



First Week of School

Create a draft of a suggested unit plan for the first week of school by completing the following tasks.

1. Suggest or choose an age-appropriate theme for the start of the school year. The theme should provide opportunities to collaborate and partner on activities that:
 - a. forge relationships among students and teachers.
 - b. illustrate a strong community value.

A theme for a middle school class is “Jamming for Study”, which could include engaging students around the use of Internet resources such as YouTube, their favorite music, and their personal technology in enhancing their learning of math and science (e.g., how are mathematical principles involved in the creation of playlists versus random selections on your iPod?).

A theme that could be used for secondary level students is “Our Culture: How We Come Together in a Diverse Community”, which could include a historical review of the Underground Railroad, and why we celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

2. Provide a list of the types of student work (individual and group) that might adorn the classroom or school hallway at the end of this theme activity. The list can come from first-hand experience, through an interview with a peer, and/or research of print or Internet resources.
3. Outline an activity in your theme plan that models appropriate community behavior or illustrates commitment to the community values in the classroom or the school.

Once you have completed this activity, reflect on and answer the following questions.

- What are the next steps in applying what I have learned here?
- Where do I need to spend time to enhance the community in my classroom or school?
- When things are not going right, how do I respond? Is my response appropriate?
- How do I ensure that my classroom community is built upon mutual respect and shared responsibility?
- What changes should I consider in order to create this powerful community?