Curriculum Plan:

Creating a Plan for a 3rd Grade Progressive Science Learner-Centered and Essentialist Social Studies Knowledge-Centered Curriculum

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EDCS 725: Principles of Curriculum Instruction

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December 6th, 2021

Curriculum Plan 1: Aims and Goals for the Program

This Progressive, learner-centered curriculum will cover four weeks of learning. For students to learn all aspects of the curriculum, several learning goals are listed below since objectives exist to guide the learning. These objectives provide a scaffolded learning paradigm to build upon the knowledge students should get from week to week and based upon students' interests related to learning about the topic. The following objectives exist for this plan:

Week 1	● Objective #1: Students will identify the parts of the water cycle. ● Objective #2: Students will discuss what happens in each part of the water cycle.
Week 2	● Objective #1: Students will explain the causes that disrupt the water cycle.
Week 3	● Objective #1: Students will analyze solutions for disruptions to the water cycle.
Week 4	● Objective #1: Students will be able to present issues and solutions related to the disruption of the water cycle.

Theoretical Grounding for the Curriculum

Progressivism is an educational philosophy that focuses on the whole child rather than strictly on the content in the class. Schiro (2013) explains that in this school of thought, curriculum designers ought to work "to stimulate the growth of people by designing experiences from which people can make meaning, fulfill their needs, and pursue their interests" (p. 204). Early Progressive thinkers include G. Stanley Hall, who in the 1880s began studying children to understand their needs and interests better to create instruction tailored to the student. Additionally, through his works *Democracy and Education* (1916) and *Reconstruction in Philosophy* (1920), John Dewey is often credited as one of the founding fathers of Progressivism. He believed that learning should be active and that children can construct meaning from their experiences. As a result, Dewey viewed the role of educators as being ones who construct learning environments where students actively

engage the material, often through project-based learning, to have experiences that teach them about the world around them.

Thus, this educational philosophy and the following curriculum are decidedly learner-centered. Learner-centered educators believe that knowledge acquisition is not the primary concern of teaching but rather a by-product of student growth and an illustration of learning (Schiro, 2013, p. 211-212). The goal in a learner-centered classroom is to allow students to "make meaning through creative self-expression as a result of organically interacting with their environment" (Schiro, 2013, p. 220). As a result, employing project-based learning and providing opportunities for self-reflection allows students to make meaning from their experiences in the classroom and apply the learning from their experiences to the world around them.

The Role of the Educator

In the Progressive learning-centered classroom, it is essential to remember that the educator takes on the role of the facilitator. When planning a unit that centers on the water cycle, the teacher should consider the levels of the students and make connections to the real world. The teacher will collaborate with colleagues such as other teachers, literacy coaches, and a local water plant worker to develop a rigorous curriculum and promote collaboration and problem-solving. The curriculum will take an interdisciplinary approach, requiring the teacher to collaborate with the fine arts department. Aside from collaboration, the teacher must gather materials and research to ensure that they understand the content to facilitate learning. The teacher will help ensure that students are actively engaged and discuss their newly found knowledge with their peers.

For this curriculum plan, the students are presented with a problem and are encouraged to solve it using the information they gain in knowledge centers and problem-based learning. The teacher is responsible for developing the problem and presenting it to the students. In order to

develop the problem, the teacher will collaborate with a local water plant treatment facility as well as their grade level team. The problem focuses on disruptive issues related to the water cycle and how students can save the water cycle. The purpose of a project-based approach is to provide students with an authentic assessment. The teacher's role is to model how to use each tool to set students up for success (Chapman & King, 2012). After modeling how to use each tool, the teacher will release responsibility to the students. As the students work on their project, the teacher will float around to ensure students stay focused and on the right track.

Teachers will be split into groups to allow for team-teaching and to best focus on each teacher's strengths to help facilitate the learning at each station or in each room as students go around and learn. These groups organize in several different ways. For example, one pairing might be multiple science teachers participating and working together either by the same grade level or different levels to allow a cross-age collaboration. Other options could be teachers from multiple disciplines such as mathematics, the arts, social studies, and physical education to create an interdisciplinary curriculum (Drake, 2012, p. 6).

The Role of the Learner

For this curriculum plan, the student’s interests will guide their learning. After a brief mini-lesson, students rotate through stations with their collaborative learning group. Students work through the stations and actively engage in conversations with their peers on the subject. Students will rotate through with their science notebooks to record any observations or new information. Before moving to the next station, the students will have an exit ticket that caters to Bloom's Taxonomy and requires them to evaluate and analyze their learned information. After evaluating and analyzing the information, students must use their critical thinking skills and present what they have just learned.

After exploring stations to acquire information about the water cycle, students will problem-solve with their collaborative groups. First, the students will be presented with a problem to spark their curiosity. Then, as a group, they have to determine the best solution using the information they have acquired throughout the curriculum plan. Next, students will conduct research on ways to save our water and on the issues that are currently prevalent with our water. Finally, the students will work with their groups to map out a plan. Students discuss, brainstorm, record ideas, and research during this process. After developing a solution, students will cater to the highest level of Bloom's Taxonomy to create a presentation of their solution. Finally, the collaborative learning group will decide how to present the solution.

Overview of Curriculum Content

In a Progressive learning-centered curriculum, the purpose of the school should be to improve the lives of students and, in turn, society as a whole. Teachers should create situations and provide experiences so students learn by active participation. The curriculum should be student-led and based on student interests, and the content of the curriculum should develop from student interests and questions.

The goal is for students to take an active role in their learning by experimenting, examining, and asking questions in an engaged learning environment around the selected topic. For example, after a student information survey, students explained that they wanted to learn more about natural habitats, animals, water, and weather. Therefore, the content will be spread out over four weeks to maximize the learning potential on the subject guided by student interest.

Pre-Assessment Plan

A pre-assessment prior to the learning is needed to engage the student in the content matter, set a baseline of current knowledge, and what misconceptions they have on the topic. This

assessment should occur one to three weeks prior to the start of the lesson so the data can be collected, utilized, and employed to come up with the best plan for learning the material (Chapman & King, 2012, p. 69). The pre-assessment should also show attitudes, examine emotions and feelings, strengths, weaknesses, and provide an entry point for new information, views, and beliefs (Chapman & King, 2012, p. 70). Recommendations include Ponder and Pass, Signal and Action Responses, Take a Stand, and Knowledge Base Corners (Chapman & King, 2012, p. 72-79).

The pre-assessment is step one of what the student will produce to guide the teacher on what topics should be in the curricular plan. Using this pre-assessment, the teacher can better understand what "academic knowledge" the students have on the topic and what knowledge the students have regarding essential topics around the subject. Some examples of these disruptive issues could include the increase in coastal flooding, the increase in more intense thunderstorms and hurricanes, the risk of drought and its effects on farming because of drought, and the dangers of extreme fires. Chapman and King utilize the metaphor of a movie advertisement and state that using pre-assessment "builds anticipation, generates interest, and provides personal ownership" and "targets individual strengths and needs" (Chapman & King, 2021, p. 71).

The data gathered from the pre-assessment will have many uses to facilitate the desired learning. For example, personal instruction plans (Chapman & King, 2021, p. 71) can foster a stronger focus for individualized learning, experiential learning, integrated studies, and developmentally appropriate practice with real-world emphasis. In addition, after the pre-assessment is analyzed, the curriculum process of creating objectives, developing learning strategies, implementing assessments to measure learning, and the success of the curriculum can all be tailored to the Progressive learning-centered paradigm.

Learning Experiences and Products

In a Progressive learning-centered curriculum, "students are expected not merely to learn academic knowledge and skills, but to use knowledge as a tool for problem-solving" (Ellis, 2004, p. 35). These problems should be current real-life problems that stem from student interests. Therefore, students will be required to keep a thinking journal throughout each program week. In the last 15 minutes of the class, the student will document their thoughts and feelings on the topics discussed during the day. This journal will be a formative assessment of the learning and growth that the student has developed throughout the lesson hoping to show progression over thinking from day one to the last day of the lesson. The assessment is less about knowledge acquisition of the science lesson and grades, but more a self-reflection about what the student gained thinking about the topic and the problems that arise relating to that topic.

At the end of each week, the teacher will read over the students' thinking journals and provide comments to help facilitate their thinking and check to see if there are areas that students are struggling with on the topics discussed. During learning, formative assessments can help reteach, revamp, enrich, adjust assignments or learning strategies, provide alternative resources, ask specific probing questions, or incorporate extra assistance or praise in a curricular plan (Chapman & King, 2012, p. 83).

Week One of the curricular plan will revolve around stations of the water cycle. In the first class period, there will be a video that the students will watch, giving an overview of the water cycle. Next, they will fill out a "travel log" that they will carry around with them to each station over the week, where they can write down and document the most salient points of each part of the cycle. Finally, students will spend 30 minutes at each station with their group (one station a day), looking at the topic of that station conducting hands-on activities around that specific section (Evaporation, Condensation, Precipitation, and Collection). On the last day, the students will get to

choose one of these specific focuses of the water cycle and, based upon their choice, break into a group that will have to make a story, a poster, a song, a paper, or a skit to explain their portion of the water cycle. The students will also have to turn in their Travel Log "Drip through the Cycle Worksheet" that they were given on the first day to see what salient points they wrote down for each part of the cycle.

Week Two of the curricular plan would revolve around real-world issues related to the water cycle. First, students will go around to various stations in groups and examine prominent real-world examples of what would happen if the water cycle fails. Then, students will create a concept map that they will fill out on issues like drought and flooding (rising seawater), fire, severe thunderstorms/hurricanes, effects on agriculture and farming, and effects on wildlife populations. Week Three of the curricular plan will require the students to go on a field trip to visit experts who work in the field to resolve these issues. Again students will be broken up into groups based upon interests and go around to various locations to talk about big ideas, enduring understandings, and 21st-century skills necessary to resolve these issues. The field trips will be as follows:

1) National Park/Forest/Firehouse. Students will meet with a park ranger or firefighter to talk about ways to mitigate fires and how fires affect the environment, and how the water cycle plays a role in fires, droughts, and the effects on natural habitats;

2) A water treatment plant. Students will talk to a water treatment expert about managing water supply chains and keeping them clean and safe for public use;

3) A weather station. Students will talk to a meteorologist about extreme weather and what is causing the weather to become more extreme and ways to solve/prepare for this in the future;

4) A farm. Students will talk to a farmer about managing and producing crops, especially when extreme weather, flooding, and drought all play a role in crop production;

5) A National Park/Forest. Students will talk to a Park Ranger about soil erosion and the dangers of flooding and how to mitigate the effects of flooding, especially for coastal communities;
6) A local park or preserve. Students will talk to a biologist about natural habitats and the dangers to habitats based upon the water cycle.
These local community members will lead discussions and show students that resolving real-world issues requires community engagement.

In week four, the students will be paired in groups based on their field trips during week three. The groups will be required to create a presentation to discuss with community members and parents what they learned throughout the four-week program about the topic, the impending dangers involving this topic, and solutions to help resolve the problem. This final project will serve as a formative qualitative assessment of the students' learning about the topic and solutions to resolve the problems they faced. The students will be required to turn in a concept map that showcases their learning over the four weeks and resolve the presented problems. The final reflections in their thinking journal and this culminating project show that "Performance is key because doing something that demands growth in skill, knowledge, and judgment is prized above paper and pencil exercises and recitation which are seen as artificial achievements of little lasting significance" (Ellis, 2013, p. 36). See Figure 1 for a 3rd Grade Progressive Learning-Centered Science Curriculum Map.

Nature of the Learning Environment

The Progressive elementary science classroom provides students with a nurturing, supportive, and inviting environment, where student freedom is a significant focus. The classroom can organize diverse learning opportunities that spread across different classroom areas. Collaborative learning stations where students can build models, run mini-experiments, and

practice science vocabulary, read age-appropriate books about the topic of study, and answer writing prompts about the topic of study will be utilized. In this classroom, students are allowed the freedom to choose what stations to go to, how long to spend at each station, and the type of learning that occurs. As a result, students enjoy and have fun at each station. This organization allows for student choice and more meaningful and motivating learning experiences; it allows their genuine interests and needs to develop (Schiro, 2013, p.5).

Students work in groups to accomplish common goals and independently focus on individual goals. Students surround themselves with invested peers who can motivate others to learn and engage. Student expression is encouraged and shown by the prominent display of diverse student work around the classroom. Students often point to and evaluate their work on display and engage in discussions in which they critically evaluate classmates' work. Students in this classroom see an open learning environment that fosters the freedom of personal expression and empowerment. Students and teachers interact, talk, play, and support each other. In addition, teachers constantly check-in and communicate throughout the school day to provide the most meaningful experience for the students.

Curriculum Assessment

In a learner-centered classroom, the teacher needs to constantly assess the students' growth and interests to plan the learning environment that serves the students best (Schiro, 2013, p. 144-145). The curriculum needs to be effective for the students to be successful and well-read. Gardner's multiple intelligence theory provides eight different intelligences that can be easily applied to the classroom and used to meet learners' diverse needs (Chapman & King, 2012). By providing different activities that fit within the different intelligences, students are able to learn

best when doing an activity that fits into their strongest intelligence while also building and growing the intelligences that may be weaker. In this elementary science classroom assessments are primarily focused on student growth. Rather than each student getting the same test or assessment, students go through an assessment to measure their personal growth and development. Assessments in this classroom are part of measuring the students' engagement, performance, and understanding of the stations.

Teachers are looking for personal improvement in each student, rather than labeling a high or low grade based simply on their knowledge of the content. In learner-centered classrooms, teachers and curriculum developers must constantly assess their students and their curriculum for success and ensure they are meeting the needs of the students. In learner-centered classrooms, curriculum evaluation and assessment come in the form of testimonials that state the learner's engagement, involvement, and enthusiasm in the topics being taught (Schiro, 2013, p.148). These testimonials typically come in teacher observations that reflect on student engagement, involvement, and enthusiasm. Teachers will meet with the students individually in this classroom for "check-ins." During the check-ins, the teacher and student will review their thinking journal; the teacher will encourage the student to lead the conversation, reflect on their work, and self-assess their growth. During these assessments, the teacher can use clipboard stickies or card cruising which allow for the teacher to document positive and negative behaviors, and strengths and weaknesses, as well as identify patterns and behaviors in regards to the student being assessed at the given time (Chapman & King, 2012). The teacher can also use card cruising to assess and create documentation on student engagement and enthusiasm during the presentation of the student's group projects during week one, during the field trips during week three, and during the field trip presentations. At the end of each week, the teacher will review the thinking journals to

determine the strengths and weaknesses of the students and the learning occurring in the classroom; the teacher can then use this information to change, alter, and build on the necessary topics for the following week. The teacher can also use the thinking journals to assess the types of work done in the class and how well the students responded to those given assignments. By using various assessment tools, including those named above (check-ins and thought journals), the teacher can assess the effectiveness and success of the curriculum. A long-term curriculum evaluation tool that can be used is measuring students' long-term success from learner-centered classrooms compared to the long-term success of students from traditional classrooms. For example, asking the question "How effective are students from learner-centered ideology in comparison to students from the traditional approach to education?" (Schiro, 2013, p.148)

Figure 1 - Curriculum Map of a 3rd Grade Progressive, Learning-Centered Science Curriculum

Progressive Science Curriculum	The Learner must Do	The Learner must Know	The Learner must Be	Assessment of Learning
Pre-Assessment	• Take the pre-assessment to evaluate prior knowledge and misconceptions, likes, dislikes, attitudes, emotions, and interests,etc.	N/A	• Active Learners	Formative Qualitative Pre-Assessment of Prior Knowledge, Misconceptions, likes, dislikes, attitudes, emotions, etc.
Week #1	• Attend 4 Learning Stations • Write in a Thinking Journal • Create a story, poster, song, paper or skit about their portion of the water cycle • Watch a Video on the Water Cycle • Complete a Travel Log Drip through the Cycle worksheet of salient points from each station/section of the water cycle (Evaporation, Condensation, Precipitation, and Collection) (Figure 1)	• The Water Cycle	• Active Listeners • Critical Thinkers • Respectful	Formative Qualitative Assessment of Thinking Journal and Story/Poster/Song/Paper/ Skit
Week #2	• Attend a field trip with a community partner • Write in a Thinking Journal • Create a concept map of the key topics discussed in each learning station (Figure 1.2)	• Issues around the disruption of the water cycle	• Passionate • Critical Thinkers • Problem Solvers	Formative Qualitative Assessment of Thinking Journal and Concept Map
Week #3	• Attend a field trip with a community agent around(Fire, Agriculture, Wildlife Habitats, Flooding/Drought, and Extreme Weather) • Write in a Thinking Journal	• Solutions to the issues around the disruption of the water cycle	• Problem Solvers • Critical Thinkers • Creative • Risk Takers • Active Citizens	Formative Qualitative Assessment of Thinking Journal and Modifications to Concept Map

Week #4	• Attend class each day ready to prep the final project • Write in a Thinking Journal • Create a final project and present it to outsiders who were not connected to the project learning • Complete the concept map (Figure 1.2) of the solutions based upon every groups presentation	• The water cycle, how it could be disrupted and how to create solutions	• Problem Solvers • Critical Thinkers • Active Citizens • Risk Takers • Educators • Active Learners	Formative Qualitative Assessment of Thinking Journal and Final Project. Assessment of the concept map with the additions to the solutions that the students learned about from their field trips.

Curriculum Plan 2: Aims and Goals of the Program

This essentialist, knowledge-centered curriculum will cover the economy in a five-week curriculum. An essentialist curriculum tends to be a "future-oriented curriculum in that it asks, 'what knowledge and skills will students need to prepare them for the future life?'" (Ellis, 2012, p. 118). The focus then is on skills that will be most beneficial to a student in the future. As a knowledge-learning essentialist paradigm, the student's learning will be directed by the course material, such as a textbook that teaches skills development but is prepared to "regulate the flow of instruction and study" and comes in a sequential order to promote scaffolded learning from year to year (Ellis, 2012, p. 119). Since a student needs to gain mastery over the material, the curriculum must be followed to ensure that maximum learning can match up with assessments that will guide student learning at the end of the lesson. The objectives for this curriculum map up nicely to the weeks of learning as outlined by the chosen textbook for the lesson:

Week 1
- Objective #1: Students will discuss essential terms associated with economics.

Week 2
- Objective #1: Students will be able to explain the history of money from bartering to cash-based currency
- Objective #2: Students will be able to demonstrate how money is used

Week 3
- Objective #1: Students will be able to discuss how money connects with power, influence, and wealth
- Objective #2: Students will explore how money is used locally and globally
- Objective #3: Students will explain how to acquire money

Week 4
- Objective #1: Students will be able to explain supply and demand

	• Objective #2: Students will be able to discuss the importance of managing money, budgeting money, and saving money
Week 5	• Review. This week will be spent re-capping everything and making sure students learned the previous objectives. The end-of-unit test that will happen this week will measure that assessment.

Theoretical Ground for the Curriculum

Essentialism is a subject-centered philosophy. This philosophy focuses on teaching a series of progressively difficult topics to move sequentially to the end-point of the curriculum. The most prominent essentialist was William C. Bagley. In the *Essentialist's Platform* (1938), Bagley argued that curriculum and teaching should be thorough, rigid, and expertly dictated from the teachers to students. He believed that this was necessary for a well-informed democracy to function. Similar social efficiency thinkers argue that a "worthwhile curriculum has the nature of a capability for action" (Schiro, 2013, p. 211). The most important of these actions is to function within society and be equipped with the requisite knowledge to do so (Schiro, 2013, p. 211). **Overview of Curriculum Content**

In an essentialist subject-centered curriculum, the belief that all children should learn traditional, basic, *essential* subjects is the driving force of the philosophy. Sahin (2018) explains that essentialism is a doctrine of concepts, ideas, and skills that all students should learn through methodical teaching without considering individual student needs (p. 194). Essentialist education and curriculum aim to impart "the traditional knowledge and cultural heritage of a certain society and civilization to students" (Sahin, 2018, p. 194). The teacher is the purveyor of content and knowledge.

The goal of essentialism is to teach students morals, standards, and values through textbooks, the works of prominent thinkers, and academic rigor. In contrast to perennialism with its

fixed core curriculum, essentialism adheres to the theory that school and learning should not only be practical but dynamic, as well (Sahin, 2018, p. 195). Students are considered vital members of society and should be prepared to contribute to the betterment of said society. Values such as respect for authority and self-discipline are paramount. After the five-week unit, students should explain the basic history of economics, including bartering, the influence of wealth, supply and demand, budgeting, and how to save money. The students will be taught how economics applies to specific cultures, civilizations, and societies based upon traditional values and standards.

The Role of the Educator

In the knowledge-learner, essentialist classroom, the teacher is the director of learning. The teacher is the center of and is responsible for the student's learning. Ellis (2004) describes the essentialist curriculum as a curriculum that asks, "What knowledge and skills will students need to prepare them for future life?" (p.118). During planning, the teacher should consider the essential skills that the students should learn by discussing them with their grade level team. This curriculum plan is for elementary students and focuses on the economy. When planning an economics unit for elementary students, the teacher and their grade level team should research to ensure that they are experts on the topic before instructing the students. Aside from the grade-level team, the teacher will also collaborate with the district's social studies representation to review the support documents to teach the entire standard through the curriculum effectively.

To develop an assessment, the teacher will look at the formative assessments created by the district. By looking at the assessment first, the teacher incorporates the backward design method, which allows the grade level team to develop a curriculum that will effectively cover all the content. Since this plan is geared for elementary students, the grade level team will collaborate to develop teacher-led notes and a study guide with the help of the district's social studies

representative.

The Role of the Learner

For this curriculum plan, the students are limited in the amount of choice. Instead, they are expected to exhibit self-discipline during instruction. Their role will be to take their notes and complete their assignments. Throughout the curriculum plan, students will have homework assignments that they will need to complete and several in-class worksheets that provide a formative assessment of their knowledge throughout the unit. Students will be expected to complete teacher-led Cornell-style notes in their Social Studies notebooks on some days and teacher-led interactive notes on other days. Every Friday, the students will have a notebook check to ensure that they have kept up with their notes during the week. This curriculum plan prompts students to engage in organization skills, Bloom's taxonomy level of application, and understanding. Students will work in collaborative groups throughout the curriculum plan to study and discuss the content being taught by the teacher.

Towards the end of the curriculum plan, students will be expected to study their study guide for homework to prepare them for the summative assessment. Students will be able to use their notes during the paper-pencil test.

Pre-Assessment Plan

The pre-assessment plan is essential in determining what students already know about the topic and what misconceptions they have about it to draft a plan that engages the students in the standard information that will help prepare them for the end-of-unit test. This assessment of prior knowledge is to gathered to assess skills gaps or knowledge gaps.

Learning Experiences and Products

Since the essentialist curriculum is knowledge-centered, students must understand the

weekly concepts. Because of this, there will be nightly readings from the assigned textbooks and worksheets that the students will complete to see if they are comprehending the materials they are reading. In addition, worksheets will be discussed during class to make sure students understand the materials and to discuss any answers they got wrong. In a knowledge-centered curriculum, students need to gain mastery of the topic before moving on to the next topic since each lesson is scaffolded.

Each week students will be graded based upon their homework to see if they comprehend the readings. In-class activities will highlight the lessons learned in the reading at night and try to connect student learning to real work examples. At the end of each week, there will be a summative assessment to measure student learning of key concepts. These graded quizzes and homework worksheets will provide an opportunity for students to show what they are learning in a rewards-based assessment. In addition, each weekly quiz will prepare students for an end-of-unit test that will measure how well the students understand all the subject matter taught during the five-week curriculum and if they met the weekly objectives. This end-of-unit test will focus more on knowledge acquisition and less on the development of the student through this process. See Figure 2 for a 3rd Grade Knowledge-centered, essentialist Social Studies Curriculum Map.

Nature of the Learning Environment

The elementary social studies classroom focuses on not only understanding the content but preparing students to be successful in the following grade, as well as in adult life. The classroom is seen as a place to learn the topic of study, complete assignments, and follow the direction of the teacher. The typical day and each unit of study are structured and involves the teacher guiding the student's learning by following the textbook manufacturer's scope and sequence. Students are seen sitting at individual desks, listening to teacher instruction and direction. Students transition to

working independently on a worksheet to reflect their understanding of the content or work in small groups on a group project, depending on what the teacher directs. More often than not, they use the textbook as a primary resource for their learning. Students in this classroom typically know what to expect and what is expected of them. Because the curriculum is not tailored to the specific community, school, or students, the students are exposed to various topics that may not be directly applicable to their current lives. Students will ask questions to clarify and become curious about topics that are not familiar to them.

Curriculum Assessment

Students are assessed on the work completed for the class; this includes classwork and homework, projects, group work, quizzes, and tests. Student work is typically graded based on accuracy and understanding of the content and learning goals. Students receive scores on most assignments that reflect their understanding of the knowledge, and individual assignment scores collectively equate a letter grade to represent student knowledge. Students are tested at the end of each social studies unit and will have occasional quizzes throughout the unit. Unit test questions come in multiple-choice, short answers, and extended responses. This allows students to be well versed in test-taking and be prepared when it comes time for state testing. In addition to assessing student growth and learning, learners and teachers in an essentialist classroom curriculum are all factors that need to be assessed and evaluated. Curriculum, learners, and teachers all need to be assessed and evaluated for their role in accountability and standards (Schiro, 2013, p.94). Teachers hold curriculum specialists and developers accountable in creating an appropriate scope and sequence that meet the standards while also holding students accountable for completing work, self-discipline, and mastery of the standards. Teachers are held accountable for their understanding

and expertise in the field of study, and students' success relies on teachers' ability to teach the standards (Schiro, 2013, p.95)

Figure 2 - Curriculum Map of a 3rd Grade Progressive, Knowledged Centered, Essentialist Social Studies Curriculum

Knowledge Centered Social Studies Curriculum	The Learner must <u>Do</u>	The Learner must <u>Know</u>	The Learner must <u>Be</u>	Assessment of Learning
Pre-Assessment	• Take the pre-assessment to evaluate prior knowledge and misconceptions.	N/A	• Active Learner • Rote Memorizer	Formative Qualitative Pre-Assessment of Prior Knowledge and misconceptions
Week #1	• Complete nightly reading • Complete nightly homework • Participate in all in-class activities • Take end of Week Quiz	• Students will be able to discuss important terms associated with economics.	• Active Learner • Rote Memorizer	• Turn in nightly homework sheets • Participation with in-class activities • Summative End of Week quiz
Week #2	• Complete nightly reading • Complete nightly homework • Participate in all in-class activities • Take end of Week Quiz	• Students will be able to explain the history of money from bartering to cash based currency • Students will be able to demonstrate how money is used	• Active Learner • Rote Memorizer	• Turn in nightly homework sheets • Participation with in-class activities • Summative End of Week quiz
Week #3	• Complete nightly reading • Complete nightly homework • Participate in all in-class activities • Take end of Week Quiz	• Students will be able to discuss how money connects with power, influence and wealth • Students will explore how money is used locally and globally • Students will explain how to acquire money	• Active Learner • Rote Memorizer	• Turn in nightly homework sheets • Participation with in-class activities • Summative End of Week quiz
Week #4	• Complete nightly reading • Complete nightly homework • Participate in all in-class activities • Take end of Week Quiz	• Students will be able to explain supply and demand • Students will be able to discuss the importance of managing money, budgeting money and saving money	• Active Learner • Rote Memorizer	• Turn in nightly homework sheets • Participation with in-class activities • Summative End of Week quiz
Week #5	• Complete study guides 1-4 as review • Take End of Unit Test	• Students will be able to identify terms related to economics, discuss the history of money, how it is used, acquired, spent locally and globally, influences on power, wealth, understand supply and demand and how to manage/budget money.	• Active Learner • Rote Memorizer	• Study Guide #1 • Study Guide #2 • Study Guide #3 • Study Guide #4 • Summative End of Unit Test

Personal Educational Philosophies

After spending the past eight weeks examining the different approaches to curriculum theory, pedagogical methods, and assessment techniques, each of us has created our unique view on curriculum design and its roles in the classroom.

Zelexis Jones' View of Curriculum

I am an advocate for progressivism philosophy and the Learner-Centered curriculum. Both Progressivism and the Learner-Centered curriculum place the learners first and consider the needs and concerns of the students. With this approach, teachers serve as merely the facilitator. I can concede this concept because it is the best practice for educators to serve as facilitators for students, thus focusing on the students and allowing them to oversee their learning and collaborate with peers. Lastly, I believe that Progressivism lends itself to promoting both creative and critical thinking skills.

In addition to a philosophy centered around the students, I believe students should learn by doing. They should engage in authentic and meaningful learning experiences that promote collaboration. I also believe that students should choose how they are assessed. Project-based learning is more beneficial to me than traditional tests. By providing students with a choice in how they are assessed, they are given a sense of ownership and can engage in higher-order thinking skills.

Nathan Johnston's View of Curriculum

I believe each student is a unique individual in need of a stimulating environment to develop emotionally, intellectually, and socially. As a result, it is my job as an educator to facilitate a collaborative atmosphere, encourage reasonable risk-taking, and support reaching those ends.Pedagogically, I view the function of the classroom in two parts. The first function is to equip

students with various skills necessary to engage the world around them meaningfully. Helping guide students towards being engaged, global citizens, in my opinion, is the central tenet of education. As a result, I view my job as a teacher to help students think while not telling them what to think.

The second function of the classroom is to provide students with some framing to better understand the world around them. In helping students navigate the vast amount of information, the curriculum provides a roadmap to help guide them along with their engagement with the world in any given course. As curriculum designers, we must determine what skills are most important in the course and then design content that provides information while giving students the best opportunities to hone those skills.

The assessment then functions to allow students to put the skills acquired in the classroom into practice by providing multiple opportunities to think critically, reason effectively, and explain their answers and understanding accordingly. Thus, I believe that education should be student-centered with a healthy combination of project-based engagement and instruction from the teacher.

Dorothy Alton's View of Curriculum

The only real constant is change. Students come from all walks of life. Our world is changing rapidly with the implementation of technology, different societal ills, climate issues, and a contentious political climate, naming a few; students are left having to navigate through a rapid rate of changes. Therefore, I oscillate on my views of what curriculum should entail. I like that perennialism focuses on a canon of great works. However, I also align with some of the tenets of reconstructionism, as it aims to improve society by solving issues in society. However, I also align with some of the tenets of Progressivism and the learner-centered classroom. As Schiro (2013)

explains, "the needs and interests of learners, rather than those of teachers, principals, school subjects, parents, or politicians, play a major role in determining the school program" (p. 105).

The idea of determining what to teach emanating from the students in the classroom with no outside interference sounds ideal. I also like how Progressivism focuses on student interests, and it aims to help students develop a sound moral compass. However, in today's global and social climate, I believe education and curriculum need to reflect what is going on in the world. Proper education should provide what is necessary for students to be prepared for the "real world." Flinders & Thornton (2017) explain Bobbitt's theory that "Education must take a pace set, not by itself, but by social progress" (p. 11). As educators, we need to be addressing the student holistically. It is imperative to teach students not *what* to think but *how*to think. These students will be the next generation of problem solvers.

Teachers provide a safe and non-judgmental environment where students can express their ideas and engage in constructive conversations in an environment that lends itself to self-improvement, critical thinking, problem-solving, and the development of metacognitive skills. One size does not fit all; the curriculum should reflect today's students' various needs and attempt to help students learn how to address said needs, issues, and changes. Our schools need to provide a place where we, as trained educators, can enlighten students by teaching them how to research, think critically, problem-solve, and communicate effectively. Only through holistic, relevant, and valuable curriculum and pedagogy can we create the next generation of global citizens and leaders.

Alison Vild's View of Curriculum

As a learner and an educator, I believe that education should be about the students' needs, interests, and wants, but also about the knowledge known about the world around us. Throughout

the last few texts, I feel such a pull towards both learner-centered and knowledge-centered curricula. I believe there are two sides to education developing the individual while simultaneously giving the student the world's knowledge as we have come to know it.

The learner-centered curriculum is appealing because it values the importance of the individual learner, and the curriculum is built off the interests and experiences of the learner. I find so much value in what Abraham Maslow called self-actualization or the idea that individual learners should have the opportunity and freedom to aspire to become what they dream of becoming (Ellis, 2004, p. 41). Gardner's multiple intelligence theory states there are eight intelligences, and each individual has strengths and weaknesses within those intelligences (Chapman & King, 2012). If students are given the opportunity and freedom to explore the different intelligences and become self-reflective learners, they will better understand themselves and become further invested in their learning.

My support and interest in a learner-centered curriculum do not overshadow the value of the knowledge-centered curriculum. I believe that, as stated in Ellis (2004, p.95), the well-educated person is invariably the most adaptable, most prepared, and best citizen. They are more rational, reflective, and less inclined to impulsive behaviors. Unfortunately, as crucial as self-actualization is, many youths cannot simply determine or understand what they need to know and what is vital for them to know.

Shaun O'Malley's View of Curriculum

I have always believed that education is an ongoing cognitive development journey that should illuminate experiences and enhance decisions (Bok, 1974). Furthermore, education should transform and inspire tomorrow's leaders to be self-authored, life-long learners (Baxter-Magolda, 1999). Students should have room to explore what interests them and what identities, beliefs, and

values are important to them through engaged scholarship opportunities that make their learning come to life (Boyer, 1994). With that belief in mind, I support a Progressive paradigm for education. Whether it is from Quintilian's notion of the "Doctrine of Interest" to the romanticized version of education set forth by famed-educators Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and the pragmatist Dewey (Ellis, 2004, p. 29), the thought that the purpose of education should be "based on the continuous reconstruction of experiences emanating from student interest and active investigation" (Ellis, 2004, p. 30) is truthful and authentic.

I believe strongly in creating a learning-centered curriculum. The reason for that is that the learning-centered curriculum focuses on self-actualization, per Maslow, "What a man can be, he must be" (Maslow, 1943, p. 383). A curriculum is supposed to focus on what a person is interested in and what a person needs most to be the best possible person, which will result in them fulfilling their need to be a social activist or a life-long learner (and meet the needs of the other curricula). The teacher is a learner and facilitator in the learning-centered approach, "The guide on the side, not the sage on the stage" (Ellis, 2004, p. 33). Learning is collaborative, and the teacher needs to collaborate with the student to create an environment of engaged learning so that the student will eventually transform from participant to the metacognitive builder of their learning (Bouncristiani & Bouncristiani, 2012).

Therefore the best possible assessment in a learning-centered environment is a formative one. A low-stakes assessment that gives continuous, poignant, and developmental feedback to the student with little worry of benchmarking and failure and provides feedback to the teacher as a facilitator to monitor student learning and growth around a topic.

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