



The TEACHER CENTER of Broome County
Teacher Study Group Grant Award
2002-2003

FINAL REPORT – “Reliving the Renaissance”
DOCUMENT PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

The final report must be word-processed and submitted both in print and on disk using this form. Include information under each of the following headings.

Describe the initial goal of the group noting any adjustments that had to be made as time passed.

Initial goal –

The purpose of our group was to design an inter-disciplinary unit of instruction about the Renaissance. Members are participating from different subject areas so that we can make connections in our teaching (and curriculum) between the various aspects that combined to create such a vibrant and important time in world history. This group will also help to foster new connections between departments in our high school, while fostering a renewed sense of wonder and intellectual curiosity for the participants.

Our goal shifted to creating a resource that we could all use because some of us do not have enough time in our busy curricular schedule to use a complete new unit. From this resource we all will develop lesson and unit plans. In the end our goal was to produce an interactive, interdisciplinary, multimedia resource of the Renaissance with special focus on music, art, literature, history, and social customs. We did retain the goals of inter-department ties, collaboration and intellectual renewal for participants. (We each had individual motivations, as well, listed on the handout we distributed for our Superintendent’s Conference Day presentation.)

Describe how the action plan was implemented.

We met on Thursdays after school to assemble our info, ideas, resources, and timeline. We created an interactive PowerPoint timeline. The resource can be used for teacher or student-centered pedagogies. We first decided on how to attack the great amount of information we had to share. We each brought 5-10 exemplars in the Renaissance for each of our areas, and then compared notes. Next we decided on dates of the Renaissance (harder than it might seem). We proceeded to create a general timeline. Next we learned PowerPoint and created our own slides for our respective areas. These were tied into the timeline. Lastly we presented our timeline to anyone in the high school who wanted to see it. This was very successful and we received good feedback. We then briefly presented what we did to the whole faculty in our March meeting.

What methods were used to evaluate your original intended results?

We have presented this resource to faculty and students to discover their feedback. Teachers at the Superintendent's Conference Day presentation went through the presentation at their own pace in the computer lab. Their "testing" of the material added to our exploration of the work of each other's slides. Responses were very positive from all participants. Students like the format and presentation, as well. Many teachers are interested in using this next year or in the future. Evaluation will be ongoing from year to year.

Our goals for collaboration and renewed intellectual spirit were evaluated intrinsically and we have all shared our pride and enjoyment towards this initiative.

Evaluation of the impact of the study group effort on teacher/student performance.

- What evidence is there that the goals of the study group has/has not been met?
- What evidence is there that teaching practices have changed?
- What evidence is there that student achievement is improving?

- The project itself is evidence of the layering of disciplines and proof positive that we all teach the Renaissance in different ways.
- Most teachers in presentation attendance were pleased with the broad scope of the timeline. Many will be using this in the future.
- Most evaluation will have to occur next year because many of us have already passed this period in our classes this year.
- Some of us have approached the integration of technology into our classroom differently, with PowerPoint techniques being used by members outside of this grant.

Comment on the value of the study group process? Did it work for you?

- M. Flynn – "Excellent source of collaboration. No wasted time. Every minute added to the true total value of the experiment."
- D. Daniels – "Yes! Great opportunity to work with teachers from other subject areas. 'Best practice' ideas were also shared."
- A. Allport – "Working as a group was great, as we brought lots of different perspectives to the same era. I think all of us learned something new in our exploration of the Renaissance."
- Asp – "This experience has totally renewed my optimism towards education. Knowing that people can find time to share knowledge in the course of their hectic High School teaching day is inspiring and comforting. Having the resource to show the collaboration and REALLY use it is a great reward for all our hard work."
- D. Metzlar – "The process our study group used to develop our presentation was excellent! I think we all learned from each other during our meetings – shared ideas- developed ideas- as we helped each other with particular problems and questions with our own work."