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Research in the Field of Education.

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In the field of education, research is constantly being done as educators search for answers to questions about the ways we learn, the best methods to teach an idea or concept, and what concepts are most important for students to know at each grade level. The questions raised by the researchers our group read ranged from the value of an integrated curriculum to what role does gender play in children literature.

Gordon Vars (2001) feels the high stakes testing method is the wrong approach. In her paper, Vars attempts to answer four questions as they relate to Integrative Curriculum. What is Curriculum Integration and why is it so vulnerable? Is Curriculum Integration worth saving? What will it take to save Curriculum Integration? Other questions our group studied dealt with what role does law play in a student's curriculum, how does outside employment affect a teachers ability to teach, what role does gender play in children's literature, and is block scheduling a good model for a middle school curriculum.

Methodology

It is apparent that Gordon Vars has done extensive research on this topic. She has documented over fifty references during the course of writing her paper, many of

who have taught and/or advocated Integrative Curriculum for over fifty years. Vars also talks briefly about a few of the more than two-hundred studies that have been done to assess the effectiveness of Integrative Curriculum, several of which include live in class studies. Along with the many references and studies, Vars draws from her own experience as an educator and professor at Kent State University. Other methods of research discovered by our group include middle school models, interviews, library research, and analysis of literature.

Analysis of Curriculum Integration

Gordon Vars has a strong desire to see that all children receive a proper and fair education. After reading this article one has no doubt where she stands on this issue. She believes the current method of testing has added undue pressure and stress on the teachers and more importantly on the students who must take the test. Vars favors a student-centered approach, referred to as Integrative Curriculum that allows the student to take part in the planning of the curriculum. Vars still believes that ultimately the educators are responsible to teach. But under the Integrative Curriculum approach students are allowed to express their ideas and concerns while helping to plan their learning experience.

Analysis of Gender roles in Children's Literature

The article "Gender Roles in Children's Literature": A Review of Non-Award Winning "Easy to Read" Books, by Renae Poarch and Elizabeth Monk-Turner, analyzes gender differences in character representation found in non-award winning "Easy to Read" books. It is a replication of a previously done study by Crabb and Bielawski to analyze the use of household, production, and personal artifacts used by characters in children's literature. The main difference in the two studies is that Crabb and Bielawski studied Caldecott Medal Award winning books and Poarch and Monk-Turner studied non-award winning books. The intent was to analyze the same author and check for similar themes or central ideas. The study was conducted by examining the characters in the story and what type of artifacts they were pictured with. Results showed that males were more often associated with production artifacts, such as non-domestic and professional artifacts. Results also showed that their female counterparts were often depicted with domestic artifacts, such as household appliances. The study also showed that the ratio of female characters to male characters was 1:1.5. This illustrated that males had more representation in the stories. The books that were gathered for the study came from a large regional public library,

and were selected from a series listed under each letter of the alphabet.

Analysis of the Case of Law-Related Education

What is Law-Related Education? In the article "The Case for Law-Related Education," it discussed the need to educate our youth about the laws and the consequences of illegal behavior. As disturbing reports of school violence continues to increase. Teachers and bar associations have developed an interest in ensuring that the public learns about the law. Approximately 21 states have these programs sponsored by bar associations (Hanson, 2002). The teachers receive training in legal issues, and volunteer lawyers or police officers learn interactive strategies that will help students develop positive attitudes toward the law and judicial system.

Analysis of Work Related Factors in Teacher Moonlighting

The article written by Carolyn Pearson and Delos Carrol was about the effects of moonlighting. According to Pearson and Carrol (1994), moonlighting is when full-time teachers work an additional part-time job after school. It was found that most teachers who moonlight want to improve their standard of living (Pearson & Carrol, 1994). In order to compare moonlighters to those who do not moonlight the following factors were considered; gender, work-related

factors, and attitudes towards teaching (Carrol & Pearson,1994). It was found that over one-third of full-time teachers moonlight, of which the majority were younger, well educated males (Carrol & Pearson,1994). The results of the study showed that moonlighting had no affect on the classroom (Carrol & Pearson,1994).

Analysis of Block Scheduling for Middle Schools

Block scheduling is a common practice in many high schools, however this form of scheduling has yet to be tested at the middle school level. The question asked in this paper is does block scheduling fit into a middle school setting? An effective schedule allows a teacher to reallocate larger blocks of time based upon student needs, skill acquisitions, and instructional approaches (Clark & Clark,1994). There are two types of block scheduling discussed in this article. The first type, referred to as the 4x4 semester plan, requires the student to complete a four year equivalent course each semester. The second plan, referred to as the eight block alternating day model, requires the student to enroll for eight classes annually, completing blocks 1-4 and 5-8 on alternating days.

Format and Documentation

This paper was written in an APA format, which is evident by the in text citing of the author's name and the

year the work was created. Also unique to the APA style is the use of subheadings to begin new topics or paragraphs. The documentation of the references follows APA format with the listing of the author followed by the year and the title of the article. Noticeably absent from an APA style paper is an abstract and title page. The title of the article is listed on the same page as the introduction and takes on more of a magazine style appearance. There are several long quotes used in this paper none of which seem to follow correct APA format with respect to indentation. Even though there are several aspects of an APA style paper that are missing from this article, there is no doubt that this paper was written in an APA style. All the papers read by our group were written in an APA format. The biggest difference was two of the papers included abstracts while the other three did not.

References

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