Haninger

Title: My Life As Told By....

Subject: Language Arts/Social Studies

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Grade Level: Fourth or Fifth Grade

Time Duration: Two to three weeks

Overview: Students will listen to Ben and Me by Robert Lawson, a story written in 1937 about Ben Franklin with a twist as to the biography’s authorship. They will be able to discuss what is true and what is not true about the story. They will create a character and write a biography of themselves from the view of the made up character.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to write a biography of themselves in the third person.

2. The students will able to compare and contrast fiction verses non-fiction.

3. The students will undertake a study of the vocabulary used in this book and demonstrate their knowledge of it by using it in their own story as much as possible.
Standard covered by the lesson’s objectives are: (The following is adapted from the Course study standards of the Columbus Diocese based on Standards of the Ohio Department of education)

Standard: Students demonstrate competence in the general skills and strategies of the writing process.

With this project students will:

- Practice and maintain skills in understanding and developing a process of pre-writing.
- Their prewriting will determine purpose and audience. They will be able to distinguish between different voices and different points of view.
- Demonstrate the ability to seek information, ask questions, evaluate, and take risks to be able to write about themselves.
- Practice and maintain their skills in writing events in proper sequence.
- Practice and further develop skills using descriptive detailed words when writing.
- Practice using transitions between sentences, ideas, and paragraphs in writing.
- Practice identifying and writing sentences using various phrases and/or clauses to achieve variety.
- Incorporate personal, high-interest vocabulary when writing and expand vocabulary in written pieces by using various resources.
- Evaluate writing to determine if thoughts are complete and clear.
- Rearrange words, sentences, and paragraphs to improve writing.
- Add and delete information and details as needed.
- Apply editing skills to improve word choice, sentence variety, usage, spelling, and/or mechanics.
- Use a checklist and a rubric to evaluate writing.
Materials: Book *Ben and Me* by Robert Lawson, access to the Internet, computers with word processing for drafting, composing and editing their story, and a copy of the vocabulary list attached.

Activities and Procedures: Prior to the class reading of the book *Ben and Me* they will undertake a study of the book’s rich vocabulary by using online dictionaries and the online program Lexipedia at [www.lexipedia.com](http://www.lexipedia.com). The will keep a list of these words and their meanings. They will also review some books and web sites as a class directed by the teacher that tells some of the facts of Ben Franklin’s amazing life. Teacher will read the book aloud to the class pausing at parts of the book to note and discuss with the students what in the book is real and documented to have happened in the life and times of Ben Franklin. Photographs of places and things such as his fur hat will be made available for the students to view. Following the reading of the story students will create a fictional character of their own to tell their life story. The will be able to tell the story in the third person and tell it with interesting detail, interviewing family members to find out parts of their early life that they may not recall. Facts about themselves, interesting stories about themselves and use of their new vocabulary will be expectations for this activity.

Conclusions: In this activity students will learn facts about Ben Franklin and themselves, they will learn about fiction vs. non-fiction, they will learn about some new online tools to help them learn vocabulary, they will experience writing autobiography/biography in a creative way. They will also learn about and come to appreciate an amazing American, Ben Franklin.

Extra Credit: Students who wish to earn extra credit may select and think about 5 of Ben Franklin’s maxims and for each write what it means in their own words and if it is still a helpful, truthful maxim for today.

Websites: Lexipedia, Teaching Ben Franklin
A Rising People: Ben Franklin and the Americans
June-July 2009
A Landmarks in American History and Culture Workshop

Books: Ben and Me by Robert Lawson

Other books to have on hand: Ben Franklin America’s Original Entrepreneur
Franklin’s Autobiography for Modern Times adapted by Blaine McCormick, Ben
Franklin’s Almanac Being a True Account of the Good Gentleman’s Life by
Candace Fleming, Back in Time with Benjamin Franklin A Qwerty Stevens
Adventure by Dan Gutman

Technology used: Internet, SMART board, word processing

Rubric: see attached

Vocabulary list attached