

A Recipe for Student Success: Adding Other School Subjects to the Human Ecology Mix

At East Selkirk Middle School, two teachers are experimenting with the addition of Literacy and Numeracy into a new setting. Mrs. Sheila Stark-Perreault, ESMS' Human Ecology teacher, and Brandie Lev, a divisional lead teacher, is examining the Human Ecology curriculum through the lens of Literacy and Numeracy, in an effort to integrate deeper learning for students. Using numeracy and literacy in Mrs. Stark-Perreault's subject area, gives real life connections to this scope of learning and teaches applicable skills for life.

It started with Mrs. Stark-Perreault's involvement in planning the nation-wide Canadian Home Economic Educator's Symposium, taking place this year, in Winnipeg. She wanted to present some of the ideas that she's been applying in her classroom to meet more learning goals from other subjects within hers. Partnering up with Ms. Lev, who is a Universal Design for Learning teacher support, made sense as they have worked together previously on designing work that gave students opportunities for inquiry and critical thinking.

Together, they are creating lessons and assessments that span the six strands that English Language Arts teachers focus on: Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, Viewing and Representing; along with processes math teachers focus on: Connections, Mental math with Estimation, Visualization, Communication, Technology, Problem Solving, Reasoning, all according to the Manitoba Curriculum.

Teaching with intent and promoting the big ideas behind the skills involved in Food & Nutrition and Clothing & Textiles using math concepts and terminology, is helping students apply the math they are learning from their math teachers. By giving students more experience with language and specific reading strategies used in other areas, students are discovering literacy is all around us.

Some of the Literacy in Human Ecology involves: Reading recipes; reading stories that involve food, like in the book, *Cook-A-Doodle-Do*; following directions within their sewing patterns and translating menus from countries around the world. "There are numerous Mother Goose rhymes that involve food, and we are going to challenge students to come up with recipes based on these poems," Mrs. Stark-Perreault notes.

Numbers are everywhere in Human Ecology. Ironically, some students state as they are using measurements and doubling a recipe in Mrs. Stark-Perreault's kitchen, "I am not good at math, but I love cooking!" Some of the numeracy in Human Ecology includes: estimating ingredients, visualizing a finished sewing project, taking body measurements, dividing finished recipes and budgeting when meal planning. "Just the other day, a student was struggling with measuring $\frac{3}{4}$ of a cup. Students in the kitchen collaborated to come up with a solution of using the $\frac{1}{4}$ measure three times to solve their problem."

Mrs. Stark-Perreault is excited to share this work with Human Ecology teachers across the country. "I'm really looking forward to working on this project; however, there is so much science and art in my subject area too, I'm thinking we'll have to work on that next year!"

Ron Hummelt, ESMS' school principal observes the deep connections that students are making in Mrs. Stark-Perreault's class. "It's great to see all students finding success in her class and even better will be for students to take this learning and apply it into other areas."

Another exciting creation that Mrs. Stark-Perreault and her students have been working on in Clothing & Textiles, is a Multiple Intelligence quilt that showcases the nine areas of learning that demonstrates all students are SMART. The Lord Selkirk School Division believes in “Student Success for All”, and one way staff are working towards this is to boost a student’s self-esteem when they realize their areas of strength. Once completed, the quilt will be on display in ESMS’ school Library.

The Canadian Home Economics Symposium took place at The Hilton Airport Suites, from February 27th until March 1st, 2015. [Click here](#) to view the PREZI link to see the Symposium presentation on

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