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Bamboo People—an interdisciplinary unit for high school

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UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN

Unit Cover Page

Unit Title: Bamboo People—an interdisciplinary unit for high school

Grade Level: 9th

Subject/Topic Area(s): Interdisciplinary—World Geography, Biology, English, Technology, & Math

Designed By: Mitzi Moore

Time Frame: flexible (summer + several days at the beginning of the school year)

School District: North East Independent School District

School: International School of the Americas

School Address and Phone: 1400 Jackson Keller Road, San Antonio, TX, 78213, 210-442-0404

Brief Summary of Unit (Including curricular context and unit goals):

A summer assignment asks students to read the book Bamboo People, by Mitali Perkins, and complete assignments in every class that are connected to the book. At the beginning of the school year, teachers use the assignments to extend the learning and help students understand the major themes of the book (child soldiers, landmines, literacy, and service to others). A video conference with the author is planned, as well as interactions with people familiar with modern-day Myanmar/Burma. The culminating activity is to bring all the assignments together in one place by publishing a blog post.

Bamboo People:

An interdisciplinary unit for 9th grade based on the novel by Mitali Perkins

By Mitzi Moore, 2011

Stage 1 – Desired Results		
<p>Established Goals (e.g., standards)</p> <p><u>Performance Outcomes of the International School of the Americas</u></p> <p><u>English</u> Understands how texts are situated within their biographical, cultural, and historical contexts</p> <p><u>Social Studies</u> Relates evidence from sources to specific context(s)--place(s), time(s), or idea(s).</p> <p><u>Math</u> Monitors and reflects on the process of mathematical problem solving</p> <p><u>Science</u> Investigates and explains scientific content relevant to an issue including contributions from multiple scientific disciplines</p> <p><u>Technology</u> Communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a</p>	Transfer	
	<p><i>Students will independently use their learning to...</i></p> <p>Create a blog post that illustrates their work and learning related to the book <u>Bamboo People</u>.</p>	
	Meaning	
	<p>Understandings <i>Students will understand that...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people in other countries have difficult lives due to war and injustice. • Literacy (textual and quantitative) impacts life. • Documenting a series of learning experiences requires new technology skills as well as introspective reflection. 	<p>Essential Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How are the lives of the characters in the book different from your own? How are they similar? 2. How does being able to read and think mathematically create more opportunities in your life? 3. How can you demonstrate what you have learned and created to an audience?
Acquisition		
<p>Knowledge <i>Students will know...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child soldiers and landmines represent types of global injustice, and both of these exist in modern-day Burma/Myanmar. • There are many reasons to learn to be a good reader. • Proficiency in mathematics depends on innate ability, life experiences, and good training. • The five themes of geography are location, 	<p>Skills <i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write an essay explaining how literacy impacts life. • Elaborate on the factors affecting mathematical literacy. • Create an advertisement extolling the uses of bamboo. • Produce a product (print or digital) that connects images of Burma to the five themes of geography. • Perform service for the community and document it. • Create a collage that illustrates 	

	Learning Activities	Progress Monitoring (e.g., formative data)
	<p>During the summer, students will complete the following assignments independently:</p>	
A & M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the book Bamboo People. 	Completion grade
T	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. For English class, write an essay considering how the events in the book relate to Gallagher’s 10 “Reading Reasons,” in order to explore how literacy impacts life. Then write a letter of introduction. 	
T	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. For Math class, consider how characters in the book are math literate, and answer reflection questions about how one becomes “good at math”. Final product may be in the form of a letter or a multimedia project. 	Completion grade
A & M	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. For Biology class, research bamboo. Then create an advertisement (print, audio, or video) aimed at the people of Burma that promotes the uses and benefits of this useful plant. 	Grade
T	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. For World Geography class, research the Five Themes of Geography and use a search engine to find images of Burma that relate to the five themes (3-5 pictures per theme). Using the images, create a Burma picture book, brochure, PowerPoint, video, website, essay, newsletter, etc., which includes the photos, credits, and explanations of why those photos fit the theme. 	Grade based on checklist
T	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. For Multimedia, volunteer your time to serve others (as many of the book characters did) for at least one hour, and document the process in multiple ways. In addition, create a collage you will be able to use to introduce yourself on the first day of school. Finally, an optional assignment is to attend the local World Refugee Day ceremony to meet Burmese and Karenni refugees. 	Grade based on rubric
M	<p>During the first week of school, lessons in every class will relate to <i>Bamboo People</i>. The summer assignments will guide the lessons by providing subject matter for pair shares, small group talks, and whole class discussions. Work will also be displayed publicly. In the Multimedia class, the collages will be used to collaboratively generate a rubric that outlines the criteria of a quality product.</p>	Class discussions Written check-ins
T	<p>During the first month of school, an assembly will be arranged. The author of the book, Mitali Perkins, has offered to video conference with our class. Philanthropist Matt Schatz has agreed to come and talk about his recent travels to Myanmar to build schools and playgrounds. Students may also be provided</p>	Written reflection? Chalk talk?

<p>A, M, & T</p>	<p>the opportunity of speaking with Burmese refugees that live in San Antonio, through collaboration with the Catholic Charities Refugee Resettlement Program.</p> <p>Throughout the year, our school will continue to engage in student-driven campaigns against landmines (to raise \$20,000 to buy a landmine-sniffing dog), as well as against child soldiers (via the Peace Jam Club working with Invisible Children and Falling Whistles).</p>	<p>n/a</p>
<p>A, M, & T</p>	<p>During the first semester, students will create a post in their portfolio. Each student has an individual blog (through Edublogs) that serves as a digital portfolio space. The post will include all their assignments, digitized, as well as reflections based on questions the freshman team will collaborate to design. The logistics of this part will happen through Multimedia class. Students will give feedback to their peers via comment boxes, and the portfolio will be shared with parents in April during a student-led conference.</p>	<p>Rubric</p> <p>Published work will receive audience feedback via blog comments and private conversations.</p>