A First Grade Curriculum for the 1994-1995 School Year

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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Ball State University

Muncie, Indiana

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Expected date of graduation
July 23, 1994
Purpose of Thesis

This curriculum was created using the Indiana Curriculum Guides in all of the subject areas and the book, ITI: The Model, by Susan Kovalik, and the textbooks that are currently being used in the Metropolitan School District of Lawrence Township. I have attempted to select themes for the entire year and list the keypoints or main ideas that the children should learn through their study of that theme. I have also included a brief explanation of what specific topics will be covered during each of the themes. Finally, I have fully developed one of the components, "I Care...about pets." For this particular theme, I have included various activities for each of the main subject areas and a list of specific skills that will be emphasized during this particular theme.
Contents

1. Sample Daily Agenda
2. Yearlong themes and schedule
3. Summaries of themes
4. "I Care... about pets."
5. Sources
Sample Daily Agenda

8:00 A.M. - Children arrive at school. Students begin the day by reading a book or writing in their journals until it is time to begin class. During this time, the children may work independently or they may work quietly with or beside a friend.

8:15 A.M. - Attendance
Children perform jobs (take care of pets, water plants, lunch count, etc.)
Daily paper work (collecting forms, money, etc.)
Pledge of Allegiance
Review the agenda for the day

8:15-8:45 A.M. - Daily Oral Language (D.O.L.)
Daily Oral Math (D.O.M.)
Math Board
(taken from Math Their Way program)
Creative Movement
Songs/music

8:45-9:30 A.M. - Direct instruction in the theme
(Themes integrate all subjects.)
Cooperative group work time

9:30-9:40 A.M. - Restroom break

9:45-10:45 A.M. - Individual inquiries
Learning centers
Free activity in choice areas
(choice areas include, art center, dramatic play area, library, blocks, games, writing/publishing center, listening center, etc.)

10:45-11:00 A.M. - Clean-up
Sharing time
Restroom break

11:00-11:30 A.M. - Lunch

11:30-12:00 P.M. - Recess

12:00-12:30 P.M. - Read aloud by teacher
Sustained silent reading

12:30-1:15 P.M. - Math

1:15-2:15 P.M. - Special area classes (art, music, physical education, etc.)
2:15-2:30 P.M.-Wrap-up and sharing of day
   Clean-up
   Prepare to dismiss

2:35 P.M.-Students dismissed

***This schedule is very flexible. I feel that when children are really involved in an exciting learning experience, they should be provided adequate time to complete that activity. I will try to provide this time as much as possible.
Yearlong theme: 
I Care...

Components of the theme: 
I Care...

... about school.
... about friends.
... about me.
... about my family.
... about my community.
... about pets.
... about trees and plants.
... about insects.

Organizing concepts of the theme: 
interdependence of life 
diversity 
responsibility

Rationale for the yearlong theme: 

The children will become aware of how living things are dependent upon each other for life. The children will also learn about the diversity that exists in life and in our world. Finally, the children will be able to explain their role in their world and the responsibilities that they understand they have in that world up to this point in their lives.
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*Wrap-up* day of *Last day of*

*TEACHER'S FRIEND* ©
I Care...about school.

Keypoints:

1. School is the place where I go to learn.

2. There are rules at school that I must follow so that I can be safe and so that I can learn.

3. It takes many people to make a school run smoothly.

Summary of the component:

This unit of study will used to introduce the children to their school, school personnel, and the expectations and rules in the school. During this unit of study, the children will learn the school, bus, playground, and cafeteria rules. The children will be learning about safety issues in those same areas and the reasons that the rules are necessary.

The children will also be getting acquainted with their school by meeting the school personnel that they will have contact with. These people include the principal, school secretary, nurse, custodians, and cafeteria staff. The goal of this experience is to help them feel comfortable in their new environment and to teach them a little about what these people do and how they help the school.

In the classroom, the children will be actively involved in setting up the classroom agreements. We will also discuss our expectations for the year and for each other.
I Care...about friends.

Keypoints:

1. Friends are special people that we work and play with.
2. It is okay if our friends are different from us.
3. There are many different things you can do with a friend.
4. It is hard work to be a good friend.
5. Friends make us feel special and loved.

Summary of the component:

During this component, the children will be focusing on friendship, a very vital component in our lives. We will begin by defining friendship and what it means to us. We will continue on by talking about how we are like our friends and how we are different. We will focus on friends that might have special needs or might not be exactly like us. We will also include a discussion of the characteristics of a friend and friendship. Some of these characteristics would include, sharing, being a good listener, being flexible, etc. We will end this component by talking about the great variety of things that we can do with a friend and how friends make us feel about ourselves.
I Care...about me.

Keypoints:

1. I am special. There is no one exactly like me.

2. Because I care about myself, I choose to say no to drugs and alcohol.

3. Because I care about myself, I will take good care of my health.

Summary of the component:

This component will focus on the self. We will begin the unit by discovering how special and unique each one of us really is. We will also emphasize the building of a positive self-esteem and confidence in these young children.

The second part of the component will focus on good health. The children will be involved in a drug/alcohol/tobacco awareness and abuse prevention program. We will then move on to a wellness unit that will include the study of nutrition, exercise, getting plenty of rest, visiting the doctor and dentist regularly, personal hygiene, and taking care of our emotional health.
I Care...about my family.

Keypoints:

1. The people that I live with and care about are my family.
2. Every family is special. No families are exactly alike.
3. Families do things together.
4. Each person in a family has a special job to do.
5. Every family has traditions.
6. Families change over time.

Summary of the component:

This unit of study will stress the importance of the family. At the beginning of the unit, we will discuss what a family is and who is included in our families. We will discuss the various family structures that are represented in our class with emphasis on the value and importance of each type.

We will also discuss the diversity that exists in families. This will focus on the types of housing families live in, the customs that they follow, the kinds of things families like to do, the roles that each person in a family plays, and the special traditions that families have.

We will end the study of the family by exploring the ways that families change over time. Some examples of change are having a baby, getting married, moving away from home, divorce, etc.
I Care...about my community.

Keypoints:

1. A community is a place where people live, work, and play together.
2. Every person in a community has a special job to do.
3. Someday, I will do a special job in my community.
4. I must take care of my community by keeping it clean.

Summary of the component:

This component will focus on the community. We will begin by defining a community and discussing the particular community that the children live in. We will continue our discussion by introducing the community helpers, including, doctors, bankers, police officers, fire fighters, teachers, etc.

A very important part of this component will be to provide the children with some real experiences in the community. To accomplish this, the children will be going on a lot of field trips to gain information about the community helpers and what they do. They will then use this information to set up their own community in our classroom. This mini-community will be in operation for approximately 3-4 weeks. The children will also be encouraged to explore what kind of job they would like to do in their community when they grow up.

The final part of this component will be a recycling unit. We will focus on keeping the community clean and simple things that we can do to help.
I Care...about pets.

Keypoints:

1. A pet is a tame animal that is kept for fun and friendship.
2. Pets need special care to stay healthy.
3. Pets need a lot of love to stay happy.
4. Having a pet is a big responsibility.
5. Some pets help people.
6. Pets can be good friends for older people.
7. Having a pet is a lot of fun.
8. It is important to spay or neuter your pet to prevent having unwanted pets.
9. Just like people, pets will eventually die.

Summary of the component:

This component will study the role of pets in our lives and the responsibilities that go along with owning a pet. To begin the unit, we will define what a pet is and list examples of animals that would make good pets and animals that would not make good pets. We will continue on by discussing the importance of taking good care of a pet and providing enough attention. We will emphasize the responsibility that pet owners have.

We will then discuss pets that help people, or working pets. We will discuss the role of pets particularly in the lives of disabled people. In keeping with that concept, we will also discuss the role that pets can play in the lives of older Americans and why this is important.

We will also explore all of the fun things that pet owners can do with their pets. The children will use their own experiences to share the joys and sometimes pains of being a pet owner.

Finally, we will discuss the importance of spaying and neutering pets to prevent an overpopulation of pets and the death of a pet. The children will be able to discuss openly and honestly their experiences with pet death and their fears about it.
I Care...about trees and plants.

Keypoints:
1. There are many different kinds of trees and plants.
2. Trees and plants have very special parts.
3. Trees and plants help people and animals.
4. There are many different uses for trees and plants.
5. Trees and plants help make our world beautiful.
6. We must protect trees and plants.

Summary of the component:

This component will focus on trees and plants. We will study the great variety of trees and plants and their parts, such as, the trunk, the branches, leaves, stamen, petals, stem, etc. During this portion of the component, the children will begin creating a leaf and seed collection.

The second part of the component will be to discover the many ways that trees and plants help both people and animals and the uses of trees and plants in our world. We explore the ideas of trees and plants used for food, shelter, products, oxygen, etc.

Finally, we will look at trees and plants as a source of beauty in our world and the vital importance of protecting them. We will review a few of the recycling issues at this time to reinforce this point.
Keypoints:

1. Three-fourths of all living animals are insects.
2. Insects have six legs.
3. All insects come from eggs.
4. The body of an insect is divided into three sections: head, thorax, and abdomen.
5. Insects move in many different ways.
6. Insects communicate by making noises.
7. Some insects help people and others can harm people.

Summary of the component:

This component will focus on the study of insects or "bugs." The children will explore the different types of insects that exist. The children will also look closely at characteristics of insects, such as, the number of legs that an insect has, the sections of the body, the life cycle of an insect, and the ways an insect moves and communicates.

Finally, the children will explore the ways that insects help people and the ways that they can harm people. We discuss ways to encourage helpful insects and ways to deal with those that hurt us.
Literature List—Pets

The Berenstain Bears’ Trouble with Pets
Stan and Jan Berenstain

Clifford the Big Red Dog
Norman Bridwell

My Guinea Pigs Pip and Gus
Donna Bryant and Jakki Wood

I Really Want a Dog
Susan Breslow and Sally Blakemore

Hemi’s Pet
Joan de Hamel

Pinkerton, Behave!
Steven Kellogg

The Little Puppy
Judy Dunn

The Little Kitten
Judy Dunn

The Little Rabbit
Judy Dunn

The Puppy Who Wanted a Boy
Jane Thayer

Can I Keep Him?
Steven Kellogg

Herbie Hamster, Where Are You?
Terrance Blacker

Billy’s Beetle
Mick Inkpen

Pet Show
Ezra Jack Keats

The Random House Book of Poetry for Children
Jack Prelutsky
(*see "Dog and Cat" poems pages 65-69 and see "The Ways of Living Things" poems pages 71-87)

***For additional titles, please consult Cats and Dogs by
Creative Teaching Press and Pets by Frank Schaffer
Publications.
Meet Our Pets

The children will bring in pictures or illustrations of their pets to display in our room during our pet unit. The children will also be responsible for writing down the name of their pet, the type of animal that they are, their pet's age, and the length of time they have owned their pet.

Defining Pets

Using a mindmap, we will brainstorm what we think a pet is. The children will try to list as many characteristics of a pet as they can. From these characteristics, we will try to write a class definition of a pet.

Who Would Make a Good Pet?

The children will cut out pictures of animals from magazines. We will then try to sort the pictures into two groups, "Good Pet" and "Not a Good Pet." With each animal we will discuss and write down why we think that animal would or would not make a good pet.

Pet Graphing

Using our "Meet our Pets" display, we will graph the pets that we have in our room. Once the graph of pets is completed, we will use this graph to count the total number of pets, the most popular pet, the least popular pet, etc.

Pets: K/W/L

The children and I will create a K/W/L chart on pets. We will first list the things that we already know about pets. We will then list the things that we want to know about pets. At the completion of the unit, we will list the things that we have learned about pets. This chart will be posted throughout the entire unit on pets.

"We Love Our Pets" collaborative book

The children will each write a few sentences about their pet and draw a picture of their pet. The children can write about a special time with a pet, a description or facts about a pet, or anything else that they choose. We will then combine all of our pages to make a class book about our pets.
"Pretty Neat Pets" collaborative book

The class will collect interesting stories or articles about pets from newspapers, magazines, etc. We will create a scrapbook about these pets and call it "Pretty Neat Pets." The children will be encouraged to include stories about their own pets in our scrapbook.

Pet Riddles

The children will write a few sentences that give clues about a pet. They will then draw a picture of that pet. The top of the paper will be folded over the picture so that only the clues can be seen. The rest of the class will then read the clues and try to guess what type of pet the author is describing. To check their answers, they will simply lift the flap.

Pet Care Guide

After brainstorming about the things that pet owners need to do to take care of their pets, the children and I will write a collaborative book on pet care. Each child will have a page to write and illustrate. We will then share the book with the entire class and make it available in the school library so that students considering getting a pet will know about their responsibilities.

Goldfish Storyboards

Each child will receive a card that has a fish bowl on it. The children will then receive a bag with goldfish crackers in it. We will begin the math lesson by counting the number of crackers each child received. We will quickly graph the number of crackers on the graph board.

After graphing, I will give the children story problems. An example might be, "Two fish were swimming near the rock. Four more fish came and joined them. How many fish were swimming near the rock in all?" The children will then use their card and their crackers as manipulatives to solve the problem. They will record the math problem, $2 + 4 = 6$, on a recording sheet. I will continue to give the children story problems to work. After I feel that the children are successfully answering the problems, I will allow the children to dictate problems to each other to solve and record. As a final step, the children will write out a story problem and draw a picture of what it would look like on their storyboard.
Pet Tangram Puzzles

The children will be given cards that have outlines of pets on them. Using tangrams, the children will fill in the pet shapes. The children will then be encouraged to create their own tangram pets and/or shapes.

Pet Pattern Block Puzzles

The children will be given cards that have outlines of pets on them. Using pattern blocks, the children will fill in the pet shapes. The children will then be encouraged to create their own pattern block pets and/or shapes.

Pet Treat Recipes

The children will create a cookbook of nutritious treats for their pets. The children will write their own recipes for the cookbook and they will draw a picture of what the treat will look like when it is finished. We will try to write recipes for a wide variety of pets.

"Dog-gone Good!"

Using a recipe for whole-wheat dog biscuits, the children will make some dog biscuits for our canine friends. We will practice good measuring skills and time telling skills to make sure our special treats turn out perfect.

For humans, we will follow the recipe for "Puppy Chow." When this snack is completed, we will all enjoy it together.

Classification of Pets

As a group, we will discuss the characteristics of mammals, reptiles, birds, fish, and amphibians. We will create big charts with the characteristics written on them. We will then classify the class pets into the group that they belong. We can also classify any animals that we may think of into these groups in case we have a child who does not have a pet or if we do not have an example of a certain type of pet.

Class Aquarium

As a class, we will research fish and the setting up of an aquarium. We will then brainstorm the things that we will need to get to start our aquarium. After making a list, we will go to a local pet store and buy the items.

After returning to the classroom, we will work to get the aquarium ready for our class pets. We will also figure out a feeding schedule to make sure that our fish are taken good care of.
Finally, we will take a vote as to what kind of fish we would like to put in our aquarium. We will study information on those types of fish so that we will know what we need to do to take care of them. After we know exactly what to do, we will purchase the fish and place them in their new home.

During this whole experience, the children will write in their science journals what they are learning about fish and aquariums. The children will then have an opportunity to share the things that they have learned with the rest of their classmates.

Working Pets

As we are talking about the ways that pets help people, we will talk about pets that are used for disabled people. We will talk about blind leader dogs and dogs used to help people in wheelchairs. If possible, we will have someone come in to the class and discuss the training of these animals, the care and treatment of the animals, and possibly bring in one to show the class how they work.

Visit the Veterinarian

We will visit a veterinarian’s office during our pet unit. We will find out what he/she does, what a pet exam is, and other services that a vet offers.

After returning from our visit, the children will have the opportunity to set up an animal hospital dramatic play area. They can brainstorm the types of things that they will need to have an animal hospital and then we will work together to collect those items. After it is all set-up, the children can each bring a stuffed animal and have our "vet" give it an exam.

Pet Shop Dramatic Play Area

After our visit to the pet shop for our aquarium supplies, the children will have the opportunity to set up a pet shop in our classroom. Each child will bring in something used with pets from home to add to our shop. The children can then "sell" the items and offer their expert advice of pet care and kinds of pets.

Humane Society Visit

During our study of pets, the children will visit the local Humane Society. They will learn about what the Humane Society does with animals, where they get the animals, services they provide, and the importance of spaying and neutering pets.
As a follow up activity to this field trip, the children will create posters to tell people to have their pets spayed and neutered. The posters will be posted at the Humane Society (if possible) and in our school to create awareness in pet owners.

**Pet Show**

After reading Ezra Jack Keats' *Pet Show*, we will hold our own pet show. We will give every pet represented in our "Meet Our Pets" display some type of award. For the children who do not have pets, we will give them awards based on the type of pet they would most like to own.

**Calico Cats**

Each child will be given an outline of a cat. They will then be supplied with paints, tissue paper, wallpaper, etc. They can use the materials to make a collage in the outline of their cats.

**Thumbprint Pets**

The children will be given a stamp pad and a piece of paper. Using their fingerprints, they will create "thumbprint pets." We will display our pets and their names with our other class pets.

**Creative Movement**

We will move like our favorite pets. Some examples are the dog, cat, snake, fish, and parakeet. I will also encourage the children to use language, especially describing words or adjectives, to explain how they are moving.

**Pet Songs**

In small groups, we will write piggy back songs about pets. The groups will then teach the class their song and we will sing them throughout the unit.

In addition to the songs written by the class, we will also sing old favorites like, "B-I-N-G-O!" and "How Much is That Doggie in the Window?" and others that we think of.

****The activities that are listed above are not an exhaustive list. As I teach, I find new ideas seem to just spring up. I would include these activities plus any others that I thought were of educational value for the children. I would also consult the sources listed at the end of this paper for additional ideas and activities.
Emphasized Skills: Pets

Science:
- Classifying
- Measuring
- Communicating
- Predicting

Language Arts:
- Interpreting information
- Predicting outcomes
- Describing personal experiences
- Writing
- Recognizing nonfiction literature
- Writing declarative sentences
- Using adjectives
- Using a period

Math:
- Using manipulatives to solve problems
- Graphing
- Recognize and develop the use of money
- Act out a story problem
- Addition
- Subtraction
- Create and solve pattern block puzzles
- Create and solve tangram puzzles
- Measurement

***This is a list of skills that would be emphasized throughout our study of pets. This list is just a sample of the skills that would be taught, practiced, and mastered during this unit.

Creative Teaching Press. Cats and Dogs: Integrated Activities for Whole Language and Thematic Teaching.

The Education Center. Learning Centers Club: Pets.

Hartz. Pet Pals: Teacher’s Discussion Guide.

Frank Schaffer Publications. Clifford, the Big Red Dog Literature Notes.


Textbooks:

Scott Foresman Science. Discover the Wonder, Grade 1.

HBJ Health. Being Healthy, Grade 1.

HBJ Social Studies. People We Know, Grade 1.

Heath Reading Series. Grab that Dog!, Grade 1.

HBJ. Language, Grade 1.

Houghton Mifflin. Mathworks, Book A.