



Social Studies VISION



February, 2015

Volume 17, Issue 2

GEOGRAPHY — **CIVICS** — **HISTORY** — **ECONOMICS**



Gunston participants in the final round of the Geography Bee with Eli Posner, grade 8 as the champ.



Glebe's first, second, and third place Geography Bee winners.



ATS students compete in the final round of the Geography Bee.

Consider this...

Formative Assessment: Bridging Today's Lesson to Tomorrow's

The research is clear... what teachers do in their classroom matters. Based on an extensive meta-analysis study, formative assessment has been identified as one of the most influential practices to improving student learning (Hattie 2012). Formative assessment is the process used by teachers during instruction to gauge student learning to inform teaching. Here are some top formative assessment practices that can be incorporated into effective classroom routines.

Randomly choose students

The goal here is to spread questions through the classroom allowing the teacher to better gauge what students know while holding all students accountable for participation. While many understand the benefits of this idea, selecting students at random can be difficult. There are various options of randomizing devices. Interactive whiteboards have randomizers built into the software, randomizers can be downloaded from the Internet, there are smartphone apps for randomizing, and, of course, there's the tried and true randomizer system - popsicle sticks in a can. Another tip related to randomly calling on students is to ask the questions BEFORE calling on the student. In a class where randomized calling is the norm, this strategy will have all students thinking about the question in the event they are called on.

Pause during questioning

Also known as wait time, pausing during questioning allows students time to process information, transferring ideas from their short-term to long-term memory. There are various techniques for soliciting student feedback that builds in wait time. Turn-and-talk, think-pair-share, and polling for opinions are all ways to provide wait time needed to increase participation and gauge student understanding. By implementing wait time regularly teachers differentiate for a heterogeneous classroom of language learners, students with special needs, and student with different learning styles.

Look for patterns in answers

Teachers who are effective at utilizing formative assessments look for patterns in their students' work to inform classroom instruction and move students along the learning continuum. For instance, how students respond on their exit tickets can guide the planning of the next lesson. If exit tickets are submitted anonymously, the teacher can gauge and address the most common misconceptions from the class.

Consider this...cont.

Formative Assessments

If, however, students write their names on the exit tickets, then the teacher can group students for the beginning of the next lesson, either by grouping students with significant misunderstandings at one table and working with them while the rest of the class work on an extension activity or by creating mixed-ability groups so students can compare responses and help each other.

Make feedback user-friendly

Caroline Thompson (2014) points out that to realize the power of formative feedback, its aim should be to illicit a cognitive student response, not an emotional one. Thus instead of generic praise or critics, it is more productive to share with students their next steps in that student's learning process based on goals that are clear to the teacher and student. This results in differentiated feedback that focuses on aspects of a student's skill set that move them to their next level of development.

Best used, formative assessment is an ongoing, regular evaluation of student learning. By increasing the student engagement and thereby the feedback to the teacher, student learning can be optimized.



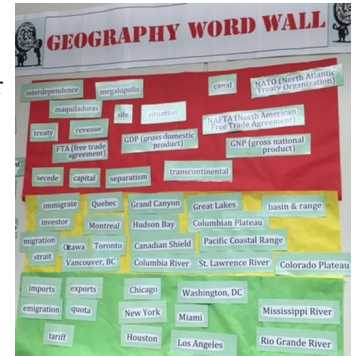
Washington-Lee's IB Anthropology Class visit the Islamic Cultural Center in Washington, DC.

Differentiation Corner

Building Academic Fluency: Teaching Mortar Words

Teaching “Brick” and “Mortar” words are an essential practice in developing academic language. “Brick” words are the key content vocabulary. “Mortar” words are general academic words that are common in everyday communication and used across disciplines. They are utility words that hold the “brick” words together. Students’ academic language improve when teachers: (1) intentionally include the teaching of brick and mortar words; (2) repeatedly expose students to brick and mortar words; (3) regularly utilize word-learning strategies to help students use brick and mortar words.

Here are some ideas for teaching mortar words:



- Have students use a mortar word glossary as a reference guide, include it in their notebooks.
- Highlight the brick and mortar words within a reading passage or on test items.
- Teach new words using the following code: need to know words (RED), good to know (YELLOW), and nice to know (GREEN) as seen in the photo.
- Define important mortar words. Highlight mortar words in your power points.
- Apply the mortar words within an everyday context.
- Have students practice brick and mortar vocabulary using oral or written language in the context of the lesson (turn and talk, sentence frames, journal entries, warm-up responses, exit tickets, vocabulary journals).
- Stagger the mortar word instruction over the course of the year. For instance, if you have a list of twenty mortar words you want to cover, introduce five words per quarter.

Thanks to *Chrissy Steury of W-L* and *Maureen Nolan of Thomas Jefferson* for sharing their work on mortar words



Improving Student Motivation

What turns kids onto learning? In her research on motivation and her book *Mindset: the New Psychology of Success*, Carol Dweck reveals the psychological barriers to students' academic success. Dweck found that students who doubt their abilities or question whether students of their background belong in a course often fail or fall behind in school irrespective of their intelligence or the quality of teaching.

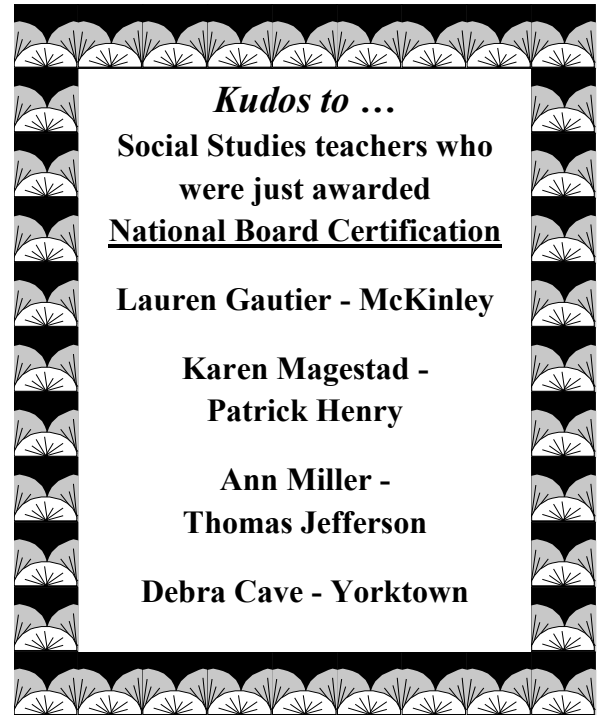
However, her research also found that fortifying students with the core belief of a "growth mindset" can help students achieve. The message behind a growth mindset is that "you have the capacity to be great *if* you work hard." Thus potential for achievement is based on *work* with the understanding that the mind can *grow*. A growth mindset emphasizes that potential for achievement is not based on being smart or not, an idea that the mind is fixed. Here are some suggestions for cultivating a growth mindset classroom and thereby increasing student motivation.

Do's:

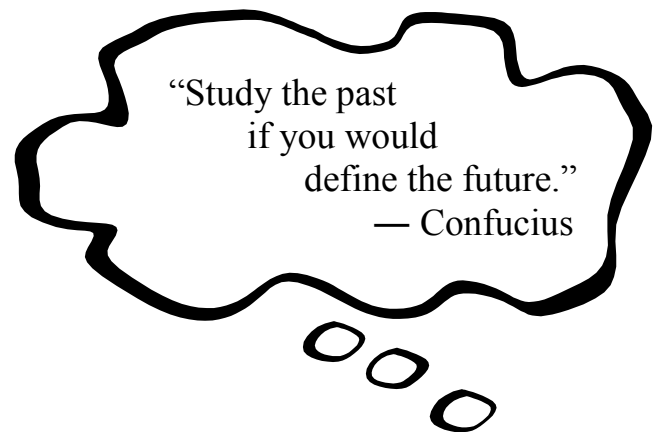
- Notice students' good efforts and strategies and praise them (particularly if they take on a challenging task).
- Be specific about the praised behaviors and reinforce this behavior with your feedback.
- Use praise to link the outcomes of an assignment to students' efforts.
- Talk explicitly and in detail about the strategies a student has used. Comment on which strategies were helpful, and which were not.
- Ask a student to explain his or her work to you.

Don'ts:

- Don't offer praise for trivial accomplishments or weak efforts.
- Don't let a student feel ashamed of learning difficulties. Instead, treat each challenge as an opportunity for learning.
- Don't say, "You are so smart." in response to good work. Instead, praise the work a student has done, (e.g., "Your argument is very clear;" or "Your homework is very accurate.")



Thought of the Month:





The Third Annual **Festival of the Minds**- a week of professional learning for APS K-12 educators, will run June 23-26, 2015. A one-day overview of History Alive! will be offered at this conference.

Check out the [APS weblink](#) for information on registration and proposal submission.

HISTORY ALIVE!/SOCIAL STUDIES ALIVE! Level I Institute will run from August 17-21, 2015 at the Syphax Education Center here in Arlington. This course is designed to provide teachers with a powerful instructional approach to keep social studies engaging, relevant, and challenging as well as to address the need for differentiation in the diverse classroom. Course participants must attend ALL five days of the institute. Contact the Social Studies Office if you are interested in registering.

The National Lincoln Oratory Festival invites 3rd-8th Grade classrooms to study a speech by Abraham Lincoln, explore what President Lincoln's words means to them, and share their ideas with Ford's Theatre via a classroom video performance of the speech. Registration and contact information can be found at the [Ford's Theatre Website](#).



Virginia Historical Society –teacher and student awards. These awards recognize teachers and students who have made an impact on history education.

Visit VHS's website for information on how to nominate a teacher or student. All materials are due by May 29, 2015.

National Conference on Geographic Education, August 6 - 9, 2015 in Washington DC. NCGE's annual meeting will be celebrating it's 100th anniversary this year. [Visit NCGE's website](#) to submit a session proposal today or check back soon for registration information.



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE
Humanities

NEH Summer Seminars for Teachers

Each year, NEH offers tuition-free opportunities for teachers to study a variety of humanities topics. Stipends of \$1,200-\$3,900 help cover expenses for these one- to five-week programs. Click [here](#) for the list of topics and locations.

One of NEH's programs will be **The Long Road from Brown: School Desegregation in Virginia.**

Teachers grade 6-12 are invited to participate in one-week summer workshops on school desegregation in Virginia, following the historic Brown v. Board of Education decision. Teachers will interact with leading scholars in the field, visit historic sites and archives, and will discuss curricular and teaching techniques related to this subject.

Workshop Dates: July 13-July 17, 2015 or July 27-July 31, 2015.

Application deadline: March 2, 2015.

Additional information on the workshops and application information can be found on this [link](#).

[Summer Institutes - The Library of Congress](#)

Each institute week, LOC education specialists offer sessions modeling strategies for using primary sources to engage students and help them build critical thinking skills and construct knowledge. Review the [summer institute syllabus](#).



Open sessions (any subject area):

June 22-26, July 6 -10, or July 27- 31

Civil rights focus: August 3 -7

Supreme Court Summer Institute, presented by the Supreme Court Historical Society & Street Law, Inc., is a six-day program where teachers exam case studies of recent Supreme Court cases with leading experts, visit the Court to hear decisions, and participate in various sessions that will help teachers expand their knowledge and learn new methods for teaching about the Supreme Court of the United States.

Click [here](#) for complete details and application information.



NEWS YOU CAN USE, cont.

Summer Institute on International Affairs for High School Educators

is hosted by the World Affairs Council in Washington, DC and will be offered June 22-26, 2015. This week long seminar looks at the role of the U.S. in the world and features expert speakers who facilitate discussions on foreign policy issues. More details can be found at the [WAC-DC's site](#).



The Civil War Washington Teacher Fellows

is a free summer professional development opportunity that focuses Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, and the city of Washington, DC during the Civil War. This weeklong program includes workshops, materials, lunches and a dinner on Sunday evening. Registration information can be found at the [Ford's Theatre Web-site](#). Free for qualifying DC Area Teachers and runs from June 21-26, 2015. Applications are due by April 3, 2015.



The Story of Virginia Teachers Institute will be offered June 29-July 3 and July 20-24 by the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond. The course provides an overview of Virginia history as participants work with VHS staff and outside experts through lectures, workshops, readings and interactive gallery activities. Participants receive teaching materials, textbooks and lunches for free. Applications will soon be available on the [Virginia Historical Society's website](#).

Web Tools

Beyond the Bubble is a website developed by the Stanford History Education Group that unlocks the vast digital archive of the Library of Congress to create a new generation of history assessments.

<https://beyondthebubble.stanford.edu/>

Kahoot.com – a game based classroom response system. Create and play quizzes, discussions or even surveys (called Kahoots) using any device with a web browser, including a laptop, iPad, iPhone, iPod, Android, Chromebook, Windows Phone or PC.

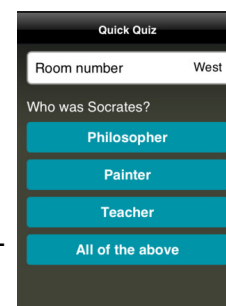
<https://getkahoot.com/>

Today'sMeet – is a backchannel platform. The backchannel is the conversation that goes on alongside the primary activity, presentation, or discussion. A backchannel allows teachers and students to use the live stream to make comments, ask questions, and use that feedback to tailor the presentation.

<https://todaysmeet.com/>

Socrative – is a simple, dynamic online student response system that can help teachers spark conversation and learning through user-created polls and quizzes. With digital polling and quizzing, it offers teachers a quick and comprehensive way to gather formative feedback from their students.

<http://www.socrative.com/>



Quizlet – is an application for digital flashcards. Users can create and upload custom sets of flashcards and then review those flashcards on demand. Flashcard sets in Quizlet can be reviewed in three ways: Students can flip through their sets in the Cards view, play a game in the Match view, or type in the “back” of a card through the Learn view.

<http://quizlet.com/>

History Comes Alive Through Field Trips, Community Nights, and in the Classroom



Here 2nd grade teacher **Eric Sokolove** serves as a guide to students & families at **Carling Springs Social Studies Night**.



It's 1607, and Virginia Indians of **McKinley** gather to discuss and prepare to debate what should be done about the new English settlers who've arrived on our shores.

Photo taken in **Lauren Gautier's** 4th grade class.

W-L students in **Wendy Taylor's** EPF and AP World Geo classes present their team's development plan to the City Council on how to revitalize the city of Elmwood. The City Council awards the contract to the team of students who presents the most comprehensive vision and responsive plan.

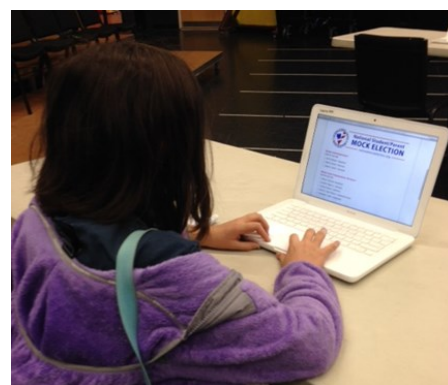


Hoffman-Boston 1st Graders participate in - "1st Kid for a Day." In this program, offered by the White House Historical Association, students dress up and role play what it would be like to be the son or daughter of the President of the United States.



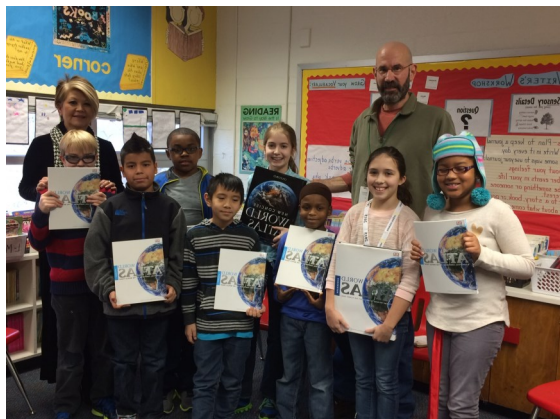
Hoffman-Boston 4th graders participate in the "Paths to Freedom" program. Students travel to the Decatur House in DC where they dress up as the members of President Lincoln's cabinet as well as other major characters at a White House New Year's Eve Party on the night of the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation.

Students from all grade levels of **Kenmore Middle School** participated in the National Student Parent Mock Election again this year. After first registering to vote one week, students returned on October 28th to cast their ballot for Virginia's senators and representatives in the U.S. Congress—just like the real election held at the start of November.



Geography Bee

It's that time of the year when students across the nation Grades 4 to 8 compete in the National Geographic Bee. Throughout this issue we've included a sampling of school Geography Bees across held across APS.



Abingdon's Geography Bee led by **Steve Morse** and the winner is **Isabel Ramon**.



Final round contestants and alternates at **Arlington Science Focus School** relax at the end of the competition.

ates at **Arlington Science Focus School** relax at the end of the competition.



Drew contestants stand for a round of applause as they complete the school competition.



Barcroft final round contestant proudly pose with their certificates.



Long Branch's Geography Bee school champion, **Sassan Fiske** poses with Social Studies lead teacher **Ms. Mitchell**.

Patrick Henry's 2015 school Geo Bee champion, **Finn Loughney** shows his medal.



Tuckahoe students participate in the final round competition.

Geography Bee, cont.



Taylor's School champion is Henry Bedell (right). Also pictured is 2nd place winner Sarah Bender-Prouty. Third place Nicholas Bollman.



Congratulations to **Jamtown's** Geography Bee champion.

Congrats to Kevin Farrell **Williamsburg's** Geo Bee Winner! Third 6th Grade winner in WMS history!



Swanson's school champion, Michael Farrel-Rosen.



Kenmore's Geo Bee winner, Eli Sampson.



Arlington Science Focus winner is William Graf.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to all the APS Geography Bee School Champions.

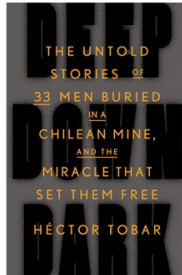
- Abingdon—Isabel Ramon
- Arlington Science Focus—William Graf
- Barcroft—Andrew Rogers
- Drew—Ethan Smart
- Glebe—Elizabeth Marcus
- Henry—Finn Loughney
- Kenmore—Eli Sampson
- Long Branch—Sassan Fiske
- Taylor—Henry Bedell
- Swanson—Michael Farrel-Rosen
- Williamsburg—Kevin Farrell

Teachers are you looking for a good book?

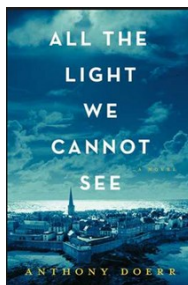


Check out these Social Studies reads

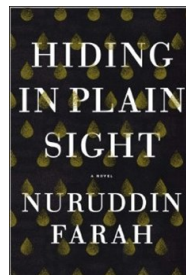
Deep Down Dark: The Untold Stories of 33 Men Buried in a Chilean Mine, and the Miracle That Set Them Free by Hector Tobar is the story of the much-covered 2010 story of 33 Chilean miners trapped underground for 69 days. Tobar layers the purely uplifting version of the men's ordeal in his book and captures the most inspiring aspect of the miners' behavior—their almost immediate decision to act in solidarity.



All the Light We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr is a National Book Award finalist and tells a story about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.



Hiding in Plain Sight by acclaim African writer Nuruddin Farah is a novel about freedom, family, and loyalty. While it opens like a thriller, the book is actually a sensitive story about living in the shadow of grief, learning to forgive and exploring the question, “What does it mean to be Somali in today’s world?”



Getting to know SOCIAL STUDIES LEAD TEACHERS

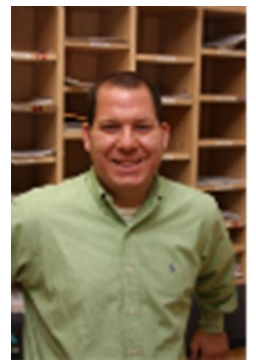
Jeff D'Onofrio is excited to begin his second year teaching 6th grade U.S. History at Thomas **Jefferson Middle School**. Jeff studied Political Science before getting his M.Ed. at The George Washington University. Jeff loves living in Arlington with his wife and two cats, Bennie and The Jet.



This is **Carolyn Crumpler's** fifth year teaching at **H-B Woodlawn**. She came to HBW right after graduating from the University of Virginia with her Masters in Teaching. She is currently teaching World History, Ancient Civilizations, and English 9, which she started two years ago as a course to pair literature with her World History content. Originally from North Carolina, she loves to travel south to visit family and friends (and get some good Southern cooking!)



Eric Sokolove has taught at **Carlin Springs** for ten years. Prior he taught in D.C. Public Schools as a Teach for America corps member and worked as an analyst at the U.S. Department of Education. Eric loves teaching social studies and working with his colleagues to help connect social studies instruction to the lives of each student. He lives in Alexandria with his wife (a school counselor) and 2 kids (both in elementary school, where he serves on the PTA Board), so a LOT of his time is spent in schools!



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