

March 2011

## **Great Lessons from SuperTeachers**

### **Angela Binder – Coppell High School**

Ms. Binder created an Amazing Race Adventure for her students to study volcanoes. They 'traveled' in Google Earth to various locations around the world to complete challenges as a team, while learning about the different types of volcanoes and how they affect our society. Students were working together while competing with other teams to win the Amazing Race.

### **John Harris – Coppell High School**

In Mr. Harris' World History STEM, students were assigned to research a civilization. Using multiple resources including lap tops and smart phones, the students worked in groups to create drawings for the civilization and define it in their own words. Mr. Harris set in motion the group dynamics for the students to work together on their projects. The resulting presentations were outstanding and clearly demonstrated the students' mastery and understanding of the importance of collaboration and communication in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Shane Bybee – Coppell High School**

Coach Bybee has designed lessons that make Shakespeare come alive for his Freshman English students. Students are designing set layouts, explaining the dialogue to one another, and practicing swordplay while speaking the lines. The students are experiencing Shakespeare, not just passively reading. Romeo and Juliet is far more appreciated by these students because of Coach Bybee's engaging lessons.

### **Rochelle Cowan and Ryan Hill – Coppell Middle School East**

Sixth grade science students at CMS East are creating a strategic plan for re-designing Coppell's electricity production and distribution systems utilizing only renewable and inexhaustible resources. Through a Project-Based Learning approach, students are evaluating the advantages and disadvantages of a variety of energy resources, indentifying the energy transformations involved and recognizing the importance of developing a diverse energy portfolio. Today's hands-on inquiry investigation was one of many scaffold learning experiences through which students will increase their understandings in preparation for the final presentation of recommended energy plans.

### **Alicia Deranger – Coppell Middle School East**

In Ms. Deranger's mathematics class, students worked on netbooks to complete an online assessment. While taking the assessment, students were logged into a class Edmodo account and were able to message questions to the teacher and have them answered in real-time. After students had completed the assessment, they created a Thinking Map that previewed the next

lesson. Students used software on the netbooks to generate an individualized Thinking Map and sent it electronically to Ms. Deranger when completed.

### **Tess Haranda – Coppell Middle School North**

8th grade Creative Reading/Writing Studio students are writing product descriptions for crafted items made by the Siwok tribe in northern Argentina. The students are partnering with a local church that sponsors this group of indigenous people in an effort to help them become self-sufficient by promoting and selling the pieces, as well as coordinating distribution of the crafts to other churches to sell. After receiving information on the Argentinean people and the specific materials used to create the crafts, students will coordinate getting pictures of all of the items and then write unique and creative descriptions of each item. Students will have the opportunity to help the local community by reducing the volunteer strain to write hundreds of descriptions. They will be serving the global community by helping another people sell their goods. They will also get their own words published on the Internet in a very real-world writing project. Ms. Haranda is facilitating authentic, relevant learning opportunities for her students!

### **Anthony Poullard – Coppell Middle School West**

Señor Poullard teaches Spanish I at West, and his energy and enthusiasm are contagious. In his class, students transitioned seamlessly from having a conversation about favorite pastimes (in Spanish, of course) to a review on prepositions. As the music played loudly, Señor Poullard and his students sang along to the Spanish lyrics about prepositions and used choreographed hand motions. Señor Poullard was clearly overacting the fast-paced song while walking/dancing through his class and encouraging each student, coaxing everyone to participate. He did a great job blending the nuts and bolts of Spanish grammar and pronunciation with a fun and exciting lesson.

### **Kelly Coleman – Town Center Elementary**

Ms. Coleman's students worked in collaborative groups using the engineering process to create efficient alarm circuits that would alert farmers when the water in an animal's trough was low and needed to be replenished. The students used a Google Doc to gather ongoing feedback from their peers as they worked to create the best circuit. Feedback consisted of peers testing out circuits using the directions each group wrote for operating their circuit, and then posting their testing feedback on the team's Google Doc. Each group created a Glogster to showcase their work. On their Glogster, teams had a link to their Google Doc that housed all their notes, feedback, schematic diagram, and culminating video presentation made by using a flip video camera. Students then posted the Glogster onto their individual student web pages as part of their digital portfolio.

### **Sharon Danchak – Town Center Elementary**

Donning her red cap, black suit and mask, Ms. Danchak becomes the "Conflict Wheel's Masked Marvel" during her guidance lessons, and the kids love her. She also dresses up as a chef and,

using her best Italian accent, takes pots and pans to cook spaghetti and meatballs by selecting the best ingredients for being a “good citizen.” The students generate the list of ingredients they think should be added to the spaghetti pot. This is a powerful message to the students with a creative spin!

### **Tammee Henderson – Valley Ranch Elementary**

Ms. Henderson has successfully implemented Daily 5 which allows students to select a task on which to work: read to someone, read to self, word work, writing, and listening to reading. These student led options allow each student to determine their level of interest and area in which to work. While each student was actively engaged, the teacher worked with a small group on reading strategies and identifying parts of speech. White boards, group discussions, games and interactive activities were planned on the smart board to reinforce skills and assess the students in the small group. The overall lesson was authentic and allowed student choice and student leadership in their learning.

### **Kelsey McKnight – Denton Creek Elementary**

Ms. McKnight’s fifth graders have been studying the events leading up to the American Revolution. She had her students hold a debate to understand, explore, and argue the differences between the Patriots and the Loyalists. The students dressed in authentic costumes and had to assume the voice, disposition, and demeanor of the character they were portraying. Other students played the role of investigative reporters and questioned leaders such as "Benjamin Franklin" and "Sam Adams" which led to some lively and interesting discussion! Students not only learned the content in a clearer way, but also learned to value other perspectives and opinions that were different than their own. This great lesson was enhanced by technology with the students using "Today's Meet," an online forum which helped continue their lively discussion as students wrote their reflections, opinions, and questions online while the debate was going on. This was an innovative lesson where students were active participants and not merely passengers in the learning!