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Evaluating Thematic Units to Build Reformed Worldview

Abstract

This descriptive study researched the benefits of implementing thematic units as an effective curricular approach to aid in developing and opening the minds of students, parents, teachers, and administration to the possibilities of kingdom transformation and kingdom discipleship. More importantly, this paper focused on the creation of evaluation rubrics in aiding schools in fulfilling their mission statements.

The literature review examined three things: research on the benefits of using an integrated curriculum, background information on Reformed thinking on education, and information on the use of rubrics and school accountability concerning worldview development.

The results found that thematic units are a teaching strategy that creates a dynamic curriculum. Thematic units will challenge teachers to rethink curriculum from a view of curriculum as a "static list of facts" to be learned or topics to be mastered to a curriculum where students will see the wholeness of God's creation and gain a clearer vision of Reformed worldview and an awareness of and a better understanding of living lives of kingdom discipleship.

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Evaluating Thematic Units to Build Reformed Worldview

By

James M. Schuller

B.A. Dordt College, 1984
M.A. National University, 2006

Thesis
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Education

Department of Education
Dordt College
Sioux Center, Iowa
September 2006

Evaluation of Thematic Units to Build

Reformed Worldview

By

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I would also like to thank Jeanette Romkema, professor of Thematic Units at Dordt College for pushing me out of the box and into the world of thematic instruction. She has been my soul mate through this process, her comments aided in the direction of the project, and I value her timely emails, her energy, abundant knowledge, fair criticisms, and her willingness to share my tears and fears, and allowing me to vent when frustrated.

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Abstract

This descriptive study researched the benefits of implementing thematic units as an effective curricular approach to aid in developing and opening the minds of students, parents, teachers, and administration to the possibilities of kingdom transformation and kingdom discipleship. More importantly, this paper focused on the creation of evaluation rubrics in aiding schools in fulfilling their mission statements.

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INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Thematic Units are instructional units designed to teach a theme by integrating activities from all curricular areas such as mathematics, social studies, science, and language. Through thematic units teachers can implement strategies that create a dynamic curriculum, one that will challenge the school community to rethink curriculum. Schools that instruct through thematic units will be able to transcend disciplines that will allow students to integrate information and topics within the full range of human experience. Although not a new way of looking at teaching, thematic units have received a great amount of attention in many educational settings. Many academic publications not only see the importance of thematic units but also comply with the demand of educators by providing resources for instruction. Beyond the afore mentioned reasons, it is my thesis that thematic units can lead students to a better understanding of a Reformed worldview and open students' minds to the possibilities of kingdom transformation and kingdom discipleship.

Statement of the Problem

Many Christian schools have failed to stay true to their mission statements. Teacher in-service training, offered by many schools, promotes a Reformed worldview of education, but teachers may not be fulfilling the vision in the classroom. The number of students entering Reformed Christian colleges without a foundation in a Reformed worldview is growing. Schools continue to allocate money for staff development and even though scores on standardized subject area tests for many schools are improving, it is questionable if students have a better understanding of living lives of kingdom service.

Christian schools may excel in the area of academics but they must not fall short when the question is asked, "Do students truly understand their connection to God's creation?" Students must see that all creation has been ruined by sin, and they must understand their calling to transform this world into what God intended the world to be. Vision statements do a fine job of defining the purpose of a Reformed worldview in education, but the vision must be put into practice. The message must be taught in the classroom and reflected in the lives of the students. The assumption must not be made that if the classroom is filled with children from Christian homes with church-going parents the students will develop a Reformed worldview. Nor will a Reformed worldview necessarily develop if the teachers set good examples in the classroom and create an atmosphere of love and morality. The Christian school must be more than a factory beginning with devotions and then moving on to business as usual, teaching and allowing intellectualism, positivism (the teaching of facts), and individualism to reign. The Christian school must not become nothing more than a good private school.

Many Christian educators argue that schools need to reconsider their practices because today's schools are not adequately presenting the Reformed worldview of education to their students. One factor contributing to this failure is the widespread reliance on standardized testing to measure student achievement. Schools using this process can only interpret test results at the conclusion of the unit. Schools then compare how students performed in comparison to other students, but the standardized testing results do not give a clear picture of the vision the school hopes to instill in each student. Schools may continue to use these norm-referenced tests in certain areas; they are helpful when

analyzing and modifying instructional programs or providing interventions for individual students. However, norm referenced tests do not identify what teaching strategies work best to show what methods of instruction support the Reformed vision of the school.

Another factor contributing to Christian schools inadequate inculcating of the Reformed view of education is the superficiality "or "dumbing down" of results in what many students actually do learn (Eisner, 1994). Reformed thinking about any subject requires a depth of perception. However, national assessments show that 40% of high school seniors, though able to state opinions clearly in writing, have great difficulty when needing to include adequate evidence in support of their opinions. Similarly, while most students can comprehend simple written messages, more complex works seem to baffle them. Appraisals of student knowledge in many core classes reveal reasonable amounts of awareness of content but lack of depth to this knowledge (Eisner, 1994). Students are unable to connect the content from various disciplines into a cohesive framework, and of course a Reformed view of education seeks to provide the student with exactly that, a cohesive framework.

A third factor contributing to the Christian schools' failure to effectively live up to their Reformed mission statements is the effect of the typical contemporary school environment. The traditional environment breaks up the school day into fixed 45 minute or hour periods with each period presenting a discrete subject. The problem is that the subjects generally have no obvious connections to each other. This structuring of education into disconnected units does little to mimic the natural manner in which humans learn. Schools using the traditional process have become fixed and sometimes dull. The process creates an institutional environment where educators are held captive

by time and their creativity is stifled. One would ask why the school environment is designed within such a fragmented context (Schoolrenewal, 2004).

In summation: Can the use of thematic units help overcome the adverse factors of over-reliance on standardized testing, satisfaction with superficial results, and the effect of the fragmented educational environment, and thus enable Christian schools to better fulfill their mission statements?

Research Questions

The following research questions form the framework for this thesis.

1. What is a Reformed worldview in the classroom?
2. What are thematic units?
3. What are the advantages of using thematic units in attaining a Reformed worldview?
4. How can thematic units aid in developing Reformed world view development?
5. What instruments can administration, teachers, students, and parents use to ensure that Reformed education resonates in the classroom and beyond and see the value of thematic units?

Description of Terms

The following definitions were used to ensure clarity and consistency throughout the thesis.

Assessment – Assessment is a comprehensive description of student work within the unit. Assessment reveals what is intended to be evaluated in the unit, how the teacher evaluates the unit, and when evaluation should occur.

Curriculum – Curriculum is the programs of instruction within a school. The curriculum contains two elements: what will be taught and how the subject will be taught.

Integrated Curriculum – Integrated curriculum is education organized in such a way that the lesson cuts across subject lines, bringing together various aspects of the curriculum into meaningful association to focus upon broad areas of study.

Reformed Worldview- Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper stated: There is not one square inch of creation not belonging to Christ. God is the ruler and creator of all (Swanson, 2001). God created a good and perfect world which sin has broken. Christians with a Reformed worldview, seeking closer union with God, struggle daily to alter this fallen world and transform its structures so that it reflects the biblical norms God has established.

Targeted Understanding - Targeted understanding refers to the main assumptions upon which the unit is based. The targeted understanding serves as the rationale for the time and effort committed to this unit.

Thematic Statement – The thematic statement identifies the interconnections between unit content**,** rationale for a particular worldview, and the organizational focus.

Thematic Units – Thematic Units are designed to teach a theme, by integrating activities from all curricular areas such as mathematics, social studies, science, and language.

Webbing – Webbing is using a theme as a base for instruction in various disciplines, allowing students to see an intricate web of connections between disciplines.

Worldview –Worldview is one's basic beliefs about life and reality.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to provide instruments for teachers, administrators, parents, and students to review thematic units and materials to ensure that a Reformed worldview is heard, understood, and reflected upon by students. By implementing thematic units schools will be more able to become conduits of shalom where God's mercy is taught in the classroom, and students have a better understanding of how to bring God's grace to a hurting and disconnected world.

Significance of Study

This study is of relevance to all in the field of education who wish to implement a Reformed worldview of education into the classroom. These include college or university administrators, elementary and secondary administrators, and elementary and secondary educators. The findings of this study should serve as a catalyst to influence educators to review their current curriculum practices concerning thematic instruction to create an effective avenue for the development of a Reformed worldview. The goals of this project are: 1) define a Reformed worldview of education; 2) provide an understanding of thematic units; 3) list advantages of using thematic instruction in developing a Reformed worldview; 4) discuss how thematic instruction aids in developing a Reformed worldview; 5) provide rubrics and lesson evaluation instruments

to aid teachers, administrators, parents, and students in seeing that use of thematic instruction will aid students in gaining a better understanding of a Reformed worldview.

Summary

As social and economic conditions change, and political climates alter, schools need to make adjustments to accommodate changing conditions. But the purpose of Christian education does not conform to societal changes. The material taught may change, but the vision is always to remain constant. By implementing thematic units, students will gain a better understanding of God's perfect creation, the effects of sin on all creation, the power of Christ's redemption, and the call into kingdom service.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

What Reformed Education Is

Classroom activities continue to be where students are introduced to Bible stories and material is presented to students about Christian living, but students are not asked to reflect upon nor act upon their worldview framework. One way for schools to offer the opportunity is through thematic or integrated instruction. Schools using thematic instruction need to adopt methods of teaching and evaluation calling for all within the school community to reflect upon whether the unit is consistent with and instills in students the motivation to develop and act upon their Reformed worldview. This means by the time students reach the 12th grade, they need to understand their calling in the world. Thematic instruction will provide educators with the opportunity to display sin and its destructiveness and to call students to be transforming agents in this sinful world. Properly constructed thematic units will open a child's mind to the connectedness of creation and the calling into kingdom service. Through community evaluation and reflection on the unit the entire school community will see and become more aware of the connectedness of all the elements of God's creation and become better prepared to understand the connectedness between the lessons taught, its Christian worldview, and the need to act.

A Reformed perspective begins with the sovereign God. Only if the perspective begins with God will schools be able to plot a truthful course that is both objective and meaningful (Fennema, 2005).

A Reformed perspective of education believes that children did not evolve; God created them. He knows each one by name and calls each one to be a mirror of God

himself, by being obedient to him. All children are unique, with different personalities, developmental stages, learning styles, and ways of processing information. But sin has polluted all creation, and children will walk in their own self-determined way (Fennema, 2005).

Abraham Kuyper's famous saying is there not one square inch of creation that does not belong to Christ is the anchor of a Reformed worldview (Swanson, 2001). God is the ruler and creator of all. God created a good and perfect world that sin has broken. The entire fallen world must therefore be scrutinized because of God's grace. Teachers need to understand that there is a huge U shaped flow of traffic between God and the people of God. God pours out grace and glory among the people who work and then give the harvest right back to God (Plantinga, 2002). Christians, seeking closer union with God, struggle daily to alter the condition of this fallen world and its structures in order to bring shalom. Shalom is the restoration of peace and justice, but more than that, the condition where peace brings delight in right relationships with God, with self, with fellow humans, and with nature (Wells, 2004).

Reformed Christians need to hate what is evil and cling to what is good; however, at times believers cannot tell where the evil stops and the good begins. Christian education must open students to the knowledge, skills, and virtues that will serve God's kingdom of light. Schools must teach students the difference between darkness and light and help them find their way through the shadows lying between the two. To carry out this battle, teachers need the power of the Holy Spirit and the love of Christ in order to join hands and forces to battle for good in the world. There will be struggling and fighting and

dying, but through the power of the resurrection and ascension, all creation returns back to God (Plantinga, 2002).

Nevertheless, the question remains, how can schools best implement and lead students to a better understanding of a Reformed worldview? In a Reformed perspective of education, teachers are not mere transmitters of information filling empty bodies with academic facts to attain marketable skills. Each lesson must aid students in seeing the connectedness of God's creation, the destruction sin has caused in this creation, and the call to students into service to heal the brokenness caused by sin. Thematic instruction allows teachers, teaching from a Reformed perspective of education, to be conduits of peace, allowing God's grace to flow through them to his children. Thematic units can open students' minds to becoming instruments of change – transforming and bringing healing to a broken and disconnected world. The theme must direct learning and nurture children towards daily unfolding and seeking God's kingdom (Vander Aark, 1995). (See Appendix C for a list of possible themes).

Schools, implementing a Reformed perspective on education and defining the perspective as truly Christian, must look at their goals and objectives. The teaching must bring redemption to the educational process. Goals and objectives must be clearly stated and evaluated, thus ensuring students are guided into knowledgeable and competent discipleship. The ultimate purpose of education for every lesson is to learn the will of God and then to prepare the student for servant hood in a broken world. Before the instructor transfers this process to the student for discipleship, the teacher must be confident and firmly committed to this process, and not deviate. (Van Brummelen, 1998).

Reformed education must allow students to be aware of the world around them. Teachers must realize on this journey they guide students into communal learning where all members of a team are seeking and pursuing the goal of kingdom redemption. Reformed education is not intended to knock sense into students, and the intent must not be to provide students with the knowledge so they can make more money, to have a better career, or to climb higher on the social ladder (Nouwen, 1971). If schooling only provides students with marketable skills and good moral behavior, then the school has lost its distinctiveness. By being distinctive in their approach Christian schools will call their students to do great things in the world, great things according to God's glory. Students must believe they can bring something to the Kingdom of God, and God will take what they bring and do more than anybody could ask or imagine (Plantiga, 2001).

Conducting all aspects of academic life before the face of God has been the calling of Reformed education (Byker, 2005). Dutch theologian, Abraham Kuyper, spoke to this in 1880, when he stated: "No single piece of our mental world is to be hermetically sealed off from the rest, and there is not one square inch in our entire domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry: Mine!" (as cited in Byker, 2005, p. 22). Secular theories on children find their answers within the world itself. A Reformed perspective has a more objective vantage point – the sovereign God. Only if the perspective begins with God will schools be able to plot a truthful course that is both objective and meaningful. Through thematic units, teachers will offer an education that is bigger, bolder, and more hopeful. Through thematic instruction educators can better portray the problems of sin and can open the window for students to see that nothing in creation is unredeemable and no creature is beyond the grasp of

Christ's grace (Byker, 2005). Through the implementation of thematic units, teachers must look at their goals and objectives. The purpose of teaching must be to bring redemption to the educational process. All the goals and objectives, of the unit, must be stated and evaluated to ensure the ultimate purpose of education being, leading students into knowledgeable and competent discipleship (Abma & Van Eek Abma, 2005). Thematic units follow the premise that all disciplines will be taught through the lens of Scripture. Thematic units will show the connections of creation, the destruction of sin on all creation; and they will allow students to see the world as ordained by God. Then students will be able to perform their calling and work at transforming God's world (Byker, 2005).

Review of Literature

In order for students to become effective constructors of meaning, they must learn to understand the differences in resources available. Thematic units make possible the opportunity to arrange several subjects together to help students transfer different skills to construct meaning. Students learn skills by practicing skills. By using thematic units teachers have the possibility to scaffold instruction and gradually shift the responsibility for learning to the students (White, 1995). Teachers can provide heavier academic support and can model the expected outcomes for students. Teachers allow students to take control and model what they are learning while still under the teachers' guidance and coaching. Finally, students use the last section of the unit to model and apply what they have learned. By encountering several subject areas during a unit, students get repeated modeling using the same strategies and skills through application across the disciplines (Eisner, 1994).

Thematic units help to account for the concepts of schema theory and prior knowledge. By having related, focused material, students are able to build connections and relationships about a given theme, which is how they develop prior knowledge and use the theme to construct meaning (Romkema, 1999).

The research related to thematic instruction centers on three major categories, which overlap to some extent. According to Fogarty (1990), the largest bodies of literature regarding thematic teaching are descriptions of thematic units or other types of integrated curricula and explanations of implementation in the classroom. Most units are grade specific and integrate two or three content areas. Many sources consider thematic instruction from the historical perspective, looking at the core curriculum movement and other educational innovations while other sources address why thematic instruction is important to education. Fogarty (1990) further explains that many articles cite brain research and its relationship to learning and many also describe current and future educational and societal conditions requiring a thematic perspective. Fogarty's findings describe many definitions for thematic units. *Integrated units*, *interdisciplinary teaching*, *thematic instruction*, *cross curricular* and *synergetic teaching* are all terms used in defining thematic units. Fogarty also says that schools seem to go through two levels of integration when developing thematic units. The first is integration of the language arts; the second occurs when a much broader theme begins to encompass all curricular areas.

The idea of curriculum integration can be traced to the reforms of the 1930s, specifically to John Dewey's discussion of meaningful learning. The period of Progressive Education argued that the teachers need to build classrooms around the principles of continuity and integration (Dewey, 1938). Later, Bruner (1960) argued for

the centrality of meaning and the building of a spiral curriculum where students visited and revisited core ideas. Even when the back-to-basics movement gained strength during the 70s and early 80s, teachers grappled with ways to connect those basics with students' lives and raised questions about what they saw as a growing fragmentation of curriculum (Freeman, 2004). The subject of curriculum integration has been under discussion for the last half-century, with a resurgence occurring over the past decade. The explosion of knowledge, the increase of state mandates related to a myriad of issues, fragmented teaching schedules, concerns about curriculum relevancy, and a lack of connections and relationships have all been cited as reasons for a move towards an integrated curriculum (Jacobs, 1989). Many teachers have felt the frustration of workload and time constraints; every year more is added to the existing curriculum. This feeling of frustration is one of the motivations behind the development of integrated curriculum (Lake, 2003).

As schools move away from teaching isolated facts toward a more thematic view of learning, schools must provide students with in-depth knowledge of subjects. This view finds its basis in the work of Piaget, Dewey, and Bruner who hold a holistic view of learning. Each of these theorists is concerned with children having an understanding of concepts and underlying structures (Lake, 2003). The movement towards thematic instruction is a move away from memorization and recitation of isolated facts and figures to more meaningful concepts and the connections between concepts. Thematic units provide a way to support goals of learning, teaching students to think and to reason. Thematic units provide a curriculum more relevant to students (eduplace, 2004).

Rebecca Lukens defines thematic units as a significant truth expressed in appropriate elements and memorable language. The significant truth is an element that is essential to

turn a simple narrative into meaning. This truth, according to Lukens, goes beyond any story and comments on human beings. Each theme offers broad possibilities for developing students' conceptual understanding in concert with building skills (as cited in Schlick –Noe, 1997). A further definition is offered by Jeanette Romkema (1999) when she states that thematic units are instructional units designed to teach a theme by integrating activities from all curricular areas such as mathematics, social studies, science, and language. She encourages linking skills and knowledge across disciplines.

Shoemaker (1989) further defines thematic instruction as education organized in such a way that instruction cuts across subject matter lines, bringing together various aspects of the curriculum into meaningful association to focus upon broad areas of study. Shoemaker views the learning and teaching in a holistic way and reflects upon the real world, which is interactive.

Dressel (1958) goes beyond the linking of subject areas and calls thematic instruction the creation of a model for understanding the world. Through thematic instruction planned learning experiences provide the learners with a unified view of commonly held knowledge (by learning models, systems, and structures of the culture) and also motivate learners to perceive new relationships and thus create models, systems, and structures.

These definitions of thematic units support the view that thematic units are an educational approach that prepares children for lifelong learning. An effective thematic unit will create a web of intricately connected relationships and meanings that raise teachers and students to higher levels of thinking, feeling, and understanding. Long after specific facts are gone, students will still carry the deepest meanings in their minds and hearts (Lake, 2003). In general, all the definitions of thematic instruction include using a

combination of subjects, emphasizing projects, using sources beyond textbooks, developing relationships among concepts, using thematic units as organizing principles, and allowing teachers to utilize flexible schedules along with flexible student grouping (Lake, 2003). Many authors have gone beyond a single definition of thematic instruction to a continuum of integration. Fogarty (1990) has described ten levels of curricular integration. See Appendix A for a summary of her work.

Others involved with the implementation of thematic units have supported Fogarty's work. These differentiations may move from two teachers teaching the same topic but in their own separate classes to a team design of thematic units, to interdisciplinary courses, to a fully integrated curriculum, which Bonds & Cox, and Gantt-Bonds (1993) refer to as *synergistic teaching*. Synergistic teaching goes beyond the blurring of subject area lines to a process of teaching whereby all school subjects are related and taught in such a manner that they are almost inseparable. What is learned and applied in one area of the curriculum is related and used to reinforce, repeat, and expand the knowledge and skills learned in other curriculum areas. This process allows students to perceive the relationships between learning in all curriculum areas and applications throughout each of the school subjects. This teaching does more than integrate; the process presents content and skills in such a manner that nearly all learning takes on new dimensions, meaning, and relevance because a connection is discerned between skills and content that transcends curriculum lines. In a synergistic classroom, simultaneous teaching of concepts and skills without regard to curriculum areas is believed to have a greater effect than the sum of learning skills and concepts in individual subject areas.

During the past several years, research in instruction has shown that students do not learn the material to the degree often thought. In a review of research on teaching and learning, Palmer (1991) identified several studies that measured students' knowledge of people, places, dates, and events from American history. In these studies, students were found lacking in knowledge of basic factual information. Palmer (1991) reports that researchers concluded there have been little appreciable change in or in student factual knowledge over time. Palmer further states researchers in the area of teaching methodology show methods of instruction, likewise, have failed to change over the years. The prevailing pattern in the classroom has been lecture, teacher-guided discussion, written responses, and exam completion (Schlechty, 1990).

Because of this trend, many teachers examined fundamental issues regarding teaching and learning. First, what is learning? Does learning entail students' remembering facts, people, places, dates, and events, or can learning also mean understanding broader ideas such as cause and effect, change, chronology, culture, diversity, interpretation, and the universality of human thought and action? Should learning be determined by only traditional measures such as multiple choice and essay tests, or might a visual product such as a collage, mural, or drawing also measure learning? Learning can also be determined by students showing understanding in a debate, monologue, or role-play (White, 1995). If teachers accept a broader view of learning, then they must also accept a broader view of content and how content is taught. According to White, teachers who implemented thematic units commented that using a theme makes the unit more universal. Ideas cannot be separated, yet textbooks scatter information about a topic through several hundred pages of material or pay only scant attention, usually in a single chapter (White, 1995).

Remembering the nature of the learner is critical to understanding why the textbook approach presents a problem. What is clear, logical, and even interesting to teachers is not always clear, logical, or interesting to many students. What seems to represent the whole for the teacher often is a fragmented, isolated bit of information in the students' minds (Lake, 2003). A thematic approach presents the whole rather than the individual parts. A thematic approach helps students make connections in the world; more importantly, they see the commonalities among all factions in the world seeing the differences in a worthwhile learning outcome (Stronks & Bloomberg, 1993).

Teachers who explore broad themes with students are able to teach more about less and help students develop a deeper understanding of the course content (White, 1995). The view that all content is of equal value is not feasible in theory or in practice. If all content is seen as having equal importance, determining what is relevant and what is irrelevant is impossible. When using a thematic approach, teachers must realize that students are not exposed to the same amount of material as in the traditional approach and students will not all arrive at the same understanding. Thematic units bring the subject matter to the students in a holistic fashion and enable students to understand important content in a meaningful and useful context (Freeman & Sokoloff, 1995).

Students should be familiar with the factual knowledge of the unit so there is structure in which to fit other ideas. The payoff in using thematic units is this type of teaching produces long-term learning. Current practice is contributing to the discontinuity. Here there are pieces of the curriculum, but nothing seems to connect in any real coherent way. In this process students are often not motivated for a variety of reasons, and with more

heterogeneous classes, the standard approach does not allow teachers to meet the needs of all their students (Lake, 2003).

Thematic units allow teachers to draw from an endless source of materials such as quotations from speeches, excerpts from literature, personal writings, legal documents, and even current events articles to clarify key questions and issues. Culminating activities include speeches, essays, and visual work products such as drawings, collages, and murals.

The research findings on constructing thematic units have several common threads. One recurring point that comes through is that designing and properly implementing thematic units takes time. Common planning time is needed to allow teachers to select themes, explore resources, discuss student learning styles and needs, and coordinate teaching schedules (Lake, 2003). (See Appendix B for a list of components for the development of thematic units).

METHODS

Worldview Evaluation Instruments

According to Blankenship (2004), nothing aids a child more than when learning is valued by teachers, administrators, families, and communities working together in partnership. These stakeholders' involvement does not happen by accident but through strategic intervention. The communication must inform stakeholders where students have been, where they are now, and where are they going in their worldview development (Stanislaus County Office of Education, 2005). To build support, schools need to use assessment instruments for administrators, teachers, parents, and students that will give them the kind of evidence required to determine the degree to which students are confronted with worldview. The instruments provide evidence about whether or not teachers are including worldview in each lesson and whether students are hearing and being asked to reflect and act upon their worldview. Evidence of worldview acquisition includes the ability to articulate what one understands to be meaningful, but the evidence really relates to how people live (J. Hull, personal communication, December, 2005).

The traditions of measurement in education assume all learning, including worldview acquisition, can be measured and expressed quantitatively. The challenge for Christian educators is to develop an assessment model appropriate to the learning task, especially when the task resists quantification (J. Hull, personal communication, February 15, 2005).

What are needed are lesson plan templates and evaluation instruments that teachers, administrators, parents, and students can use to assess the curriculum's ability to address worldview in the classroom. Many Christian teachers and administrators have been

working (mostly independently, but with an eye to what others are doing) on a holistic approach to curriculum planning for many years. Much good work has been done recently. Dr. John E. Hull, Associate Professor of Education of The King's University College, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, has developed a workshop to produce a curriculum design course for the teacher training program (J. Hull, personal communication December, 2005).

Public schools presently are driven by achievement data. Test scores of individual students are viewed and compared to other students, but little attention is given to the actions of teachers, administrators, and policy makers. Schools must create measurable indicators of teaching, curriculum, leadership, parent involvement, and other factors that are associated with students living out their kingdom service (Reeves, 2005).

An accountability system that fails to address whether a Reformed worldview is being addressed does not deserve the support and confidence of the Reformed community. Any system explored must cover the best way to yield information that is useful in assuring students, parents, teachers, and administrators look at the program to determine its effectiveness (Reeves, 2005). According to Reeves, a school that bases its accountability system on test scores alone actually encourages behaviors contrary to those endorsed through a Reformed worldview. In the context of worldview development, parents, students, teachers, and administrators must learn about the process and results of teaching and learning. If Reformed education is to be taken seriously, then schools can reasonably expect that the evaluation of lessons is related to the issues at hand: students learning and acting upon their convictions. Schools must teach and ask students to act upon those convictions in solving real world problems. Effective evaluation of teaching and learning

is the foundation of students attaining a Reformed worldview. If effective accountability of the thematic unit does not provide students with an opportunity to live out their convictions, then the unit and the educational system has been ill served (Reeves, 2005). Effective evaluation can be measured only with multiple information sources over an extended period of time. Such an analysis must include consideration of all factors: resources, teaching methods, student support, and parental commitment (Reeves, 2005).

Teaching evaluations are devices for making judgment consistent, fair, and clear to all involved in the educational process. Evaluation is an authoritative framework of categories under which people are expected to operate. Evaluations can be structured in many ways, but all contain three basic elements. The first element names the categories of evaluation – that is the components the evaluator looks for in performance. The second element names the levels of performance that can be attained for each of the criteria. These can be letter grades, descriptive words, or a combination. The third element is the series that results when criteria and the levels of performance meet. The rubric may be a series of numbers, a continuum line, picture symbols, or other things. An evaluation must meet the basic purpose to clarify what is expected and how teachers are to be judged (Berkholz & Wessels, 1994). Teachers must receive feedback in a comprehensive manner. Moreover, teachers must have direct input into the accountability system so they can use results during the year to focus, re-focus, expand, and contract their curricular emphasis in order to achieve the best results for their students (Reeves, 2005).

When evaluating thematic units, schools must include the entire school community. The purpose is to aid teachers, administration, the board, students, and parents to be a

reflective, communal, and diligent community assisting each other in the task of understanding and living a Reformed worldview. Effective evaluation procedures and practices place the responsibility and accountability on the community committed to improvement.

Teachers also need to evaluate their lessons to determine the extent to which the unit goals are being achieved (Wiggins & Mc Tighe, 1998). The evaluation of a unit must display to students the extent of their development, bring about regeneration, and result in transformed lives for kingdom service. True evaluation occurs when the community sees students acting on their new commitments and expressing biblical principles in their real life setting.

Administrative lesson and unit worldview evaluation instrument

The administration of the school has a responsibility in helping teachers grow and ensure that worldview reflection is taking place in the classroom. The administration regularly needs to remind teachers of the opportunities and responsibilities they have in helping students and parents understand and reflect upon a commitment to helping students grow. This can be done through formal evaluation of the teacher as well as through occasional interruption of regular school days through *walk about visits*. Regular classroom visits by administrators provide a wealth of information in helping teachers promote worldview development through thematic units. Through this process administrators encourage a climate of school wide goals that in turn foster a climate that provides a snapshot of the unit being taught, the questions being asked, assessment procedures being implemented, teaching strategies being used, and an analysis of the depth of understanding and worldview engagement. The instrument is designed to

provide information as the school implements thematic instruction. The evaluation tool includes pertinent information concerning the class, date, time of visit, course, subject, and other information deemed important. Administrators can also address dominant teaching strategies, skill development, depth of understanding, time on task, student activity, essential questions, targeted understanding, lesson goals and objectives, visibility of unit integration, and worldview reflection. The classroom observation instrument is designed for a high school to provide information from an objective vantage point about how well the school is meeting and carrying out worldview development through the use of thematic instruction. (See Appendix D to view a high school administrative classroom observation instrument).

Teacher lesson and unit worldview evaluation instrument

Many teachers create lessons with the intention of aiding students in developing a Reformed worldview. The idea of thematic instruction is no different. Through the thematic statement, essential questions, and class activities teachers have the intent of having students grapple with how they can transform this world into what God intended it to be. But teachers need to understand that through thematic instruction students will become better acquainted with the connectedness of God's creation and through the course of the unit be able to not only see the destruction sin has caused but wrestle with and express possibilities to transform the Kingdom. In order for this message to flow through the unit teachers need to sit back and reflect on each unit and explore whether the thematic unit allows for those opportunities. To insure the worldview is not only in the unit but students are required to reflect upon their worldview teachers must evaluate each lesson and unit and reflect on the worldview issues the unit will provide.

Christian teachers are committed to helping students understand and reflect on worldview and good teachers are committed to improving their practice. A lesson evaluation rubric will allow teachers to reflect upon and evaluate the extent to which the unit requires students the opportunity to wrestle with and reflect upon their worldview development. Teachers should have developed a targeted understanding that explains the connections between the worldview framework, the essential questions addressed, and the central organizing focus of the unit. The lessons in the unit should provide students with opportunities to engage these questions and to test the validity of the unit. The instrument should keep the students and teachers focused on what is of most importance. This instrument should not only flow from a biblical worldview but also help students engage their worldview. The categories in the rubric should relate directly to the design and implementation of the unit. After evaluating the unit teachers should participate in conferences with administration to review the findings. (See Appendix E for a high school thematic unit evaluation rubric for teachers using thematic units).

Student worldview evaluation instrument

Students are a major part of the school community; therefore they should be a part of the worldview evaluation process of thematic instruction. Students must realize the knowledge they have cuts across the traditional subject lines and all learning is interrelated. Through thematic instruction, students will be allowed to unwrap their talents and gifts to honor God and help others. Through the students' ability to evaluate thematic instruction, they will feel the joy of community and their responsibility to others.

Students learn by responding personally and playfully with God's good creation, investigating and experimenting with its boundaries. If true learning is the goal of thematic instruction, then students must have the opportunity to take delight in God's marvelous reality or to grieve the brokenness created by sin. Students must be allowed to reflect and offer feedback as to their own strengths and weaknesses, judge what is important, and set their own objectives. Student evaluation of thematic units must aid students in setting a clear path for regeneration and transform lives for kingdom service. Students must reflect upon the value of their skills inside and outside the classroom. (See Appendix F for a high school student evaluation instrument).

Parental Worldview evaluation instrument

Schools committed to thematic instruction must encourage responses from parents of their students. One area of concern that may need to be addressed is whether parents truly understand what Reformed worldview is. Many schools admit students from non-Reformed backgrounds. If the parents do not understand worldview, how can they aid in ensuring their child is either engaged with or reflecting upon the Reformed worldview? This could be accomplished through parent nights at school as well as communication the school provides to the parents throughout the school year. Including parents in the evaluation of worldview development will invite all involved in worldview development to participate in a communal effort of aiding students wrestling with and become engaged in worldview development. So a true instrument for checking the integrality of Christian education must go beyond what teachers say, write, and do. Any instrument must evaluate the structure of learning that includes the ability of the unit design to engage the theme and questions concerning worldview. Teachers must provide information to

parents concerning the unit's goals and objectives that will allow parents to aid in the process by leading discussions at home with their children and encouraging their children to reflect upon the worldview being introduced and developed within the unit. (See Appendix G to view the high school parental worldview survey).

DISCUSSION

Recommendations & Areas for Further Research

Schools wanting to be truly distinctive in their Reformed approach to education face many challenges when trying to create a school for life-long learning and kingdom transformation. There are many factors that need to be considered when moving toward a thematic approach to teaching. Schools need to consider if their current instructional practices are effective avenues for aiding teachers and students for worldview development. Schools must develop common and well defined vision statements that reflect a Reformed worldview. Schools need to ensure that all within the school community understand and agree with the worldview framework as described in the mission statement of the school. Ensuring the school, church, and home are sending the same message will aid in the effectiveness of worldview development. Schools using thematic units must provide resources to implement thematic instruction effectively. The daily schedule must be flexible to ensure that themes can be developed thoroughly. Support services and teacher training must be provided to aid teachers, administrators, and parents in the proper development and evaluation of meaningful thematic units.

Further study needs to take place in the area of increased student achievement when thematic units are used. Without clear evidence as to the increased achievement of students through the use of thematic units there may be difficulties in attaining acceptance from those within the school community as to the value of the use of the units. Along with accountability issues there needs to be further research concerning the links between integration and broader outcomes. Schools need to see how the thematic instruction will affect the current scope and sequence of the curriculum.

Another implication cited by Humphreys (1981), revolves around assessment of students' learning. If thematic units are guided, in part, by students' and teachers' interest, there will be less consistency of experience than many teachers currently intend. This, less consistency of experience, may impact performance on standardized tests and require alternative methods of assessing students' understanding of essential concepts. Further study needs to occur in the area of how assessment will be reported to stakeholders. The current system of reporting progress to parents and students, in many schools, does not report on worldview reflection. New reporting procedures must make connections on whether students are reflecting on the connections of the unit and whether students are properly reflecting on their worldview. Information gathered and communicated to parents and students must display how students have grown, not just compare them to others. The reporting of this development should not include the standard A-F grading scale but be brought forth in narrative report cards placing all skills on a continuum, assessing the students' development rather than assigning grades. However, a secondary school may face different constraints than an elementary school. Rather than move from a traditional, subject-specific unit to a thematic instruction in one sudden sweep, teachers may find more success through gradual changes.

A thematic unit may not address a logical sequence within a discipline such as mathematics. Further research into thematic instruction and the effect of implementing the units in the current scope and sequence will be needed if teachers are to look at the role of the sequence in curriculum decisions. When the unit is based on broad concepts linked thematically, students may acquire knowledge in very different ways, making the traditional sequence of activities difficult to include.

Teachers who are not provided with adequate in-service time to develop thematic units may go to an unstructured approach (Jacobs, 1989) rather than a truly thematic approach to learning. An unstructured approach does not facilitate the kinds of understanding and achievement that thematic units can bring. Teachers who base their curriculum planning on learning outcomes (especially if they are provincial or state designed) are entering into a traditional curriculum as an approach that contains many assumptions that are not compatible with a Christian worldview. For example, the outcomes-based curriculum is not as likely to be structured around integral units but is instead based on a series of activity lessons that only meet the content objectives. This brand of teaching/curriculum delivery encourages a fragmented learning experience that fails to foster critical thinking, and limits measurable outcomes.

Conclusion

The research does not indicate which type of thematic unit works best. However, the studies (Fogarty, 1990, Bonds, Cox and Gantt & Bonds, 1993, Schlick-Noe, 1997, and Lake 2003) do indicate overall positive reactions to the use of thematic units in the classroom from teachers, students, administrators, and parents. The overall reaction, to thematic units, is better when teachers believe in and embrace the concept that thematic units will bring results in the classroom. The overall reaction of schools implementing thematic instruction is positive, if teachers utilize alternative teaching methods, open students' minds to kingdom service, and provide meaningful thought on kingdom discipleship. Schools are the training ground of the leaders, teachers, and kingdom servants for the 21st century. As John Dewey said, "time spent at school should not be in anticipation for life to begin sometime in the future once school is over. Time spent at

school should be spent in the midst of a variety of rich challenging, and interesting experiences that build lively curiosity and personal confidence that will project students into productive adulthood" (Dewey as cited in Walsley, pg. 142, 1997).

Evidence of worldview acquisition includes the ability to articulate what one understands to be meaningful but has much more to do with how one lives. The tradition of measurement in education would have us believe that all learning, including worldview acquisition, can be measured and expressed quantitatively. The challenge for Christian educators is to incorporate methods that are appropriate to the learning task. Teachers need to use thematic units to both integrate subject disciplines and integrate faith perspective. Christian educators must take thematic units one step further. Thematic units have great potential for showing students the unbreakable bonds between their fundamental beliefs, vision, worldview, perspective, philosophy, and the experience of learning.

Schools need to plan for the future but are also required to pay attention to the future. The planning is riddled with uncertainties. The priorities that are set depend on the values brought to the planning process and the conceptions the schools hold on the view of education and humanity. These problems arise within the Christian school community to the point that many Christian schools have lost their distinctiveness and have become good private schools. Christian educators have a long history of wrongly assuming that an alternative, biblically based philosophy of education is both well developed and integrated. Worldview development within the daily lessons is not that simple! And, often teachers do not know how far off or on they are from integrating worldview framework within the lesson. Christian schools have done their best work in

articulating an alternative world and life view within their vision statements. The efforts to develop a philosophy of education based on that worldview are evolving, but the ability to bridge the gap between vision/theory and actual practice remains at the pioneer stage in many locations.

Schools are often influenced by what the community wants and what students need. The vision of Reformed education must animate the planning process. The curriculum taught in Christian schools is not the sole purpose of warranting a diploma or degree to signify competence. Christian schools need to be offering opportunities for lifelong learning leading to kingdom transformation. Schools need to incorporate different strategies to meet the needs of all students. Through the lessons taught schools must see the strengths and weaknesses of each child and remain focused on what method or strategy is seen as the best to implement. Schools must consider and carefully research strategies for increased student achievement, allow students to see the connections within creation, and understand how these may affect academic priorities and life choices. The lessons taught through thematic units need to activate and communicate to students worship of God in their daily living. A child is a learner by nature; he/she was created to learn. Through each lesson schools build relationships with students to guide them to follow along in exploring God's creation. Christian schools do this through modeling, discipline, meaningful devotions, encouragement, motivation, and structuring curriculum that unfold and open up what students do not know or cannot do and enable students to perform acts of service in the community. Schools must open the minds of students to be Christians who try to live their lives before God and where students, however unimportant they may feel, have the privilege of personally being addressed by God, the

ruler of the universe. To accomplish this task schools must move outside the status quo, reinvent their purpose, carry-out their mission and allow students to invest their life strategically for the kingdom of God.

The idea of thematic units is also important for the administration of a school. Administrators are the instructional leaders of the school community. The task of the administrator is to develop steps to change teacher practice so all students are taught a Reformed worldview framework every day. Administration must ensure all students in the classroom see the broken and hurting world around them and through the saving power of Christ see opportunities for kingdom discipleship. By facilitating the opportunity to develop thematic units, effective leaders can ensure that change takes place. Effective leaders will offer guidance, provide teacher training, review materials, provide resources, and collect random work to ensure that all teachers are teaching Reformed worldview and opening the door for kingdom service. By providing quality classroom supervision techniques, effective leaders can provide proper feedback to teachers regarding their lessons and verify the accuracy of teacher interpretation of the schools' vision. Effective leaders must realize there will be no school reform unless teacher behavior changes. Only by improving teaching effectiveness will students be allowed to carryout the vision set before them. If using thematic units creates learning opportunities for all students, then the process should be used. But if using thematic units merely opens the minds of the administration and educators and allows them to reflect on the results and discuss strategies that will help improve the school to pursue the goal of kingdom redemption that is reason enough to attempt this process. However, schools

considering implementation must follow the proper procedures and guidelines when undertaking this process.

For schools the answer of whether or not to implement thematic units goes much deeper than test results and attitude surveys. Many schools are doing a fine job with current teaching strategies. Whenever viewing opportunities, educators need to evaluate whether current classroom techniques and procedures are fulfilling priorities and meeting the vision of school. Schools should not assume that thematic units will become a panacea to solve the problems and answer all the questions facing schools. But schools need not withdraw from the question either.

Christian faith does not produce easy or automatic answers to any questions or problems, but faith does provide a powerful and exciting framework from which to work. When students seek the truth, this does not mean they should look for simplistic answers, turning to the Bible for proof texts taken out of context. Rather, truth from the perspective of the biblical story will provide a framework for life and thought. Thematic units can help us unfold the light of the biblical story of creation, fall, redemption, and glorification. The implications of seeing the connections of creation students will think about the problems of the environment and realize the world does not belong to them but to God, and they are called to be good stewards of creation. When student's minds are opened to think about the truth of social problems such as those dealing with race or poverty, they must think from the perspective all humans are creatures made in God's image. True knowledge exists when educators see students acting on their commitments in a real world setting.

Thematic units have the potential to captivate the minds and open up students to God's world and his mighty acts. Thematic units, for a teacher, can be the spark igniting students' imagination and lifting them up into worlds yet unknown. Thematic units can allow effective teachers to lead students to unfold their own skills, imagine possibilities, articulate convictions, and bring students to make distinctions so they can begin to exercise their cultivating Lordship. The lessons taught must bear the imprint of a biblical worldview. Educators need to teach young children to think critically, to make hard decisions, and to confront the world. Educators need to be sincere in this endeavor, and think unselfishly in their goals. School leaders must constantly thank God for the strategies and give credit to God alone. They should not be hasty in this decision. Rather, they must use prayer for the Spirit's guidance, read scripture to give direction, and gain counsel of fellow members of the body of Christ in making these decisions.

APPENDIX A

Appendix A

Levels of Curriculum Integration

Name	Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
Fragmented	Separate and distinct disciplines	Clear and discrete view of discipline	Connections are not made for student; less transferring of knowledge
Connected	Topics within a discipline are connected	Key concepts are connected, leading to the review and assimilation of ideas within a discipline	Disciplines are not related; content focus remains within the discipline
Nested	Social thinking and content skills are targeted within a subject area	Gives attention to several areas at once, leading to enriched and enhanced learning.	Students may be confused and lose sight of the main concepts of the activity or lesson.
Sequenced	Similar ideas are taught in concert, although subjects are separate.	Facilitates transfer of learning across the content area.	Requires ongoing collaboration and flexibility, as teachers have less autonomy in sequencing curricula.
Shared	Team planning and or teaching involving two disciplines, focuses on shared concepts, skills or attitudes.	Shared instructional experiences; with two teachers on a team is less difficult to collaborate.	Requires time flexibility, commitment, and compromise
Webbed	Thematic teaching using a theme as a base for instruction in may disciplines.	Motivating for students see connections between ideas.	Themes must be carefully and thoughtfully selected to be meaningful, with relevant and rigorous content.
Threaded	Thinking skills, social skills, multiple intelligence's, and study skills are "threaded" throughout the discipline.	Students learn how they are learning, facilitating future transfer of learning.	Disciplines remain separate

Integrated	Priorities overlap multiple disciplines are examined for common skills, concepts, and attitudes.	Encourages students to see interconnectedness and interrelationships among disciplines, students are motivated as they see connections.	Requires interdepartmental teams with common planning and teaching time.
Immersed	Learner integrates by viewing all learning through the perspective of one area	Integration takes place within the learner	May narrow the focus of the learner.
Networked	Learner directs the integration process throughout selection of network experts and resources.	Pro-active, with the learner stimulated by new information, skills or concepts.	Learner can be spread too thin, efforts become ineffective.

(Fogarty, 1991)

APPENDIX B

Appendix B

Components of Thematic Units

1. Core skills and processes. These include basic skills, such as reading and mathematics, as well as social skills and problem solving.
2. Curriculum strands and themes. These are the organizing principles around which the curriculum is built. They are very broad in nature and integrate content from multiple areas.
3. Major themes. Each curriculum strand is further divided into major themes.
4. Essential Questions. Questions are used to further define themes and focus activities.
5. Unit development. From the theme and the essential questions, knowledge, and skills related to the concepts, teachers plan activities that will lead to the development of knowledge and skills, which will answer the essential questions. Teachers also collect resources and develop actual lesson plans and assessment strategies.
6. Assessment. Through both summative and formative assessment procedures student progress is assessed and through this process the unit is evaluated. (Lake, 2003)

APPENDIX C

Appendix C

Themes

Worshipping God	Discerning Idolatry
Keeping the Earth	Creating Beauty
Seeking Justice	Enjoying Creation
Restoring Brokenness	Building Community
Balancing Work and Rest	Affirming the creation's goodness

J. Hull (personal communication, December 1, 2005)

Appendix D

Appendix D

Administrative Lesson Evaluation Instrument

Classroom Evaluation

Teacher_____

Classroom _____

Day of the Week
Monday
Tuesday
Wednesday
Thursday
Friday

Start time _____

Subject Language Arts Math
Social Science Physical Education
Foreign Language Science
Music Elective (course)_____

Type of classroom—circle one

Regular Education Special Education Self-contained classroom

Student Activity:

Essential Questions:

Posted in room Y N

Clearly stated Y N

Reflect worldview Y N

Comments:

Targeted Understanding:

Posted in classroom Y N

Evidence in lesson Y N

Reflect worldview Y N

Comments:

Goals and Objectives:

Clearly stated during lesson Y N

Reflect worldview Y N

Call for student act of transformation Y N

Clearly display creation Y N

Clearly display brokenness caused by sin Y N

Predominant Practice:

_____ Identifying similarities and differences

_____Summarizing and note taking

_____Reinforcing effort/providing recognition

_____Homework and practice

_____Representing Knowledge

_____Learning Groups

_____Setting objectives/providing feedback

_____Generating and testing hypotheses

Depth: Circle one

Recall Strategic thinking

Skill/ Concept Level Extended thinking

Instructional Mode:circle one

Individual

Small group

Whole class

Other Effective Practices also used:

_____Identifying similarities and differences

_____Summarizing and note taking

_____Reinforcing effort/providing recognition

_____Homework and practice

_____Representing knowledge

Comments:

_____Learning groups

_____Setting objectives/providing feedback

_____Generating and testing hypotheses

_____Cue, question, and advanced organizers

_____Other

Teacher Activity: Circle one or more of the following

Direct Instruction, whole group
Direct Instruction, small group
Individual Instruction
Lecture
Monitor / Provide Feedback
Lead Discussion
Film
At desk / computer
Attending to Miscellaneous Needs
Monitoring Transition
Other _____

Communication:

Communicates well with students Y N
Uses positive reinforcement Y N

Check for understanding: circle one

Presses on
Reads body language
Asks clarifying questions

Worldview development: check where applicable

____ Explained creational design
____ Explained brokenness caused by sin
____ Explained redemptive response
____ Called students into committed action

Classroom Management

Manages Time Y N
Manages Student Behavior Y N

Curriculum Integration:

Lesson connected to following disciplines

Language Arts
Math
Social Science
Physical Education
Foreign Language
Science
Music
Elective_____

Strategies;

Active student involvement	Y	N	N/A	Emphasis on key vocabulary	Y	N	N/A
Access prior learning	Y	N	N/A	Wait time on questions	Y	N	N/A
Social interaction	Y	N	N/A	Closure to lesson	Y	N	N/A
Objective is clear	Y	N	N/A	Assessment procedure clear	Y	N	N/A
Verbal with visuals	Y	N	N/A	Lesson develops school vision statement	Y	N	N/A

Comments:

APPENDIX E

Appendix E

Thematic Unit Evaluation Rubric for Teachers
Name_____ Date_____

	High Quality	Quality	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
Targeted Understanding	Extremely focused, strong worldview emphasis, biblically based.	Focus is clear on worldview on what ultimate goal of the lesson/unit.	Worldview is present but not clear enough focus on ultimate goal of unit/lesson.	Worldview is not present or unclear.
Essential Questions	Extremely high calibration of questions to targeted understanding, answers how, what, and why purpose of the unit	Questions are clear and relate to the targeted understanding but somewhat unclear on the how, why, and what of the unit	Questions are present but difficult to follow the order and thought	Questions do not relate to the targeted understanding, difficult to see correlation
Worldview Framework	Worldview is well planned and clearly displays God's design, brokenness of the world, human response, and transformational opportunities	Unit is planned and organized to display God's design, the brokenness of the world, human response, and transformational opportunities.	Worldview is somewhat present but confusing to clearly see God's design, brokenness of the world, human response, or transformational opportunities	Worldview is not present, no clear display of God's design, brokenness of the world, human response, or transformational opportunities.
Subject Integration	Unit is well planned, organized, and supports connections with other disciplines	Unit planned and organized to display connections to other disciplines.	Unit is organized but does not fully display connections to other disciplines.	Unit is somewhat organized but does not clearly relate to or connections are forced to other disciplines.

Thematic Unit Evaluation

Name_____ Date_____

	High Quality	Quality	Acceptable	Not Acceptable
Assessment Instruments	Assessment tools are varied and demonstrate a high correlation to essential questions, objectives, and worldview.	Assessment tools are varied but may reflect occasional inconsistencies to essential questions, targeted understanding, or worldview reflection.	Assessment tools are not varied or do not reflect clearly back to essential questions, targeted understanding, or worldview reflection.	Assessment tools do not relate to essential questions, targeted understanding, or allowing for worldview reflection.
Lesson Plan	Lesson assisted students in observing connectedness of creation, seeking of the truth, with daily emphasis on worldview development.	Lessons were presented to students and displayed connectedness of creation, truth, and regular reflection on worldview development.	Lessons attempted to display connectedness of creation with few opportunities for finding the truth and worldview.	Lesson were presented but cannot sufficiently answer questions concerning connectedness of creation, seeking the truth, or worldview development.

APPENDIX F

Appendix F

High School Student Worldview Survey

Worldview Assessment Survey Name_____ Date_____	
To the right of each statement mark the response that best indicates your feelings toward the statement. 1= minimally 2=partially 3= substantially 4= fully	
1. The unit's goals and objectives were clearly stated to me.	1 2 3 4 5
2. The teacher explained the school's vision statement clearly.	1 2 3 4 5
3. The unit allowed my parents the opportunity to be involved.	1 2 3 4 5
4. The teacher modeled opportunities for me to transform God's kingdom.	1 2 3 4 5
5. The unit helped me grow in faith. (explain)	1 2 3 4 5
6. The unit provided opportunities for me to explore and evaluate my own learning.	1 2 3 4 5
7. The unit provided opportunities for my family to discuss and develop activities for kingdom transformation.	1 2 3 4 5
8. The unit helped me to see the connections of God's creation.	1 2 3 4 5
9. The unit helped me see the consequences of sin on creation.	1 2 3 4 5

To the right of each statement mark the response that best indicates your feelings toward the statement.
1= minimally 2=partially 3= substantially 4= fully

10. The unit helped me see my full potential as an image bearer of God.	1 2 3 4 5
11. The unit allowed me to collaborate with my classmates	1 2 3 4 5
12. The unit allowed for the students to participate in designing the questions for the unit.	1 2 3 4 5
13. The vision/mission of the school can clearly be seen through the materials used during the unit.	1 2 3 4 5
14. I support this type of unit within my academic program.	1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

APPENDIX G

Appendix G

Parental Worldview Survey

Worldview Assessment Survey Name_____ Date_____	
To the right of each statement mark the response that best indicates your feelings toward the statement. 1= minimally 2=partially 3= substantially 4= fully	
1. The teacher provided and communicated worldview to the home prior to the start of the unit.	1 2 3 4 5
2. The teacher communicated what a Reformed worldview was and what we as parent should look for in our child's work.	1 2 3 4 5
3. The teacher was willing to help our child (modify teaching strategies) to ensure our child had an opportunity to learn.	1 2 3 4 5
4. The unit called for our child to respond and react to his/her calling in God's world.	1 2 3 4 5
5. The unit provided clear expectations of what our child's responsibilities are as a Kingdom disciple.	1 2 3 4 5
6. The unit provided opportunities for our child to be involved in meaningful kingdom service.	1 2 3 4 5
7. The unit provided age appropriate kingdom opportunities for worldview development	1 2 3 4 5
8. The teacher provided information throughout the unit on our child's worldview development.	1 2 3 4 5

To the right of each statement mark the response that best indicates your feelings toward the statement.
1= minimally 2=partially 3= substantially 4= fully

9. The unit had in place a system to communicate and celebrate our child's God given gifts.	1 2 3 4 5
10. The unit fostered and supported collaboration between the classroom and the home.	1 2 3 4 5
11. The unit allowed for various teaching methods to be used by the teacher.	1 2 3 4 5
12. The vision/mission of the school can clearly be seen through the materials used during the unit.	1 2 3 4 5
13. The purpose of the unit was clearly focused and allowed our family the opportunity to see it was biblically based.	1 2 3 4 5
14. I support this type of unit within our child's academic program.	1 2 3 4 5
15. The unit helped our child grow in his/her faith development.	1 2 3 4 5

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President Southwest Christian Teachers Association, 1995-1997

SCTA Representative International Convention (Toronto), 1996

Keynote Speaker Calvinette Convention, 1996

Commencement Speaker, Ripon Christian Junior High, 1989, 1992, 1996, 2001

Commencement Speaker Ripon Christian High School, 1990

California Young Educator of the Year, 1995

In-Service Speaker, Ripon Christian School, 2000

Keynote Speaker Golden Bear Council, 2005