

How to Replicate This Program – The Meadowbrook School of Weston

2013 Jaffarian Award Winner

1. **Title of program:** “Transforming Tales”

2. **Summary of program:**

Third grade social studies curriculum designed to help students develop a deeper understanding of the interrelationships between the US (and themselves) and other places in the world. The year starts with a focus on geography. Students see the connection between climate, and geography and how it shapes a culture. Students study two or three countries in depth. Their study culminates in a student-run cultural fair, designed to showcase student knowledge and cultural awareness of a particular country. In library we move from the general to the specific and look at fairy tales from the country the students are now studying in the classroom. The specific country changes from year to year. Students divide into self-selected groups (2-3 participants) and write a fairy tale set in that country, drawing from examples to which they have been introduced in library. As a final product, students produce a finished tale.

3. **Why would other school librarians want to replicate this program?**

We believe this program is easily modifiable. Classroom teachers and specialist participation make a difference. Instead of focusing on literature, the program could be tried in another discipline. For example, if students are studying the American Revolution in Social Studies, in the library they might read an historical fiction/diary about the Revolutionary War, then write and illustrate their own narratives.

4. **Suggested grade level:** 2-4 grade

5. **Suggested participant group size:** 10-15 students

6. **Individuals or Groups within school to collaborate with:**

Music, Art, Language Arts, possibly foreign language

7. **Individuals or Groups within local community to collaborate with:**

Depending on the target country, librarian should seek to connect with people from the target country.

8. **Program preparation time:**

Approximately 11 hours: A 1-hour meeting to present to faculty; e.g., a division meeting program presented (classroom teacher); 3 2-hour meetings with teachers/librarian directly involved; 4 hours of resource assessment and development

for librarian.

9. Program implementation time:

Although time could be condensed to a semester, the way we implemented this program takes almost an entire school year, culminating in the cultural fair at the end of May.

10. Materials needed:

In introducing the unit, we used:

- “Noodlehead Stories: World Tales Kids Can Read and Tell” (Hamilton & Weiss, August House 2000).
- “How and Why Stories: World Tales Kids can Read and Tell” (Hamilton & Weiss, August House 1999), introduction to fairy tales.

We use Jill Williams’s definition at Teachers Network:

<http://teachersnetwork.org/teachnet-lab/ps171/jwilliams/fairytales/fairytalesld002.htm>
and stories from the country studied.

Other materials as necessary, depending on the final project. For example, this past year the children studied Jamaica so we focused on the country’s strong oral tradition and each child used an iPad to record a story about a family memory. Another year, students used LEGOs® to build a scene from a fairy tale.

11. Subject areas covered:

- social studies
- art
- music
- language arts
- foreign language
- culture

12. Curriculum standards covered:

Key ideas and detail; Craft and structure; Integration of knowledge and ideas; Vocabulary acquisition and use.

13. Skills (Please include any skills acquired by students participating in the program, from [AASL’s Standards for a 21st Century Learner](#)):

This program exposes students to the following AASL standards:

Standard 1: Inquire, think critically and gain knowledge. Students gain knowledge when they learn about fairy tales and other story forms (such as “How and Why” stories). In this program, children learn that each country has its unique

traditions, but that there are common threads throughout cultures.

Standard 2: Draw Conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to new situations and create new knowledge: Students create “new” knowledge when they create a fairy tale of their own. After examining common tales, students come to understand that the tales are a culture’s attempt to understand themselves, and to find meaning in the world. These stories also reflect what a culture holds up as important: what is considered appropriate behavior.

Standard 3: Share knowledge and participate ethically as members of our democratic society. Because fairy tales are introduced as a model for ethical behavior, children learn from them. When they write their stories, they share with the community what they have learned.

Standard 4: Pursue personal and aesthetic growth. We believe the program models a process for pursuing personal interests. Students are encouraged to create in writing and pictorially.

14. Additional resources that assisted program creator (e.g., a website, bibliography, etc.):

- iEARN.org – International Education and Research Network (<http://www.iearn.org/>)