Watershed Science for Educators

NRS 591
Instructor: Denise Poyer

Final Project/Lesson
By: Chace Loomis

"Connections to Community"

Using technology to increase awareness of the Narrow River Watershed

Background/Overview:

Computer Applications II is offered at *South Kingstown High School* and is recommended to all students in order to complete their state-mandated .5 credit in technology. The course is a heterogeneous grouping of grades 11-12, and is offered through the Business Education Department for a period of one semester.

One of the units covered during the course is "Advertising and Promotion", with emphasis on the makings of an effective *Brochure*. Students are exposed to some very effective designs, as well as some very poor, ineffective designs. After meeting and discussing the needs of the *Narrow River Preservation Association (NRPA)* with active member and educator, Veronica Bouransky; specifically with an emphasis on making the exposure "more exciting", it was decided to create a two-week unit on meshing the technical/mechanical process of brochure writing with the NRPA.

Lesson Preset:

Students are familiarized with the NRPA with use of the website www.narrowriver.org, as well as shown the history of the Narrow River Watershed via Photostory.

Semantic mapping then takes place, as students brainstorm ideas with regards to content of a finished, appealing brochure. Mrs. Bouransky provides some photos and maps with regards to the watershed that she would like included in the design. She also states that she would like "talking points" included, as well as a brief history of the watershed for potential visitors to the region/area.

Present NRPA brochure is distributed and discussed; strengths and weaknesses identified.

Objective:

Completed tri-fold brochure highlighting the history as well as key talking points of the Narrow River Watershed. Brochure to be distributed at *Gilbert Stuart Museum, Narragansett Kayaks* and the *Pettasquamscutt Historical Museum*.

Procedure:

Day 1

-Intro to brochure design, rubric introduced (see attachment)
-"Secrets to good brochure design" (handout)
-View Photostory on the "History of the Narrow River" (loaded onto network drive)
-Web/Flowchart/brainstorm order of thought/ideas

Days 2 /3/4

-Using Microsoft Publisher design template, begin design
-Construct rough draft using frames (text, picture, word art and table)
-4 photographs and 3 maps provided on network, common drive for student access
-All information brainstormed onto working copy of brochure

Days 4/5

-Using LCD overhead, presentations on ideas, rough copy results
-Color, theme, audience, purpose are addressed

Day 6

-Visitor Veronica Bouransky to classroom; brief outline of the NRPA, it's origins and mission
-Question/answer session with regards to design and purpose

Day 7

-Final layout and design
-Spellcheck/grammar check
-Finish review

Day 8

-Print Brochures
-80 lb/glossy paper
-Finished brochures presented to Board of NRPA for final approvals

Day 9

-Evaluations, presentations (see rubric attached)

End Notes:

One of the major benefits of this type of activity is its potential for common thematic units across the school's subject areas. Presently Matt Shiels teaches a course in Rhode Island History and has agreed to incorporate some of the work completed during this project.
Dale Loomis, teacher of science at Narragansett Pier School, also has interest in a second brochure highlighting the "Biodiversity of the Watershed."

At present, 12 brochures have been designed, following the above plans. They are scheduled to be reviewed by the Board of Directors for the NRPA on Tuesday, May 5th, 2009. Once approved, one design will be selected to go to finish print.

On a final note, all 12 students in the classroom cited this project as one of the more "relevant" projects they've done thus far in high school. They all scanned and uploaded their brochures into their portfolios for their graduation requirements; meeting SLE (Student Learning Expectation) #3: Use of 4 different types of software during instruction.