

## Research Around School Field Trips

Marzano, Robert J. *Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, VA. (2004)

- ❑ “The research literature supports one compelling fact: what students *already* know about the content is one of the strongest indicators of how well they will learn new information relative to the content – background knowledge.” With an average correlation of .66. (p. 1-2)
- ❑ “We acquire background knowledge through the interaction of two factors: (1) our ability to process and store information – what one has been able to learn from and do with experience, and (2) the number and frequency of our academically oriented experiences – the number of experiences that will directly add to our knowledge of content we encounter in school.” (p. 4- 5)
- ❑ “Unfortunately, a great many children attending U.S. schools grow up in poverty.” There is a “direct relationship between access to academic background experiences and family income.” (p. 7)
- ❑ “Although children of poverty had equal or better access to loving parents, their access to resources was dramatically different.” “...those on welfare were frequently isolated, sometimes because of the dangers associated with playing in the neighborhood.” (p. 8)
- ❑ “...in welfare families, their children were exposed to a fraction of the language that children in working-class and professional families were exposed to. This difference was strongly associated with differences in students’ academic achievement.” (p. 10)
- ❑ “Crystallized intelligence is exemplified by knowledge of facts, generalizations, and principles. Although a certain level of innate intelligence is important to academic success, learned intelligence is the stronger correlate of success in school.” (p. 13)
- ❑ “By definition, a direct approach to enhancing academic background knowledge is one that increases the variety and depth of out-of-class experiences. Such experiences include field trips to museums, art galleries, and the like....” (p. 14) This “activity would go a long way toward leveling the playing field in terms of the students’ academic background knowledge.” (p. 16)

Montgomery County Public Schools, 2006  
<http://www.mcps.k12.md.us>

**Social Studies:** “Field trips enable teachers to expand children’s learning beyond the walls of the classroom into the vast community outside. They provide children with experiences that cannot be duplicated in the school, but are nonetheless an integral part of school instruction. ....a field trip can best be described as a living laboratory in which learning is acquired through active, hands-on experience with the rich resources of the local community.”

“Field trips should be preceded by good planning, trip selection, pre-visit preparations, the trip itself, appropriate follow-up and evaluation – ensuring a successful educational experience.”

“Research has shown that field trips are important for many reasons:

- they increase student knowledge and understanding of a subject
- they add realism to the topic of study, and
- they provide an opportunity to develop and enhance a student’s socialization and citizenship skills”

Anderson, Heather. “A River Runs Through It: Art Education and a River Environment,” Art Education, November, 2000 (p. 13-18).

**Art/Science:**

- These field trips “offer fresh insights and a heightened awareness of our natural world; they help students gain a respect for the many environmental issues they will face as stewards of the natural land, and they introduce them to artists and their artwork about the environment.”
- “...students and (a) their growing perception, awareness, and concern for the natural environment; (b) their personal expression of this while learning about artists and their art; and (c) cross-curricular activities used to encourage an interdisciplinary art education program.”
- “In order to draw, one must learn to see...”
- “..help students develop their critical awareness and aesthetic appreciation.”
- “.....create insightful images of the history, ecology, environmental issues, conservation practices, and wonder of the park.”

Melber, Leah M. “Why Are They Doing That? Animal Investigations at the Local Zoo.” Science Activities, 0036-8121, January 1, 20001, Vol. 37, Issue 4.

- “Linking classroom science to real-world scientific ventures is key when trying to create a meaningful experience for your students.”
- “Zoos are living laboratories where students can observe, investigate, and explore issues in animal science.”
- “The study of animal behavior is addressed by the National Science Education Standards at all grade levels.”
- “Children seldom have the opportunity to carefully observe animal behavior except in front of the television, however. Also, many curriculum resources on animal studies do not provide opportunities for inquiry. Instead they stress the acquisition of facts such as identifying where specific animals live, how long they live, and what they eat.”

**English Language Learners (ELL):**

Urdanivia-English, Carmen. "Whose History? Social Studies in an Elementary English Class for Speakers of Other Languages." *Social Studies*, 0037-7996, September 1, 2001, Vol. 92, Issue 5, p. 1-7.

- ❑ In English Language Learners, "perhaps the greatest difficulty in guiding or scaffolding students' learning of social studies was the students' lack of interest in the topics being discussed."
- ❑ ".....social constructivism and participatory action research to enhance learning experiences – learn by inferences and logical analysis" then more scaffolding and prior experiences, background knowledge is needed.
- ❑ ".....the children were developing communication skills, which evolved from their oral discussion, accounts of their progress, and peer review of their writing."
- ❑ ".....provided the students with closer visual and kinesthetic experiences."
- ❑ "The project promoted better communication with parents and within families."

Kovalik, Susan. ITI: The Model "Integrated Thematic Instruction (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Susan Kovalik and Associates, 1994.

The 8 brain-compatible elements are;

- ❑ absence of threat
- ❑ meaningful content
- ❑ choices
- ❑ adequate time
- ❑ enriched environment
- ❑ collaboration
- ❑ immediate feedback
- ❑ mastery (application)

"the advantages of studying the real world 'tuned to that channel,' the skill differences among students are the least, firsthand, being there experiences can be provided, it is possible to gather local resources, application of what is learned in real life situations – the purpose of schooling – is built into the curriculum." (p. 37)

".....'being there' opportunities, is the prerequisite for understanding." (p. 39)