

Kim Clemons

**It's Only a Game (Isn't it?)!
Converting the SMG Simulation to Real Life Experiences**

Grade Levels - 4th, 5th and 6th grade CREATE (gifted and talented students)
at Beauvoir and Jeff Davis Elementary Schools –Biloxi, MS.

Total Number of Students – 28

Project Timeline – January 2007 – Current

I teach intellectually gifted students in grades 2 – 6, at two public elementary schools in Biloxi, MS. The majority of my students are children of military parents from Keesler Air Force Base (in fact one of my schools is located just outside of the West Gate of the base and the other is about 2 miles down the road from the West Gate), so they are very transient.

The State of Mississippi requires that the Intellectually Gifted Program (grades 2 - 6) for each district follow the Instructional Management Plan (IMP) for its gifted students. Within that IMP are skills that are taught or facilitated by the gifted teacher. Those skills are Creativity, Critical Thinking, Logical Thinking, Communication Skills, Research, Career Exploration, Life Skills, Visual Arts, Performing Arts and Affective Skills.

Because the Stock Market Game (SMG) is a simulation, in order to meet the criteria for the IMPs of my students, I needed to take the simulation and move it to Real Life skills. In order to do that, the first step was to have my students investigate how they, as children, can earn money, by utilizing their talents and skills. I found a wonderful publication by the Federal Reserve titled *Great Minds Think (A Kid's Guide to Money)*. It is a step-by-step activity guide that starts with the very basic vocabulary of Economics (such as scarcity, opportunity cost, income, benefits, wants and needs) and gives examples for the students to follow in order that they may establish goals for saving and spending. The activity book also has "Ask an Adult" activities, so that the students see how what they are learning applies to the "Real Life" experiences of their parents.

The next step was to introduce my students to the Stock Market. There is an educational website www.brainpop.com, which has animated videos that introduce students to a variety of subjects, including economics. Two of the videos concern the Stock Market, so we watched those videos and the students took the quizzes at the end of the videos (a copy is attached in my lessons). I used this as a Pretest and a Posttest to measure the learning. I also had a speaker from a local bank to talk about mutual funds.

Then they began the Stock Market Game. I taught them about P/E ratios and how to research the stocks and mutual funds they wished to purchase, using those lessons in the SMG, as well as teaching the rules of the game. The students, as a team, researched a variety of publications as well as utilizing the internet and chose their investments.

The major outcomes were that my Beauvoir team won first place in the Elementary Division of the Spring 2008 SMG and one of my teams at Jeff Davis came in second place in the Elementary Division of the Fall 2008 SMG! They each made over a 25% increase in their portfolios. I took the money that I won for their success and gave each of them a \$50 savings bond to start their own investment portfolios!

Title: "Saving and budgeting 01/15/2008 - 01/15/2008

money"

Standards

- *IG2 - CREATIVITY – Given a real life situation, the student will be able to select from divergent thinking, analogical thinking, visualization, attribute listing, morphological analysis, synectics, intuition
- *IG2m. - demonstrate the ability to use creative problem solving skills
- *IG2p. - participate in decision-making activities
- *IG4n. - demonstrate the ability to write effectively
- *IG6c. - demonstrate the ability to establish realistic goals

Additional Objectives/Standards

None

Plan

The students will be given a booklet titled *Great Minds Think (A Kid's Guide to Money)* a publication from the Federal Reserve that has a variety of activities for the students to complete on their own, including charting their own budget including listing funding sources, the amount of money given by each of these sources, establishing a goal (a want that they wish to purchase) with that money and how long it's going to take them to earn the amount of money necessary to purchase that want.

In addition, there are pages that they students will work with their parents and when they've completed the exercises, the parents will sign the certificate of completion in the back of the booklet.

Homework

Ask the parents questions which are posed in the booklet and have the parents sign the certificate of completion in the back of the booklet. Return the completed booklet to me.

Resources

Great Minds Think (A Kid's Guide to Money) from the Federal Reserve, computer with internet to research the cost of the item they wish to save for, a calculator, pencil and paper.

Assessments

The completed booklet

