and the connections they share regarding horses

**Lesson #2 Objective:** The students will collect information and acknowledge the contributions of themselves and of members in their groups.

**Lesson #3 Objective:** The students will work together to create a game and will practice complimenting members in their groups.

**Lesson #4 Objective:** The students will take turns playing games and will evaluate and acknowledge their contributions and others efforts.

## Lesson #1

**Objective-** The students will: learn about each other and the connections they share regarding horses

**Materials-** Horse Pictures for sorting groups, Enrolling Questions, List of Horse Topics, Pencils, *What we Know, What we Learned* worksheets.

**Evaluation-** Based on observation of the participation of the students

### Procedure-

5 min. **Introduction and setting a purpose-** " My name is Mrs. Koett and I love horses. My plan is for our group to work together to learn some facts about horses and then make some games about horses and play them. Today we will get to know each other and then pick what the games will be about."

15 min. **Enrolling Questions Activity** - Have students perform the movements while the teacher reads the sentences out loud. After the activity have them turn to the person beside them and ask them their name and one thing they know about horses. Have the partner report to the group.

15 min. **Choosing Groups and Topics** - pass out horse pictures. Have the students walk around and form a group with the students who have the matching stickers. Pass out the list of topics and have each group choose a topic for their game. (Allow for combinations of topics if necessary)

10 min. **Activating Background Knowledge-** Have each group fill out the 'What We Know' section of the worksheet (What we Know, What we Learned). (Allow them to figure out who and how they will do this. Emphasis that everyone in the group must contribute to the answers.) Collect papers.

15 min. **Play 'Gossip' about horses** - Have students sit in rows of five. Have the first person in the row turn around and whisper something they know about horses to the second person. The second person then turns to the third person and repeats what was said but adds to it. The third and fourth people continue repeating and adding on. The fifth person then repeats the whole string of ideas about horses out loud. Shuffle groups and play again if time.

5 min. **Conclusion-** "We will meet next week and will begin to collect information for your games."

## Lesson #2

**Objective-** The students will share jobs and acknowledge the contributions of each member of their groups.

**Materials-** *Classify Note Cards*, Computers, Library books at all levels. Website lists, paper and pencils, *Self Evaluation* sheets.

**Evaluation-** Self evaluation sheets

### Procedure-

5 min. **Introduction and Setting a purpose-** "My name is Mrs. Koett. Today we will work together to collect information for your games. Before we begin we need to think about the jobs we will be doing today so we are going to play a game."

10 min. ***Classify, Categorize, and Organize Game*** - Explain to students that they will be finding people who have different jobs and will make a group of three. Emphasis that these groups will not be the groups that they are working with on their game. Hand out the note cards with the jobs on them and have students circulate to find two members that do not have the same cards as them. Once they have formed a group have them sit down together on the floor. Have them read their cards to each other.

Evaluation - Show students enlarged self evaluation form on the board. Explain that they will be assessing how well they worked in their group today at the end of the lesson.

5 min. **Game Formats-**Show the different mediums available for collecting information. Have students form their working groups and pass out the paper on which to collect information, the website list and the self evaluation forms. Have students assigned to work stations around the room. Each group can use a laptop and can have a book or two.

35 min. **Collecting Information-** Circulate encouraging students to share the information they find with each other. Encourage groups to gather many facts. Some groups may wish to cut and paste to a word document if they know how. If some students can't read have them gather ideas from pictures and tell them to a group member. Roles will vary. Emphasise the need for everyone in a group to be involved and that members of the group are responsible for each other's participation.

10 min. **Self Evaluation and Group Evaluation** - Have members of the group help those who can't read or write to fill in their evaluations.

5 min. **Clean up** - Collect papers, and if time ask them to be thinking about how they are going to design their game. (note: they may wish to continue to gather more facts at home)

### Lesson #3

**Objective-** The students will work together to create a game and will practice complimenting members in their groups.

**Materials-** Game templates, construction paper, pencil crayons, felt pens, tag board, paper, rulers. Cut flash cards

**Evaluation-** Verbal answers to group questions

#### **Procedure-**

5 min. **Introduction & Set purpose-** " Today we will be working on creating your games. We are going to start off by looking at some different ideas for game boards. Then you will get into your groups and work together to make your games. While you are working I will be coming around and asking two very important questions. **Is everyone in the group doing something? Are you helping each other?** Turn to a person beside you and tell them what I will be coming around looking for." (Have these two questions written on the board)

10 min. **Game board walk** - Have students get into their groups and go to one game board. Ring a bell and have them go to the next game board and have a look. Once they have seen all of the templates give each group a piece of paper to sketch their rough idea on. Once they have completed their rough copy pass out the tag board.

35 min. **Making game boards** - circulate asking the questions and offering suggestions to encourage everyone to be involved. Scaffold and help problem solve if needed.

5 min. **Clean-up-** using visual timer.

5 min. **Pass a Compliment game-**Have students line up in their groups. The first person whispers a compliment to the next person. The second person adds to it and passes it to the third person. The third person adds on a compliment and whispers it to the first person. Continue adding on until time is up.

## Lesson # 4

**Objective-** The students will take turns playing games and will evaluate and acknowledge group efforts .

**Materials-** Students games, Evaluation forms, pencils, *What We Know, What We Learned* worksheet, horse pictures for group sort

**Evaluation -** Evaluation form, *What We Know, What We Learned* worksheet

### Procedure-

5 min. **Introduction-** "Today you will be playing each other's games. Before we begin I would like you to get into your groups and set up your games. When I ring the bell you will stop what you are doing and I will give you a horse sticker. You are to find other people with the same horse picture and sit down. These will be the students you will be playing games with. The goal for today is to have fun, take turns, and think of something nice to say about each game you play." Explain that there will be an evaluation sheet at each game and every group who plays the game must think of one nice thing to say about the game or something they learned from playing the game. Older students are to help younger students write.

(Note: Have a reminder on the board about the evaluation)

12 min. **Game set up** - Students get into their original groups and set up their games.

8 min. **New groups** - Hand out horse pictures and have groups find each other. Once they have found each other have them sit down. Groups that are sitting down can be directed to a game to start playing.

25 min. **Play games-** Rotate groups every 12 minutes. Encourage students to write remarks while they are awaiting their turn. If games are finished sooner let them rotate to another game.

10 min. **Final evaluation:** Ring bell for students to get back in their original groups. They can read any evaluations that were written about their games. Pass out the *What we Know What we Learned* sheets and have the groups complete the 'What We learned' section and clean up. Collect sheets.

Names \_\_\_\_\_

What We Know	What We Learned

Name \_\_\_\_\_

### How Well did We Do?

Circle the answer.

- |  |     |    |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. I helped someone .  | Yes | No |
| 2. I wrote some ideas down.                                    | Yes | No |
| 3. I looked at a book and shared my ideas with my group.       | Yes | No |
| 4. I looked on the computer and shared my ideas with my group. | Yes | No |

The person I helped was \_\_\_\_\_.

The person who helped me was \_\_\_\_\_.

Our group worked well together because

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I could help my group better next time if I \_\_\_\_\_

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## Enrolling Questions Activity:

- If you like horses stand up.
- If you have ever ridden a horse sit down.
- If you would like to ride a horse sit down.
- If you have ever cleaned a horse's hoof raise your hand.
- If you have fed a horse cross your feet.
- If you have petted a horse put one foot up.
- If you have brushed a horse put two hands up.
- If you have taken horse riding lessons stand up.
- If you have read a book or seen a show about horses sit on the floor.
- If you have won a medal riding horses put your hand on your head.

## Topics for Research Pick one or choose your own

- 1) Parts of a horse
- 2) Racing horses
- 3) Famous horses
- 4) Wild Horses
- 5) Horse Jobs
- 6) How horses help humans
- 7) Caring for horses
- 8) Grooming horses
- 9) Types of horses
- 10) Colours of horses
- 11) Horses in (Pick a country)
- 12) How to look after a horse
- 13) Horse facts
- 14) (Pick one type of horse and collect facts about that type)
- 15) History of horses

Your Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

## Websites and Videos for Horse Research

Parts of a horse (clickable) videos/ horse care

<http://horses.about.com/library/partsofthehorse/blhorsemap.htm>

To learn about types of horses /wild horses/ caring about horses/horse tack/ horse colours/ horse markings/ horse anatomy

<http://www.learn-about-horses.com/>

Interesting facts about horses

<http://www.facts-about.org.uk/facts-about-horses.htm>

facts about the parts of a horse

[http://www.ehow.com/list\\_7547697\\_kids-parts-horse.html](http://www.ehow.com/list_7547697_kids-parts-horse.html)

Famous horses

<http://www.freewebs.com/minihorsekidsclub/famoushorses.htm>

Caring for your horse (Go to the bottom of the page for more information)

<http://www.netplaces.com/kids-horses/caring-for-your-horse/horse-care-from-a-z.htm>

Video how to groom you horse/ how to look after it's hooves

<http://www.videojug.com/film/how-to-groom-your-horse>

10 breeds of horses mainly pictures

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkgIFXiPlxl>

History of horses

<http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/kids/animals-pets-kids/mammals-kids/horses-kids/>

<p>Metacognitive Approach</p>	<p>Piaget's idea of schema is a way of linking new information and categorizing it which aids recall and understanding. (Piaget)</p>	<p>A "metacognitive" approach to instruction can help students take control of their own learning by defining learning goals and monitoring their progress in achieving them. (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking)</p> <p>Help students develop self regulatory, intentional approaches to learning. (Coleman)</p> <p>Have students plan- monitor- reflect.</p>
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## References

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