

Four Corners Home for Children
Farmington, New Mexico
Linda Gutierrez, teacher
"A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words," granted \$1,400

1. Project Objective

As the saying goes, "a picture is worth a thousand words." For students who struggle with language, the ability to express themselves in different ways is critical. My plan is to put a camera into their hands on a regular basis to give them another way to share their thinking. I've created a month-by-month, year-long photography unit that includes all of the core curricular areas. By making it intrinsically motivating because of the personal relevancy that they'll bring to the projects, I hope to inspire in them the ability to open up their thinking and for some of them, possibly even develop a life-long hobby.

I teach at Navajo Missions School, which is a very much like the old one room schoolhouse. I average about ten students in grades one through five. Because my class is so diverse age wise, I need very open-ended projects that I can have the youngest and the oldest student's access. The students I get are primarily Navajo students that have been placed with me through social services. Many are coming from homes with drug and alcohol abuse. Due to the nature of this school, life is not always pleasant for these students. This project will provide them with memories that they can re-live through the photos and projects that they take with them at the end of the year.

2. Project Objective

August -All About Me (Social, Learning Style)

Students make a display about themselves, their interests and hobbies, their family and friends, etc.

September -Camera Care (Technical Reading)

We will read books about photography and camera care and make class contracts to protect the cameras and insure high quality work.

October -Fall Colors (Art, Language Arts, Science)

Combining the color spectrum, poetry, and the life cycles of plants, we will focus on fall colors and do art projects for our classroom.

November -Thankfulness (Writing)

Using Thanksgiving as our main focus, we will do a writing project about a person that is making a difference in our life.

December -Traditions (Social Studies)

During a unit on geography, we will explore the idea of community and culture as the students attend and photograph different community activities.

January -Patterns (Focus on Math)

During the month of January, we have a strong focus on math as we approach the 100th day of school. We will use the cameras to photograph geometric patterns in our environment.

February -I've Got a Story to Tell (Writing)

Students will use creative writing and their cameras to make up a story and illustrate it with photography.

March -Black and White (Reading)

Using black and white film, we will explore the idea of factual information in reading. We will focus on photography that is more abstract in nature as we attempt to fool the brain with optical illusions.

April -Spring Fling (Science)

Similar to the October unit, we will again focus on color and life cycles.

May -Friends, Memories, Yearbook (Social)

We will celebrate our learning by pulling in photos from throughout the year and assembling our final photo album project that the students can take home with them.

3. Project Evaluation

I will evaluate the project by the monthly projects. As the projects are turned in, I will evaluate them for objectives taught in that unit, as well as quality and overall effort. I anticipate increased scores on their reading and writing tests as well, because of the vocabulary that will be generated with each project.

4. Community Awareness

My school is jointly funded by Farmington Municipal Schools and Navajo Missions Inc. Therefore, I will have two strong avenues for communication. NMI publishes a quarterly newsletter called Navajo Neighbors that is distributed to approximately 6,000 people. There are also school newsletters that are put out, as well as my own classroom newsletters.

5. Budget

10 -35 mm point and shoot cameras with flash	\$350
100 rolls of film	\$300
100 film processing fees	\$600
10 Photo/Memory Albums	\$150
Assorted Photo Album Accessories (Stickers, stencils, art pencils, etc.)	\$100
Total:	\$1,500