

SOCIAL STUDIES AND MOTIVATING FACTORS:
VIEWS OF FOURTH GRADE ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The importance of social studies in elementary schools has often been debated. Especially since the advent of *No Child Left Behind* it is often treated as a supplemental subject. When looking at the focus of most standardized tests at the elementary level, significance is placed on math and the basics of reading and writing. It is well documented that high-stakes testing has resulted in a shift away among teachers from emphasizing higher-level to lower level concepts. Consequently, competency tests have had a significant impact on the quality of social studies education. According to Passe (2006), “at the elementary level ... the entire subject area of social studies is disappearing from the school day.” To many policymakers and elementary teachers, social studies is not unimportant but nonetheless considered an enrichment or second-ranked subject (Zhoa & Hoge, 2005). Many government-funded programs, such *Reading First* or *Title I*, exist to aid teachers’ efforts in the area of reading, writing, and math. But, where are the programs that help children to recognize their civic duties, rights, and general responsibilities of becoming a contributing member of society?

Researchers have found that students often have a negative attitude towards the subject area (Carroll & Leander, 2001; Chapin 2006, 1998; Chiodo & Byford, 2004; Governale, 1997; Haladyna & Thomas, 1979; Houser, 1995; Schug, 1984; Shaughnessy & Haladyna, 1985; Weible & Evans, 1984). They generally consider the negative

attitudes to be a result of curricular content, teaching methods, and classroom environment (Zhoa & Hoge, 2005). Motivated teachers have tried to boost excitement in the classroom by using a variety of teaching methods, including primary as well as secondary resources, and exposing students to simulations and re-enactments. Yet, most students continue to view social studies as boring or irrelevant. Nearly 30 years ago, Shaughnessy and Haladyna (1985) captured the essence of why social studies is one of the least liked subjects. They interviewed sixth and twelfth grade students in a Midwest school district about social studies subject matter and teacher preparation. They concluded that:

It is the teacher who is key to what social studies will be for the student.

Instruction tends to be dominated by the lecture, textbook or worksheets.... and social studies does not inspire students to learn (p. 694).

Teachers greatly influence the extent to which their students have a negative or positive outlook upon the subject of social studies. This is not to say that all teachers do not place an emphasis on social studies or have a positive attitude towards the subject. However, the methods teachers use and the excitement they show towards the content area have a lasting impact on how students formulate their opinions about the subject. Nonetheless, teachers cannot fully take the blame for their students' lack of interest. Since reading and mathematics take priority when updating texts and curriculum, many schools are left using outdated textbooks, maps, and other materials used to teach social studies (French & McMahan, 1998).

Despite adverse thoughts of social studies held by elementary students and teachers, researchers are hopeful that attitudes can be altered toward a more positive light. Some researchers see this disparity as an opportunity to turn something negative into a positive. Libresco (2006) points out that:

In these rather dark times for elementary social studies educators, elementary social studies teachers still have much power to make positive change. Our commitment to do so will require us to jump into the testing fray, spend much more time with elementary teachers in the field—supporting their work, in terms of both content and pedagogy—and re-explore the possibilities for interdisciplinary instruction (p. 193).

Contributing factors to the loss of interest are not limited to in-school but also involve factors that extend beyond school. Those factors include socioeconomic status and family views regarding education. The aim of this research project was to target these and other areas in order to identify the reasons why students do not take an interest in social studies. Also, this research project sought to provide practical teaching methods and engaging lessons that may ignite and motivate students to acquire an interest in the content area.

More information concerning the attitudes of students pertaining to social studies is needed. Most research discusses school policy reform or focuses on other subject areas such as reading, leaving social studies neglected and forgotten. This research project seeks to add to the existing literature on how to improve negative attitudes towards social studies and teaching methods that motivate students.

Research Questions

This master's research project seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the attitudes of fourth grade students towards social studies?
2. What methods of instruction do fourth grade students find most motivating during social studies instruction?

Limitations

Major limiting factors for this master's research project are:

1. The review of the research literature does not include publications prior to 1976. In addition, resources were used only if they were available online or through interlibrary loan.
2. Most literary research has been conducted with a focus on primary and secondary education.
3. The participants in this study were predominately Caucasian. Consequently, generalizations may not apply to other more diverse populations of students.
4. The findings of this study were produced following a series of standardized testing. Since the testing schedule is so rigorous, the opinions of students about school in general may have been affected.
5. The opinions found within this study apply to fourth grade students in a rural, Midwestern school district. Generalizations beyond the setting of this study are the reader's responsibility.
6. A limited number of participants were selected from each class period in order to obtain more detailed information regarding student attitudes.

7. A small number of participants were not able to finish the study due to illness, family situations, or leaving the school district.

Summary

This chapter presented background information regarding social studies and the views of this subject area held by elementary students. The main problem and research questions were also outlined. Chapter Two will present a review of literature and identify major themes. Chapter Three will present the methodology of this research project to include its research and design, participants, data collection, and data analysis. Chapter Four will present a comparative analysis of the findings. Finally, Chapter Five will present the conclusions of this study and suggest and offer recommendations for practice.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The elementary school is where the foundation is built for the future of a child's educational experience. This is where the child gains the basic skills and knowledge in order to add the building blocks of more advanced knowledge and thinking. According to Karaduman and Gültekin (2007), "the elementary education is the fundamental educational step that the child meets the regular education facts for the first time. It is also a period, in which the students experience their most critic terms, namely growing period, and it is the basement of their forthcoming educational lives (p. 98). Students in the elementary grades endure a day full of the core content areas: math, science, language arts, and social studies. Each subject area is viewed differently by each student, depending on his or her natural and learned abilities and talents, preferences, and interests.

Many researchers have set out to determine what children think about the subjects that they are learning about in school. Most research concentrates on and isolates one subject area at a time in order to determine how it is perceived by school aged children. Social studies is no exception. Abundant research has been conducted concerning student views of the subject. Sadly and overwhelmingly, most research points out that students tend to take a negative view on their social studies experiences. This chapter will focus on the opinions of students about social studies, the possible causes for these opinions, and ways that student motivation can be improved.

Examining Student Views and Correlates Regarding Social Studies

Social studies has a relatively low status when compared to other school subjects. When school aged children are asked to rank the school subjects from their favorite to their least favorite, social studies nearly always is found at the bottom of the list. Most researchers think that this can be attributed to the teaching methods that teachers use present social studies content. For the teacher, the textbook is the “easiest way to teach” (Governale, 1997). According to Mehlinger (1988), it takes time to prepare a good lesson, to select, preview and arrange for an appropriate audiovisual presentation, to write a simulation or to conduct a field trip. Elementary teachers are already pressured to kowtow to the requirements of standardized testing; therefore social studies instruction may suffer as it is often not a subject that is tested at the primary level. In order to find out more about student views, attitudes, and the correlates that affect them, more studies and research will need to be consulted.

Shaughnessy and Haladyna (1979) conducted many studies regarding students’ attitudes toward school, and more specifically towards particular school subjects. In 1979, they conducted a non-verbal attitude survey of approximately 3,000 students. The purpose of the study was to examine the attitudes of elementary and junior high school students about school. The authors used what is called an *ME* in order to collect their data. An *ME* is a non-verbal, attitude survey which was devised for the purpose of determining the relative degree and magnitudes of attitudes toward school (Shaughnessy & Haladyna, 1979). The version they used for the primary grades contained three types of facial expressions—happy, neutral, and sad—in order to gauge responses. Students were

asked to place a mark next to the appropriate face when asked a series of questions. Concluding the series of questions, Shaughnessy and Haladyna assigned a score to each of the responses given. After careful analysis of the data, they found that social studies scores were the lowest and concluded that social studies was held in very low regard by most students surveyed regardless of their grade level.

Since the advent of their findings regarding school in general, a more focused study conducted in 1985 by the duo looked at student attitudes toward social studies and showed that attitudes still had not changed six years later. They sampled students in grades four, seven, and nine. The pair used attitude scales and inventories in order to elicit responses from their participants. Looking specifically at each grade level, Shaughnessy and Haladyna determined correlates for each of the answers given. They suggested that:

“Three student variables show consistent and strong correlations with social studies attitudes. These are fatalism, self-confidence, and importance of the subject matter. All three appear highly interrelated. In fact we may conceptualize that all three plus attitude are part of a complex motivation factor which is important in determining progress in academic achievement. In classes where confidence and feeling of importance are high and fatalism is low, class attitude toward social studies is higher. Student perception of the importance of social studies should be of concern to all social studies teachers, particularly since this trait is apparently associated with social studies attitudes” (p. 22).

Furthermore, the researchers also hint at the fact that teachers affect their students' attitudes as well. The consistently high relation of overall teacher quality to attitudes was strong enough to suggest that teachers do indeed make a direct difference in classroom attitudes (Shaughnessy & Haladyna, 1985).

Though Shaughnessy and Haladyna conducted much of the research concerning student attitudes toward school, and social studies in particular, they have not been the only researchers interested in the topic. Other researchers have been fascinated to discover student attitudes as well and find out the direct and indirect causes of student preferences toward particular content areas. Much of the research indicates that teachers and their teaching methods affect the way students view a subject area. It is also important to note that with each passing decade of educational research, a sort of "evolution" of recommendations for teaching methodology emerges. McTeer (1976) points out that "the 'new' social studies of the 1960's advocated an inquiry approach and the use of much simulation. A greater emphasis on student-centered, rather than teacher-centered classrooms, reemerged" (p. 2). More recently, with the advent of educational technology, the use of computers and more sophisticated pieces of equipment such as the Smart Board have been advocated. This leads to the question to what extent teaching methodologies impact on student views of social studies?

One such study was conducted by researcher Pahl (1994) who investigated student preferences in three subject areas: social studies, science, and English. He found that much has been made in the recent past of students' dislike for social studies classes. His research study compared two sets of student preferences, between social studies and

science and social studies and English. He randomly selected 888 junior high and high school students and used a survey instrument modeled after the Harter's Intrinsic/Extrinsic Motivation Survey.

When comparing his findings for preferences for either social studies or science, he found that seventh grade students preferred social studies to science. But, as the grade levels increased, social studies began to lose popularity. He attributed this decline to the curriculum used at the eighth through twelfth grade levels. The seventh grade curriculum at the junior high was part of an English/social studies block that involved a great deal of thematic learning, student interaction, and student oriented learning). Pahl also noticed that the tenth grade had the highest predilection towards science. He admitted:

World history is taught at the tenth grade level with a traditional textbook, lecture/discussion, and notebook method. It is the first course in the district's curriculum that involves much reading, lecturing, and detailed memorization of names, dates, and places. Science at the tenth grade is biology in which students often do hands on exploration of nature. The preference is clearly for science at the tenth grade (p. 63).

Pahl also contrasted the preference for social studies versus English. This choice yielded some similar results to that of the comparison between social studies and science. Pahl found that seventh graders had a strong preference for social studies when compared to English. The surveys also revealed a similar pattern of decline to that of the comparison between social studies and science. Students appear to prefer the way social studies was taught in the seventh grade, but were less impressed with it as they spent

more years in school (Pahl, 1994). This preference led Pahl to find out why students had more affection towards social studies in the earlier grades but less in the later grades. He found that the change of instructional methods from a more hands on interactive approach in the seventh grade to a more traditional “chalk and talk” high school classes was a major factor.

McTeer (1976) likewise found that teaching methodology plays a key role in influencing student opinions towards social studies. He added that as teachers and school administrators are aware of these and other trends in the teaching of social studies, they must reexamine their teaching methods, matters, and subject matter content. Selecting 391 subjects, randomly chosen from schools in Cherokee County, Georgia, McTeer administered an open-ended questionnaire. These students were asked to list their likes and dislikes concerning the social studies (McTeer, 1976). After gathering student responses, McTeer constructed a survey that included statements taken from the open ended survey. In a follow-up survey McTeer included eight statements dealing with social studies content and ten items dealing with social studies methodology and found that:

1. Students prefer discussion type classes more than lecture type classes. They express a negative interest in lecture classes.
2. In regard to testing, students expressed a negative interest in discussion tests. They have a far greater liking for tests that are a combination of various types of test items with only a few discussion items.
3. Students expressed a liking for methodology that uses films and filmstrips.

4. If textbooks are interesting and readable, students expressed a high interest in methodology which uses textbooks.
5. Students expressed a negative interest in methodology that uses oral reports. This may be because the student does not wish to gather information for his/her report, or it may be because students find it boring to listen to other students' reports.
6. As probably expected, students expressed a liking for classes that have no homework. (p. 7-8).

McTeer is also careful to point out that student views should not be the sole determining factor for teaching methodology choices, but it is a factor that should be taken into consideration.

Much of the research indicates students' disinterest in the subject area of social studies. Few researchers have conducted studies on ways that can improve student attitudes. Governale (1997) has suggested four intervention strategies: using historical fiction, cooperative learning strategies, hands on activities, and graphic organizers. In order to determine whether student perceptions of social studies can be changed, Governale introduced "innovative means of intervention" over a period of three months and set aside one hour out of each school day to teach four units of social studies using each of the four teaching interventions. At the end of three month, the students admitted to "enjoying social studies because it was interesting and fun" (p. 37). Students also divulged that social studies had become one of their favorite subjects, gaining three more votes versus the one vote received at the beginning of this action research project. They

confessed that the methods Governale had used changed their appreciation of social studies for the better. They attributed their increased appreciation to success in completing the activities, opportunities to work with other classmates, and “explained that graphic organizers helped them to plan and organize their thoughts and the material that they were studying so that they could easily present it to the class” (p. 32).

Thus the research suggests that negative attitudes towards social studies can be altered. Teachers play a key role in determining how their students perceive the subject. Using a variety of teaching methods can prove successful in amending pessimistic attitudes and views. Nonetheless, this cannot be the only thing to take into consideration when planning social studies lessons. Another factor that must be looked at is the types of teaching strategies that can be used to motivate students.

Examining Motivational Teaching Strategies within Social Studies

According to the research, one of the central factors affecting student attitudes is the teacher and the methods of instruction that he or she uses to teach social studies. In order to gain momentum and boost the motivational levels of students, teachers are turning to a variety of methods in order to teach social studies content. They are hoping that these new strategies will help them with the many challenges they now face in the classroom, such as rapidly changing demographics, varying cognitive abilities, and increasing cultural diversity (Governale, 1997). Such instructional methods include the use of cooperative learning, simulations, role playing, hands on projects, and audio/visual aids.

Cooperative learning is a fun and meaningful teaching strategy that educators can employ in their classrooms. It presents pupils with the opportunity to work together in structured groups in order to achieve a central goal. In these groups, they are engaged in solving a common problem while at the same time sharing ideas and helping each other (Strommen, 1995). Sutton and Smith (1990) reported that perceptions of social studies were more positive in cooperative than competitive classrooms. In order to maximize the effectiveness of cooperative learning, Wong (2004) suggests that teachers must follow the seven steps:

1. Specify a group name.
2. Specify a group size.
3. State the purpose, materials, and steps of the activity.
4. Teach the procedures.
5. Specify and teach the cooperative skills needed.
6. Insist on individual accountability for the work of the group.
7. Teach evaluation methods the students can use to determine how successfully they have worked together. (p. 258).

Cooperative learning groups may have a tendency to spiral out of control or result in unequal sharing of the group's work. In order to curtail these problems, the use of "support group jobs" within each group can prove to be an effective solution. The jobs can either be assigned to students or handed out at random. After deciding on the size and number of groups, teachers can assign groups a symbol or team name. By creating a poster of the team's symbol or team's name and placing them around the room, the

teacher can designate where each group works in the classroom. This will ensure that students know where to gather in their groups as well as have a designated space. Some examples of support group jobs and responsibilities include:

- Facilitator- Acts as the group leader. Makes sure that the entire group is following each step of the activity carefully and correctly.
- Equipment Manager- Obtains all of the group's materials needed for the activity and ensures that they are returned to the appropriate place at the conclusion of the activity.
- Recorder-Observes, takes minutes, and records data for the group. Also makes sure that the group has all of the proper forms for recording results of the activity as they occur.
- Reporter-Coordinates the writing of the group report and also helps to present the findings of the group.
- Maintenance Director- Responsible for the clean up of the group's workspace. He/she can also recruit others to help in this effort.
- Technical Advisor- Responsible for any extra special tasks assigned by the teacher. He/she may also be responsible for operating the technical equipment used during the activity such as the computer, TV, VCR, etcetera.

Teachers can utilize any or all of these support group jobs in order to maintain a peaceful environment in the classroom during a cooperative learning activity. Some jobs are small enough to assign two jobs to one student if group size is small. For example, the recorder

and reporter responsibilities could be combined and given to one group member.

Alternatively, some jobs could be omitted.

Another motivating teaching method that teachers can use is simulations/role playing. Simulations allow students to re-enact a specific event. Simulations encapsulate in simplified form the essential elements of real life, historical situations, and present these elements to be dealt with by the students (Hootstein, 1994). Schug and Kepner (1984) believe that conventional classroom simulations have been judged by social studies teachers and researchers to be of educational value for a variety of reasons:

- A safe generalization from the research is that simulations can teach social studies knowledge as well as more traditional instructional approaches.
- Simulations are often important devices for enhancing student motivation in social studies.
- When teachers use well designed simulations, they find that the large majority (90 to 100 percent) of their students actively participate.
- A well designed simulation provides students with multiple opportunities to make decisions about an important question.
- Simulations allow teachers to bring a greater degree of reality into the social studies classroom (p. 211-212).

Role playing also allows students to re-enact or to step into the role of a person while learning. They are faced with making decisions and using critical thinking skills while making decisions. For example, in the realm of economics, students can learn how to operate a business by opening up their own store or lemonade stand. Acting as the

business owner, students must take into account what goods he/she is going to need, what expenses he/she is going to incur, and what prices to set in order to make a profit.

Providing vicarious experiences is motivating because it helps students to construct vivid mental images of situations that are absent from their present experience (Hootstein, 1994).

Even though simulations/role playing can be a motivating teaching technique, there are some precautions. Moss (2000) cautions that:

... the scenario needs to be accurate and realistic in its external features in order to help students enter into the exercise fully. The scenario needs to have its own inner consistency so that students do not stumble over inaccurate or irrelevant material (p. 472).

Providing hands-on activities for students can be another motivating factor when teaching social studies. Hands-on activities help to stimulate interest and engage students. Because all students learn differently, hands-on activities can accommodate the tactile learner and encourages interest in the topic being studied (Hootstein, 1994).

Integrating the technology can be another motivating factor while teaching social studies. As defined by Reeves (1998) and Dockstader (1999), technology integration involves students using technology as a resource to help them develop higher order thinking skills, more creative responses to assignments, and enhanced research skills. Zhao (2007) also found that “the student-centered activity was the most desirable because it enabled students to obtain in-depth knowledge and it motivated students to learn social studies” (p. 327).

Unfortunately, many teachers have been leery to integrate technology into their lessons. Research has shown that social studies teachers lag behind other content area teachers in the adoption of innovative teaching methods provided by technology (Zhao, 2007). While conducting research regarding the views of technology, Zhao discovered that teachers admitted that “social studies textbooks were considered...as boring irrelevant, and out of date. In contrast, the information on the Internet was considered more current, interesting, and more concise and easier for the students” (p. 318). Most teachers who admit that they do not include technology in their instruction do so because of their lack of knowledge. They may feel inadequate because they are unsure of how to use computers, DVD players, or other sophisticated technologies. Another reason that is often suggested is the limited availability of technology in classrooms.

Summary

There are multiple strategies teachers can use to motivate their students. A review of the research literature clearly indicates the value using cooperative learning strategies, simulations, role playing, hands-on projects, and audio/visual aids. For social studies instruction, it is important to keep in mind that using a blend of teaching methods will best serve the students. Schall and Bozzone (1994) captured the entirety and importance of variety when they argued that:

relying solely on the textbook to teach social studies is like building a house only using cement. You may lay a sturdy foundation but you won't end up with a structure that is inviting—or memorable. To construct a lively social studies program, teachers we talked to used a combination of tools (p. 36).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Research and Design

The purpose of this study was to find out the opinions of fourth grade students about social studies as well as the most motivating methods of instruction teachers can use. In order to gather the most accurate data this study used a survey with both open-ended questions and statements, classroom instruction using motivating teaching methods, and audio recorded interviews using open-ended questions. The interviews provided additional information to validate the findings. The findings of this study will hopefully help other pre-service and in-service teachers to further their knowledge about methods of motivation that work for primary school students.

Participants

I conducted my research at Burr Oak Elementary School, part of a consolidated school district located in a small Mid-Western community. There were 69 fourth grade student participants who ranged in age from 9 to 11 years old. Except for one African American student, all were Caucasian. Thirteen students had an Individual Education Plan (IEP). Twenty-one students, regardless of whether they had an IEP, also had one or a combination of the following types of disabilities: learning, behavioral, or physical.

Prior to conducting my study, I received permission in writing from the school's principal and the classroom teacher. After approval from the administration and staff member, I sent home consent forms for the students' parents/guardians (see Appendix A).

The forms explained the purpose of my study and that participating students would be required to complete the same assignments as the non-participating students. After receiving permission from the parents, the students also received an assent form in to indicate whether or not they themselves would like to participate in the study (see Appendix B).

All 69 parental consent forms were returned and all parents/guardians agreed to let their child participate in the study. The students in this study were studying their state's history. Each of the three class periods studied a unit on economics. The academic levels of the class periods were all geared towards traditional classroom instruction. There were no advanced or honors classes. Though these class periods were traditional, each period contained a varying level of achievement as evidenced by the students' scores on homework, class assignments, and tests.

Data Collection

The methodology I used in order to collect data involved a multi-faceted approach. Before any classroom instruction could take place and after all of the consent forms were collected, the students filled out a 21-question-questionnaire in order to document their opinions and attitudes toward social studies (see Appendix C). This questionnaire contained statements in which they had to use a scale of varying SpongeBob Square Pants faces in order to record their level of agreement or disagreement. All students were told that the questionnaire would not affect their social studies grade.

From each class period, I next chose three students to complete an audio-recorded interview. The criteria for their selection were based upon their questionnaire responses. I chose to use one student who exuded a love for social studies, one who appeared neutral, and one that found social studies to be his/her least favorite subject. All nine students were asked the same eight open-ended questions (see Appendix E). These questions gave the students a chance to elaborate on the levels of agreement or disagreement they indicated in their questionnaire. Prior to asking each child the questions, I explained that the interview would not affect their social studies grade and that no one would be able to listen to their answers. These statements were given to every student who participated in the interview in order to encourage honest and truthful opinions.

All interviews took place outside of the regular classroom and were recorded in an area across the hallway from the classroom. This was done in order to minimize distraction of the interviewee and to protect the answers given by the student. All interviewees were Caucasian, five were male students and four female. Each interview lasted about 5-7 minutes.

After completing the student surveys and interviews, I instructed each class period over a span of seven consecutive days using five different teaching methods. The teaching methods I used were lecture, cooperative learning, role playing/simulations, hands-on projects, and the use of audio/visual aids and equipment. After teaching each lesson, I asked the students to fill out a short eight-question-survey about the lesson and method I used (see Appendix D). One item was an open ended question requiring a

written, detailed answer from the students and the other seven were statements using the SpongeBob Square Pants faces scale described above.

Lesson One focused primarily on using the lecture teaching method (see Appendix G). A new economics unit had already been introduced to the class. Students were asked to read from their textbooks in order to find out what economics was and to provide an introduction to the topic of goods and services. During instruction, the pupils were given lined paper in order to take notes from the lecture.

After the section of the textbook had been read aloud, a majority of the students were given pictures of either a good or a service. A T-Chart graphic organizer was drawn on the whiteboard and headed with the sections “goods” and “services.” Student volunteers were asked to classify their pictures in the category where they thought it belonged. After all pictures had been placed, the class as a whole reviewed the placement of the pictures in order to correct any mistakes.

At the conclusion of the activity, students were handed a worksheet that was once again divided into two sections: goods and services. They were told they would have to listen to a read-aloud of *If You Give a Pig a Pancake*. While being read to, the students had to document what they thought was a good or a service based on the demands the pig in the story made. The answers were recorded on the board and corrected on the students’ papers after finishing the story.

Students were given a homework assignment to further reinforce and assess the knowledge of goods and services. A sheet with a box and some lines underneath the box were handed out. The students were instructed they would be creating their own book and

everyone would be able to create a page. They were given a writing prompt in order to get them started. The prompt read: “If you give your teacher a dog, she will want _____.” The blank was to be filled in with a good or service that a teacher would need or want in order to take care of her dog. Students were to also illustrate the sentence by including the good or service they had chosen in the box above the lines. Before every class period was dismissed, they were asked to complete an eight-question-survey regarding the day’s lesson.

Lesson Two focused on cooperative learning (see Appendix H). The topic of the lesson was how businesses earn a profit. The class was introduced to the idea of profits and expenses by reading a short paragraph explaining why and how businesses try to make a profit. Following instruction about profits and expenses, the students were asked to come up with three businesses that they could operate at their present age in order to make profits. Each student was to give the type of business, the good or service his/her business offered, the type of customers they would be serving, and why they thought they would be successful at operating that business. Next, I asked for students to volunteer their ideas while I wrote their answers on the whiteboard.

Since the students had created businesses, they had to learn how to run a profitable business. In order to do so, I asked them to figure out word problems detailing specific scenarios of revenues and expenses in order to figure out whether the business made a profit or suffered a loss.

Finally, I told the students they would be in charge of a business that made rings from string and pasta. But each of the three different companies had its own method of

making the rings which could impact its profits. Each student was asked to write his/her name on a piece of paper and to place it in a hat. I explained that in the “real world”, you often do not get to choose who your co-workers will be but that your boss hires people he/she thinks will best fill the position. So, keeping true to the “real world” standards, names were chosen and six groups of students were formed.

Since there were only three different companies, the six groups had to be split into two formations of groups of three operating at opposite ends of the classroom in order to allow all of the groups to experience each type of company. The students were instructed to read all the paperwork at each “company work station” before assembling their product. I also taught the student how to rotate from work station to work station at the end of each seven minute work period. When the groups were formed, each group “manned” a production station in order to produce its rings. I informed them that for every ring the group made, they earned a profit of \$2.00 but that they were only going to have seven minutes to produce these rings. Also, every company had specific rules for how to produce the product, so the students would have to pay close attention to those guidelines while tracking their progress and profits. The students then gathered back together as a class after three rounds of ring production in order to talk about the profits each company made and the advantages and disadvantages of the guidelines they had to follow for each company. Next, I asked them to justify the impact of certain methods of production in order to increase profits and to deter losses. Once again, I gave them the eight-question survey at the end of the lesson.

For Lesson Three I used role playing/simulation (see Appendix I). I used this lesson to teach the concept of supply and demand. To open the class, random students were given envelopes with money in them. I told the class that they were going to get to shop in a special store that offered all of the latest items for sale at incredible prices. Each of the envelopes passed out was labeled with a number corresponding to a scenario that was going to take place at the store. The scenarios are detailed below:

- Scenario 1:
 - The teacher will reveal an item and it will have an outrageously high price tag.
 - The student will probably not want to buy the item. If so, ask the student why he/she does not want to buy the item. It will probably be due to the unfair price. The teacher then decides to mark the price down. The student may still refuse. The teacher continues to mark the price down until the student is willing to buy the item.
- Scenario 2:
 - Have some students come up with some money.
 - Show them an item that is for sale.
 - Have another student or teacher pretend to open a store “across the street” advertising that same item for less.
 - Ask the students where they want to buy the item. They will probably choose the store that charges less. Why did you choose the other store?
 - Then, mark down the price of your item in order to compete with the new store.
- Scenario 3:
 - Have two students come up and show the pair one item. Tell the students that it is the last one in stock. Maybe both of the students want the same item. Since it is so popular, they may be willing to pay more for the item than what is reasonable.

I explained each of the scenarios and taught students how the principle of supply and demand worked.

In order to give the students a taste of what it would be like to have their own store and have to price their goods, I set up a role play. I told the students they were either going to be producers or consumers. The producers would be selling the items they

had “made.” The consumers would be buying the items from the producers. Every producer was given items to price and sell. They had to take into consideration a fair price, but also one that would result in profit. All consumers were given play money in order to buy the goods that they wanted or needed. Every consumer and every producer had to keep track of the money he/she made or spent. After I split up the class into the two groups, the shops were set up, the money handed out, and the class told that there would be two rounds of five minutes.

During the first round, the classroom stores were conducting business very quietly. Some stores sold items, some sold none, and others sold out. When the time limit had expired, the consumers were asked to return the items they purchased. The producers were instructed to revise their prices, if necessary, based on the sales performance during round one. The consumers were given more money in order to continue buying the items that they wanted or needed. During the second round students started to catch on they should vocally advertise their products, sales, and promotions in order to draw consumers to their shops.

After the second round I switched the students’ roles to give each student the experience of both. Next, the student played two more five minute rounds. At the conclusion of the first round, I asked the producers to revise or raise prices in order to make profits. When the two rounds were completed, I asked the class to come back together in an effort to find out what pricing strategies worked and see if supply and demand affected their profits. Again, I gave them the eight-question survey at the end of the lesson.

Lesson Four was based on the idea of how companies advertise their products (see Appendix J). The teaching method employed for this lesson was a hands-on project. At the start of each class period, I made an advertisement for a juice drink that would make the consumer's wildest dreams come true. The advertisement detailed how numerous celebrities such as Hannah Montana and Carrie Underwood, along with professional athletes such as Tiger Woods and LeBron James, had all used this juice drink in order to become rich, famous, and the best at what they do. I told the students that just one sip of this juice drink would transformed their lives to how they always had wanted to live. The only thing was that the bottle of juice that was being shown was the only bottle left and was being sold \$59.99. I asked the students to raise their hands if they were interested in buying the remaining bottle. Almost everyone raised his/her hand, so I raised its price raised higher and higher due to the demand. I then told the students they would have to call a special phone number in order to purchase the juice: 1-800-yeah-right.

At the close of the ad, I asked the students were asked why they wanted the juice despite the raised price. We discussed the answers and I made the students aware of the fact that companies use many techniques in order to get consumers to buy their products. Using the computer and a TV, I showed billboard ads and asked the students to interpret what it was trying to communicate. I also showed each class television commercials in order to discuss and point out different techniques.

In order to allow the students to gain experience with this topic, I divided them into "advertising teams." Each team had to create a billboard using the advertising

techniques that they had been shown. They could choose a product that already existed or they could make up their own product. Along with the billboard ad, each group had to create a television commercial to further explain its product. The criteria for the ads were that they needed a clear name for the product, list its price, contain a picture of the product and a colorful background, as well as use one or more of the techniques they had seen. After two days, each group presented its billboard and television commercial. We had a class discussion after the presentations ended and the class decided which ads were effective and why. A survey was administered to every class period following the second day of instruction for this lesson. Each survey was completed and handed back before the students were dismissed.

Lesson Five focused on the use of audio/visual aids and also required the students to role play (see Appendix K). To focus more on local businesses and economies, the students learned about the coal mining industry that was and is prevalent in the area. I introduced them to primary resources through a PowerPoint presentation. I briefly gave them an introduction to the history of coal mining in the area, what the working conditions were like for a coal miner, how they were paid, what tools they used, and what their lives were like. I also allowed the students to share their stories about family members who worked in the coal mines.

Next, I told the students they would become coal miners themselves, except they would not be working in dark and dangerous conditions, but rather would be mining “coal” from chocolate chip cookies. I gave each student \$19 in start-up capital and told

him/her that he/she needed to purchase one mine (a cookie) and one tool to mine the coal with. The choices of mines and tools were as follows:

- Great Value Chocolate Chip — \$3
- Chips Deluxe Cookies: Original— \$5
- Chips Deluxe Cookies: Chocolate Lovers — \$7
- Flat toothpick — \$2
- Round toothpick — \$4
- Paper clips — \$6

When each child purchased his/her mine and tool, he/she was obligated to keep track of his/her expenses. I also told the students that for each piece of coal that they mined, they would make \$2 in profit. I gave them five minutes to mine their pieces. In order for them to know when to stop, I played the song “Working in a Coal Mine” by Devo. After five minutes I stopped the music and, the students had to count up their pieces and calculate their revenue. Next they had to subtract their expenses in order to figure out their profits and were allowed to eat their “coal mine.” In each class we discussed why some mines were more profitable than others. A final survey was given to the each class period, completed, and then handed back to me before the students were dismissed to their next class period.

At the conclusion of the five lessons, I once again interviewed the same nine students, asking the same ten questions to each of the students (see Appendix F). Each interview lasted about 7-9 minutes.

Data Analysis

All participants in this study completed two versions of a written instrument: a questionnaire and a survey. In addition, nine students participated in an audio-recorded interview before and after I taught the five lessons.

I read through all questionnaires before I taught each class the five lessons in order to analyze the students' attitudes towards social studies. The initial questionnaire contained 21 statements and asked the students to identify whether or not social studies is an important subject, whether they looked forward to coming to social studies class, and which teaching methods they preferred their teacher to use when teaching social studies content. I determined whether the students had similar opinions of social studies and what teaching methods they enjoyed. In order to determine this, I tabulated the responses in each category, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, for each of the 21 questions that appeared on the questionnaire.

The surveys that were given after each lesson contained less questions and one open ended response question. The survey asked what the students liked and disliked about the particular teaching method used and why they thought so. The survey also made it easy to determine what motivational levels the students were at subsequent to undergoing the specific teaching method. Each individual question was analyzed separately in order to obtain an accurate analysis. The analysis involved a step-by-step process of calculating the responses for each question according to the level of agreement or disagreement of each student participant. Each answer, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, was recorded in a chart for each of the questions on each of the five surveys.

I categorized the interviews on a question-by-question as well as overall basis to determine whether certain teaching methods motivated the students more than others and

why they liked social studies or not. This was done by developing a chart that listed all nine interviewees' responses to each of the questions.

The surveys and interviews were especially helpful in the data analysis process because they were completed immediately after the lessons ended. In addition, they were more detailed than the original questionnaire and allowed each student to express his/her opinion freely and anonymously. The findings of this research project will be present in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

A total of 69 students participated in this study. All were between the ages of 9-11 years old and enrolled in a traditional state history class for Social studies. This chapter presents the analysis of the initial questionnaire given to the student participants prior to instruction, the surveys administered subsequent to each of the five lessons, and the interviews.

Initial Questionnaire

The initial questionnaire was completed prior to any instruction taking place. The questionnaire contained 21 statements regarding views and opinions toward social studies. Each statement was judged according to a scale of agreement or disagreement about the statement. The scale used was based on a popular children's cartoon character named SpongeBob Square Pants. According to the varying degree of each face's expression, the participants circled the face that they identified with the most and best matched their opinion on the statement. The choices for each face corresponded to the five options listed: strongly agree, agree, do not agree or disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree. Some of the totals do not equal 69 due to student absences. The results of the initial questionnaire can be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Student Views of social studies Before Instruction

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1. I usually look forward to social studies class.	23	35	25	38	11	17	2	3	5	7
2. I am afraid to ask questions in social studies class.	5	8	8	12	13	20	14	21	26	39
3. I think that it is important to learn about social studies.	39	59	17	26	7	11	1	1	2	3
4. I just like reading out of the textbook in order to learn social studies.	16	24	16	24	14	21	6	10	14	21
5. I like it when the teacher talks about social studies and makes the class take notes.	19	29	13	20	18	27	5	7	11	17
6. I like it when the teacher uses videos to teach Social Studies.	43	66	12	18	7	11	0	0	3	5
7. I like it when the teacher uses pictures to teach Social Studies.	29	45	25	39	4	6	3	5	3	5
8. I like it when the teacher uses real artifacts to teach social studies.	49	75	10	15	5	8	0	0	1	2
9. I like it when the teacher tells the class about kids my age doing things in history.	24	37	21	32	12	19	4	6	4	6
10. I like it when the teacher lets the class create projects about things that are being taught in social studies.	57	88	5	8	2	3	0	0	1	1
11. I like working in groups and learning about social studies.	39	60	13	20	9	14	1	1	3	5
12. I like to work by myself and learn about social studies.	8	12	9	14	15	23	12	19	21	32
13. I like to do my own research when I am learning about social studies instead of the teacher teaching it to me.	6	9	14	21	17	26	12	19	16	25
14. I like it when the class can go on field trips to learn about social studies.	58	89	6	9	0	0	0	0	1	2
15. I like it when the class can go to places that we are learning about or have learned about in social studies class.	52	80	7	11	4	5	1	2	1	2

16. When the teacher teaches, it makes me more interested in social studies.	17	26	27	42	12	19	4	5	5	8
17. After a lesson, I want to know more about what I learned in social studies.	27	42	16	25	15	23	1	1	6	9
18. I think that social studies is boring.	7	11	8	12	7	11	14	22	29	44
19. social studies is my favorite subject to learn about.	22	34	11	17	14	22	10	15	8	12
20. I think that social studies is hard to learn.	4	6	9	14	12	19	10	15	30	46
21. I get confused after I learn a lesson in social studies.	5	8	14	22	12	19	11	16	23	35

The responses to the questionnaire were variable. The majority of the answers, or 73%, showed that the students generally looked forward to coming to social studies class (n=48). The participants revealed that 60% of those that turned in a questionnaire felt comfortable asking questions during social studies class. Surprisingly, thirteen students (20%) admitted to being afraid of asking questions. In order to gauge the students' responses to how important the subject of social studies is, the third question revealed that 85% (n=56) thought it was. Only 4% (n=4) indicated that the subject was not important.

The majority of the following questions focused on teaching methods in order to find out the participants' preferences for certain methods. When asked if the solitary act of reading the information from the textbook was appealing, nearly half of the students (48%) agreed that they liked this method of learning, whereas nearly one third (31%) did not.

Asked whether they liked lectures and taking notes nearly half of the students indicated (49%) of they liked this method. About one fourth of the student remained neutral (27%) or disagreed (24%).

As expected, the majority of the students liked watching videos. Eighty-four percent indicated they preferred this method of learning. Only 5% of the students said they did not like watching. One student mistakenly skipped this question.

A vast majority of the students liked it when the teacher uses pictures (84%). A mere six percent of the students (n=4) were indifferent whereas ten percent of the students preferred that no pictures were used. One student did not mark anything for this statement.

The results suggested that these participants enjoy primary resources. A staggering 85% (n=59) said that they strongly agreed with this statement. Even though this method was popular among the responses given by students, 8% of the students were indifferent toward this method while 2% did not prefer it. One student mistakenly skipped this question.

When asked if they liked learning about children their age during class, 45 students (69%) stated that they agreed. Twelve students held a neutral opinion on children their own age doing things throughout history. Eight students in total (12%) disagreed. One student did not mark anything for this statement.

Nearly all students (96%) indicated they liked hands-on learning. The students indicated they like cooperative learning activities (80%). Surprisingly, 14% of the responses showed an indifferent attitude. One student did not mark anything for this statement. Slightly over half of the students (51%) indicated they didn't like working by themselves. Surprisingly, 23% (n=19) of students marked that they were neutral on

working by themselves. About one fourth of the students (26%) indicated they liked working by themselves. One student failed to answer this question.

The questionnaire aimed to find out if students preferred to do their own research or if they liked when the teacher presented it. Opinions regarding this question were nearly evenly divided almost over all five of the choices, with the exception of one. Only 30% of the students preferred to research social studies topics by themselves. A close 26% remained neutral on the idea, while the majority (46%) indicated they did not like to conduct research. One participant did not answer this question.

Almost all students, (98%), enthusiastically supported field trip (n=58 for strongly agree and n=6 for agree). Some students wanted to show their agreement with this statement by placing exclamation points or arrows around their marking. Two percent of the students indicated they disliked field trips. One student neglected to answer this question. Asked whether they enjoyed traveling to sites that they are learning about or have learned about in social studies, the majority of students, or 91% (n=59), either chose that they strongly agreed or agreed (n=52 for strongly agree and n=7 for agree). Five percent (n=4) marked that they felt neutral on the idea, while 4% of the students marked that they did liked visiting the places that were taught about. One participant did not answer this question.

The findings show that the majority of these students, or 68% (n=47) thought that their teacher motivates them to learn more about social studies. Nineteen percent of the students did not agree nor disagree, but 12% of the students said that they were not

motivated to learn social studies because of the methods used by the educator. One student neglected to answer this question.

More than half of the students (67%) indicated they were motivated past the school day to find out more about the topics that they were learning about in social studies. Ten percent suggested that they were not compelled to seek further information regarding the topic taught in social studies. One participant did not answer this question.

Two thirds (66%) of the students divulged that they did not find social studies to be a boring subject. However, nearly one fourth (23%) agreed that social studies is boring. One student did not fill out this question. A little over half of the students (51%) agreed that social studies was their favorite subject, slightly more than one fourth (21%) indicated that social studies was not their favorite subject, followed by a nearly similar neutral group (22%). One of the participants overlooked this question and did not provide an answer. The data also showed that 61% of the students found social studies easy to learn although one fifth (20%) found it an obstacle. Nineteen percent of the population surveyed revealed that they were neutral. One student did not fill out this question.

While about half the students (51%) suggested that the teacher clearly communicated the material that was being taught, 30% of the students disagreed. Nineteen percent remained indifferent.

Interviews: Pre-Instruction

The interviews added in-depth information as it came directly from the students. I interviewed a total of nine students: three from each of the three class periods. The interviewees were chosen according to the answers they provided on the questionnaire.

From each class period, I chose one student who indicated a love of social studies, one who was neutral, and one who strongly disliked social studies. All nine interviewees were asked the same five questions. Each was given a pseudonym to protect his or her identity.

The responses were varied, yet similar in some respects. The first question asked the students to suggest their favorite subject in school and to indicate it was their favorite. Out of the nine answers, five chose Math, two Science, two Social Studies, and none Language Arts. Some of the reasons they gave were that these subjects were easy for them to understand, that the content taught in the subject was fun, and that the teacher made it interesting. One of the two students, Billy, who said Science was his favorite subject commented, "I like Science because of all of the experiments that we do." The hands-on, tactile aspects of the subject area created a motivation for him to want to learn.

In order to find out what topics students thought the social studies encompassed, I asked the interviewees what they studied in the content area. Most (n=7) only remembered the topics that they had recently studied. One student, Cyrus, did remember, however, that "we studied about Indians and arrowheads. The teacher brought in real arrowheads for us to look at." This would suggest that primary resources and artifacts can make a difference in what the students remember.

Seven of the nine students said that they believed that social studies was an important subject to learn. "I think that if you know social studies and someone asks you a question about it, then you can share what you know," said Danni. She said that "some things you learn in social studies, you will use in life, but other things that you learn, you

will not use.” Kelly commented that she did not think social studies is important because “you can find out about social studies yourself instead of someone teaching it to you.”

Next, the interviewees were asked to construct their own social studies class. Most students (n=8) liked to see more hands-on activities, more games, more field trips, more artifacts, and shorter tests. One of the students, Olivia, remarked that she would “change all her class periods to social studies” because she liked it so much! Thinking about the current methods used by the teacher, Cyrus said that he “would change taking all of the notes.” As a whole, all interviewees had suggestions for improving how to teach the content that included doing away with lecture and note taking approaches and infusing more game style methods of teaching.

Finally, the students were asked how the teacher affected their attitude towards social studies. Four of the nine students said that their attitudes had improved because of how their teacher taught the subject. Moreover, some of the students mentioned that the teacher was very knowledgeable. For example, Michael stated that “She is important because if you have a question, she knows the answers.” Surprisingly, five of the nine students commented that the teacher “kind of” makes them interested in the subject she teaches. The majority of the students (n=6) said that the variety of methods that the teacher uses is “fun some of the time and boring some other times.” A dominant method of instruction that the students mentioned in the interview was lecture and taking notes. A general cause of the indifferent attitude, as explained by some of the students, was that “taking notes gets boring after doing it every day.”

Overall, the majority of the students did not choose social studies as the most interesting subject. Only two of the nine interviewees chose social studies as their favorite. Most (n=7) admitted that this is due to the fact that other content areas allow them to excel, be more creative, and use more motivating learning methods. Nonetheless, the majority of students (n=7) said that the social studies is important despite its low ranking on their list of favorite subjects. However four students agreed that it is the teacher who can make them more interested in the subject area, while five said that they do not.

Lesson One Survey: Lecture

Lecture was the focus of the first lesson. After presenting an introduction to economics, the students were asked to fill out an eight-question survey that contained one open-ended question and seven statements for which they had to indicate their level of agreement, neutrality, or disagreement to. All 69 participants were present in class on the day that this survey was administered.

The first question of the survey asked the students how they liked this style of teaching and to explain their answer. The responses suggested two categories: enjoyable and not enjoyable. Most of the students (89%) did not enjoy this teaching style. A majority of the comments were geared towards their dislike of the lecture and note taking method. For example, Casey said, "I did not like this lesson because I have been taking notes and listening to the teacher for weeks. I wish that we could do something else." Eleven percent of the students indicated they enjoyed this type of lesson. Brandy

commented, “I like to take notes,” while Molly said, “This lesson was really fun.” The results of this survey for questions 2-8 can be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Student Views of the Lecture Teaching Method After Lesson One

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
2. I would pay attention more in social studies if my teacher taught like this all of the time.	3	5	3	5	7	10	21	30	35	50
3. After this lesson, I am beginning to like Social Studies more.	7	10	6	9	15	22	21	30	20	29
4. After this lesson, I am looking forward to Social Studies class.	4	6	3	5	8	11	18	26	36	52
5. After this lesson, I am afraid to ask questions in Social Studies class.	6	9	5	7	9	13	24	35	25	36
6. After this lesson, I think that it is important to learn about social studies.	4	6	5	7	9	13	12	17	39	57
7. After this lesson, I am interested in learning more about what I studied today.	7	10	6	9	8	11	21	30	27	40
8. After this lesson, I will tell other people about what I learned today.	12	17	8	11	13	19	16	24	20	29

The data from the table reveal that the lecture-style lesson was not successful in capturing students’ attention. While 80 percent disliked the methods, 10% did like it.

Fifty-nine percent of the students indicated they liked social studies less after being

lectured to. Furthermore, 79% of students did not look forward to coming to social studies class after this lesson. However, the majority of students (71%) indicated they were not afraid to ask questions during a lecture. Nearly three fourths of the students (74%) indicated that lecturing negatively changed their outlook on the importance of social studies and the lesson did not pique their interest to learn more about the topic (70%). Last, the survey wanted to find out if the participants would their knowledge of the lesson with others. Fifty-three percent revealed that they would not, while 28% said that they would. Overall, most of the students did not like the lecture method and were hoping for a change in method.

Lesson Two Survey: Cooperative Learning

I used the cooperative learning method the second day. I placed the students in small, heterogeneous groups. Upon the completion of the lesson, I administered an eight-question survey to a total of 63 students.

The number of answers for question one totaled 58 because 5 students did not answer the first question. A majority of the students (75%) said that this lesson was very enjoyable. Some of the students commented that the lesson “was fun because we got to make things and work together.” Emily thought “this lesson was kind of great and kind of bad because it was a fun activity, but you didn’t get to pick who you worked with.” Only five students admitted that they did not benefit from the lesson due to the people in their group. Rose wrote, “I did not like this because the people in my group would not work together.” Overall, the students took pleasure in working with their classmates. Table 3 displays the findings for questions 2-8 of the survey.

Table 3

Student Views of the Cooperative Learning Teaching Method After Lesson Two

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
2. I would pay attention more in social studies if my teacher taught like this all of the time.	35	56	15	24	7	10	3	5	3	5
3. After this lesson, I am beginning to like Social Studies more.	29	46	18	29	9	14	3	5	4	6
4. After this lesson, I am looking forward to Social Studies class.	32	51	18	29	6	9	3	5	4	6
5. After this lesson, I am afraid to ask questions in Social Studies class.	6	9	4	6	9	14	7	10	37	59
6. After this lesson, I think that it is important to learn about social studies.	36	57	12	19	8	13	4	6	3	5
7. After this lesson, I am interested in learning more about what I studied today.	27	43	18	29	8	13	3	5	7	10
8. After this lesson, I will tell other people about what I learned today.	23	38	10	16	13	20	5	7	12	19

Eighty percent of the students indicated, as opposed to 10% for the lecture method, that they would pay more attention during social studies if the teacher incorporated cooperative learning activities. Also, 75% of those surveyed suggested they liked social studies more after this lesson. Only 11% indicated they did not look forward to social studies after this lesson. Sixty-nine percent of the students reported they were not afraid to ask questions after this lesson. A big difference in the attitudes of the

students regarding the importance of social studies can be seen in comparison to the lecture method. Seventy-six percent agreed that this lesson led them to view social studies as more important to study and learn. Moreover, 72% agreed that this lesson made them more interested in learning about social studies. A little over half (54%) indicated they would share the information that they learned in this lesson with others.

Overall, using cooperative learning activities motivated student more to learn and encouraged them to view of social studies as an important and interesting subject.

Lesson Three Survey: Simulation/Role Play

The third lesson incorporated a simulation in order to introduce students to the topic of supply and demand. In this lesson, students role played the jobs and responsibilities of producers and consumers. If the student was a producer, he/she had to set up a store with products and price the products according to what he/she thought the consumer would be willing to pay for the products. If the student was a consumer, he/she had income (in the form of play money) that he/she was allowed to spend. The students had to make wise choices about their income based on their wants and needs. A total of 62 completed the surveys.

Nearly all students (94%) suggested they liked this lesson. Some of the responses included that the lesson “was fun, it taught us how to do what we learned about in class, and it helped me to understand what producers and consumers do.” Other positive remarks of this method of teaching included that they “liked to play with the fake money in order to buy things” and “it helped me to learn how to spend my money.” Russ even commented that it would help him in a real life by saying that “it will help me if I become

a cashier.” Only one student felt pessimistic towards role playing. The reason for this response was due to the fact that the class “did not read out of the book.” Two students did not give an answer to this question. Table 4 displays the findings for questions 2-8.

Table 4

Student Views of the Simulation/Role Play Teaching Method After Lesson Three

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
2. I would pay attention more in social studies if my teacher taught like this all of the time.	49	79	8	13	5	8	0	0	0	0
3. After this lesson, I am beginning to like Social Studies more.	43	69	9	14	8	13	1	2	1	2
4. After this lesson, I am looking forward to Social Studies class.	44	70	11	18	5	8	1	2	1	2
5. After this lesson, I am afraid to ask questions in Social Studies class.	9	14	2	3	8	13	6	10	37	60
6. After this lesson, I think that it is important to learn about social studies.	42	69	8	13	8	13	1	2	2	3
7. After this lesson, I am interested in learning more about what I studied today.	38	61	13	21	8	13	2	3	1	2
8. After this lesson, I will tell other people about what I learned today.	28	45	12	19	10	16	3	5	9	15

Ninety-two percent of the students remarked that they would pay more attention in class during role playing. A remarkable 83% of students suggested they were

beginning to like social studies more after this lesson. When asked about the outlook of going to social studies class, 88% of the students disclosed that they looked forward to coming. Seventy percent of the participants indicated they were not afraid to ask questions in class during role playing, while 13% were neutral. After the simulation/role play lesson 82% of the students indicated that social studies is an important subject. Likewise, 82% suggested they would like to learn more about the topic presented during the lesson. An increase was seen in the amount of participants that admitted to sharing what they learned in the lesson as compared to both of the previous lessons. A higher percentage of the students, in comparison to lecture and cooperative learning, (64%) indicated they would talk to others about the role playing lesson.

This lesson was both successful in motivating the students to learn more about the topic as well as create a more positive outlook on the subject.

Lesson Four Survey: Hands-On Project

For this hands-on project the students were able to choose their own group. The goal of the project was to produce a billboard advertisement for an existing or invented product along with a TV commercial. A total of 66 students completed the survey.

Nearly all students (97%) suggested they thoroughly enjoyed the lesson. Most remarked that “it was fun” and it “allowed [them] to be creative.” A lot of the students also included that they liked making their own decisions about their group and product. For example, Benji mentioned that he “wanted to learn more about social studies” after completing this lesson and project. However, two students were neutral arguing that some of their group members did not contribute and that they needed more time. Only Sean

wrote that he did not like the lesson because he “did not get to play with the play money” as he did in previous lessons. Table 5 displays the results for questions 2-8 of the survey.

Table 5

Student Views of the Hands-On Projects Teaching Method After Lesson Four

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
2. I would pay attention more in social studies if my teacher taught like this all of the time.	50	76	11	16	3	4	1	2	1	2
3. After this lesson, I am beginning to like Social Studies more.	46	70	12	17	5	8	1	2	2	3
4. After this lesson, I am looking forward to Social Studies class.	44	67	15	22	6	9	0	0	1	2
5. After this lesson, I am afraid to ask questions in Social Studies class.	7	10	10	15	9	14	6	9	34	52
6. After this lesson, I think that it is important to learn about social studies.	44	67	11	16	8	12	1	2	2	3
7. After this lesson, I am interested in learning more about what I studied today.	35	54	16	24	11	16	2	3	2	3
8. After this lesson, I will tell other people about what I learned today.	30	46	10	15	12	18	2	3	12	18

Ninety-two percent of the students indicated they paid more attention in class during this hands-on project. Eighty-seven percent indicated they liked social studies better after this lesson. Moreover, when asked if they would be more excited about coming to social studies class after this lesson, 89% of the participants indicated

they would. More than three-fifths of students (61%) were not afraid to ask questions during this lesson, although one fourth (25%) did. Eighty-three percent marked that social studies is an important subject to learn. In addition, 78% indicated an interest to learn more about the topic studied during the lesson. The data also showed that 61% of the students believed that they would tell others about what they learned during the lesson.

The hands-on projects style of teaching proved to be motivating and fun for the students as evidenced by the high percentages of responses.

Lesson Five Survey: Audio/Visual and Simulation

The final lesson used audio/visual aids and a simulation. I used Microsoft PowerPoint to show primary resources, such as photos, to the students. I also used music was also during the simulation. Students briefly learned about the history of coal mining in Southeastern Ohio. Afterwards, they became “coal miners” by digging “coal” out of chocolate chip cookies. They were able to apply their knowledge of expenses and profits to this lesson as they had to buy their coal mines and tools to mine the coal. A total of 62 students completed the survey.

Ninety-five percent of the students liked the lesson. Most commented they liked the lesson because they were able to eat the cookie afterwards. Other students remarked that “it was fun to pretend to be a coal miner.” Tabitha was so moved she said, “I liked this lesson because it made me feel like I should tell everyone about it.” Two students admitted that they did not like it. Table 6 displays the results for questions 2-8.

Table 6

Student Views of the Audio/Visual and Simulation Teaching Method After Lesson Five

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
2. I would pay attention more in social studies if my teacher taught like this all of the time.	51	82	9	15	0	0	0	0	2	3
3. After this lesson, I am beginning to like Social Studies more.	45	73	13	21	0	0	1	2	3	5
4. After this lesson, I am looking forward to Social Studies class.	52	84	4	6	3	5	0	0	3	5
5. After this lesson, I am afraid to ask questions in Social Studies class.	10	16	8	13	5	8	3	5	36	58
6. After this lesson, I think that it is important to learn about social studies.	44	71	7	11	6	10	1	2	4	6
7. After this lesson, I am interested in learning more about what I studied today.	45	73	9	14	4	6	1	2	3	5
8. After this lesson, I will tell other people about what I learned today.	41	66	9	14	5	9	0	0	7	11

After this lesson 97% of the students indicated they liked social studies better after this lesson, while 90% marked they would look forward to coming to class if the teacher utilized these methods more. Sixty-three percent said that they were not afraid to ask questions during the lesson, while 29% were. Opinions on the importance of social studies in the classroom proved to be high as evidenced by the 82% level of agreement among the students. When asked if they would continue on their own to learn outside of

the classroom about the topic, 87% percent of the students indicated they would. Finally, 80% students indicated they would share this lesson with others. Overall, this lesson was the most successful of the five lessons. Students both praised this lesson for being fun, engaging, and the subject matter interesting and informative.

Interviews: Post-Instruction

After completing the five lessons, I interviewed the same nine students to once again ask them to clarify their opinions of social studies. All were asked the same ten questions. Each interview lasted about 7-9 minutes.

Eight of the nine students suggested that social studies is an important subject area to focus on. "I did not know that social studies taught you about how you could spend your money. I think that is really important to know," Cindy remarked. After seven days of varied lessons, eight students thought that it was an important subject area to learn about and only one regarded it as unimportant. Kelly still maintained that she did not consider it as important because "you could teach social studies to yourself. You do not need anyone to teach it to you." The comparison of the answers can be seen in Table 7 below.

Table 7

Student Perspective on Importance of Social Studies Before and After Instruction.

	<i>Before Instruction</i>		<i>After Instruction</i>	
	n	%	n	%
Social Studies is Important to Study	7	78	8	89
Social Studies is Kind of Important to Study	1	11	0	0
Social Studies is not Important to Study	1	11	1	11
Total	9	100	9	100

All nine of the student agreed that the variety of lessons was motivating. Wally stated, “If social studies was like that all of the time, I would like it more.” Buck, another student, commented that he enjoyed the variety of teaching methods as it made him “want to come to social studies class just to see what we were going to learn next.” Some students even cited specific activities within certain lessons they enjoyed. “I really liked when we got to play with the money and become consumers. I like to spend money,” Michael stated enthusiastically. Billy wanted to continue with some of the lessons because they were so fun. He said, “I wish that we had more time to do the activity where you got to act out a TV commercial.”

Three of the nine students working in cooperative learning groups as their favorite. Two stated that role playing producers and consumers and were able to become store owners and income earners was their favorite. One favored lesson four, while three favored lesson five. One favored the hands-on project on advertisements, while three favored utilizing audio/visual aids and a simulation. None of the students chose lecture as their favorite.

Asked to explain why they chose certain lessons as their favorites and to give details of what they remembered about their favorite lesson, Cindy stated that she “liked working with other people.” Buck, stated that he thought “that the lesson was fun.” Kelly’s reason was that she “liked having other people help me to make money.” Cyrus commented that he “liked making money by selling products in my store.” Billy remarked that he “had fun making up the prices for my store.” Olivia said she “really like[d] to act, so making a TV commercial was so awesome.” Three of the students picked lesson five as their favorite. A general consensus of all three was that they enjoyed “eating the cookie at the end of the lesson.”

The students unanimously agreed that they would pay more attention in social studies if his/her teacher used variety of teaching methods was motivating. In addition, they unanimously agreed that they would like social studies more after their favorite lesson. For example, Danni commented that he “was not too crazy about some of the lessons”, but after his favorite lesson, he “really liked social studies!”

Six of the nine students said they “liked to play with the play money” during some of the lessons. Two of the students admitted that their favorite thing “was working with friends” in groups and during the hands-on project and simulations. One of the nine students, Olivia, emphatically stated that she “liked watching the other TV commercials when people acted out funny ones.”

Eight of the nine interviewed students remarked that they did not like lecture, commenting that the lesson was boring. For example, Kelly said she was “tired of listening to the teacher always talking and having to take notes. It gets so boring after a

while!” Danni, the remaining student of the nine, identified his least favorite thing as not being able to use the play money in all of the lessons. He remarked that he “really liked using the play money [and] was sad when we weren’t using it in all of the lessons.”

Finally, I asked the students to explain whether and, if so, how the teacher affected their attitude towards social studies. While four of the nine students said in the initial interview that their attitudes were improved because of their teacher and how she teaches the subject, this time eight of the nine students said their attitude towards social studies had improved. Buck commented that, “the teacher knew a lot about economics. She was a fun teacher.” Before the five lessons, five of the nine students commented that the teacher “kind of” made them interested in the subject when she taught, whereas after the five lessons only one student gave the same response. A general reason for an indifferent attitude, as explained by Olivia, was that “some of the lessons were boring, but some of them were a lot of fun.” The comparison of answers before and after the lessons is displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

Attitude Towards Social Studies Before and After Instruction.

	<i>Pre-Instruction</i>		<i>Post-Instruction</i>	
	n	%	n	%
Improved Attitude Towards Social Studies When the Teacher Teaches	4	80	8	89
Indifferent Attitude Towards Social Studies When the Teacher Teaches	5	20	1	11
Negative Attitude Towards Social Studies When the Teacher Teaches	0	0	0	0
Total	9	100	9	100

Summary

The data revealed specific themes about the students' dispositions toward social studies and teaching methods. The initial questionnaire offered a good starting point by providing an insight into the students' prior dispositions towards the subjects. The interviews added the insight of a small group of individual students. Finally, the surveys offered feedback on how each participant felt about the different teaching methods I used each day.

The findings of this research project suggest that certain teaching methods are more beneficial than others for improving student views and enhancing their interest in social studies. Much of the research literature argues that most students have a negative view of social studies. Zhao (2007) found that "most children said that they did not like social studies" while conducting a survey among three elementary school districts (p. 218). Likewise, Haladyna & Thomas (1979) reported that "Social studies is held in very

low regard by most students surveyed regardless of grade level” (p. 22). Furthermore, Chiodo (2004) surveyed students and asked them to rank the school subjects from their favorite to least favorite. He said that students “ranked social studies last in importance when compared to other core subjects” (p. 16). In part, the findings of this study suggest otherwise.

Some of the research literature has also suggested that teaching methodology plays a big part in affecting student views of social studies. Haladyna & Thomas (1979) stated that instruction plays a major role in affecting the attitude of students regarding social studies. Additionally, Mills (2001) agrees that teaching methods such as “inquiry, role playing, values clarification, critical thinking, and problem solving” all help to motivate students (p. 82). McGowan (1990) agrees with this point of view and reports that “evidence mounts, nevertheless, that conditions over which teachers exercise direct control shape student reactions to social studies” (p. 38). Like this research, the findings of this study appear to support this suggestion as cooperative learning, role playing/simulations, hands-on learning projects, and audio/visual aids all motivated the students to appreciate social studies more than when lecture was the dominant methodology the teacher used.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

Literature

The review of the literature suggested that elementary students generally hold a negative attitude towards the subject area of social studies. Zhoa and Hoge (2005) “consider the negative attitudes to be a result of curricular content, teaching methods, and classroom environment” (p. 216). Outdated materials and lack of school funding can also play a role in the disdain that students have for social studies. Since Reading and Mathematics take priority when updating texts and curriculum, many schools are left using outdated textbooks, maps, and other materials to teach Social Studies (French & McMahan, 1998).

The literature also suggests that teachers play a key role in whether students will view social studies in a positive or negative manner. The consistently high correlation between overall teacher quality and student attitudes was strong enough to suggest that teachers do indeed make a difference (Shaughnessy & Haladyna, 1985).

Another theme in the research literature involves the methodology used to teach social studies. McTeer (1976) found that teaching methodology plays a vital role in influencing student opinions about social studies. He added that “as teachers and school administrators are aware of these and other trends in the teaching of social studies, they must reexamine their teaching methods, matters, and subject matter content” (p. 2).

The literature offers a multitude of methods that teachers can use to motivate their students. It clearly indicates the motivating impact of cooperative learning strategies, simulations, role playing, hands-on projects, and audio/visual aids (Dockstader, 1999; Hootstein, 1994; Governale, 1997; Moss, 2000; Reeves, 1998; Schug & Kepner, 1984; Sutton & Smith, 1990; Wong, 2004; Zhao, 2007). For social studies instruction, it is important to keep in mind that using a blend of teaching methods will best serve the students. Schall and Bozzone (1994) captured the entirety and importance of variety when they stated that in order “to construct a lively social studies program, teachers we talked to used a combination of tools.”

Findings

Sixty-nine fourth grade students participated in this study. All participants filled out questionnaires and surveys, while nine participated in interviews. In contrast to what the literature, the initial questionnaire suggested that the students in this study did not have a negative attitude towards social studies. Though social studies was the favorite subject of a minority of the interviewed students, only one student stated that social studies was not an important subject to learn. Eight of the nine interviewees affirmed that social studies is an important subject that should be taught in schools.

The surveys that were administered after each lesson suggested that the majority of the students enjoyed the variety of the methods that were used to teach economics. As the lessons progressed, the students developed a deeper appreciation of social studies. The survey that followed Lesson One, which used a lecture format, revealed that only 13% of the student participants felt that social studies was an important subject to learn.

After Lesson Two, which utilized the cooperative learning method of learning, 76% of the students agreed that the subject area is important. After Lesson Three, when role playing was introduced, 82% of the students held this opinion. After Lesson Four, which involved a hands-on project, 83% of the student reaffirmed this opinion. Finally, after Lesson Five, which used a combination of audio/visual aids and a simulation, 82% still suggested that social studies is an important subject area to study.

Not only did the students' opinions of social studies show improvement, but their motivation to learn and pay attention in class also showed gains. After Lesson One, only 10% of the students were self-admittingly motivated to learn more or pay attention in class. By Lesson Two, 80% of students suggested they were motivated to learn. Eighty-two percent of students found social studies more interesting to learn subsequent to Lesson Three. Lesson Four produced 92% of students to become motivated. Moreover, Lesson Five showed an increase to 97% of student participants suggesting they had become more motivated.

The types of teaching methods used affected the students in this study and how they viewed social studies. The majority of students, or 65%, indicated they did not like the lesson involving lecture and note taking because they had experienced weeks of this method and it was becoming mundane. Cooperative learning proved to be an effective method among the students. Eighty-six percent said that they enjoyed the opportunity to work in groups. An overwhelming 94% (n=59) of the students suggested they enjoyed the role playing lesson. They indicated it was fun to play a role in order to gain the experiences of the "jobs" that they were asked to carry out. The most motivating of all of

the five teaching methods was the hands-on project. Ninety-seven percent of the student answers (n=64) indicated they thoroughly enjoyed this type of lesson because it allowed them to be creative. The combination of audio/visual aids and simulation was a close second as 95% of the students suggested that this combination was both motivating and interesting when learning social studies.

The post-instruction interview also revealed that the nine students previously interviewed developed a new perspective on social studies. When asked before if the five lessons I taught whether social studies was an important subject to study, 7 of the 9 interviewees agreed that it was; while afterwards, 8 interviewees espoused that opinion. Likewise, originally 7 of the 9 interviewees indicated they liked social studies, whereas after the conclusion of the five lesson series, 8 suggested they did. The student who changed his mind after the conclusion of the five lessons admitted that “it was nice to not have to take notes all of the time and listen to the teacher talk about social studies.” Thus, it is important to note that a negative attitude towards social studies can be positively changed.

Recommendations

This study was conducted in an ethnically homogeneous elementary school in rural Southeast Ohio. Schools with similar as well as more diverse student populations are recommended to use the findings of this study. The lessons, surveys, and interview questions can be used in schools that are both similar and different in order to obtain a general idea of what students think of social studies. The lessons can be used in a different order or for a topic other than economics, as well as be modified for

differentiated instruction or for use in special education classrooms. Students can also be surveyed in order to find out what previous methods of instruction they have experienced in prior social studies classes. This information can provide more insight into whether a variety of methods has already been used or whether there has been an overreliance on particular methods of instruction. The information obtained can also give the action researcher a more complete picture as to whether the methods used in the study had an positive impact on their students appreciation of social studies.

While this study strictly focused on fourth grade students, other studies have used a variety of teaching methods to improve student views of social studies among younger students as well as older students (Brookhart & DeVoge, 2000; Brookhart & Durkin, 2003; Carroll & Leander, 2001; Haladyna, 1982; Lister, 2005; McGowan, 1984; McTeer, 1976; Pahl, 1994; Schug, 1982; Shaughnessy & Haladyna, 1985). Educators who teach subject areas other than social studies can also add some of the methods presented in this study to their repertoire. A final recommendation is that teachers should not rely solely on any one method to teach content. An overreliance on one particular method decrease its effectiveness as well as students' motivation.

APPENDIX A
PARENT LETTER

January 27, 2008

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Danielle Perricelli. I have been your child's student teacher this year. I am also a graduate student at Ohio University completing my Master's research project. I am researching the views of 4th grade students concerning social studies.

I would like to use your child's social studies classroom as part of my research. In order to collect data, I plan to teach some of the social studies lessons to the students, have them complete a survey documenting their opinions about social studies, and conduct brief audio recorded interviews in order to obtain details about student's attitudes towards social studies. I will not be taking photos, video taping, or using actual student names when reporting my findings.

In order for your child to participate, I will need your permission. I have already obtained permission from Principal Zirkle and your child's social studies teacher, Mrs. Carol Adams. Please read and sign the permission slip below and return it to school as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Danielle Perricelli

____ I give my child, _____, permission to participate in the research project.

____ I would prefer that my child, _____, does not participate in the research project.

Signed, _____ Date _____
(Parent/Guardian)

APPENDIX B

INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Read each sentence. Circle the face that represents how you feel about each sentence. Your teacher will explain what each face represents.

1. I usually look forward to social studies class.



2. I am afraid to ask questions in social studies class.



3. I think that it is important to learn about social studies.



4. I like just reading out of the textbook in order to learn social studies.



5. I like it when the teacher talks about social studies and makes the class take notes.



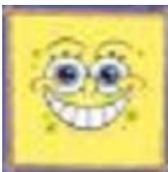
6. I like it when the teacher uses videos to teach social studies.



7. I like it when the teacher uses pictures to teach social studies.



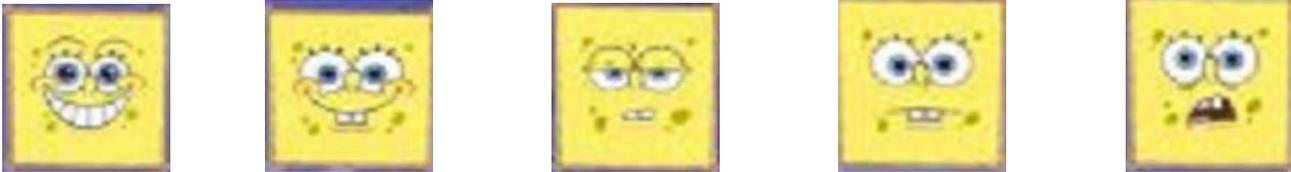
8. I like it when the teacher uses real artifacts to teach social studies.



9. I like it when the teacher tells the class about kids my age doing things in history.



10. I like it when the teacher lets the class create projects about things that are being taught in social studies.



11. I like working in groups and learning about social studies.



12. I like to work by myself and learn about social studies.



13. I like to do my own research when I am learning about social studies instead of the teacher teaching it to me.



14. I like it when the class can go on field trips to learn about social studies.



15. I like it when the class can go to places that we are learning about or have learned about in social studies class.



16. When the teacher teaches, it makes me more interested in social studies.



17. After a lesson, I want to know more about what I learned in social studies.



18. I think that social studies is boring.



19. Social studies is my favorite subject to learn about.



20. I think that social studies is hard to learn.



21. I get confused after I learn a lesson in social studies.



APPENDIX C

STUDENT SURVEY: POST-INSTRUCTION

Directions: Read each sentence. Circle the face that represents how you feel about each sentence, except for the first question. Your teacher will explain what each face represents.

1. **How did you like this kind of lesson? Explain why you liked it or why you did not like it.**

2. **I would pay attention more in social studies if my teacher taught like this all of the time.**



3. **After this lesson, I am beginning to like social studies more.**



4. After this lesson, I am looking forward to social studies class.



5. After this lesson, I am afraid to ask questions in social studies class.



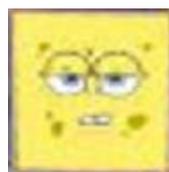
6. After this lesson, I think that it is important to learn about social studies.



7. After this lesson, I am interested in learning more about what I studied today.



8. After this lesson, I will tell other people about what I learned today.



APPENDIX D

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (PRE-INSTRUCTION)

1. What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
2. What do you study in social studies? What else is social studies about?
3. Do you think social studies is important? Why or why not?
4. Suppose you could change anything about your social studies class. What would you do and what would it be like?
5. How important is the teacher in your attitude toward social studies? Please explain.

APPENDIX E

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (POST-INSTRUCTION)

1. Do you think social studies is important? Why or why not?
2. How did you feel about the changes in teaching to your social studies class?
3. What was your favorite lesson?
4. Why was this lesson your favorite?
5. What do you remember from this favorite lesson?
6. Would you pay attention more in social studies if your teacher taught her lessons like this one?
7. Would you say that you like social studies more or less after this kind of lesson?
8. What was your favorite thing about learning from these lessons?
9. What was your least favorite thing about learning from these lessons?
10. How important is the teacher in your attitude toward social studies? Please explain.

APPENDIX F

LESSON PLAN ONE

Lesson #1

Topic: Economics

Teaching Method Used: Lecture

Grade Level: 4

Standards Met:

- Economics 1

Materials:

- *The Ohio Adventure*
- Pictures of goods and services
- Lined Paper
- *If You Give a Pig a Pancake*
- Goods and Services Worksheet
- Chart Paper
- Markers
- Story Board Worksheet

Procedures:

- **Introduction**

1. Ask students to open *The Ohio Adventure* to page 203.
2. Discuss the picture found on that page.
3. Turn to page 204.
4. Pass out lined paper for notes.
5. Choose 4 volunteers to read a paragraph from page 204.
6. As the volunteers read, define important vocabulary words such as goods, services, economics, free enterprise, employees, and wage/salary.

- **Activity #1- Goods and Services**

(Standards met- Economics 1)

1. Students will be given pictures of goods and services.
2. The teacher will draw a T-Chart on the board and have each student place their picture under a label of either “good” or “service”

3. After all pictures have been placed, the class will discuss what makes each picture a good or service and to revise guesses.
4. The teacher will explain what a good and service is and give working definitions for each.

- **Activity #2- *If You Give a Pig a Pancake***

1. Pass out the Goods and Services Worksheet and explain the directions.
2. The teacher will read aloud *If You Give a Pig a Pancake* as the students write down the goods and services found in the book.
3. Go over the goods and services identified.
4. Discuss:
 - What are some goods and services you would like to have?
 - Do you have all the goods and services you would like?
5. Explain that people have unlimited wants for goods and services. This means that the list of things they want never ends.

- **Activity #3- If You Give a Teacher a Dog...**

1. Explain that the class is going to write its own unlimited wants story. Begin the story by writing on the board, "If you give a teacher a dog, she will want _____."
2. Ask a student to name a good or service that a teacher might want if she had a dog. Write the student's answer in the blank. For example, "If you give a teacher a dog, then she will want dog food."
3. Continue by writing on the board, "If she has (dog food), she will want _____."
4. Ask to name a good or service the teacher would want if she had the new item. Write the student's answer in the blank. For example, "If she has (dog food), she will want a dog dish."
5. Continue this process until there are ten or twelve sentences in the story.
6. Distribute drawing supplies to each student. Explain that students will create part of a story board for the class story. A story board shows pictures of what is happening in the story.
7. Assign each student two sentences in the story, instructing them to draw two pictures to go with the sentences and to write the correct sentence at the bottom.
8. Display the different story boards. (If there are twelve sentences and twenty-four students in the class, there will be four complete story boards.)

Name _____ Date _____

Goods and Services

Directions: As the teacher reads the book *If You Give a Pig a Pancake*, identify and write down the goods and services that the pig asks for.

Goods

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Services

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

If You Give a Pig a Pancake Worksheet Answers

- Goods:
 - Pancake syrup
 - Bubbles
 - Toy
 - Suitcase
 - Tap Shoes
 - Clothes
 - Envelopes and stamps
 - Wall paper and glue
 - Pancake syrup
 - Pancake

- Services:
 - Playing the piano
 - Photography (taking her picture)
 - Mail the letters to her friends
 - Building a tree house
 - Decorating the tree house

Name _____ Date _____

Story Board

Directions: Write out the sentences for the story below on the lines. Illustrate your sentences in the box below once you are finished writing.



APPENDIX G

LESSON PLAN TWO

Topic: Economics

Teaching Method Used: Cooperative Learning

Grade Level: 4

Standards Met:

- OCS, Grade 4, Economics 3, 4

Materials:

- *The Ohio Adventure*
- Earning a Profit Sheet
- Jobs I Can Do to Earn Money Sheet
- Twenty Money Makings Ideas for Young Persons Slides
- Pasta Jewels Simulation Instructions and Sheets
- Pasta such as elbow macaroni or rigatoni
- String
- Scissors
- Ruler

Procedures:

- Introduction

(Standard Met- Economics 3,4)

1. Open *The Ohio Adventure* to page 205.
2. Pick two volunteers to read the Making a Profit section
3. Define and discuss what profits and expenses are.

- Activity #1- Choosing a Business

(Standard Met- Economics 3,4)

1. Pass out Jobs I Can Do to Earn Money Sheet.
2. Have students complete it and discuss their answers.
3. Create a list of jobs and reasons they will be successful to organize on the board
4. Show slide show named Twenty Money Makings Ideas for Young Persons

- Activity #2- Figuring Out Profits and Losses

1. Pass out Earning a Profit Sheet.
2. Have students grab two different colored pencils or crayons.
3. Tell the students to read each job's description.
4. Color the money making (revenue) sentence one color.
5. Color the money spending sentence (expenses) the other color.
6. Have students complete it and discuss answers.

- Activity #3- Pasta Jewels Activity in Cooperative Learning Groups
(*Standard Met- Economics 3,4*)

1. Have students write their names on a piece of paper.
2. Draw names to form groups.
3. Explain to students that you do not get to choose your co-workers in real life.
4. Once groups are formed, explain the stations and rotation schedule.
5. Each group will start at a station. Each station will have instructions for that company.
6. Each group will get 7 minutes at each of the three stations in order to complete the task specified.
7. Students will write down their profits and losses for each station that they complete.
8. The teacher will keep track of all of the groups' progress on the board.
9. After every group has rotated three times through each of the three station, have the class come back together to discuss the effectiveness of each company. Which ones worked the best? Which ones worked the worst? What made these companies the best or worst? How could you change some of the operations of some of the companies in order to produce more profits and cause fewer losses?

Company: Do What You are Told, Inc.

Values and Goals

Values: Your company is very strict. You must always follow the directions, no matter what! Therefore, each person in your group will have a task to perform in order to assemble the rings that your company makes.

Goals: To produce what the owners think is necessary.

Situation: With your limited resources of string, pasta, a ruler, and scissors, your company creates rings. Your company sells these rings for \$2 each. Immediately, your company must make 5 rings in order to make the owners happy. Believe me, you do not want to make them mad!!

Production

Process: Your company feels that every person must do one step in order to complete the rings. So, one person must be the string cutter. One person must be the pasta counter. Another person must be the pasta stringer. The last person must be the knot tier. If you do not have 4 people in your group, have a group member do more than one job.

After the 5 rings are made, check them to make sure that they look nice enough to sell. If so, have one person mark down your profits. If you are able to make the 5 rings before the time is up, your company will receive \$10 per person. After that, the money that you earn will go to the owners and cannot be counted.

Company: **Make as Much as We Want, Inc.**

Values and Goals

Values: Your group is all about being unique. Each group member can make as many rings as they want. They can even color the pasta in order to make them look better.

Goals: You can organize yourselves however you want. Make sure that it is in a way that can produce a lot of profits.

Situation: With your limited resources of string, pasta, a ruler, and scissors, your company creates rings. Your company sells these rings for \$2 each. You can produce as many as you want.

Production

Process: You can organize your group however you want. It would be a good idea to have one person measure and cut the string, one person count the pasta, one person string the pasta, one person to tie the knot, and one person color the pasta. If you do not have 5 people in your group, someone may have more than one job.

After the rings are made, you can inspect them to make sure that they look nice enough to sell. Your company is paid for every ring that they make in the time limit that is given.

Company: **That's The Way We've Always Done It, Inc.**

Values and Goals

Values: Your group is very concerned with how things were done in the past. You value the past and want to do things without trying to make a lot of extra money. Everything your company does is done according to old beliefs and practices.

Goals: To produce what others before you have produced and in the same way that they did. Following tradition is your goal.

Situation: With your limited resources of string, pasta, a ruler, and scissors, your company creates rings. Your company sells these rings for \$2 each. Your company has always made rings, so you will have to as well.

Production

Process: Each person must make one ring and no more. In order to do this, only one person can make a ring at a time. One person must measure and cut their own string, count their own pasta, make the ring, and tie the knot on their ring. Once that person is finished, he/she passes the materials clockwise to the next person.

After every one has made a ring, you must pass your rings around to your group members. Your group members must tell you one thing that they like about your ring. This is an old tradition of your company. Then one person records \$5 profit if all of the procedures are followed for each ring. After the rings are made, you pass them around, and you record your profit, take a break. You are finished for today.

Jobs I Can Do to Earn Money



Job #1 _____ . I will be
 providing a _____ to _____ .
good/service customers

I think I can be successful because _____
 _____ .

Job #2 _____ . I will be
 providing a _____ to _____ .
good/service customers

I think I can be successful because _____
 _____ .

Job #3 _____ . I will be
 providing a _____ to _____ .
good/service customers

I think I can be successful because _____
 _____ .

EconEdLink: Earning a Profit Answer Sheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Calculate the profit or loss for each of these money-making ideas.

Remember: Revenue - Expenses = Profit or Loss

1. Bracelets. You sell ten bracelets for three dollars each. You have spent three dollars on cord and nine dollars on beads.

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} - \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

2. Cookie Sale. At the grocery store you paid ten dollars for the things you needed to make the cookies. You got twenty dollars for the cookies you sold.

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} - \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

3. Can Recycling. At the recycling center, you are paid fifteen dollars for the cans you collect. Your only expense is one dollar for some bags to put the cans in.

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} - \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

4. Raking Leaves. You rake two lawns getting paid five dollars for each. When the rake you borrowed breaks, you have to replace it. The rake costs eight dollars. You paid three dollars to print flyers to advertise your business to your neighbors.

$$\underline{\hspace{2cm}} - \underline{\hspace{2cm}} = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

5. Which idea has the most revenue? _____
6. Which idea has the least revenue? _____
7. Which idea has the most expenses? _____
8. Which idea has the least expenses? _____
9. Which idea earns the most profit? _____
10. Which idea earns the least profit? _____
11. What idea loses money? _____

EconEdLink: Earning a Profit Answer Sheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Calculate the profit or loss for each of these money-making ideas.

Remember: Revenue - Expenses = Profit or Loss

1. Bracelets. You sell ten bracelets for three dollars each. You have spent three dollars on cord and nine dollars on beads.
 $\$30 - \$12 = \$18$ profit

2. Cookie Sale. At the grocery store you paid ten dollars for the things you needed to make the cookies. You got twenty dollars for the cookies you sold.
 $\$20 - \$10 = \$10$ profit

3. Can Recycling. At the recycling center, you are paid fifteen dollars for the cans you collect. Your only expense is one dollar for some bags to put the cans in.
 $\$15 - \$1 = \$14$ profit

4. Raking Leaves. You rake two lawns getting paid five dollars for each. When the rake you borrowed breaks, you have to replace it. The rake costs eight dollars. You paid three dollars to print flyers to advertise your business to your neighbors.
 $\$10 - \$11 = \$1$ loss

5. Which idea has the most revenue? **Bracelets**
6. Which idea has the least revenue? **Raking Leaves**
7. Which idea has the most expenses? **Bracelets**
8. Which idea has the least expenses? **Can Recycling**
9. Which idea earns the most profit? **Bracelets**
10. Which idea earns the least profit? **Raking Leaves**
11. What idea loses money? **Raking Leaves**

APPENDIX H

LESSON PLAN THREE

Topic: Economics

Teaching Method Used: Role Playing

Grade Level: 4

Standards Met:

- OCS, Grade 4, Economics 3

Materials:

- *The Ohio Adventure*
- Small items such as pencils, markers, flowers, food, candy, ect to sell
- Data Retrieval Sheet
- Play Money
- Change boxes (Shoe boxes work well)
- Containers for students to use in order to carry their purchases

Procedures:

- Introduction
1. The teacher will give play money to certain students, then tell the class that she is opening up a store with wonderful things inside.
 2. Students will be called up in order to find out what they can buy from the teacher's store. Different scenarios will be presented to the students in order to illustrate the supply and demand principle.
 - Scenario 1:
 - Have a student come up with some money.
 - Tell the student that the item that you are going to show them was made in a limited amount, so it may be hard to find in other stores. But, luckily you have a few available.
 - Reveal the item and the price.
 - Ask the student if he/she would be willing to buy it and why they are willing to buy it. (Answers may include that they would buy it because they really like or want the item. Since it is hard to find, he/she may want to buy it while they have a chance to.)
 - Scenario 2:
 - The teacher will reveal a group of the same items and they will have an outrageously high price tag.

- The student will probably not want to buy the item. If so, ask the student why he/she does not want to buy the item. It will probably be due to the unfair price. The teacher then decides to mark the price down. The student may still refuse. The teacher continues to mark the price down until the student is willing to buy the item.
- Scenario 3:
 - Have some students come up with some money.
 - Show them an item that is for sale.
 - Have another student or teacher pretend to open a store “across the street” advertising that same item for less.
 - Ask the students where they want to buy the item from. They will probably choose the store that is charging less. Why did you choose the other store?
 - Then, mark down the price of your item in order to compete with the new store.
- Scenario 4:
 - Have more than one student come up and show the pair one item. May be both of the students will want the item. Since it is so popular, the students may be willing to pay more for the item than what is reasonable.
- 3. After the scenarios are played out, ask the class what happened in each scenario. Why did the consumer make the decisions they did? Why did the producer make the prices too high, lowered them, ect?
- 4. Explain the principle of supply and demand.

- Activity #1- Market Set Up
(*Standard Met: Economics 3*)

1. Explain to the class that they will be having a market in their classroom.
2. Tell them that they will be playing the roles of a producer and of a consumer.
3. Producers make the products and sell them. Consumers are the people that buy and use the products.
4. The producers will be the ones selling the items in the market. They are responsible for pricing the products that they are selling. The consumers will be given money, so they are responsible for making good choices in order to buy the things that they want and/or need.
5. As students are pricing their products, ask them:
 - “What do you think would be a reasonable price for your product?”
 - Do you think your product is worth more or less than a can of soda?
 - A can of soda costs about \$1.00. Do you think your product should be \$1.00, more than \$1.00 or less than \$1.00? (Use any other examples of prices that are similar in scope to the products they are selling).

(NOTE: The purpose of this activity is to help the students understand how price affects a market. It is acceptable to have students price their products unrealistically. During the

conclusion, students will reflect on how their pricing practices affected the market and if they would change their prices in the future).

6. Have your students work with their classmates to make a list of items for sale; also list the producers who will sell them. Divide your students into two groups: Producers and Consumers. Take a few minutes to prepare for the marketplace activity by thinking about the following things:

Producers:

- Set a price for your products.
- Make signs showing the prices.

Consumers:

- Count your money.
- Have the consumers make a sheet which they may use to keep track of what they spend.

7. Have students use the data retrieval worksheet to keep track of the items they sell and purchase.

- Activity #2: To Market!
(*Standard Met: Economics 3*)

1. Open the marketplace and allow time for all the consumers to make their purchases.

Producers:

Have the students keep track of how many items they sell; they also should add the amounts of money people pay to keep a record.

Consumers:

Have the students make a list of the things that they buy and the amount they spend on each item. Instruct them to keep track of the total amount they spend.

Students who are not ready to add two-digit numbers can keep track by making a pictorial representation or circling the number of coins they spend in each denomination.

**EconEdLink Lesson: To Market To Market
Data Retrieval Chart**

Name: _____ Date: _____

Producer

Item	Price (1 st round)	Number sold	dollars made (price x number)	Price (2 nd round)	Number sold	dollars made (price x number sold)
Pencils						
Erasers						

Consumer

Item	Price (1 st round)	number sold	dollars made (price x number)	Price (2 nd round)	number sold	dollars made (price x number sold)
Pencils						
Erasers						

APPENDIX I

LESSON PLAN FOUR

Topic: Economics

Teaching Method Used: Project

Grade Level: 4

Standards Met:

- OCS, Grade 4, Economics 3

Time Needed to Complete the Lesson: 2 Days

Materials:

- *The Ohio Adventure*
- Poster Board
- Markers, Crayons, and/or Colored Pencils
- Checklists for billboard ad and TV commercial
- Video Camera
- Small Props such as sunglasses, clothes, hats, ect.
- Audio/visual set up such as a TV, VCR, DVD player, or sound system to play slides, video, or radio ads.

Procedures:

- Introduction

(Standard Met: Economics 3)

1. Have some advertisements ready on video, on a slide show, or audibly from the radio. Try to find some advertisements that are older and some that are more recent.
2. Play them or show them to the students and discuss them. What does a company make an advertisement for their product? Does this ad make you want to buy the product? Why or why not? What about this ad makes you want to buy the product? How do some of the ads differ from the ones that we have today (comparing some of the old ones to modern day ones)?
3. Open *The Ohio Adventure* to page 20_ and have a volunteer read about how companies advertise.
4. Discuss why businesses advertise.

- Activity #1 (Day 1)- Create your own advertisement

1. Divide students into 6 groups.

2. Each group will have a leader, materials manager, recorder, reporter, maintenance director, and technical advisor (if needed).
 3. Each group member will have an index card with their job and responsibilities on them, so that all members in the group are contributing and working cooperatively.
 4. After the formation of the groups, tell the class that each group is the advertising team for a big company. The company has requested that the advertising teams make an advertisement for a billboard for one of their products.
 5. Each group will receive a checklist with the requirements for their advertisement that they are going to create. As the group completes each task, they can check it off.
- Activity #2 (End of Day 1 and all of Day 2)- Create a TV advertisement
 1. After each group has completed their poster advertisement, they must come up with a TV commercial for their product. This commercial is to be no longer than 3 minutes and every member of the group must participate somehow.
 2. Again, a checklist will be given to every group in order for the group to stay on task and include all of the necessary parts for their commercial.
 3. When all of the groups are finished, each group, one by one, must present their billboard advertisement and their commercial.
 4. The teacher will film each commercial in order to show them all to the class.

APPENDIX J

LESSON PLAN FIVE

Topic: Economics

Teaching Method Used: Simulation

Grade Level: 4

Standards Met:

- People in Societies 3a
- Geography 6
- Economics 3, 4
- Social Studies Skills and Methods 1

Materials:

- pictures of coal mines from south east Ohio
- pictures of coal mining tools
- pictures of script
- map
- play money
- worksheet
- grid paper
- pencils
- three different types of chocolate chip cookies (ones with a small amount of chocolate chips, one with a medium amount, and one with a large amount)
- flat toothpicks
- round toothpicks
- paper clips
- paper towels
- “Working in the Coal Mines” by Devo (song)

NOTE: Some students may have allergies. Please take this into account before using this lesson as some cookies may have been prepared where nuts may have been used.

Procedures:

- Activity #1- Brief History of Coal Mining
(Standards met- People in Societies 3a; Geography 6; Economics 4; Social Studies Skills and Methods 1)

1. The teacher will show on a map the region of the Little Cities of Black Diamonds and explain the coal mining industry there in the 1800's and how it attracted many people from all over to work in coal mining towns.
 2. The teacher will describe how coal mines were opened by companies run by individuals. These individuals are called entrepreneurs.
 3. The teacher will detail how coal mines attracted workers, how workers had to purchase their own equipment from company stores, the different tools used by miners, the conditions that miners worked in, the wages and income the miners made, and how profits were made by coal companies. The teacher will illustrate this information using authentic photographs when available.
- Activity #2-Simulation: Cookie Mining
(Standards met-Economics 3 and 4)

NOTE: Some students may have allergies. Please take this into account before using this lesson as some cookies may have been prepared where nuts may have been used.

1. The teacher will tell the class that each student will become an entrepreneur and coal miner. Every company needs start up capital (define for students), so each student starts with \$19 of play money. Each student receives a Cookie Mining worksheet and a sheet of grid paper.
2. The teacher will make clear that entrepreneurs must pay for a lot of things in order for their business to be successful. These things are called opportunity costs. Some companies take risks when deciding whether to buy things that may benefit the company.
3. Each student must buy their own "mining property," which is a cookie. Only one "mining property" per player. Cookies are for sale:
 - Great Value Chocolate Chip — \$3
 - Chips Deluxe Cookies: Original— \$5
 - Chips Deluxe Cookies: Chocolate Lovers — \$7
4. When students have their "mine", the teacher will explain the word "survey" and how land owners have this done to assess land area. This will lead to the students tracing the outline of their cookies and counting the squares that it encompasses.
5. The teacher will congratulate the students. "You are now a mine owner!"
6. Workers must be hired. The students will assume this role.
7. Companies hire workers and agree to pay them a set price for the amount of work or product that they produce. These are called wages and income. With the income students make, they are able to purchase the tools that they need and pay for other necessities such as food.
8. The teacher will become the coal company store and provide tools for a cost. The teacher will explain that coal miners that lived in company owned towns had to purchase their tools from the company store using part of their income to do so. The

teacher will also identify the functions of each tool and how they are similar to the tools examined in Activity #2.

9. Each student must buy their own “mining equipment.” More than one piece of equipment may be purchased. Equipment may not be shared between students.
Mining equipment for sale is:
 - Flat toothpick — \$2
 - Round toothpick — \$4
 - Paper clips — \$6
10. The teacher will tell the students that mine owners must pay operating costs that allow the mine to function. Mining costs in the students’ mines are \$1 per minute.
11. Students will have about 5 minutes to mine their chocolate chips in an attempt to recover costs and to make a profit.
12. While mining, students will hear “Working in a Coal Mine” by Devo. Students will be instructed that they can mine while the song is playing and must stop when the song is over.
13. After the students are done mining, the teacher will have them calculate the number of chips they were able to extract.
14. The students will assume the role of the entrepreneur and assess profits and losses. The teacher will define each term.
15. The students will receive \$2 profit for each whole chip. (Broken chocolate chips can be combined to make one whole chip).
16. The teacher will explain that legislature has been passed about the land used for mining. The law says that this land must be returned to a state where it can be used again. This process is called reclamation. This can be an expensive requirement for coal mine owners.
17. After the cookie has been “mined,” the cookie should be placed back into the circled area on the grid paper (reclamation). This can only be accomplished using the mining tools — no fingers or hands allowed. Reclamation costs are \$1 for each square covered outside original outline.
18. After the reclamation process is over, students may eat their cookies.

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