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ABSTRACT

This guide was developed to assist high school students in understanding the culture of India. As part of this elective anthropology course, high school students create a teaching museum for elementary students. Students teach younger children and prepare museum exhibits for visitors. As cultural anthropologists, students develop a project and teach what they learn. The sections of the paper include: (1) "Goals"; (2) "Methods of Operation"; (3) "Claims"; (4) "Theoretical Framework"; (5) "Conceptual Framework"; (6) "How the Program Operates"; (7) "Exportability"; (8) "Evidence - Evaluator's Comments"; (9) "Bibliography"; and (10) "References: Indian Culture." (EH)

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The Museum of Culture

by

Robert G. Shamy

**A Curriculum Project Developed During the 1996
Fulbright-Hays Seminar Abroad Program: India Seminar**

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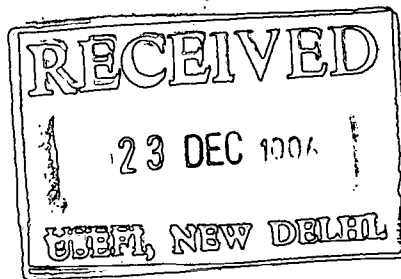
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OPB

O.P. Bhardwaj
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Dear O.P.,

Please find the curriculum enclosed. I hope that you find it acceptable. If there are any problems or the need for clarification please contact me at the above address, or by email. I hope that all is well in India. I have been presenting workshops on the Fulbright program and "India Today" at local and state functions. My Indian friends in the area and I will be presenting an India Night at the school January 16th. It should be fun. Thank you for all of your help and direction this summer. It was beyond description.

Sincerely yours,

Bob Shamy

THE MUSEUM OF CULTURE

Curriculum

Developed for the Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program

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The Museum of Culture Program is a student-directed teaching museum. As part of the elective course, Anthropology, students in grades eleven and twelve study Native American, Asian, African, or other world cultures, curate a school museum, and prepare museum exhibits and audio-visual programs for elementary school students. Elementary school classes and their teachers visit the museum program and are taught by the high school students about the specific culture that has been selected for study and exhibition. The museum program involves two basic components:

- A. The elective course Anthropology, a text-based, traditional course in which the students study the concepts and methods of Anthropology and world cultures.
- B. The museum and audio-visual programs, directed and curated by the students as part of their course responsibility. The museum provides an opportunity for high school students to teach the concepts they are learning to elementary school students. Using the methods of cultural anthropology the students collect the materials and artifacts exhibited in the museum. Local historical associations, cultural or ethnic groups, museums, and universities constitute excellent resources. They not only provide assistance and resources, but they also demonstrate an interest in the role the high school museum serves in the preservation of culture and history. In addition they provide the museum program's students an opportunity to work with professionals.

GOALS:

- A. The students will work as cultural anthropologists curators and teachers.
- B. The students will work in a project with clear objectives and practical goals.
- C. The students will teach what they learn.
- D. The teacher will work with the students on a collegial level.
- E. Elementary school students will benefit from the program.

METHOD OF OPERATION:

The class meets daily as part of the elective course offering Anthropology. Through a combination of field trip and classroom experiences the students learn the material they will teach and they are assigned work to accomplish in the museum. Elementary school classes visit periodically and the high school students present the museum's audio-visual and exhibit programs. Approximately 1500 elementary school students visit the museum each year.

This is a full year, five credit social studies elective.

CLAIMS:

1. The museum offers multiple opportunities for students to communicate knowledge to others in an educative setting.
2. The activities of the museum engender individual responsibility.
3. The museum program provides for practical experiences in inquiry, documentation, and writing.
4. The museum program enhances the elementary and high school student's knowledge of world cultures and reduces ethnocentrism.

As a result of a Fulbright-Hays Seminar to India during the summer of 1996 the museum program has focused on India as the main element in the teaching and exhibit programs. The collection of photographic materials, cultural artifacts, maps and cultural information during this seminar have provided the museum program with teaching resources and strategies on the land, people and culture of India. Although these materials are difficult to reproduce they may be available to those who wish to absorb the cost of reproduction or purchase. There are teaching materials, audio-visual programs, cultural artifacts, etc., available in the traditional sources and in commercial markets throughout the United States. Those wishing to visit the museum program at Monroe Township High School should contact the museum program director, Robert Shamy at (908) 521-2882 to arrange a visit or for further information.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The museum program was initiated over a decade ago with one primary instructional objective: to provide the student with real and practical tasks in the Social Sciences. The instructional methods and strategies applied in this program are based on a pragmatic approach. John Dewey's call for experience and practical tasks in education originally led to the consideration of applying anthropology to the Social Sciences. Too much of a student's time is spent accumulating unrelated facts. Little opportunity is provided to demonstrate or utilize this information in a practical activity. Dewey argued, "Thus much of the energy that sometimes goes to thinking about individual children might better be devoted to discovering some worthwhile activity and to arranging the conditions under which it can be carried forward." [Dewey, 1974 p.177]

The museum program provides specific information and a setting in which the student may utilize and demonstrate this information. The student is an anthropologist, museum curator, and a teacher. When the high school student stands before the elementary school students in the role of teacher, the need to know the course material becomes a high priority. The high school student-teacher prepares extensively for teaching. This need to master the material removes many of the motivational problems found in the traditional classroom approach to learning. The museum also provides an opportunity for the museum director to observe the student in the role of teacher and to evaluate the student's knowledge of the subject. These observations provide one with more than a simple judgment of student learning. Much can be learned from observing the student in practical activity. "Moreover a teacher can find out immensely more about the real needs, desires, interests, capacities and weaknesses of a pupil by observing him throughout the course of such consecutive activity than by any amount of direct prodding or of merely cross-sectional observation." [Dewey, 1974, p.177]

Anthropology is not a recent addition to precollege curricula. For nearly a century, it has been gaining acceptance among those individuals and organizations who make decisions concerning curriculum content. Today we find anthropology in precollege classrooms throughout the United States. Over the last two decades organizations such as the Smithsonian Institution and various departments of anthropology at the university level have become actively involved in the development of training programs and curricula materials in anthropology for the precollege teacher.

Anthropology is the study of our species and its many forms of adaptation worldwide to the problems of living. These adaptations are the essence of each peoples' culture. "The public school curriculum sorely needs a cultural perspective that is scientifically rather than ethnocentrically based." [Dyngneson, Coleman, 1986 p.5] Cultural isolation is dangerous in our "global" community and educators are making an effort to dispel this cultural isolation. The emphasis on global education is one example of this effort. A recent issue of *Practicing Anthropology, A Career Oriented Publication of the Society for Applied Anthropology*, was devoted entirely to "Practicing Anthropology in Precollege Education." [Vol.8 No.3-4, 1986] In this issue educators and professional anthropologists discuss the present status of precollege anthropology.

"Precollegiate anthropology is becoming an imperative for American students. This imperative is demonstrated in the national and international events of our times... Future conflicts are sure to arise in this [Lebanon] and other areas of the world, yet the public, most of our public school teachers, and our children are largely ignorant of major world cultures." [Dyngneson, Coleman, 1986 p.5]

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

The following outline provides a conceptual framework for the museum program.

1. Provide the student with a course of study; in this case the land, people and culture of India.
2. Give this student a set of tasks to accomplish which will develop the content of this course of study; photographic slide reproductions, cultural artifact reproduction...ex., food, clothing, music, etc.
3. Provide a practical situation in which the student is obliged to utilize this information; the museum teaching program, high school students teaching elementary school students.
4. Continue the educational process through interactions with and observations of the student; arrange teaching experiences and modifications of the existing slides and exhibit programs.

The diverse nature of the museum program provides many ways to meet the needs of a varying student population.

HOW THE PROGRAM OPERATES:

The idea is very simple. It involves teaching a basic content of information to the high school students, and establishing a structure [in this case a museum] in which the high school students must teach this information to elementary school students. The next step involves bringing the high school and elementary students together to allow the high school students to utilize and demonstrate the concepts learned in the course.

The culture selected for study and presentation is a joint decision between teacher and students. The students scan the library for pictures of the geographic area and the cultural traits of the culture to be studied and exhibited. Using photographic slide film the students take pictures and organize them into an audio-visual presentation. Reproductions are made of clothing, art work and objects that are material representations of the culture. Music, myths, religion, behaviors and representations of non-material culture are studied and prepared for presentation and demonstration. Regional foods may be prepared and served by the high school students to the elementary school students.

Research material and exhibits may be organized under the following headings:

1. **MAP LOCATION AND GEOGRAPHY:** Slides of the region may be used to support wall maps in discussing the climate, resources, altitude, etc., of the region selected for study and exhibition.
2. **SUBSISTENCE PATTERN:** The predominate methods of food collection, job specialization, division of labor, resource management and consumption, and economic system.
3. **FAMILY PATTERNS:** The social structure, role responsibilities and relationships that exist within the family structure of the culture.
4. **HOUSING:** Materials and methods of construction, architecture, community patterns.
5. **CLOTHING/BODY ORNAMENTATION:** Traditional, festive, ritualistic, and in many cases the modern elements of style that have been adapted to the traditional.
6. **RELIGION/RITUALS:** Slides and actual performances may be used to represent these elements of the culture.
7. **SOCIAL STRUCTURE:** Elements of class, caste, egalitarianism, etc., may be discussed with elementary students depending on their grade level and conceptual abilities.
8. **LANGUAGE:** Audio-tape and guest speakers may be used to demonstrate the various dialects and language patterns. Students make charts showing the script and pronunciation of the language selected for study.

While the museum program is being presented in one area, the audio-visual program is running in a separate classroom. On pre-scheduled days groups of forty to sixty elementary students arrive at the front door of our high school. The high school student teachers meet them, take them to the cafeteria for lunch if the teacher schedules lunch as part of the visit, and then bring them to the museum and audio-visual programs to start the show. The elementary students are divided into two groups. One group watches the audio-visual program taught by the high school students. The other group participates in the activities in the museum. It runs during the regularly scheduled school day, during the time that the high school students are scheduled for the elective course Anthropology.

One must remember that the primary objective is to give the high school students practical activities to undertake in the social sciences. The students formulate the objectives and complete the tasks. The teacher is a guide and assistant who works closely with the students on a one-to-one basis. Student evaluation flows naturally in the relationships that develop between the teacher and students. The secondary school students must teach what they learn. The teacher/director observes these students in the various

roles that they must fulfill to accomplish the goals and objectives of the museum program. This non-traditional approach to student evaluation is effective in that the students demonstrate their knowledge in practical situations. These student/teachers are also observed and evaluated by the visiting elementary students and their teachers. These visitors complete evaluation forms which focus on the student/teacher's performance. The more traditional forms of student evaluation, ex., tests, homework, class performance, etc., are utilized during the meetings of the scheduled elective courses.

EXPORTABILITY:

1. "The concept of the museum in a school is immediately applicable in any educational setting.
2. It is adaptable to any discipline of curricular intention. Its demonstrations provide opportunities for peer instruction and public demonstrations of learning.
3. Its organization is unusually adaptable among subject matters and forms of student activity.
4. Because the museum is tactile, participatory, and individually adaptable, it has value to special education.
5. Because it can emphasize independent study and the display of expertise, it has value to programs for the gifted and talented.

In its Monroe Township realization, the museum in the school has several qualities worth emulating in other settings.

- It is a multi-age instructional center, attracting visits from younger learners, many from outside the school district.
- As an enterprise, the museum is student-run."

[Carr, 1988 p.41-42]

EVIDENCE - EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS:

"From my early interview with Mr. Charles Stein, Principal of Monroe Township High School, the theme of the school as an instrument for fostering the maturity of its learners has been important to me. It is an attractive theme because it is so challenging to articulate this instrumentality in a public school; the circumstances of schooling make the role difficult to sustain. In most instances a school is a controlling mechanism, not an instrumental one; its students push at its edges for more independence and responsibility. Even its teachers carry out the educational mission of the institution with some necessary compromises, for the sake of keeping order.

The discovery, then, of this innovative museum program tends to support optimism. In the midst of a straightforward curriculum, it represents an attempt to offer a rare experience where concepts and objects are matched, where students are teachers, and where the teacher's contribution is informed by a social science discipline more clearly than it is by standard pedagogy. This optimism is supported by the experiences of students, who say that this program exposes them to engaging and relevant concepts, who feel that this environment nurtures their senses of responsibility and maturity, and who admire their teacher for his approach to them as a learner." [Carr, 1988 p.35]

"It is also apparent that a generally appropriate situation for teaching and learning has been created here. The museum is an appropriate conceptual structure for the presentation of material

and non-material culture. The museum program offers the opportunity for high school learners to communicate about their knowledge and to demonstrate it. The entire situation provides rare opportunities for students to experience both the trust of a valued teacher and responsibility for carrying out acts of teaching and learning among others. This is a far more active classroom than any others casually observed in the school. For Mr. Shamy, the educator, this activity and responsiveness is engaging. The program permits him to develop his subject interests and offers the opportunity to associate with his students in a more intimate, collegial role than the traditional classroom does." [Carr, 1988 p.19]

"First, the museum program clearly creates an unusual setting for communication in the school. It is important for two reasons: content and form. The knowledge transmitted here addresses human differences and cultural qualities, and this is rare and important in any classroom at this level. Opportunities for mutual effort, communication to others, and a collegial relationship with a teacher further distinguish this program from other classrooms -- even other innovative classrooms. The desire to achieve such qualities distinguishes not only the museum program itself but also the school that sustains it... Unlike most school experiences, the museum presentations are object-centered, and the messages surrounding these objects are accessible to even young learners because they are grounded in everyday knowledge of food, home, and society. In a larger frame, these object-lessons are about the parts of human culture we often take for granted." [Carr, 1988 p.21]

"While the subject matters of this experience are culture and anthropology, in a sense the real subject is teaching -- responsibility for the learning of another, knowing enough to answer questions, thinking beyond yourself. It is apparent that students feel this deeply and experience that particular kind of intensity that teachers who care about their tasks feel." [Carr, 1988 p.24]

WAS THE EFFECT OF THIS INNOVATION EDUCATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT?

"My observations and verbal evidence suggest that the museum program at Monroe Township High School has been an important and unusual experience for students. In the context of the normal high school curriculum, the experiences of the museum/classroom are important for three reasons:

- These are studies in the social sciences, the most neglected discipline at the secondary level.
- Students have made unique connections between material culture and concepts of human development.
- The museum offers multiple opportunities to communicate knowledge to others in an educative setting.

Finally, the Monroe example contains a deep and explicit emphasis on teaching and communicating. This fulfills the museum's promise as an instrument of information and its dissemination. This emphasis is an essential part of any replication" [Carr, 1988 p. 41-42]

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From : O.P. Bhardwaj, Director (Admin. & Finance), USEFI 
Subject : 1996 Fulbright-Hays Seminars Abroad Program: India Seminar

As per terms and conditions set forth in the award for the subject seminar, each participants is required to complete the curriculum project which is relevant to his/her school's/college's use on an individual or small group basis. As required, we are submitting herewith the following curriculum projects submitted by participants of 1996 Indian seminar:

Patricia Barry ✓
Anne Holland
Melissa Kantor
Diana L. Raham
Julia Rockett
Kimberly Roen
Robert G. Shamy
Robin Weaver
Ronald Wolfson

*

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