Ant Colonies Unit
2nd & 3rd Grades
Maria C. Cunningham

Families and the Role of Ants

Introduction:
Students will learn about ant cities and the roles of ants as well as discussing what obstacles were overcome in the story. Students will also write a letter to the queen ant discussing their adventures and obstacles that were encountered.

Objective:
1. The students will be able to identify 5 strategies used in order to overcome an obstacle with 100% accuracy.
2. The students will be able to compose a letter that describes an obstacle presented from the story read in class with 80% accuracy.

Standards:
1. Identify natural human characteristics of places and how people interact in them and modify their environment, with emphasis on: the relationship between the physical and the location of human activities.
   a. Write well-organized communications such as friendly letters, memo's, invitations for a specific audience and with a clear purpose.

Procedures:
1. Read “Two Bad Ants”
2. Discuss with students the obstacles that were overcome by the ants in comparison to obstacles in our own lives.
3. Discuss different obstacles that students have had to overcome in their lives.
4. Discuss the obstacles that different cultures have had to overcome.
5. Introduce the components of a letter and how to write a letter.
6. Have students write a letter to the queen ant describing what it was like to overcome some of the obstacles in the story as well as the feeling of overcoming those obstacles.
7. Have students share their letters and or any stories.

Assessment:
Were students participating? Did the students have the correct component of a letter? Were students able to provide an example of an obstacle?

Resources:
Book entitled “Two Bad Ants” by Chris Van Allsburg

Social Studies Emphasis: Maria Vixen

Introduction:
This lesson is to be done as a Social Studies lesson with many literacy components. Students will learn about the ant colonies and discuss the similarities of their own families. Students will also learn the importance of working in a family and community.
Objective:
1. The students will be able to compare and contrast the social structure of ant colonies and the social structure of their families with 80% accuracy.
2. Students will be able to provide 5 examples of the cooperation and contribution of each of their family member and discuss 5 similarities and differences between their family and the ant colonies.

Standards:
1. Social Studies: Identify natural and human characteristics of places and how people interact with and modify their environment with emphasis on:
   a. How people depend on the physical environment and it natural resources to satisfy their basic needs.
   b. How people can conserve and replenish certain resources.
   c. The ways in which people have used and modified resources in the local region, including dam construction, building roads, building cities, and raising crops. (all social studies awards are in comparison to our colonies and then related to our own society)
2. Reading: Recognize the historical cultural perspectives of literary selections.
   a. Identify similarities and differences relating to theme, plot setting, character and point of-view in literature from different cultures.

Procedures:
1. Brainstorm and discuss the roles of each family member and their contribution to the family unit.
2. Include traditional and non-traditional families, single parent families, blended families, and extended families as part of the discussion.
3. Record thoughts on butcher paper.
4. Using the notes from the discussion, work with students to create a list of jobs done by each person in his/her family.
5. Incorporate this information into a web connecting how each person influences everybody else.
6. Read “Families” by Aylette Jenness
7. Working in teams, ask students to add in other people, including aunts, uncles, and friends on an outer circle who play a significant role in their lives. What role do these people have in their lives? Have students share with the entire class and talk about families and community, compare similarities and differences.
8. Read “Ant Cities” by Arthur Dorms. Discuss ants as social insects and how they cooperate as a group. Compare and contrast the different roles of ants and people, have the students draw their comparisons.

Assessment:
1. Are students working cooperatively in groups?
2. Were students able to compare and contrast different roles of ants and people?
3. Were students able to compare similarities and differences of families and community?
4. What was student's final project? Were students able to create an illustration that compared different roles of ants and people?
Checklist for Effective Reading Instruction:
1. Yes, students read from a wide variety of genre
2. Yes, students see teachers engaged in reading for pleasure as well as information
3. Yes, students have a wide variety of reading materials to choose from and time to read
4. Yes, students are provided with appropriate strategy lessons if they experience difficulties in their reading.
5. Yes, students have opportunities to talk about what they have read, making connections between the reading and their own experience.
6. Yes, there is evidence that students' writing is influenced by what they read

Resources and Materials:

Extension- Special Education ESL 4th and 5th grade

Introduction:
1. Students will be able to verbally identify 10 action words or verbs from the stories read.
2. Students will be able to use 10 actions words in a complete sentence.

Procedure:
Students were asked to verbally provide actions words in reference to the action displayed on the action card. Teachers provided clarification as needed. Spanish words were provided for specific verbs as well as the word Verb. Students then used the verb in a complete sentence. Students wrote the verb in a complete sentence. Finally students acted out the verb. The lesson required repetition of many of the words. The lesson was broken into many segments in order to incorporate many activities.

Assessment:
Were students able to understand the directions? Were students able to identify the verb in the picture? Were students able to verbally express the verb in a complete sentence? Were students able to compose a complete sentence on paper?