

Language Arts Lesson Two

I-Search Paper

An I-Search Paper allows students to explore an area of interest using traditional methods of inquiry and incorporating aspects of interviewing primary sources. Students write up the results as an anecdotal record, along with the traditional formats of citing resources.

Also used in this lesson is the list-group-label activity. This is an excellent instructional technique for reviewing vocabulary/key terms. This technique promotes critical thinking skills by having the students first brainstorm all related terms for a concept, and then asking them to classify and label the categories of words.

Objectives:

- Students will use information that may have been covered in science classes to formulate a research question about a topic of interest.
- Students will use the research process to explore a science-related topic.
- NEVADA ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARD: 4, 6, 7, 11

Time: One or two class periods for introduction, with out-of-class time for investigation.

Materials:

- Access to library media center
- Water conservation notes/information from this unit
- Access to computer lab

Procedures:

1. As a class, brainstorm all the terms/key words students can think of that are relevant to water conservation issues.
2. In groups, have students group like terms and label the groups from the whole-class brainstorm. Each group should prepare a list of these terms. Type and distribute the list of terms to all students.
3. Introduce the I-Search Paper, telling students that they are to research an area of interest related to water conservation while finding a primary source to interview.

4. Incorporate staggered due dates for the following aspects of the I-Search paper:
 - Choosing/selecting a topic
 - Gathering print/electronic sources
 - Pinpointing and contacting a primary source to interview
 - Developing interview questions
 - Rough draft of paper
 - Final draft of paper
 - Oral / Media presentation (optional)

5. Have students make presentations of their final reports as a completion of the writing process through publishing.