

LST 403 – Constructivist Learning Environment Design Documents – Dr Cates

## **Social Studies**

# Global Geography: What is it like to live in a different country?

Submitted

by

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# 1. Project Overview

## *Title*

Global Geography: What is it like to live in a different country?

## *Target Audience*

8<sup>th</sup> grade students in Middle Schools in the United States of America (USA)

## *Overall Goal*

Learners completing this unit plan will be able to increase their knowledge of different countries, and the problems of these countries. They will gain an insight on how it is like to live in a different country by doing research and communicating with their ePALS partners.

## *Rationale*

One of the subjects offered to Middle School students in the USA is Social Studies (SS). A part of the SS component is Geography. Geography unit focuses on 'Human interaction with the Earth', 'Rebuilding the Nation', 'World War 1 & 2', 'The Great Depression', 'The Civil Rights Era', 'The Presidencies of Nixon, Ford, and Carter' and 'The Vietnam Conflict'. Students are not taught about geography beyond the shores of the USA. They are not exposed to world affairs and about the culture and lifestyle of people outside their inclusive community. Therefore, their knowledge of the world is limited.

In the light of global migration and the world becoming a global village, it is thus important to educate the young about life beyond the borders of their home states. By learning and understanding about other cultures, students will be more tolerant, less prejudiced and sensitive to different cultures. As our young will become future leaders of the country, it is imperative that they are educated about global diversity as early as possible.

A Constructivist Learning Environment (CLE) is appropriate for this project as students will be constructing their own understanding of different cultures, country and its problems through: thinking critically, using inquiry learning in research, investigating current events in the

countries selected and creating a problem-solving based project. Students will also be required to come up with some solutions on how to overcome the problems in their chosen country.

### ***Description of the Project***

The project will last for 6 weeks. Each lesson will last for 45 minutes, 2-3 times a week. Starting from the first week, each student will choose a foreign country and will have partners from that country by using the ePALS website. They and their partners will learn to appreciate life in a different country. Using insights from research and their ePALS partners, students will learn about socio-economic, environmental or any other problems that exist in their ePALS partner country; thus they will be able to answer the essential question of the unit: *What is it like to live in a different country?*

The unit will be conducted in stages:

**Week 1:** Review of American lifestyle and culture. Give the main question: *What is it like to live in a different country?* Introduction to ePALS [[www.epals.com](http://www.epals.com)]. Students chose a country for their project.

**Week 2:** Students start communicating with their ePALS partner and ask their partners the set of questions they were given. They will also visit International Bazaar and explore different cultures. They will reflect on what they have learned in their first journal entry.

**Week 3:** Learners continue communication. They learn cross-referencing world news. They have to come up with a critical problem plaguing that country.

**Week 4:** Students make individual PowerPoint presentation about their findings. Then they will form groups with their classmates who have similar problems in the partner countries.

**Week 5:** Work in groups for their problem solving project and prepare Project Exhibition.

**Week 6:** Project Exhibition – Students will be given a kiosk in the school hall to present their research findings to parents and students of their school.

## 2. Needs Assessment

### *Discrepancy Analysis*

Desired Performance: 8<sup>th</sup> grade students should know about world geography and different countries. They should develop a sense of awareness of different cultures and broaden their horizon on different cultures by communicating with people from foreign countries. They should develop empathy to the people all around the world by learning about their country's problems. They should analyze and evaluate resources on the current events of those countries from different perspectives and detect which sources are credible and applicable. They should identify problems of different countries and think critically and creatively to find possible solutions. They should present the problem of their choice and their solution to that specific problem to their classmates clearly.

Current Performance: Elementary school graduates have very limited knowledge on world geography. Most of them even cannot identify which country is in which continent. They do not have enough knowledge on different cultures in the world. They are also not aware of the problems of the people in different countries. Most of them do not even care about what is happening in different parts of the world. When learning information about different countries, they are generally exposed to only one or two media resources that present the situation or the problem of that country with bias.

### *Input-Output Analysis*

Input: In elementary school, there is not any obligatory world geography course that provides students information about foreign countries. Therefore, the learners have not had any kind of background information about the people and culture in different countries. Most of them are greatly influenced by the Hollywood movies that portray other countries inaccurately.

Output: The lack of information on world geography, cultures and civilizations cause students to have a narrow understanding of the world. This situation causes students to have difficulty in life, since they all will be working or studying in our 21<sup>st</sup> century global world where people from different countries work together and share ideas.

*Statistics*

In January of 2000, the Carnegie Corporation of New York brought together representatives from organizations, associations, foundations, and agencies interested in strengthening American understanding of the world through education. They concluded that "American students' knowledge of the world remains limited and that baseline data, assessment and dissemination of new approaches, and sustained commitment to implementation required for institutionalizing in schools do not yet exist." (Barker, 2000, p.2)

Proponents of international education in the elementary and secondary schools in the USA seem to agree with the Carnegie Report conclusions. They believe that building students' world knowledge would enrich the curriculum, engage students, improve school performance, and help children deal with the increasingly diverse communities in which they live "... (but) their success will require that they understand how culture, religion, politics, and history influence the world's social and economic well-being." (Manzo, April 20, 2005, p.5)

Catherine W. Sherer, an educator and the president of Simon and Barklee Inc., a Langley, Washington-based publisher of books with international themes related to content in core subjects stated that "the challenges are exacerbated, though, by the tendency of schools in this country to focus exclusively on the U.S. perspective, as well as by high-stakes standardized testing in core subjects, a lack of instructional materials, and limited classroom time". According to Sherer, "...the reality is that there are 6 billion people in the world, and 95 percent of them don't live here [U.S.] ...Our students have to have an awareness and acknowledgment of the world beyond the confines of [their own] city, state, and country." (Manzo, March 2, 2005 p. 5)

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) 2000 Report, more than one in three students in the public elementary and secondary schools are of an ethnic or racial minority. By 2035, this group will constitute a numerical majority of the K-12 student population (US Department of Commerce, 1996). Currently, more than one in seven children speaks a language other than English at home and over one-third of them are of limited English proficiency (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 1999). Due to immigration trends, the number of language minority students will also rise.

Consequently, a project of such a nature is deemed important to widen students' perspectives of global issues and raise their awareness of the other worlds and cultures existing beyond the USA.

### ***Market Analysis***

Most of the products available for instructions come in the form of Web sites, books and audio-visual programs.

*Some web sites:*

1. Geography Matters  
<http://www.geomatters.com/products/category.asp?CID=39>
2. MrDonn.org  
<http://www.mrdonn.org/geography.html>
3. Geography World  
<http://members.aol.com/bowermanb/101.html>
4. Geography Sites  
[http://www.internet4classrooms.com/social\\_geography.htm](http://www.internet4classrooms.com/social_geography.htm)
5. The Geology Society of America  
<http://www.geosociety.org/educate/resources.htm>
6. GeoHive  
[http://geography.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ&sdn=geography&cdn=education&tm=45&gps=56\\_789\\_1276\\_588&f=20&su=p284.5.420.ip\\_&tt=2&bt=0&bts=0&zu=http%3A//www.xist.org/](http://geography.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ&sdn=geography&cdn=education&tm=45&gps=56_789_1276_588&f=20&su=p284.5.420.ip_&tt=2&bt=0&bts=0&zu=http%3A//www.xist.org/)
7. The World Factbook  
[http://geography.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ&sdn=geography&cdn=education&tm=731&gps=114\\_1226\\_1276\\_588&f=20&su=p284.5.420.ip\\_&tt=2&bt=0&bts=0&zu=http%3A//www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/](http://geography.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?zi=1/XJ&sdn=geography&cdn=education&tm=731&gps=114_1226_1276_588&f=20&su=p284.5.420.ip_&tt=2&bt=0&bts=0&zu=http%3A//www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/)

While some of these web sites offer general printed information about geography, they have not been prepared for educational purposes. Learners are not able to reinforce what they have learned using practice questions to check their understanding as it occurs in the learning process. As these web sites are available to learners free of charge, the information is not presented in a

structured lesson format and may be difficult to follow for middle school students. The validity of information on some of the web sites is also questionable as we are not informed of the background of the authors or contributing authors.

*Some books:*

1. Geography Books  
<http://rs.prs.k12.nj.us/lmc/GeographyBooks.htm>
2. Geography for Life  
Publisher: National Geographic  
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/education/standards.html>
3. Geography for All  
ISBN: 1-30000-108-3  
Author(s): Homeschool Learning Network, Inc.  
[http://www.homeschoolestore.com/catalog/product\\_info.php?products\\_id=7849](http://www.homeschoolestore.com/catalog/product_info.php?products_id=7849)
4. Geography Books & Instructional Materials  
<http://www.barbsbooks.com/geograph.htm>

These books are mostly written for the general public unless specified. The content varies from World flags to Atlases to world cultures. Besides the cost of the books (ranging from as low as \$4.75 to as high as \$120), students need to extract relevant information from an overwhelming large amount of information. They would need to put aside at least a few hours to read and understand the content. Most of these books do not include comprehension and higher order thinking skills questions that check the understanding, analysis and synthesis of the material.

Additionally, most of the other geography books in the market cater to Grade 1-6 or to high school students. Students in middle school need to resort to books that are either easy or difficult for their comprehension, since there is not any appropriate geography book according to their level.

*Some audio-visual programs:*

1. Geography Songs  
Producer: Audio Memory  
<http://www.checbooks.com/Index.php?maincat=Geography+%26+Cultures&subcat=K++12&product=798>
2. Geography for students  
Producer: Schlessinger Media  
<http://www.libraryvideo.com/sm/geofsdvd.asp?mscssid=G08HDL333VQ38KA1FB8JG69X2FMMBSL8>

Therefore, although it may seem that there are many available resources on the market, in fact there are limited resources catering to middle school students. It is timely to have such a project to introduce students to the world and entice them to research beyond the scope of the project.

### **3. Goals and Purposes**

#### ***Goal***

Learners completing this unit plan will be able to increase their knowledge on different countries, and the problems of these countries. They will gain an insight on how it is like to live in a different country by doing research and communicating with their ePALS partners.

#### ***Purposes***

This section gives information about the activity and the specific purposes of this constructivist design project. Here, you will find why it is relevant for learners and why the students will be doing the activity.

The purpose of the activity is to develop students' knowledge and understanding of different countries and cultures. As the target audience does not have enough knowledge about the world geography and cultures, this lesson will provide them basic knowledge on the topic. Through these activities, they will learn to be sensitive and respectful to people from different countries. They would also be able to develop empathy towards other cultures and perceive other people's problem as theirs. This activity will give them a vision to look at the world from a different perspective and develop their world vision. By achieving this, learners will become better citizens of the world who are thinking critically, searching and suggesting solutions to global problems. They will become citizens who are sensitive to world problems such as hunger, poverty so forth and try to make a change in the world for a better peaceful world.

One purpose of this unit is also to prepare students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills which are needed for the global market. They will need background information on world geography and cultures as they will be working in a global world where people from different countries are working together and sharing ideas. Having limited knowledge on the world would create difficulties in their interaction with the society. As USA is a highly diverse multi-cultural society in which many ethnic groups live together, American students should have at least a basic knowledge about the world and world cultures. In this way, students' interaction and communication with different groups become much more successful and healthy.

Another purpose of this activity is foster students' collaboration and communication skills so that they can work with others. They learn the importance of sharing information and collaborating with each other while solving problems. This will help them in their life after graduation when they get into the 21<sup>st</sup> century global market and will be asked to work in groups and involve in projects.

## **4. Learner Analysis**

### ***General description***

The intended audience for this unit is middle school students. In terms of gender distribution of the target audience, male and female population is nearly equal. They are in the range of ages 13-14 years old. They come from varied ethnicity, religious beliefs, and family socio-economic status. A large percentage of them have no passport and have not traveled to other countries before; although some have traveled to other nearby states on vacations.

### ***Strengths***

Most of these students have relatively good speaking and listening skills. They participate in class discussions and are attentive to their classmates' opinions. They are also generally positive and enthusiastic in making friends and are curious to learn new things especially if the topic is engaging and related to life in general.

They are reasonably exposed to the Internet and computers. A.C. Nielson reported that these students are spending more time using the Internet as a tool for school work assistance, playing games, communicating with friends and surfing. Their savvyness in using the computer applications and the Internet is their one of their strong point. In fact, the Pew Internet & American Life Project found that 87 percent of teens (or about 21 millions) go online with 59 percent of older "wired" teens (15-17 years old) go online once a day or more.

### ***Weaknesses***

Many students in America's middle schools are below world average in reading and writing skills. They do not read widely. They generally do not spend their spare time reading books. The target audience has difficulty in writing essays and organizing their thoughts on a paper.

In many middle schools that serve large numbers of poor kids, the students' diverse needs simply overwhelm the teaching and learning process. The focus of the school shifts from academic achievement to student support. Hence, these students often have average or limited interpersonal skills and do not have a good grasp of research knowledge.

Being young, these students are impressionable and are often influenced by their peers. Most of them have Hollywood-tainted views on world affairs and are also highly influenced by the media and assume that whatever information printed or published on the media and on the Internet to be the truth.

### ***Potential area of difficulty***

Among some of the potential area of difficulty is their unwillingness to learn about people's culture. They also lack background knowledge on this topic. Their prevailing biases on world issues are mostly based on media portrayal. Hence, this is one of the serious potential areas of difficulty.

### ***Strategies***

1. To capitalize on learners' familiarity of computer applications and their high spending time on the Internet, the students will communicate with their ePALS online.
2. To take advantage of learners' enthusiasm in making new friends, part of the component of the assessment will be their reflections on their interactions with their ePALS partners.
3. To overcome learners' writing deficiencies, students will be required to write journal entries. This will allow them to reflect their ideas on writing.
4. In order to overcome learners' difficulties in reading, they will be encouraged to read various sources such as magazines, newspapers, books, diaries, travel journals.
5. To enhance the learning experience of students, this project will use positive reinforcements for learners' progress through their project presentation to parents and fellow students.
6. To avoid possible anxiety for the learners wondering if there is someone watching over their backs, this project should remind learners that no one is over their back and forcing them; learners are in control of their own research and learning.

7. To increase learners' listening skills, this project will ask learners to evaluate other students' presentations.
8. To help learners improve their speaking skills, this project will give the learners the opportunity to conduct oral presentations of their research findings.
9. To take advantage of students' listening and speaking skills, class and group discussions will be used throughout this unit plan. This will allow students to view multiple perspectives in seeking solutions to the problems they are working on,
10. To overcome learners' deficiencies in interpersonal communications, students will be encouraged to work in groups in class as well as working with their ePALS partners.
11. To increase learners' knowledge on world geography, and eliminate their prejudices to different cultures, students will be required to do research on foreign countries and develop an understand and empathy towards other cultures.
12. To increase students' motivation or enthusiasm about the topic, students will visit International Bazaar and will be able to experience different cultures at a close range.

## **5. Task/Content Analysis**

This section lays out the content to be covered in 2 different representations. The first representation is “Unit Plan” of this CLE design document (see Table 1). It displays the learning steps and the progression of the instructional material from start to finish week by week. The diagram is read from top to bottom and left to right according to the learning skills/goals and higher order thinking skill level (HOTs) of that week. The diagram is composed of 6 weeks. First week is introduction to the topic that helps students personalize the topic and gain learners’ attention to the main content. The last week is the project submission and school presentation week in which the students will be finalizing their research and presenting their work to the school. In between these weeks, students process and construct their understanding of the topic through a given serial of activities. Each week is displayed with their content objectives and activities that indicate students’ which skill are being developed.

The second analysis is “Analysis of Problem-based Content” given in Table 2. It has 3 columns titled as “Problem”, “Solution” “Teaching Techniques/Examples” and 6 rows. Problem column corresponds to problems that might be encountered during the implementation of this design. Solution column proposes the appropriate solution for the given problem. The last column explains the teaching approaches that will be used to bring the solution to the problem.

## UNIT PLAN

Table 1

Unit	Content Objectives	Socio-cultural Objectives	Reading	Speaking	Listening	Writing	Technology	HOTs	Research
<b>Week 1</b>	- Review your own culture and lifestyle (personalize the topic) - Learn about world geography	Introduction to different countries, cultures and lifestyles		Discussion on American life style	Listen to their friends in class discussion	Make a mind-map on the topic		Knowledge Comprehension Analysis	Discuss the main question: <i>What is it like to live in a different country?</i>
<b>Week 2</b>	- General understanding of the culture and lifestyles in different countries - Learn about different countries and cultures by visiting the local university's International Bazaar	Learn about different cultures		Discussion on the given question (with ePALS partner)	Listen to their friends and participate in discussion  Listen the presentations in International Bazaar	Write Journal Entry #1 on the main question and reflections about the visit to the Bazaar	Email Chat	Knowledge Comprehension Application	Begin research for presentation and project
<b>Week 3</b>	- Learn cross-referencing world news - check material reliability	Learn about current events in different countries	Read newspapers and articles	Discussion-compare and contrast the news	Listen to their friends' analysis on the events	Write Journal Entry #2 reflect their opinions on current events	Use of Internet	Analysis Application Evaluation	Search online news both from USA news and local news

Unit	Content Objectives	Socio-cultural Objectives	Reading	Speaking	Listening	Writing	Technology	HOTs	Research
<b>Week 4</b>	- Develop speaking, and presentation skills	Inform other about different countries and their problems		Individual oral presentation	Listen to their friends' presentations and take notes	Write Journal Entry #3 to reflect their opinions on other countries' problems	PowerPoint Graphics	Knowledge Comprehension Analysis Evaluation (peer assessment)	
<b>Week 5</b>	- Foster collaboration and group work skills - Review the elements of problem solving based project - Develop research skills - Synthesize their findings & work on project	- Define the problems and try to find solutions - Develop empathy towards different cultures and understand their problems	Research (books, newspaper, magazines, articles)	Exchange of information on the problem of different countries	Listen to group members'  Use negotiation to come up with their solutions		Internet for doing research	Knowledge Comprehension Analysis Synthesis Evaluation	Gather information from library, the web and from other resources
<b>Week 6</b>	- Develop confidence to present in public	- Share information with the public - Contribute to global Sensitivity		School presentation	Listen and answer questions	Write Journal Entry #4 to do self-evaluation		Knowledge Evaluation	

## Analysis of Problem-based Content

Table 2

Problem	Solution	Teaching Techniques Examples
Lack of background information on the content	Get reliable information on the content	Use inquiry based learning and let students explore and build information on the content
Need to learn about cooperation and group collaboration	Show students that learning from each other is important	Require students to work on groups, participate in class discussion and have them do peer assessment
Need to develop empathy to the people from different countries	Recognize that the country people live in affect their lives	Require students to communicate with students from different countries and encourage them to explore life and problems of their ePALS partners countries
Need to be more involved in meta-cognitive process based activities	Foster students' thinking skills and ask them personalized questions	Keep journals and helping students to express their opinions on what their life would be like if they would live in a different country  Use peer assessment and self evaluation activities
Might have prejudiced ideas for foreign countries and/or have misinformation	Learn from the source by directly communicating to the students in foreign countries	Get ePALS account and assign students ePALS partners from foreign countries
Unwillingness to learn the content	Engage students in fun activities	Take students to International Bazaar and let them do a school presentation

## **6. Learning Resources**

### ***ePALS Web site***

Students will be introduced to the ePALS Web site ([www.epals.com](http://www.epals.com)), the world's largest K-12 connected learning community. The ePALS portal provides a fun and safe environment where learners around the world can share and exchange knowledge that foster literacy, language and critical thinking skills. There are about 123,490 registered classrooms, with more than 7 million students and educators, in 191 countries participating in various projects. Prior to starting the Unit, teacher will send letters to parents requesting permission for students to be assigned an ePALS account for the project use. Teacher will supervise students during the initial stages of ePALS communications, after which students can then communicate with their ePALS independently during lesson time.

### ***Journals***

Every student will be asked to keep a small book or journal to record their reflections and thoughts on the questions posed to them or activities they go through weekly. Through these journals, teacher will get an insight on how students think about the tasks given to them. Journals serve as a recording of students' thought process.

### ***PowerPoint***

Students are encouraged to do an individual presentation of their research findings about their countries and their problems using PowerPoint. The incorporation of technology allows students to practice using computer applications and increase their technology skills.

### ***Internet***

The Internet hosts a wealth of information and resources. Students will be encouraged to use the Internet to gather information for their research and project. At the start of the project, students will be reminded by the teacher on the issues of copyright and the etiquettes when using the Internet which they have learned from the previous semester. Students will be encouraged to acknowledge the authors and the sources of their

information. They will also be reminded on the importance of cross-referencing the materials they have obtained.

### ***Newspapers, journals, magazines***

Besides the Internet, students will be encouraged to search for information in the printed media such as newspapers, journals and magazines. The printed media serve as useful learning resources as students can access chronicled materials and relevant archived materials. Students will be exposed to multiple perspectives when they go through these materials. Students will also be able to compare and contrast different view points, and cross-reference materials.

### ***Posters***

Designing posters that will display the information of their research is one way of enhancing students' creativity. Students are 'forced' to extract only relevant information and condense a huge amount of knowledge in bites-size information for the exhibition.

### ***International Bazaar***

By attending the International Bazaar, students will gain greater insight of other countries' cultures that are being exhibited. Students will get to experience the sights, sounds and even taste the food that will be on sale at the bazaar. Students can also talk to citizens of different countries and gather more information on their lifestyle, costumes, and other socio-economic factors that might be useful for their research.

## 7. Assessment Plan

This section displays how the students will be assessed during the implementation of this CLE design. Here you will find brief information about what constructivists believe about assessment and then how this plan exhibits the characteristics of constructivist assessment.

Constructivists believe that the learners should be assessed with performance-based assessment tools like projects, portfolios rather than standard-based assessment tools like multiple choice questions, fill in the blanks. Rather than there is only right or wrong as in the multiple choice questions, constructivists do not look for such a learning outcome. The outcome is the learners' progress of their knowledge and skills. Therefore, there can be multiple correct answers for constructivists.

Constructivists choose performance-based assessment, because they believe that learning is a progress in which students build their own understanding of ideas. Therefore, educators need to provide students multiple tasks and activities in which learners will be able to demonstrate their own progress of understanding of the topic.

Constructivist designs follow authentic assessment in which learners are provided multiple ways to demonstrate their knowledge on the topic. Authentic assessment also allows students to think creatively and present their understanding of knowledge meaningfully to others. As constructivism suggests, students should involve in authentic tasks (realistic problems or scenarios, real-life like situations) so that they can relate the topic to their life. Therefore, doing projects and preparing portfolios allow students to involve in real-life like tasks which allow them to make connections between what they learn to what they do in life. Students cannot relate real-life tasks on fill in the blanks exercises and multiple choice answer questions, since these types of assessment just require learners to memorize information.

This CLE design uses authentic assessment by evaluating students' performance in multiple pools and allowing them to use their creativity to come up with solutions to the

specific problems and in the end presenting their understanding on the topic. Evaluation of the students' performance on the problem-solving project and presentations suits to the authentic assessment features. Both projects and presentations will demonstrate students' progress and growth in knowledge (content). Students will be evaluated according to the rubrics they have been given.

CLE designs also require that learning include reflective activities like journals. In this design, learners are encouraged to think and reflect on the knowledge they learn. Through the use of student reflections, learners will be able to criticize and review the knowledge they have constructed. Students will not only reflect their ideas in their journals but also in the class discussions and group activities. These activities give chance to students to exchange ideas on the topic.

In this CLE design, students use technological communication tools and research to monitor their own construction of knowledge, since they learn from their ePALS partners as well as from their class discussions. They discuss and check the credibility of the information from various sources. Thus, they monitor their own construction of knowledge by evaluating and analyzing the resources they find from various sources.

This constructivist design uses social learning theory by its group work project and communication with the ePALS partners. These activities foster learners' social growth. After students hand in their project, they will be asked to do a group evaluation. Each member of the group will assess their other group members according to a list of points and hand it to the teacher. This activity will be used as a way to assess the social growth of the students.

In this CLE unit plan, students also do a self-assessment on their school presentation. They will evaluate their own performance of the task and ask themselves these questions "My strong points", "Points to consider" and "Areas that I would do differently next time". This allows learners to think more on their performance and asks how they can

improve themselves. As self-monitored learning improves students' metacognition, through self-assessment, this CLE design assesses learners' metacognitive growth.

Constructivist designs' evaluation phase consists of formative and summative evaluations of student learning.

Formative evaluation takes place during the interaction with students. In this constructive design, when the teacher elicits information from students and checks students' understanding in *explore* and *explain* stages, teacher will be implementing formative assessment. Purpose of formative evaluation is to improve the quality of learning. Formative evaluation is an ongoing assessment that is considered as coaching for high achievement of the learners. Examples of such formative assessment are class discussion where the teacher guides the students, in group discussions where the teacher walks around and monitors and asks questions to students that will help them to think more and improve their projects.

Summative assessment takes place at the end of the unit or learning program and it assesses the cumulative learning experiences. It is a comprehensive assessment that is used to check students' level of learning of the topic. Summative assessment allows educator to ensure that students have met the goals and objectives of the lesson/s. Summative assessment will be conducted by using the rubrics for individual presentation and problem-solving project. Journals and school presentation will be assessed and added to the final grade. All of these works will show students' cumulative performance at the end of the unit.

Course requirements and their percentages are as the following:

Journal: 20 % (All 4 entries are accomplished)

Individual Oral Presentation: 20 %

Problem-Solving Project (Group): 50 %

School presentation: 10%

Here are the rubrics that will be used in this CLE design.

*Rubrics*

**Problem-solving Project Scoring Guide**

<b>Category</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Content</b>	<p>Project shows in-depth background about the chosen countries'/ or region's circumstances.</p> <p>Project shows a clear understanding of previous actions taken to prevent the problem in these countries.</p> <p>Project demonstrates analysis of data and information to evaluate causes and possible solutions to an issue.</p> <p>Project clearly describes and explains action plan in detail.</p>	<p>Project shows general background about a country's/region's circumstances.</p> <p>Project shows some understanding of previous actions taken to prevent the problem.</p> <p>Project demonstrates some analysis of data and information to evaluate causes and possible solutions to an issue.</p> <p>Proposal describes and explains action plan in some detail.</p>	<p>Project shows minimal background about a country's/region's circumstances.</p> <p>Project shows a limited understanding of previous actions taken to prevent the problem.</p> <p>Project demonstrates little analysis of data and information to evaluate causes and possible solutions to an issue.</p> <p>Proposal describes and explains action plan in general terms.</p>	X 6	/30
<b>Organization</b>	<p>The beginning of the project is very engaging and captures the reader's interest.</p> <p>Transitions between ideas are smooth, logical, and seamless.</p> <p>Conclusion effectively summarizes the project and is related to the whole.</p> <p>Project answers the Main Question knowledgeably and thoughtfully.</p>	<p>The beginning of the project is engaging and mostly captures the reader's interest.</p> <p>Transitions between ideas are smooth and mostly logical.</p> <p>Conclusion summarizes the points and is related to the whole.</p> <p>Project answers the Main Question generally.</p>	<p>The beginning of the project is somewhat engaging.</p> <p>Transitions between ideas are somewhat logical, although rough or awkward.</p> <p>Conclusion is ineffective and may not relate to the whole.</p> <p>Project does not answer the Main Question.</p>	X 4	/20

Category	5	3	1	Weight	Total
<b>Collaboration</b>	<p>I contribute many ideas and do my share of research. I listen respectfully to my peers and provide constructive feedback.</p> <p>Work load between the project members is divided equally and everyone know the topic thoroughly.</p>	<p>I contribute some ideas and do some research. I listen to my peers.</p> <p>Work load is somewhat unbalanced between the group members, but everyone has a general understanding on the topic.</p>	<p>I listen to my peers, but I do not contribute much.</p> <p>Work load is not equal between the members. Some members did not do any work and do not have any knowledge on the topic.</p>	X 4	/20
<b>Sources</b>	<p>Source information is collected for all graphics and information sources.</p> <p>Documentation is in the desired format.</p> <p>A variety of sources (at least 5) are from valid sources.</p>	<p>Source information is collected for all graphics and information sources.</p> <p>Documentation is mostly in the desired format.</p> <p>At least three valid sources are used.</p>	<p>Source information is collected for some graphics and information sources.</p> <p>Documented is not in the desired format.</p> <p>Only a few sources are used.</p>	X 3	/15
<b>School presentation Materials</b>	<p>Data is displayed graphically, and graphics strongly support the action plan.</p>	<p>Data is displayed graphically, and graphics show some support of the action plan.</p>	<p>Data is not displayed graphically.</p>	X 3	/15
				<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>/100</b>

**Individual Oral Presentation Rubric**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Category</b>	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Promising</b>	<b>Minimal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>Content</b>	An abundance of material clearly related to thesis; points are clearly made and all evidence supports thesis; varied use of materials.	Sufficient information that relates to thesis; many good points made but there is an uneven balance and little variation	There is a great deal of information that is not clearly connected to the thesis.	Thesis not clear; information included that does not support thesis in any way.
<b>Coherence &amp; Organization</b>	Thesis is clearly stated and developed; specific examples are appropriate and clearly develop thesis; conclusion is clear; shows control; flows together well; good transitions; well organized.	Most information presented in logical sequence; generally very well organized but better transitions from idea to idea and medium to medium needed.	Concept and ideas are loosely connected; lack of clear transitions; flow and organization are broken up.	Presentation is disjointed; does not flow; development of thesis is vague; no apparent logical order of presentation.
<b>Creativity</b>	Very original presentation of material; uses the unexpected to full advantage; captures audience's attention.	Some originality apparent; good variety and blending of materials/media.	Little or no variation; material presented with little originality or interpretation.	Repetitive with little or no variety; insufficient use of multimedia.
<b>Material</b>	Balanced use of multimedia materials; properly used to develop thesis; use of media is varied and appropriate	Use of multimedia not as varied and not as well connected to thesis	Uneven use of multimedia materials; lacks smooth transition from one medium to another; multimedia not clearly connected to thesis.	Little or no multimedia used or ineffective use of multimedia; imbalance in use of materials—too much of one, not enough of another.
<b>Speaking Skills</b>	Clear articulation; proper volume; steady rate; good posture and eye contact; enthusiasm; confidence.	Clear articulation but not as polished.	Some mumbling; little eye contact; uneven rate; little or no expression.	Inaudible or too loud; no eye contact; rate too slow/fast; speaker seemed uninterested.
<b>Length of Presentation</b>	Within two minutes of allotted time.	Within four minutes of allotted time.	Within six minutes of allotted time.	Too long or too short; ten or more minutes above or below.

**Oral Presentation Evaluation Rubric**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Exemplary</b>	<b>Promising</b>	<b>Minimal</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>Content</b>				
<b>Coherence &amp; Organization</b>				
<b>Creativity</b>				
<b>Material</b>				
<b>Speaking Skills</b>				
<b>Length of Presentation</b>				

Revised version of the rubric from

[http://www.phschool.com/professional\\_development/rubrics/oral\\_presentation.pdf](http://www.phschool.com/professional_development/rubrics/oral_presentation.pdf)

This last form will be used by the teacher to evaluate individual oral presentation. Students will use it to evaluate each other's presentations, too.

## **8. Instructional Plan**

### ***Description of the Constructivist Learning Model***

This instructional unit is based on constructivist educational philosophy and uses the 7E learning cycle and instructional model.

The basic fundamental of the constructivist model is that learners construct knowledge in an environment where they may collaborate in groups and use various tools and information resources in “their guided pursuit of learning goals and problem solving activities” (Wilson, 1996, p. 5). Active learning environment will expose learners to multiple perspectives and allow them to reflect whilst solving real-life problems. Both inquiry-based learning; and exploration and discovery will be used throughout the unit to allow learners to incorporate knowledge into his/her own view of the world.

### ***Inquiry-based Learning***

Inquiry-based learning refers to a student-centered, active learning approach focusing on critical thinking, questioning, and problem-solving. It is associated with the idea "involve me and I understand." Through the process of inquiry, individuals construct much of their understanding of the world. Inquiry is not about seeking the right answer, rather seeking appropriate resolutions to questions and issues.

### ***Scaffolded Learning***

Scaffolded Learning refers to providing supporting information to a learner which is available to the learner at his/her discretion. If the learner feels that at some juncture of the unit, he/she needs supporting information in order to continue with the knowledge construction process, that information can be provided by the teacher.

### ***Social Negotiation/Collaborative Activity***

Of importance to knowledge construction is the need for social interaction between learners who are part of the same learning process. By collaborating with one another,

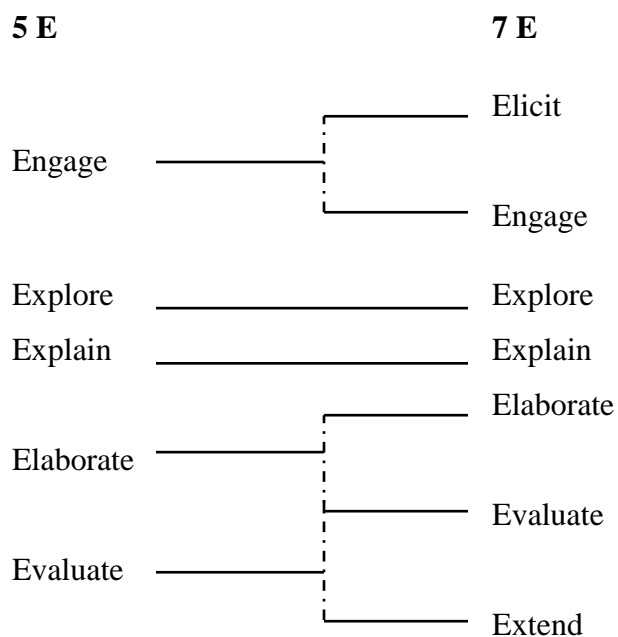
learners negotiate socially on goals, processes and products. Collaboration facilitates the assimilation of knowledge by learners.

### ***Multiple perspectives***

Through the course of students' collaborative activities, students are exposed to multiple viewpoints. They are able to see things from a different angle.

### ***Description of the 7E learning cycle and instructional model***

The 7E learning model serves as an extension of the 5E learning cycle and instructional model (Bybee, 1997). The proposed 7E model as advocated by Arthur Eisenkraft expands 'engage', 'elaborate' and 'evaluate' into the following:



#### ***Elicit***

Teacher asks students questions in order to draw out prior understanding about the topic.

#### ***Engage***

Teacher engages students on the topic by involving them and making them relate to everyday activities of happenings.

*Explore*

The first part of the exploration requires students to perform a task that allows them to discover more about the topic.

*Explain*

Students find out the reasons or ‘explanations’ of their discovery.

*Elaborate*

Students perform tasks that build on their new found knowledge and construct further knowledge.

*Evaluate*

Students assess their findings and compare them with the others.

*Extend*

Students’ knowledge of the topic is challenged and they are encouraged to explore further.

The following section presents how this constructivist design incorporates the 7 E Model. Instructional plan is organized according to 6 weeks of learning episodes.

*Week 1:* In the first week, class will do a review of American lifestyle and culture before they get into the topic that will be taught. They will answer the question of “How it is like to live in US.” Teacher will **Elicit** answers and then asks learners to form groups of 4. Students will brainstorm about their own lifestyle and culture and they will draw mind maps in groups and **Explore** the topic. This task will help the learners to call their prior knowledge about US lifestyle. Students collaborate by working in groups and this develops their social skills. Teacher will monitor students during this activity. Then, they will **Explain** their mind maps to the whole class. Students will **Elaborate** their knowledge in class discussion. In their discussion, teacher will guide them and use formative assessment. S/he will encourage them by praising well-thought ideas and give support to

them to think more. This scaffolding activity will develop learners' meta-cognitive skills. The class *Evaluates* their peer's analysis of American lifestyle.

Students will be *Engaged* into the subject and relate it to the main topic of this unit plan. Students will think about their lives and then connect the ideas they discuss to other countries and cultures. So they will *Extend* their thinking about the lifestyles in different countries when teacher gives the main question: "What is it like to live in a different country?" Teacher introduces the use of ePALS and reminds students of email etiquette that they were learned last semester. Teacher asks students to choose a country for their project and presentation. Learners come up with the country that they will explore.

Teacher will introduce communication with the students from all around the world through ePALS Web site. Students will select a country that they are interested in and learn about those countries from a partner student overseas. Teacher gives the students a set of questions and asks them to contact ePALS partners. Then students try to get answers from their partners. These questions foster students to *Explore* the life in their ePALS partner's country. Communication with their partners will help students to *Explore* life in different countries.

*Week 2:* Students start communicating with their ePALS partner before coming to class and ask their partners set of questions they were given. Teacher will give these questions as a guideline to follow so that students will be directed towards the main goal of the unit. This is a scaffolding strategy which provides guidance to learners about the topics they can talk with their ePALS partners. Students can also ask questions that they want to learn about that country/culture.

After they communicate with their ePALS partners, teacher will *Elicit* some of the answers from the students and tell them compare their previous knowledge and ideas of that country, this will *Engage* students to the topic, since it recalls their previous ideas and requires them to compare them to their new findings. The class will discuss answers.

Within the same week, teacher will take students to a local university's International Bazaar. Students will observe cultures of different ethnic groups that are presented in the Bazaar. With this activity, they will have the chance to **Explore** different cultures and take notes on their observations. This activity will **Elaborate** and expand students' knowledge on different countries and cultures.

Students will **Explain** and reflect on what they have learned from International Bazaar and their ePALS partners in their first journal entry.

Teacher will give content guidelines to be covered in individual oral presentations. Teacher will ask students to begin research for their presentation. Through research, they will **Elaborate** their knowledge and build new knowledge on their current knowledge.

*Week 3:* Learners continue communication and do research for their individual presentation. Teacher asks and **Elicits** students' knowledge on the current events of their ePALS partner's country. Teacher asks a question for class debate on "How do these current events affect people's lives?" This question is posed to students to **Engage** on the topic and let them think more about their knowledge on the main question, "What is it like to live in a different country?" This activity helps to develop students' meta-cognitive skills. Students will **Explore** current events in their partners' countries and compare the depictions of these events from both the US news and the local news of that country. They will **Explain** and ask their partners' analysis of these current events. They will **Elaborate** their knowledge on the topic.

Through this way, students will be able to critically assess and **Evaluate** the reliability of sources. They will learn how to do cross-referencing while learning information about the topic. This will also contribute to learners' research skills as they will learn how to reach a more credible source of information.

Then, they have to come up with a critical problem plaguing that country. They will do a project on that problem and try to find solutions to that problem. This activity will **Extend** learners to look for new questions and explore further on the content.

Students will also write Journal Entry # 2 and reflect their opinions on these events and explain how these events affect people's lives. This activity will allow them to express themselves and become more reflective on their own learning process.

*Week 4:* Students will make an individual PowerPoint presentation about their partner country. They will present basic information about that country (Where is that country? What kind of jobs are there? What are the current events? How do they affect life? so forth) and identify a critical problem of their ePALS partner's country that they will be using for their project. These guideline questions will be given to the students beforehand. Each student will **Explain** these points in their presentation. They will be assessed according to the Oral Presentation Rubric. During the presentation, students who are listening will **Evaluate** their friends according to the Presentation Evaluation Rubric. This peer assessment activity includes both social learning and meta-cognitive growth, since students get feedback from their peers and think about their own performance. Learners **Extend** their knowledge on their own performance by getting feedback from their friends and teacher. During these presentations, all students **Extend** their knowledge on the classmates' partner country by listening each other. This presentation activity will include content type of assessment, since students search and learn the topic and get evaluated on the content.

Students will write Journal Entry # 3. They will reflect their opinions on one other country's problem.

*Week 5:* Teacher draws a table and **Elicits** what kind of problems are presented in class. This recalls students' knowledge on the presentations that were presented last week. After they present their partner's country's problem (war, hunger, health problems, employment, poverty or education... so forth), they will work with their classmates who

have the same problem in a different country in groups of 3. They will work on a Problem-Solving based project and do research on the topic of their chose. In this activity, students will state a problem clearly and think creatively how to solve that specific problem. Another purpose is that students will learn how to cooperate, form alliances and solve problems as a group. Students will be able to cooperate with the people who experience the same or the similar problem in different countries and share ideas on how to solve that problem. The purpose is that the learners should be able to **Engage** in critical discourse aim to clarify the lifestyles in foreign countries and develop justifiable decisions about the problem they choose.

Students will work together and explain problem of their ePALS partners. They will divide the work, search and **Explore** why this problem occurred in those countries, how the problem affects life. They will explain each other their findings and get these materials together. They will **Elaborate** their findings on the problem and the possible solutions. Students will discuss solutions in their group and then prepare a problem-solving project. Thought this activity, teacher will monitor students' progress and act as a facilitator.

*Week 6:* During this week, students will continue to work on their project and use class time. At the end of the week, they will exhibit their projects to the school. Students will be given a kiosk in the school hall to present their research findings to parents, teachers and students of their school. School presentation will help to improve students' speaking and social skills. It will also assist students to develop self confidence to present material in public. Another purpose of this presentation is to allow students to learn from each other and implement the social learning theory not just inside the classroom but also at the whole school.

At the next class, students will submit a self-evaluation on their project and presentation. They will assess their social, content growth. This task is a metacognitive type of assessment since students will answer questions "My strong points", "Points to consider", and "Areas that I would do differently next time?" This **Evaluation** activity will give the

students opportunity to think about their own learning progression and assess their own skills and abilities.

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