"Journey North" Enrichment Project
Teacher Inquiry

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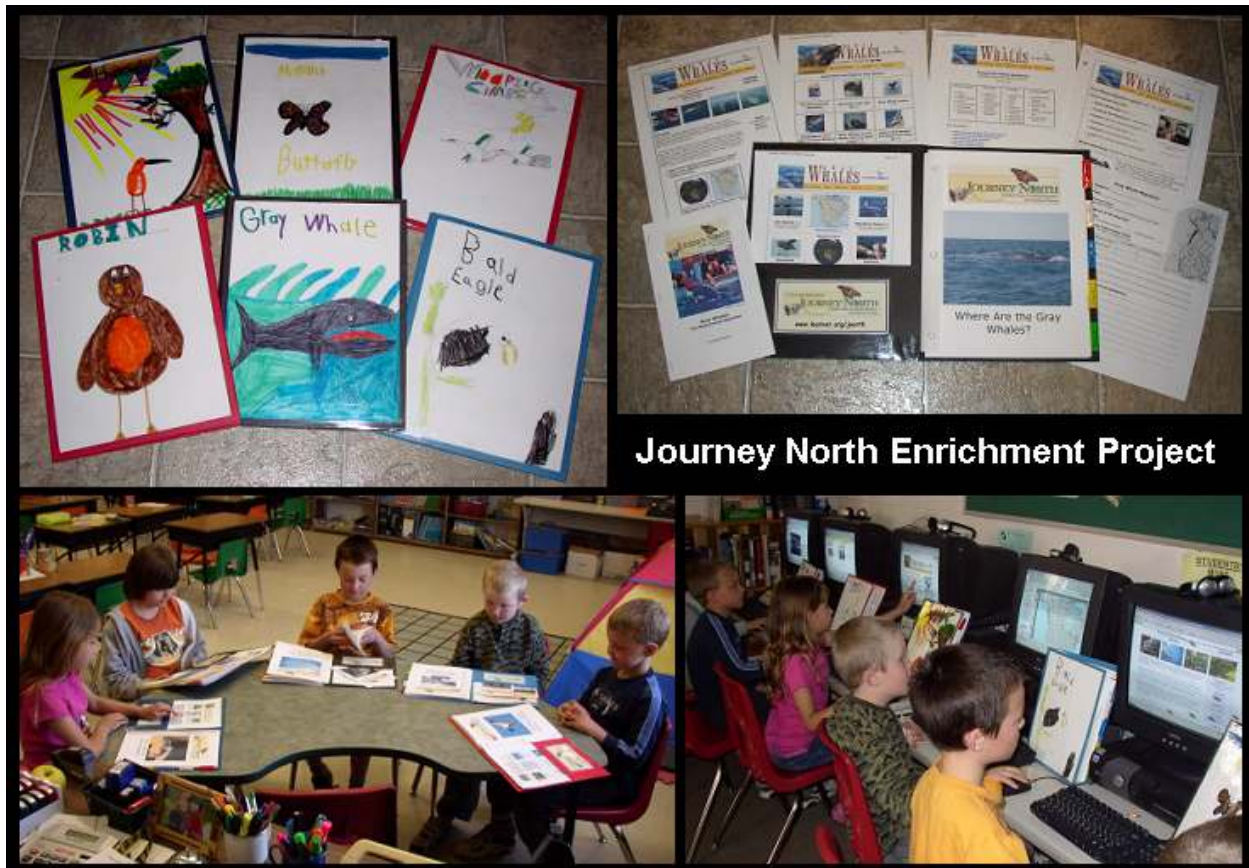Washago, Ontario

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Inquiry Question

How can I use the educational web site "Journey North," and other non-fiction resources, as enrichment tools for students who often complete their work before the balance of their classmates?

Context

I am a Long Term Occasional Teacher currently teaching a Grade 2 class comprised of 15 boys and 6 girls. This is the most ubiquitous group I have ever taught, in terms of academic achievement. All students are achieving grades of C or better; most are straight-B students; and a few students had multiple A's on their last report cards. However, there is a wide discrepancy in the rates at which students complete their work.

Rationale

Six students in my class consistently complete their work ahead of their classmates, and become bored and listless when they are not being challenged. Four of these students are boys, and research shows that computers and non-fiction reading both have particular appeal to boys.

In my teacher inquiry, I examined ways in which the educational web site Journey North (http://www.learner.org/jnorth) and other non-fiction resources available through our school library, could be used to challenge these students and stimulate their interest and competency in the areas of inquiry, non-fiction research, computer skills, media literacy, writing and oral communication.

Review of Literature Related to the Enrichment Project

Links to Standards of Practice

Section 5, in the "Commitment to Students and Student Learning" section of the Ontario College of Teachers' *Standards of Practice for the Teaching Profession*, states that teachers should assist their students in becoming lifelong learners by:

a) linking the curriculum and learning experiences to everyday life;
b) encouraging students to know about, reflect upon and monitor their own learning; and
c) challenging students in the pursuit of excellence.[1]

I believe this enrichment project does just that by linking learning to a current event in the outside world (animal migration), providing an opportunity for independent study and reinforcing and extending learning in the language and science curriculum areas.

Links to Special Education Directives

The Ontario Ministry of Education publication *Education for All: The Report of the Expert Panel on Literacy and Numeracy Instruction for Students With Special Education Needs, Kindergarten to Grade 6* states that:

"Differentiated instruction requires teachers to transform their practices from a program-based pedagogy to a student-based pedagogy. Teachers attempt to adapt pedagogical interventions to the needs of each student, acknowledging that each student differs in interests, learning profile, and level of functioning. Differentiated instruction may facilitate high levels of both student engagement and curricular achievement."[2]

The Ontario Ministry of Education publication *Special Education: A Guide for Educators* states that the intellectual exceptionality called "giftedness" is:

"An unusually advanced degree of general intellectual ability that requires differentiated learning experiences of a depth and breadth beyond those normally provided in the regular school program to satisfy the level of educational potential indicated."[3]

Although the students in the enrichment project are not old enough to have participated in gifted screening, it is clear that they are students who excel, both academically and in terms of work completion. I believe this enrichment project is a form of differentiated instruction, or a differentiated learning experience, that addresses the special needs and interests of these students. The project is designed to foster a high level of student engagement and to reinforce and extend curricular achievement.

Links to Language Curriculum Expectations

This enrichment project addresses the following overall Grade 2 Ontario curriculum language expectations. The "reflect on" items will be explored in my one-on-one interview with each student at the end of the project.

Oral

1. Listen in order to understand and respond appropriately in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes.
2. Use speaking skills and strategies appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
3. Reflect on and identify their strengths as listeners and speakers, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful in oral communication situations.

Reading

1. Read and demonstrate understanding of a variety of literary, graphic, and informational texts, using a range of strategies to construct meaning.
2. Recognize a variety of text forms, text features, and stylistic elements and demonstrate understanding of how they help communicate meaning.
3. Use knowledge of words and cueing systems to read fluently.
4. Reflect on and identify their strengths as readers, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful before, during, and after reading.

Writing

1. Generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience.
2. Draft and revise their writing, using a variety of informational, literary, and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience.
3. Use editing, proofreading, and publishing skills and strategies, and knowledge of language conventions to correct errors, refine expression, and present their work effectively.
4. Reflect on and identify their strengths as writers, areas for improvement, and the strategies they found most helpful at different stages in the writing.

Media Literacy

1. Demonstrate an understanding of a variety of media texts.[4]

Links to Best Practice in Reading Instruction

The following points are derived from The Ontario Ministry of Education publication *A Guide to Effective Instruction in Reading: Kindergarten to Grade 3.*

The document states that independent reading:

1. allows students to practise and consolidate reading strategies;
2. fosters a positive attitude towards reading;
3. allows students to see themselves as confident, competent readers who can use a range of learned strategies to process text;
4. should occur daily in the classroom. The time dedicated to this activity should increase as students' ability to read attentively improves.[5]

The document says:

"In examining the thinking of proficient readers, researchers have identified seven thinking strategies consistently used by effective readers. These include:
   1. activating prior knowledge before, during and after reading;
   2. determining the most important ideas;
   3. asking questions of themselves, the author and the texts;
   4. visualizing and creating other sensory images;
   5. inferring;
   6. synthesizing; and
   7. using 'fix-up' strategies to repair comprehension."[6]

The document states that:

"To become fully literate in today's world, students must become proficient in the new literacies of ICT (Information and Communication Technology). Therefore, literacy educators have a responsibility to effectively integrate these technologies into the literacy curriculum in order to prepare students for the literacy future they deserve."[7]

This enrichment project addresses all three of these areas by:

1. providing opportunities for independent reading;
2. challenging students to engage in critical thinking, by answering questions about the readings and constructing a research project about a migratory species; and
3. provides opportunities for on line reading and research, through the educational web site *Journey North.*

Links to Best Practices in Writing Instruction

The following points are derived from The Ontario Ministry of Education publication *A Guide to Effective Instruction in Writing: Kindergarten to Grade 3.*

"Independent writing is used to give students the opportunity to:
1. understand and appreciate the importance of writing;
2. apply their knowledge and skills to write independently;
3. make independent choices about their writing – for example, about the topic or the publication format;
4. become confident about expressing their personal voice and ideas in writing;
5. develop skills related to each stage of the writing process."[8]

"The telecommunications capabilities of computer technology can play a key role in a writing program. At a very young age, many students have already become familiar with such capabilities as word processing, e-mail, teleconferencing, and the Internet. Use of these tools in the classroom introduces students to a global community of learners through a variety of highly motivational activities. For example, students can:
1. record their ideas on the computer;
2. communicate with peers;
3. participate in collaborative projects that offer authentic experiences in reading and writing;
4. send and receive authentic, personally relevant, real-time messages.
Through these and other uses of telecommunications, students can acquire knowledge and practise skills that contribute significantly to their development as writers."[9]

The Value of Non-fiction Reading and Writing

The Journey North Enrichment Project provides students with opportunities to engage in reading and writing non-fiction. The following passages describe the merits of these activities.

Nell Duke and Susan Bennett-Armistead state that, "Informational text is a type of non-fiction that conveys information about the natural or social world." They cite six reasons to use informational text in primary grades. It:

1. provides the key to success in later schooling;
2. prepares students to handle real-life reading;
3. appeals to readers' preferences;
4. addresses students' questions and interests;
5. builds knowledge of the natural and social world; and
6. boosts vocabulary and other kinds of literacy knowledge.[10]

The First Steps Writing Resource book says this about independent research projects:

> "Independent research projects provide a most effective vehicle for learning how to collect and organize information while providing meaningful on-task practice in using a range of writing and reading strategies and conventions."[11]

Boys' Literacy

Three-quarters of the students in my class and two-thirds of the students in the enrichment group are boys, so a mention of boys' literacy seems appropriate.

Statistics show a significant gap between girls and boys when it comes to performance on Ontario Grade 3 and 6 standardized literacy tests. In Grade 6, 14% more girls than boys achieve the provincial standard. These results are echoed in Canada-wide and international statistics.[12]

The Ontario Ministry of Education publication, *Me Read? No Way! A practical guide to improving boys' literacy skills* offers two strategies for success that are relevant to this project:

1. "Keep it Real: Making reading and writing relevant to boys. Boys will be deeply engaged in literacy when they are deeply engaged in the subject of the reading or writing task itself. Having boys explore real-world themes and issues – particularly, but not limited to, those that touch them personally – taps into their need for academic tasks to be purposeful, and meaningful to their lives."[13]

2. "Get the Net: Using technology to get boys interested in literacy. New information technologies – in particular, the Internet – present us not only with new forms of text, but also with opportunities to custom-tailor literacy activities to the interests, learning styles and motivations of boys. Information technology offers and important opportunity to fully engage boys in reading, writing and visual literacy."[14]

Teaching Non-fiction Writing

In the web article "How-To: Teach Literacy… Teaching Non-fiction Reading and Writing," Miriam Bissu offers the following advice:

> "In your shared writing lessons you want to demonstrate:
>
> 1. how you decide what is important;
> 2. how you organize your information;
> 3. that you address one topic at a time;
> 4. that you include illustrations, models, graphs, and charts to explain ideas;
> 5. how you stretch out words or copy them accurately from the text or vocabulary charts on display;
> 6. how you decide upon a format and maintain the format throughout the book."[15]

In his book, *Is That a Fact: Teaching Non-fiction Writing K-3*, author Tony Stead states that:

> "Schedules need to allow adequate time for children to engage in the process of writing non-fiction pieces. These engagements should not be one-day wonders but rather comprehensive units of study that will help the children learn from ongoing engagements."

> "Children need to be part of the decision-making process when selecting the content of what they wish to write about independently."

> "Clear expectation that all children can succeed must be made evident to all learners through positive feedback and constructive demonstrations." [16]

Tony Stead further defines two major categories of descriptive reports:

> "General descriptions – for example, reports on animals, plants, housing, machines, space, geographical features such as mountains, and so on"

> "Specific descriptions – for example, reports on a specific animal, plant, planet, mountain range, and so on" [17]

He goes on to describe the text structure of descriptive reports:

> "Descriptive reports usually begin with a title that identifies what if being described and continue with an opening, general statement or classification of the subject. They then include facts on the subject, which may be grouped through paragraphs and/or subheadings. They often conclude with summarizing comments." [18]

In their book, *Non-fiction Writing: Procedures and Reports*, authors Lucy Calkins and Laurie Pessah say:

> "When children write informational texts in which they teach others what they know about a topic, the most important help we can give involves setting children up to write a lot about one and then the other subtopic, addressing each subtopic on a separate page or in a separate section." [19]

In Nancy Lilly's web article "Dead or Alive: How Will Your Students' Non-fiction Arrive?" the author says:

> "… the skills that elevate fiction are the very skills needed to write strong non-fiction, including science writing."

> "… it became evident to me that the tools of the fiction writer – such as writing with voice, using strong verbs, showing rather than telling, and varying sentences – were also tools that should be used when writing in the content areas."

"As Ralph Fletcher says, '… good writing isn't produced by magic, but by learning to arrange particular words in a particular order to create a particular effect. Such writing doesn't have to be drab, dull, or unreadable… When we teach students these skills, we help them master a kind of writing that will be crucial as the continue to learn about the world around them." [20]

Laura Robb, author of *Non-fiction Writing from the Inside Out*, concurs. In a web interview, she says the following:

"Great non-fiction is not just a long list of facts. Creative writers take those facts and connect them to our lives – to our world. They use fiction writing techniques, too. Dialogue, similes and metaphors, strong verbs. They show readers. They don't tell readers what to think. There's one major difference though. Non-fiction must be accurate. The non-fiction writer is also a researcher." [21]

I will be applying the above principles, as I teach the students in my enrichment group how to research and write descriptive reports about the species they are tracking, and I will encourage them to use the same level of exciting and descriptive language in the journal entries and research reports that they strive to use in their fiction writing.

Methodology

I conducted a literature review of best practices for teaching non-fiction writing to young students. Then, using this research as a guide, I engaged the students identified for enrichment in five-week research projects, in which they participated independently whenever they had extra class time available to them.

Students required several small group sessions, during lunch hours, to learn the methodology they were to use to collect and organize data for their research reports and to provide me with regular progress reports. Since early April, all students in the class had been engaged in lessons about how to navigate the Journey North website, so students were already familiar with the format.

Components of the independent projects included: a research paper about a particular migratory species' characteristics; journal question responses and student summaries of Journey North migration reports; oral presentations to classes about the animal and its migration.

Additional Notes About the Primary Resource

Journey North (http://www.learner.org/jnorth) is the continent's premiere "citizen science" project for children, and is widely considered a best-practices model for education. I used Journey North as the cornerstone for a whole-class, cross-curricular

migration study of Whooping Cranes, at the school where I had my last long term occasional position. I also work as a volunteer for Journey North, providing its writers with classroom teacher feedback and other input, so I am very well acquainted with this web resource. The web site I created to showcase my class' Whooping Crane project is located at: http://sky.prohosting.com/mansterg/whoopers/

Journey North is used in more than 14,000 classrooms across North America. The site is currently tracking the northbound migration of several different species. Journey North provides background information, weekly tracking reports, journaling questions and other science and language-based learning activities, in an engaging, interactive and highly visual manner.

Project Timeline

April 21-29:   Review of literature regarding how to teach non-fiction writing to young students. Development of an annotated bibliography and teaching methodology.

April 23-27:   Observation of student behaviour, when regular school work is complete, prior to the start of the project.

April 23:   Entire class to complete the Grade Two reading exemplar assignment, to provide baseline data on reading competency.

April 25:   Entire class to complete the Grade Two writing exemplar assignment, to provide baseline data on writing competency.

April 30 – June 1: Students in the enrichment group engaged in individual projects. Throughout this period, I will be printing weekly migration reports for each student, and meeting with students regularly to provide tutorials and obtain project updates.

May 14 - 18:   Mid-project observation of student behaviour, when regular school work is complete.

June 4:   Entire class to complete the Grade Two reading exemplar assignment, to provide comparison data on reading competency.

June 5:   Interviews with students in the enrichment group regarding their feelings about the project.

June 6:   Entire class to complete the Grade Two writing exemplar assignment, to provide baseline data on writing competency.

June 7-17:   Project assessment and writing of final project report.

Materials Required

I needed:

1. print and web resources about teaching non-fiction writing to young students;
2. the Ontario Reading and Writing Exemplar Documents;
3. blank checklists with room for anecdotal notes re: student behaviour prior to and during the project;
4. a digital camera, for recording various aspects of the project;
5. survey forms on which to record student impressions of the project;
6. computer access for printing weekly migration reports and writing up project results.

Each student involved in the enrichment project also required:

1. access to extra computer time in the classroom or school computer lab. (which is located in the library) for research purposes;
2. weekly migration reports for his/her particular species. I will print these reports from Journey North and, on the hard copies, highlight the journal questions and other aspects of the reports that I would like him/her to explore, in independent study.
3. print and web resources pertaining to his/her species, for the completion of his/her research project;
4. a duo tang/pocket folder for organizing weekly tracking reports, hard copies of web resources, journal question responses and research notes;
5. pencils, paper and bristol board for the creation of student research projects.

Project Extensions and Next Steps

1. Since the beginning of April, our entire class spent 20 minutes per week in the school's computer lab., studying migration on the Journey North site as a teacher-directed activity. The class continued to do so. Students involved in the enrichment project were provided with extra computer time in our classroom and/or the school's computer lab., for the purpose of in depth study.

2. It was hoped that other students would be motivated by the involvement of their classmates in this enrichment project, and that this would encourage them to become more efficient at work completion. I had mini-enrichment projects available for such students and provided them with additional computer time on Journey North to enable them to complete these projects.

3. I discussed this enrichment project with Janet Houston, Teacher-Librarian at Rama Central P.S. She asked me to provide her with a project synopsis, so she could provide one-on-one and small-group research and computer support to the students involved, while I was working with the rest of the class.

4. On May 16, 2007, Jane Duden, Journey North's Gray Whale writer, featured our class in her final migration report of the season, discussing and depicting ways we can help to keep the whales' ocean habitat healthy. This exposure allowed all of my students to feel like part of the Journey North project team, even if they weren't part of the six-member enrichment group.
   http://www.learner.org/jnorth/gwhale/spring2007/Update051607.html

5. In June, our entire class will help Janet Houston plant a special garden on the school property, which will serve as a habitat and food source for one of the species in the migratory study: Monarch Butterflies.

6. The students in the enrichment group made weekly oral reports to our class re: migration progress for the species they studied. In mid-late June, I am planning to ask several teachers at our school if they would allow my enrichment students to make project presentations to their classes.

7. I discussed this project with Jackie Preston, Principal of Rama Central P.S. She was very excited about its potential as a template for enrichment projects in general, and asked me if I would present my findings at the school's May and June staff meetings. At the May staff meeting, I took the teaching staff for a tour of Journey North, via the school's computer lab. and introduced them to the enrichment project.

8. I e-mailed a copy of the project synopsis to Elizabeth Howard, Director of Journey North. Elizabeth, a scientist and educational writer, provided me with two lesson plans and an idea for outdoor observations, to provide the entire class with background information and first-hand experience re: why migration occurs.

9. Like Jackie Preston, Elizabeth Howard is excited about the potential of this project as an enrichment project template. She has invited me to share the project with other teachers across North America, by providing her with a project description, at the end of the process, for inclusion on the Journey North web site. Journey North is a very visual medium, so I will also be photographing students involved in various aspects of the project.

Permissions and Protecting Student Identity

1. I obtained permission from the parents of students involved in the enrichment project to share photographs of the project via the Journey North web site.

2. Each student in the enrichment project has chosen a different migratory species to research. To protect the identity of students, each are referred to by the name of the species he/she studied, instead of by his/her name. (For example, the student studying Whooping Crane migration, is referred to as "Whooping Crane.")

Most photographs of students were taken from above or behind the student, so his/her face cannot be easily identified.

Data Collection and Assessment

1. Throughout the project, there was ongoing assessment of, and adjustment to, the project procedure, in order to make the project as effective at delivering enrichment as possible. These assessments and adjustments were based upon observations and interviews with students. Anecdotal notes were used to record these data.

2. Final assessment of the project took three forms:

    a. From a practical standpoint: I recorded changes in the number of times per day the six students in the enrichment project came to me and said, "What do I do now?" when they were finished their regular work. I collected a week of data prior to the start of the project and a week of data during the project. I used a checklist and anecdotal notes to record these data.

    b. From an academic standpoint: I assessed whether the six students in the project gained more academically, in terms of reading and writing competency, than their classmates who were not involved in the enrichment project. To obtain this information, I had the entire class complete the Ontario Reading and Writing Exemplar exercises, for Grade 2, prior to and immediately following the five-week enrichment project. These data were assessed using rubrics and student work samples provided within the Ontario Exemplar documents.

    c. From a motivational standpoint: I assessed how students felt about the Journey North enrichment project. To collect these data, I constructed a series of questions about likes, dislikes, challenges and favourite aspects of the project, etc. At the end of the process, I used the questions as the basis for one-on-one interviews with students. I scribed student responses and then provided a written summary of the results.

Results

a. Pre-project "What should I do next?" Inquires
(Quantities = times per day the student asked the question)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wed-nesday	Thurs-day	Friday	**Weekly Total**	Notes:
Robin	Absent	Absent	1	2	2	5	After language &/or math
Bald Eagle	2	1	2	1	1	7	Primarily after math
Gray Whale	1	2	2	2	2	9	After language &/or math
Hummingbird	2	2	2	3	2	11	After language &/or math, science, etc.
Monarch Butterfly	1	1	2	2	1	7	Primarily after math
Whooping Crane	2	2	2	3	2	11	After language &/or math, science, etc.

Mid-project "What should I do next?" Inquires
Note: The question changed from "What should I do next?" to "Can I get my enrichment folder now?"

	Monday	Tuesday	Wed-nesday	Thurs-day	Friday	**Weekly Total**	Notes:
American Robin	1	1	0	2	1	5	Timing similar to above
Bald Eagle	1	1	1	2	2	7	"
Gray Whale	1	2	1	1	2	7	"
Hummingbird	2	2	1	2	1	8	"
Monarch Butterfly	1	1	2	1	2	7	"
Whooping Crane	2	2	2	2	1	9	"

(Scores = Achievement Levels; 3 represents the end-of-year Provincial Average)

b. **Reading Exemplar Scores**	Pre-test: Reasoning	Post-test: Reasoning	Pre-test: Communication	Post-test: Communication	Pre-test: Organization	Post-test: Organization	Pre-test: Conventions	Post-test: Conventions
Enrichment Group:								
American Robin	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
Bald Eagle	3	4	2	4	3	4	3	4
Gray Whale	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3
Hummingbird	4	3	3	4	3	4	3	3
Monarch Butterfly	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3
Whooping Crane	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3
Average Scores:	3.33	3.33	2.83	3.50	3.17	3.50	3.17	3.17
Control Group:								
A. F.	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3
A.G.	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2
B. C	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	2
B. J	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	3
C. W.	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	2
D. P.	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	3
H. R.	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	3
J. C.	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3
J. P.	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2
M. C.	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
M. P	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	3
M. R	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	2
R. M.	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
R. W.	3	3	3	4	4	4	3	3
S. N.	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3
Average Scores:	2.53	2.60	2.20	2.40	2.20	2.67	2.53	2.53

b. **Writing Exemplar Scores**	Pre-test: Reasoning	Post-test: Reasoning	Pre-test: Communication	Post-test: Communication	Pre-test: Organization	Post-test: Organization	Pre-test: Conventions	Post-test: Conventions
Enrichment Group:								
American Robin	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3
Bald Eagle	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Gray Whale	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Hummingbird	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4
Monarch Butterfly	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
Whooping Crane	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3
Average Scores:	3.33	3.33	3.33	3.16	3.16	3.33	2.83	3.33
Control Group:								
A. F.	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3
A.G.	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	2
B. C	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	3
B. J	4	3	4	3	3	2	2	3
C. W.	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	2
D. P.	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2
H. R.	3	3	4	3	3	4	4	3
J. C.	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2
J. P.	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	2
M. C.	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
M. P	2	4	2	3	2	3	2	3
M. R	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	2
R. M.	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	3
R. W.	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
S. N.	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2
Average Scores:	2.40	2.67	2.46	2.60	2.33	2.67	2.53	2.53

c. <u>Attitudinal Interview</u>

1. What was the hardest part of the enrichment project? Why?

American Robin	"Trying to figure out where to go on Journey North, because there are all different sections."
Bald Eagle	"The journal questions are hard. I couldn't get enough computer time or help from Mrs. Black."
Gray Whale	"I had to figure out some hard words; I had to sound them out."
Hummingbird	"Looking up stuff and writing jot notes for the research project."
Monarch Butterfly	"The jot notes for my project, because you have to look up lots of information."
Whooping Crane	"Drawing the illustrations for my project, because I couldn't draw a map."

2. What was the easiest part? Why?

American Robin	"Drawing pictures for the research project."
Bald Eagle	"Reading all the information, because I am a good reader."
Gray Whale	"Finding things on Journey North, because Mrs. Black taught me first… we had practice before the project started."
Hummingbird	"Illustrating my research project, because I'm a good artist."
Monarch Butterfly	"Doing the journal questions, because they're just little questions."
Whooping Crane	"Going on line and finding my stuff. Journey North is easy to do after you have practice."

3. What part of the enrichment project did you enjoy the most? Why?

American Robin	"Answering the weekly journal questions."
Bald Eagle	"Going on the computer and seeing the baby eagles, because they're really cute. I like the pictures on Journey North."
Gray Whale	"Getting to draw pictures of Gray Whales and seeing animal pictures on Journey North."
Hummingbird	"Explaining 'why' in the journal questions… because I like explaining things. It makes me feel smart."
Monarch Butterfly	"The slide shows, because they have cool pictures."
Whooping Crane	"Going on line and finding out about the new babies, because they're really cute."

4. What part did you enjoy the least? Why?

American Robin	"I liked all of it."
Bald Eagle	"I like all of it."
Gray Whale	"Sometimes I had to do my enrichment project when I wanted to play."
Hummingbird	"Nothing. I liked it all."
Monarch Butterfly	"I liked everything!"
Whooping Crane	"Not being able to get computer time every time I needed it."

5. Overall, was the enrichment project a good experience? Why or why not?

American Robin	"Yes, because I got to learn about nature."
Bald Eagle	"Yes. It was really fun learning about the Bald Eagle."
Gray Whale	"Yes, because I got to explore and learn so many things. The pictures on Journey North made it almost like being there!"
Hummingbird	"Yes, because it was fun. I'd like to do it again."
Monarch Butterfly	"Yes, because I didn't know that much about Monarch Butterflies."
Whooping Crane	"Yes, because I like birds."

6. If someone offered you the opportunity to do something like this again, what would you say? Why?

American Robin	"Yes, because I like learning about migration and how you can help animals not go extinct."
Bald Eagle	"Yes, because it seemed really fun the first time, so I'd want to do it again."
Gray Whale	"YES!!… because I'd get to learn more new stuff!"
Hummingbird	"Yes, because I'm always trying to think of what to do after I finish my work."
Monarch Butterfly	"No, because I've learned enough about Monarch Butterflies. I might say yes to another animal, though."
Whooping Crane	"Yes, because I like to learn about animals."

7. If you could change something about the project, what would it be? Why?

American Robin	"I would research a different animal: the caribou."
Bald Eagle	"Easier journal questions. I don't know much about maps."
Gray Whale	"More computer time, because they weren't always available."
Hummingbird	"More computer time. I liked the rest the way it is."
Monarch Butterfly	"I wouldn't do it every day. I'd do it Monday, Wednesday and Friday, because I'd like days off."
Whooping Crane	"I would like to study other animals: bears, woodpeckers, chipmunks, squirrels and deer."

8. Will you continue to visit Journey North, on your own, in the future? Why or why not?

American Robin	"Yes… to check for new animals and to learn about where animals like the butterflies are."
Bald Eagle	"Yes. I'd like to learn more about Bald Eagles and also about the other animals."
Gray Whale	"Yes, because I get to see so much stuff and learn so much stuff!"
Hummingbird	"Yes, because I want to learn about other animals."
Monarch Butterfly	"Yes… to look at other animals."
Whooping Crane	"Yes, to find out more information about Whooping Cranes."

Analysis

Ongoing procedural analysis

By the mid-point in the five-week project, I noted two procedural issues that required adjustment:

a. Students were not quite as independent as hoped at interpreting and completing their weekly journal assignments. I believe this is was function of their young age (Grade 2). I compensated for this problem by making a point of scheduling brief meetings with students at the beginning of each week to ensure that they understood what was required vis a vis the week's journal question(s), and where to look for resources. This way, students could move directly into journaling assignments when they were finished with other work, without having to consult me further.

Scholastic Publishing. 6 Reasons to Use Informational Text in Primary Grades. Available at: http://content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp? id=4483 Accessed April 22, 2007
This article is based on the book "Reading and Writing Informational Text in the Primary Grades." The article provides six reasons why teachers should expose their students to informational text, early in their school careers.

Scholastic Publishing. 1-on-1 with a Leading Reading Instruction Expert: Laura Robb. Available at: http://content.scholastic.com/browse /article.jsp?id=4490
This article is the transcript of an interview with author Laura Robb. In the article Ms. Robb discusses her book, "Non-fiction from the Inside Out." The interview is engaging and interesting, with lots of practical advice for educators who teach writing to young children.

<u>Appendices</u>

1. Location of Journey North Educational Website: http://www.learner.org/jnorth

2. "What Should I Do Next" Tracking and Anecdotal Note Sheet
    See attachment: Appendix-2.jpg

3. Reading Exemplar Document for Grade 2
    I was unable to find a link to this document on the Ministry website, so I have scanned and attached a copy of the rubric and readings from my copy of the Reading Exemplar book.
    See attachments: Appendix-3a.jpg, Appendix-3b.jpg, Appendix-3c.jpg, Appendix-3d.jpg

4. Reading Exemplar Student Worksheets
    See attachment: Appendix-4.pdf

5. Writing Exemplar Document for Grade 2
    http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/writing18ex.pdf
    http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/elementary/task18.pdf

6. Writing Exemplar Student Worksheets
    See attachment: Appendix-6.pdf

7. Attitudinal Survey Questionnaire
    See Attachment: Appendix-7.doc