

Discovering Community Summer 2009  
Unit Plan 4/5 Class  
by Kelly Pierpont

**Topic:**

Community

**Overview:**

Monkton Central School, (MCS), is a community shaped over time by children and adults. The students will learn about this population by interviewing and photographing people who are or have been part of the MCS community. They will share their discoveries with multi-media presentations to their peers in school and with the adults in the Monkton town community.

**Enduring Understanding:**

The students will understand how to use modern technology as a vehicle to inquire, learn, and share information about their community. They will also recognize how their school community has evolved over time and what factors have contributed to the changes.

**Essential Questions:**

How has the Monkton Central School community changed over time?  
How are *habits of mind* essential to inquiry? (e.g. persisting, listening with understanding and empathy, thinking flexibly, striving for accuracy, questioning and posing problems, applying past knowledge to new situations, thinking and communicating with clarity and precision)

**Focusing Questions:**

Which of your parents also attended MCS?  
Who are the current staff members who are former students of MCS?  
How has recess changed over the years?  
How has lunch changed over the years?  
How have the school rules changed over time?  
How has our school building changed since this school started?

**Skills:**

Students will learn how to: write interview questions, create follow-up questions, listen, conduct interviews, work as part of a cooperative team, use

digital cameras, video cameras, and audio recording devices, edit recorded digital material, create a multimedia presentation of their work, share their final products with an authentic audience

### **Learning Opportunities:**

The students will explore some of the Habits of Mind, (HOM), starting on the first day of school. We will discuss what the words mean and site examples of people using the HOM. When students recognize situations where a HOM is being employed they will add their example to the classroom display.

Next, students will receive instruction on how to use digital equipment, specifically the digital camera, and the H4 audio recorder. They will practice using both pieces of equipment within the classroom. They will eventually record someone explaining what one of the HOMs means. They will then take a photo of a classmate which illustrates the HOM. These will be edited into a PowerPoint display and shared with the class.

Students will next receive instruction on how to conduct interviews. They will practice writing "fat questions" and "skinny questions". The students will share examples of each and receive feedback from their peers. Eventually, each student will develop interview questions that they will use to learn more about someone in their class.

Following instruction, students will use digital cameras and recording devices to collect images and sound from each other as they conduct interviews to learn about their classroom community. They will work cooperatively to develop questions, conduct interviews, and edit material into cohesive multimedia presentations. These presentations will be shown at a school wide assembly.

Students will then use their newly acquired skills to conduct and record interviews with the larger MCS community in an effort to explore how the MCS community has evolved over time. They will determine whom within the school and within their families could be used as resources for these interviews. Ultimately, they will create a multimedia presentation that will be shown to the town residents, perhaps at Town Meeting.

### **Resources:**

**School Staff:** Lillian Cota, Bonnie Huezinga, Mary Gemignani, Sandy Dahl, Jan Davis, Zandra Cousino

**People outside of school:** Camelita Burrett, Marilyn Stetson, Greg Sharrow, Erica Heilman, Doris Brace, others to be determined by exploration

**Equipment:** Audio recording devices from the VT Folk life Center

**Books:** On the Town: A Community Adventure by Judith Caseley

Serving Your Community by Christin Ditchfield

Return to Sender by Julia Alvarez

...more yet to be discovered

### Vocabulary:

Community, primary source, secondary source, active listening, vox pop, digital editing, resources, follow-up, digital storytelling, evolve, empathy, persistence, accuracy, objectivity, "fat questions", "skinny questions"

### ANESU Power Standards:

#### Grade 4:

##### **Inquiry**

**1. Students develop, conduct, analyze and/or communicate research by...**

a. (1) Asking relevant and focusing questions based on what they have seen, what they have read, what they have listened to, and/or what they have researched.

b. (3) Identifying and locating resources for finding answers to their questions.

c. (6) Reflecting on the process and their findings

d. (7) Giving an oral, written, or visual presentation that summarizes their findings.

##### **History**

**2. Students show understanding of the link between the past, the present, and the future by...**

a. (8) Describing ways that events, people, problems, and ideas in the community and Vermont has both changed and stayed the same over time.

##### **Civics**

**4. Students show understanding of government, citizenship and a citizen's role in society by...**

b. (14) Demonstrating positive interaction with group members

## **Grade 5:**

### **Inquiry**

#### **1. Students develop, conduct, analyze and/or communicate research by...**

- a. (1) Asking relevant and focusing questions that will lead to independent research based on what they have seen, what they have read, what they have listened to, and/or what they have researched
- b. Identifying the difference between primary and secondary sources.
- c. (4) Identifying and locating information needed including primary and secondary sources
- d. (5) Collecting evidence and recording observations using note cards, videotape, tape recorders, journals, or databases
- e. (6) Explaining the relevance of their findings (So what?) by asking follow-up questions, by proposing additional research.
- f. (7) Developing and giving oral, written, or visual presentations for various audiences.

### **History**

#### **2. Students show understanding of the link between the past, the present, and the future by...**

- b. (9) Identifying multiple perspectives in historic and current events

### **Assessments:**

Students will be assessed on their classroom presentation and later on their presentation to the public. I will use check lists to assess their interviews and presentations. A teamwork rubric will be used for peer evaluations as well as from my perspective.