Contributing to the *Cloud*

Grade Cluster - 3-5

NETS-S- 2 - Communication and Collaboration

Quick Look:

As part of a Vermont Studies unit, students collaborate with another Vermont classroom to research the existing Vermont state symbols, create an article to update the symbols information on the Vermont State Symbols *Wikipedia* page, and make recommendations for potential new state symbols.

Scenario:

"Can students really change what is on *Wikipedia*?" asks a student at morning meeting. The class looks up the Vermont article on *Wikipedia*. When looking at the symbols section of the article, students notice the Honey Bee is missing in the list of state symbols. (2a, b)(6c)

While in a *chat room* with our on-line partner class, the students choose to work together on an on-line project to update the Vermont Symbols *Wikipedia* article. (2c)(6a, b)

Each class discusses Vermont symbols and creates a list of existing symbols. They enter the symbols in a *Google Form* and use this form to select three Vermont Symbols they would like to research. The teachers review the forms with their students and create student groups comprised of two students from each classroom. Each student group chooses a different symbol or symbols to research, based on their listing of popular student choices. (2a, b, c)(6a, b)

Paired groups collaborate using different *chat rooms* on the school's server to introduce themselves and share strategies for gathering information and preparing the *Wikipedia* section about their symbol. (2a, b, c, d) For example, "What is the origin of the symbol?" is a question that warrants further investigation. The items are entered in a *Google Document* for both classes to share. (2a)

Using sites such as the Vermont Secretary of State Kid's Page and the State Symbols USA web pages, students research information needed for the articles that are eventually to be inserted in *Wikipedia* under the Vermont Symbols page. (2a, b, d)(6d)

Each group is assigned a mentor teacher. These groups meet on-line in a private *chat room* to develop their plans, share research, and share ideas about the focus of their articles. The teachers review these ideas and comment back to the students. The students revise their draft ideas plans as necessary. Students collaborate using *Google Docs* to outline and write their articles. Students add their symbol articles to the *Wikipedia* article on Vermont symbols, and on each of the class blogs. (2a, b, c)(6a, b, d)

During the research process, students also identify other states' symbols and determine which symbols other states have that Vermont does not. For example, they learn that Louisiana has a state poem, a state museum, state jellies and even state donuts. Each student group then also proposes the creation of a new state symbol for Vermont, and justifies why they have made that choice.

Each class reviews what each group has suggested, and then together, the class selects a new symbol to officially propose as a state symbol. They compose a persuasive letter that describes the new symbol and the reasons why it should become an official Vermont symbol. They send an email to our state representatives and state senators seeking their support to officially propose the new symbol. (2a, b, c, d)

The classes are very proud of their work to update the Vermont State Symbols page and are now ready to display what they have accomplished. They update the *Wikipedia* page and that night they go home and share with their families what they have been collectively working on in school. (2b)(6b, d)

Resources:

Wikipedia Vermont State Symbols
    http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Vermont_state_symbols
Vermont Secretary of State Kid's Page
    http://www.sec.state.vt.us/Kids/symbols.html
State Symbols USA
    http://www.statesymbolsusa.org/

Student Standards – The following NETS-S are noted in the Scenario:
    2. Communication and Collaboration – A. B, C, D
    6. Technology Operations and Concepts – A, B, C, D

Teacher Standards –Teachers who teach this unit address the following NETS-T:
    1. Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity - A,B,C,D
    2. Design and Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences and Assessments – A,B,C,D
    3. Model Digital-Age Work and Learning – A, B,C,D
    4. Promote and Model Digital Citizenship and Responsibility – A,B,C,D
    5. Engage in Professional Growth and Leadership – A,B,C,D

Content Grade Expectations

The scenario writer has identified the following content grade expectations that s/he felt might be assessed in this scenario. In most of these scenarios, there may well be opportunities to assess other or additional content grade expectations across a variety of disciplines. If you are interested in developing a unit or lessons based on the following scenario, and you don't see any grade expectations in your content area, we encourage

you to capture the ideas presented in the scenario and make it your own by adding components that address the grade expectations you are most interested in assessing.

Standard 1.11: Persuasive Writing*

Informational Writing: Persuasive Writing

W5: 16 In persuasive writing, students present and coherently support judgments or solution(s) by…
- Providing appropriate facts and details
- Addressing the reader's potential concerns or counterarguments

History & Social Science

H&SS3-4: Inquiry - Students conduct research by…
- Referring to and following a plan for an inquiry.
- Locating relevant materials such as print, electronic, and human resources.
- Describing evidence and recording observations using note cards, videotape, tape recorders, journals, or databases.
- Citing sources

H&SS3-4:7 History and Social Sciences Inquiry
- Student communicate their findings by giving an oral, written, or visual presentation that summarizes their findings

H&SS 3-4:14 Civics, Government and Society - Students act as citizens by…
- Demonstrating positive interaction with group members.
- Identifying problems, planning and implementing solutions in the classroom, school or community.