Enhancing Learning in Social Studies through Games

7 June 2013
Scope of Sharing

- Social Studies Department – Area of Concern
- Choice of Professional Development Tool
  - Lesson Study
- Lesson Study Cycle:
  - Planning, Research Lesson, Post-Research Activities (main sharing)
- Benefits of LS

Da Qiao Primary School
A Learning Community Committed to Excellence
Areas of concern (AOC)

Teachers teaching Social Studies realized that:

• students lack interest and find the subject boring

• our mode of instruction is always the same – teacher centered
Theoretical underpinnings

The Research lesson is based on the theory of constructivism.

- people construct their own understanding and knowledge through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences

Atherton J S (2011) *Learning and Teaching; Constructivism in learning*
We decided to

- collaborate and work as a team
- plan an engaging lesson
- infuse cooperative learning strategies in the lesson
Lesson Study @ Da Qiao

- a tool for teachers’ professional development

- a very powerful way to bring teachers together to structure and organize their thinking about teaching and learning practices.

Professional Development process

Helps improve teachers’ instructions

Work Collaboratively
Lesson Study @ Da Qiao

Lesson Study is not about creating the perfect lesson. It is about increasing our capacity to learn from:

- colleagues
- students
- curriculum & research

Catherine Lewis Mills College
Lesson Study Group
Lesson Study Cycle @ DQPS

Planning Phase
- Identify long-term goals
- Choose content area & unit
- Plan the research lesson

Research Lesson
- Teach the research lesson
- Observe and collect data

Post-Lesson Activities
- Post-lesson discussion
- Share and analyze data collected
- Consolidation of learning
- Refinements to the research lesson

Adapted from Catherine C. Lewis
Lesson Study: A handbook of Teacher-Led Instructional Change

Da Qiao Primary School
A Learning Community Committed to Excellence
Social Studies Department

Focus

We want our students to

- be active and committed citizens
- enjoy their Social Studies lessons
21st Century Competencies and Desired Student Outcomes

Values such as Respect and Tolerance and the importance of Social Cohesion

Students will know the tradition, food, culture and beliefs of the other ethnic groups in Singapore. They would be able to communicate their answers to their peers.

Develop care and concern for others through respecting their beliefs and traditions. Establish positive relationships with peers through the activities,
The Research Lesson
Da Qiao’s Research Theme:
To inculcate a spirit of lifelong learning so as to develop creative and innovative thinkers committed to excellence.

Research Lesson Theme:
To engage students in a creative based learning so as to promote creativity and instil a greater sense of appreciation towards different cultures and traditions.
Research Class

- Primary 4
- 40 students comprising of all races
- High and Middle ability students
- Research teacher : Mrs Guna
Research Lesson Planning Questions

1. What do students currently understand about this topic?
2. What do we want them to understand at the end of the unit?
3. What will make the unit motivating and meaningful to students?
4. Which lesson in the unit will be selected as the research lesson?
5. What will students need to know before this lesson?
Research Lesson

The topic of ‘Settlers from other Parts of the World’ is dealt with in the Primary 4 syllabus.

- A board game was created to infuse content key points.
- Students were expected to tap on their prior knowledge about the cultures and beliefs of the various ethnic groups in Singapore.
Research Lesson Objectives

- Pupils will be able to:
  - Explain the importance of maintaining racial harmony and social cohesion in Singapore
  - Explain the key factors that promote racial harmony in Singapore
  - Familiarize themselves with the cultures, practices and tradition of the different ethnic groups.
CL Strategies Used

Think-Pair-Square and Think-Pair-Share

- develop students’ oral communication and social skills
- promote students’ self-esteem and positive race relations
What was being observed during the research lesson

- Students’ discussion related to the content during Think-pair square
- Engagement level of students during:
  - Class discussions and group discussions
What was being observed during the research lesson

- Challenges faced by students in playing the board game
  - were the instructions to the game clear?
  - were the questions asked in the game clear?
- Students’ ability to connect their prior knowledge with the past and current issues

Lesson Observation check list
Research Lesson

- Lesson plan
- Activity sheet
Mrs. Guna writing students’ responses to the question: Name the various ethnic groups in Singapore.

- Races
  - Chinese
  - Malay
  - Indians
  - Eurasians
  - Caucasians
- Multiracial
  - Japanese
  - Filipinos
  - Indonesians
  - Koreans
  - Europ
Pupils engaged in Think-Pair Square for Activity 1
All the races have different:

- beliefs
- traditional clothes
- food

Activity 1
Think-Pair-Square
Similarities: All the races have one common language

Social Studies @ DQPS
Think-Pair-Square
Customs and Practices of the various races in Singapore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names: Jackson</th>
<th>Ignatious</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class: 4A3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarities</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) They have local languages</td>
<td>1) All the races have different beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) They have different kinds of ethnic food</td>
<td>2) They have different kinds of clothes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) They have different kinds</td>
<td>3) They have different kinds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Presentation done by each team after the think-pair session.
Students sharing their discussion notes
Mrs Guna explaining the rules of the game
Students playing Harmony-O-Poly
Post-Research Activities

- Post-conference dialogue
- Reflection by the teachers on the research lesson
- Re-teaching of the research lesson
- Documentation to show evidence of students’ learning
Research Lesson: Post - Observation

Tuning-in Activity

- Responses were forthcoming
- Attitudes and values were observed
- Dynamics of each group allowed for in-depth discussion during Think-Pair-Square.
Activity 1: Think-pair-square

- Shared their experiences and beliefs with the peers
  - Within the groups, pupils showed respect for one another

- Learning environment
Reflection

- Scaffolding to differentiate instructions
  - Change questioning technique for high progress learners
  - To build on students’ responses
  - More guided questions for the low progress learners
- Memory game (vocabulary building)
  - for low progress students
- Situational Interest Survey
  - Positive feedback
Reflection on board game

• Use game board as a diagnostic kit

• Realized that there was a gap in prior knowledge: Eurasian community

• Use the game to test on students learning after teaching the topic

• Design a check list to record the number of questions students answered correctly
Reflection on board game

- Improvement to the game:
  - Rules to the game needs improvement
  - Clearer printing of words on the cards

- Time allocation
Benefits of our Lesson Study Cycle

- Lesson study embodies many of the features of high quality professional development
- It involves teachers in active learning about content and is driven by data and goals
- Helps teachers learn to observe & critique
- Reduces teacher isolation and increases collaboration
Benefits of our Lesson Study Cycle

- Deepens teachers’ understanding of content and curricular scope and sequence
- Broadens students’ knowledge of the cultures, practices and tradition of the different ethnic groups in Singapore
- Motivates pupils to learn the content.
Challenges Faced

- Getting teachers to meet – though we have common discussion time, teachers were teaching different levels.
  - Arrangement for relief teachers
  - On-line discussions

- Designing a game that is not too complicated and time consuming to play.
Challenges Faced

- Crafting questions that matches students’ content knowledge.
- “Professional Arguments” about what strategies would work and what wouldn’t
Insights to Lesson Study

- Provided better understanding of students’ need.
- Pupil-focused looks into the learning process of the pupils.
- Confidence to move away from our traditional mode of instruction.
- Allowed teachers to enhance teaching strategies and pedagogies.
A dish prepared by any of the races:

A Ketupat is prepared by the Malays during Hari Raya.

A traditional game:

The top. A circle is first drawn on the floor. A string is wound round the base of the top. The player then throws the top into the circle, holding onto the loose end of the string. The player whose top spins the longest is the winner.

A wedding:

A Eurasian wedding by Eurasians.

A traditional costume:

Kebaya is worn by Malays when they visit their relatives during Hari Raya or regularly.
Our Multi-Racial Society

For draw things that you have learnt about our multi-racial each box.

A dish prepared by any of the races:
The roti pratas are made from Indians.
roti - prata

A traditional game:
chapteh
How to play:
By feet - take the chapteh near your feet. Drop the chapteh and kick it with your feet.

A wedding:
The Europeans exchanging of the rings on their weddings.

A traditional costume:
The Chinese females wear qipao on Chinese New Year.

Our Multi-Racial Society
I want to learn more about Europeans, Japanese and Korea etc. I want to learn about the other races besides Malay, Chinese, Indian.

By: D. Priyadharshini 2C
12/2/11
Do caucasians have a mother tongue?

D. Keerthi Wasan
I would like you to explain more about the Eurasians! And more learning!
I learnt that five stones is a Malay traditional game.
The Chinese culture is the most interesting thing that I’ve learnt. The Chinese game I learnt is Chinese chess.
"...I learnt that during [the Indian] wedding, they put this thing called ‘thali’ around their neck"
Modified Game

Harmony-O-Poly

Designed by Mrs. Sherly & Mrs. Sun
National Education & Social Studies Department
Modified Game

HARMONY
This card may be kept until needed.
You're out of.

COSTUME
Hijab/Tudung
Name the headgear worn by Muslim ladies/girls.

CULTURE
Hari Raya
This wedding attire is typically worn by which race in Singapore?

HARMONY CARD
Malay
Every recess you sit with a group of friends of different race.
Move 1 step forward.

THREAT CARD
You saw a girl trip and fall but you did not help her because she was of a different race.
Move 3 steps back.

Equipment
1. Game board,
2. 12 x 4 sets of Question Cards,
3. 12 Harmony Cards,
4. 12 Threat Cards,
5. 'Get Out of Jail' card,
6. Dice, 4 tokens.

Objective of the game
To answer as many questions about Multicultural Singapore to advance and reach the "Start" point again.

The Play
1. All tokens rest in the "Start" space to begin the game.
2. Turn player will roll the dice and move their token according to the number rolled.
3. Depending on the colour and category indicated on the space that you have landed, pick a question card from the respective category.
4. Read the question aloud and answer the question.
5. The other players will check the answer which can be found on the back of the card.
6. If the answer is incorrect, stay in the space.
7. If the answer is correct, move in the space.
8. If player lands on a "Harmony" or "Threat" space, draw the respective card from their stocks. The player may advance or retreat depending on the instruction on the card picked.
9. If you land on a "Go to Jail" space, you can use the "Get out of Jail" card to get you out, or roll a '6' on the dice at your next turn. If you don't have a "Get out of Jail" card or you don't roll a '6', you will miss a turn. After the third missed turn, you can resume the game.
10. The winner is the first person to return to the "Start" space.
THANK YOU
Acknowledgement

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• All staff of Da Qiao Primary School