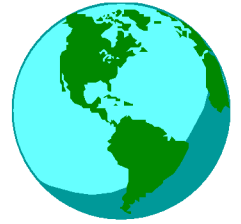




Social Studies VISION



February 2017

Volume 19, Issue 2

GEOGRAPHY

CIVICS

HISTORY

ECONOMICS



Barcroft's Geo Bee school champion relishes his win.



Barret's Geo Bee Champ has the whole world in her hands!



How is an unequal tug of war like the American Revolutionary War? ATS 4th graders participate in an experiential tug of war to find out.

***Consider This...* Building a Student Centered Classroom**

The very students who sit our classrooms today will become the citizens, leaders, caretakers, and innovators of our world in the 21st century. In their video *Shift Happens*, Karl Fisch and Scott McLeod describe the 21st century world as “exponential.” With increasing connectivity, information, and world population growing exponentially, our world has shifted drastically and will continue to do so in the future. How do we best prepare students for the world that doesn't yet exist? Part of the answer rests in a classroom environment that moves away from the traditional teacher-centered model to one that is more student-centered. A student-centered classroom is one where the cognitive load is pushed onto students as they are more engaged and invested in their learning. Here are five questions that can help develop and refine teacher strengths needed for building a student-centered classroom.

1. **Personalization:** To what extent are all students doing the same thing at the same time? Students enter the classroom with a wide range of skills, experiences, and background knowledge. Differentiation involves tailoring instruction to meet individual student needs thereby allowing teachers to meet each student where they are and move all students forward. Leading expert on differentiation Carol Tomilson (2000) states, “whether teachers differentiate content, process, product, or learning environment, the use of ongoing assessment and flexible grouping makes this a successful approach to instruction.” Through the Collaborative Learning Teams, teachers can design and share differentiated lessons. For example, **Williamsburg 6th grade** teachers share their work on how they used technology to differentiate how content is accessed by students. They also developed a set of anchor activities that allows for student choice in the products they create to demonstrate comprehension and creativity. Read more about their work around differentiation and access these resources in this issue's Differentiation Corner. In addition, check out the differentiation resources available on Blackboard.
2. **Flexible Groups:** How does student grouping promote student interaction? Student collaboration is a mainstay of a student-centered environment. To promote maximum learning, students should move frequently among groups according to their specific needs. Flexible grouping is an effective way to meet the academic, social, and emotional

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Differentiation Corner

Integrating Technology to Create Student Center Classrooms

By Sara Winter, Patricia Carlson, Aaron Tagert, and Larry Peacock, 6th grade Social Studies Teachers, Williamsburg Middle School

Many educators would agree that when it comes to 21st-century learning, having a student-centered classroom is certainly a best practice. What tools and resource do we have in place to build these environments? As a group of 6th grade social studies teachers at Williamsburg, we have found technology to be a powerful way to differenti-

ate **content**, **process**, and **product** in an effort to cultivate student centered classrooms. This article shares some of our great finds during this process.



Content: When considering content, we start with the knowledge and skills students will learn by addressing the essential knowledge, enduring understanding, vocabulary, the standards and the power standards (to identify priority for re-teaching). We learned that in Google Classroom, teachers can assign different materials to different students. This allows for content differentiation like assigning leveled readings or varied primary sources to analyze. In a recent Performance Assessment Task, students were given different levels of primary sources, different requirements, and shown different examples.

Process: Teacher can also use technology to differentiate the process. Process is about how students will be making sense of and understanding the material. These activities should engage learners and help students apply the information they have learned. Processing activities should also allow time for students to reflect before moving on. We have used Quizziz



(www.quizziz.com) to differentiate process by creating in-class or homework tasks where students are able to work at their own pace. Teachers can control the timer and settings. Quizziz offers detailed reports of student learning which can be used in conferencing with students on their learning goals and determining needed strengthening or extensions. Other great technology for differentiating processing are NearPod/Peardeck. These apps and websites allow teachers to create custom presentations and control devices through a teacher access panel. These provide a good way to vary processing activities and allow in class reflection and discussion. Students can submit responses that can be displayed to the class anonymously and serve as jumping off points for discussion. Both are effective platforms to engage students digitally. For example, when teaching students to analyze primary sources of the American Revolution, students were able to digitally annotate and share political cartoons. These annotations were then displayed to the class and a discussion followed.

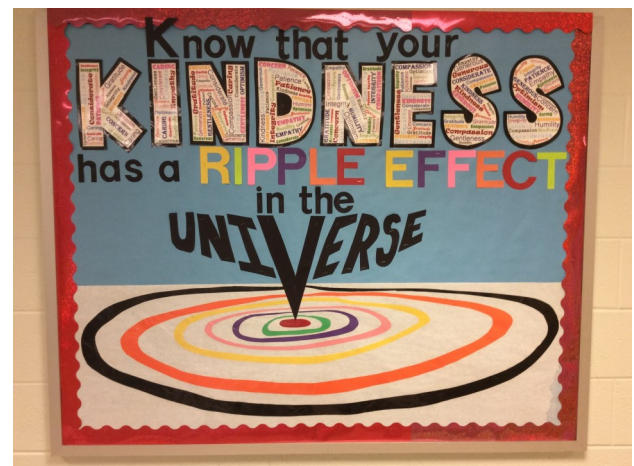
Product: Finally, technology can be used to differentiate student product. Products are often summative assessments which should range in complexity and demonstrate what the student has learned. Products can offer choice and varying formats to meet the needs of all learners. Rubrics should match these varied skills. Guided by the standards



and identified power standards, our 6th grade CLT collaborated to create a digital learning menu of anchor activities that can apply to any unit. Anchor activities can be used to differentiate process and product based on student readiness, interest, or learning profile. Anchor activities give students time to conduct independent research, explore a concept in greater depth, and enrich their skill development. Scan the QR code to check out our example. All products found here can be accessed and created digitally.

We hope these technologies will be useful to fellow social studies teacher and their CLTs on their journey to created more student centered classrooms.

Scan URL for digital learning menu of anchor



Congratulations to the Geography Bee Champions!

Abingdon: Peter Boersterling

ASFS: Abuali Masalimov

ATS: Daniel Meyer

Barcroft: Luka Curcic

Barrett: Mariam McClure

Drew: Krishnan Shankar

Glebe: Ally Bass

Henry: Claire Wiley

Jamestown: Jacob Bowen-Glazeroff

Long Branch—Keelin McCarty

McKinley—Jack Felice

Nottingham—John Voight

Tuckahoe—Conor McGinty

Gunston—Theo Bush

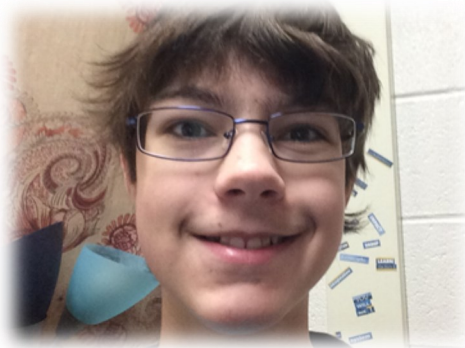
Jefferson—Gregor Deininger

Swanson—Matthew Carey

Williamsburg—Evan Barrie



Congratulations Conor on being **Tuckahoe's** Geo Bee winner. Here he stands with Mr. Pascal, Tuckahoe principal.



Swanson's Geo Bee school champion.



Congratulations to **Long Branches'** Geo Bee Winner!



Gunston's Geo Bee Champion.



After a tight competition John wins **Nottingham's** School Geography Bee.



ATS Geo Bee winner stands with Ms. Meranama, Social Studies Lead Teacher.

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.



Barrett's Geo Bee finalists and champion.



Taylor Elementary School's Geo Bee Champion and runner up.



Williamsburg Geo Bee winner smiles with Principal Laurie.



Principal Turner stands proudly with Henry Elementary School Geography Bee champion



Science Focus students stand proud after finishing their school Geo Bee competition.



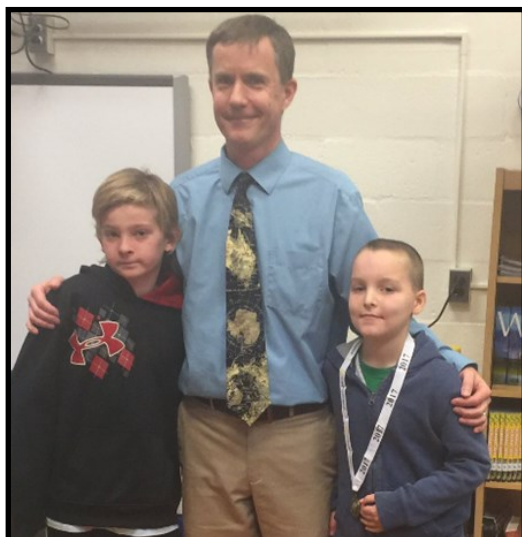
Jefferson's Bee Champ.



Nottingham Knights Geography Bee Finalists stand proudly with their certificates.

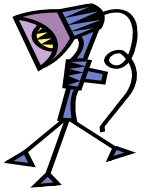


Drew Elementary's Geo Bee Champion and runner up pose proudly with their certificates.



Jamestown's 2nd place and 1st place winners of the school Geo Bee stand with 4th grade teacher, Mr. Donovan.

Strategy Spotlight



Our Strategy

Spotlight is on Student Facilitated Discussions, a student discussion strategy that provides an encouraging, open-minded environment with minimal teacher intervention.

Daniel Moses of W-L runs Student Facilitated Discussions regularly with his intensified World History classes. We visited Dan's class to capture a [Student Facilitated Discussion in action](#) and spoke with Dan about this technique.

(1) How did you come to use this method with your students?

I began doing student facilitated Harkness discussions with my students years ago when teaching in Chicago, then in DC. I became disenchanted with many of my class discussions that seemed to essentially be me giving my opinions or asking probing questions and then hoping the students would take things from there. My AP World History class seemed like the natural place to try something new and take a risk.

(2) What do you see as the greatest benefit to student facilitated discussions?

The greatest benefit is that students have to take primary and secondary sources and discuss them in a professional way without the filter of a teacher explanation. It really lends itself well to truly organic advanced historical thinking and allows students to take a greater ownership over their own classroom.

(3) What tips would you share with a teacher wanting to try this with their students?

- ◇ First, it can be a bit scary to turn over the reins of instruction to the students so try it out first in a class that has lots of strong class leadership and innovative thinkers.
- ◇ Make sure you have your laptop giving the students feedback and making suggestions about where to take the class discussion.
- ◇ Make sure to give students a primary source of some sort that allows them to reflect on the class discussion topic and give them a thought-provoking question to begin with.
- ◇ Be sure to have a strong class leader who can facilitate the conversation on your behalf.
- ◇ If it doesn't work, don't be scared to try again. Make every single student responsible for participating.

As seen in [the video](#), Student Facilitated Discussions have many benefits to student learning. It increases on-task peer interaction, it builds academic confidence and supports critical reading and inquiry. By putting students at the center of their learning, they are challenged to be more inclusive of one another and take more ownership of their discussion.

History Comes Alive!



H-B Woodlawn Sociology students learn about social networks.



Wakefield students create the French Revolution story boards in World History.



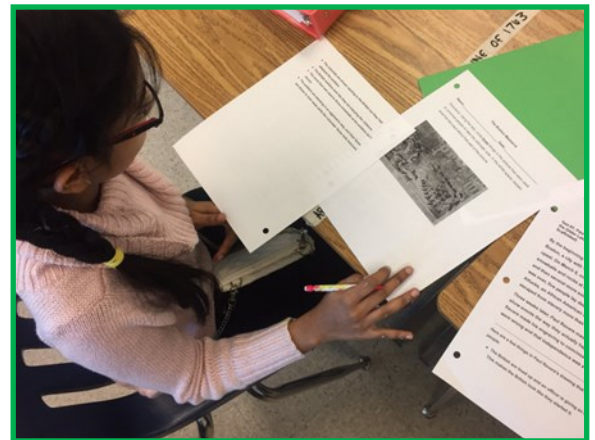
Gunston 8th graders apply economic and demographic concepts as they design authentic Shark Tank pitches to potential funders.



Barrett 4th graders take on different roles in this board game they learn about the economics of Colonial Virginia.



Budding cartographers at **McKinley** design their floor maps of the United States' physical features.



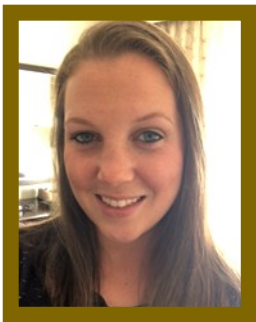
Gunston 6th graders analyze Paul Revere's depiction of the Boston Massacre and ask the question, do you always trust the news you read?"



APS teachers vote with their feet and form a human bar graph at our December Social Studies Alive! Training.

**GET TO KNOW
APS SOCIAL STUDIES LEAD TEACHERS**

Meg Enriquez, a native Arlingtonian, is in her 6th year teaching at **Key Elementary School**. She is a Special Education Teacher who works with Students in both 4th and 5th grades. She graduated from George Mason University with an undergraduate degree in Social Work and continued on to get her Masters in Special Education. Through her work with students, she loves learning more about all of the cultures that help to diversify Arlington! Teaching is not just a passion but is also in her genes, as her mom, Laurie Shaw, is a long-time APS teacher currently teaching 3rd grade at Abingdon.



Mary Kell is in her second year of teaching 7th grade at **Gunston Middle School**. Originally from Chambersburg, PA, Mary came to Virginia to teach in Prince William County Schools in 2010 and taught Civics and Economics there for five years. Mary holds a bachelor's degree in history and political science from the University of Pittsburgh and a Master of Arts in Teaching, also from Pitt. In her spare time Mary enjoys cooking, hiking, and visiting Virginia wineries. She likes spending time with local friends and exploring the rich history of this area.



Ricky House is a 2012 graduate of the University of Pittsburgh where he received his Bachelor of Arts in History and Political Science. In 2013 he graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with his Master of Arts in Teaching Degree. This is his second year in Arlington County and at **Gunston Middle School**. He previously was a team leader and 8th grade social studies teacher in Anne Arundel County, MD. Ricky enjoys skiing, tennis, and rollerblading and spending time with his labradoodle Zoey.



He is originally from Harrisburg PA and is a diehard Steelers and Pitt Panther fan!

Barbara Watkins is the IB Coordinator at **Randolph Elementary**. She began teaching at Randolph in 2004-2005 as a PDS intern from George Mason University. After her internships, she was hired as a second grade teacher at Randolph. Prior to teaching, Ms. Watkins worked in sports marketing for 4.5 years and in the Senate for 1.5 years. Ms. Watkins obtained her Bachelor's Degree from Drury University in Springfield, Missouri, and her Master's Degree in Education from George Mason University. In her free time, Ms. Watkins enjoys obstacle course racing, running, tennis, reading, hiking, cooking and lifting weights. She completed her first Spartan Race in August.



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