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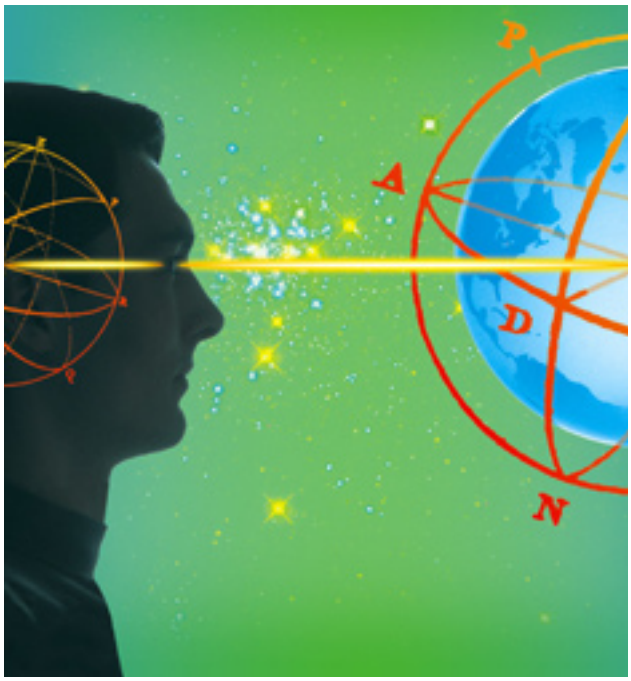
rewarding experiences that built their knowledge and connected their learning through inquiry based learning.

W.K. Kellogg students had performed very low in several areas of Earth science on the MEAP over the past several years. Our 2008 fall test scores averaged a passing rate of about 34% in the subject matter covering our universe.

The Hands on Science Initiative provided a Personal Planetarium, 3D Solar System Model, a Star Theater, an Expedition to Mars game, and a Solar Motion Lab activity. This equipment provided the much needed personal experiences that our urban students needed to internalize their learning in meaningful ways.

This collaboration is meant to result in higher MEAP science scores as well as other curricular areas requiring problem solving skills. The result of this experience intends to encourage students to continue pursuing these studies beyond the classroom!

After the initial equipment was purchased the program became self supporting for continuation from one school year to the next.



Secondary Level Curriculum Idea

Using Standards-Based Inquiry in High School Science Classes

By Mary C. Mobley, Grand Rapids Christian High School

As a teacher, I know that the state content standards are important. Somewhere, a group of expert teachers spent a lot of time and effort to identify and prioritize the most important science content for my high school students. I am happy to have this framework upon which I can develop my own classroom curriculum. The standards help me set goals and limits so that I will be able to cover the most important content in the school year. Otherwise, I would spend way too much time on the topics I like best (like genetics), and skim over the more dry and detailed ones (like photosynthesis). The state standards are an essential tool for me as a teacher.

As a scientist, I know that inquiry is an essential tool. Everything we know about science once started as a question, did it not? I want my students to think and act like scientists in my classroom, and that includes asking questions that lead to a process whereby knowledge and understanding are gained.

That said, in all honesty, I must admit that this has proven to be much more difficult than I imagined. There are limitations of time, space, resources, and energy that often deter me from incorporating inquiry in my daily instructional practices. I try to utilize some type of inquiry in every unit, but sometimes feel discouraged and ineffective.

In an effort to get some new ideas and replenish my motivation, I attended Heather Peterson's "Biology's Best! Labs, Activities and Lessons Using Inquiry AND Teaching the New State Standards" at the 2010 MSTA conference. What an excellent choice!

Heather, a biology teacher at Holt High School, was inspirational! Her session was PACKED with people sitting on the floor as well as lining the walls. I understand why. Heather not only was willing to share everything she uses in her classroom, she was enthusiastic and encouraging. The session was supplemented with a significant packet of information filled with ideas and plans for using inquiry in standards-based content. Heather helped me see that inquiry doesn't always have to be from "start to finish", but can be incorporated in smaller segments in nearly every lesson. She shared examples of how to infuse fun into the daily routine, with case studies, music, lab stations, humor, and intrigue. I left this session feeling encouraged that I **am** doing some things well and motivated to try out some new ideas that Heather so graciously shared.

Editor's Note: Heather was contacted and has graciously agreed to allow us to publish her email. Please contact her for materials and advice. Heather's email at Holt High School is; hpeterso@hpsk12.net