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Lintner, Timothy. (Ed.). (2013). *Integrative strategies for the K-12 social studies classroom.* Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

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In K-12 classrooms, social studies instruction has been slowly disappearing (Fitchett & Heafner, 2010). In elementary classrooms, the increase of standardized testing has lead to teachers choosing to spend more instructional time in the tested subjects of literacy and math as opposed to social studies, which is not as frequently tested. Recently, with the adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CSSS) in literacy and math, even secondary social studies classrooms are seeing their subject area time diminished, as social studies

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content sometimes takes a backseat in these courses to teach students literacy skills, which can take the place of learning discipline-specific skills in other subjects, such as history (Thurtell, 2013).

Integrating social studies with other subjects is seen as a solution to the problem of diminishing social studies instruction. And when done well, integration can actually enhance all subject areas being integrated. As Lintner describes in the Introduction of this book, "Good social studies pulls not just from its core, but from all other complimentary disciplines, and, in doing so, creates an interrelated, interdependent web of presentation and practice" (p. 11). However, when not done well, integration can actually distort social studies content or lack substance in either subject (Alleman & Brophy, 2010; Brophy & Alleman, 1991).

With the potential of integration to enhance or distort social studies instruction, Lintner's book is essential. *Integrative Strategies for the K-12 Social Studies Classroom* is primarily written for an audience of practicing teachers. Each chapter is written by different authors and describes the practice of integrating social studies with another subject area. There is a chapter on integrating social studies with math, with art, with music, with science, etc. At the end of each chapter, there are three detailed lesson plans for elementary, middle, and high school interdisciplinary lessons. If integrated and interdisciplinary instruction is being heralded as a solution to a lack of good social studies instruction in K-12 classrooms, it is important to see examples of what this could look like in classrooms.

In the Introduction to the book, Lintner praises the possibilities of integration, takes care to define terms (like the difference between integrated and interdisciplinary), and cautions against poorly planned integration opportunities (citing Brophy and Alleman's work in elementary social studies integration). His opening words speak directly to the practicing teachers that may read this book, as he encourages them to integrate social studies with other subjects: "Start simply, start slowly, but start" (p. 6). However, in the book's desire to show teachers how to "start simply," the examples of integration in the

chapters are at times inconsistent with Lintner's message in his Introduction.

In the Introduction, Lintner cites Brophy and Alleman's (1991) six questions that teachers should ask to evaluate interdisciplinary lessons. Two of the questions are: *Would an outsider be able to correlate the activity to the subject area taught?* and *Does the activity promote authenticity in all subject areas?* There are a few chapters in the book that would be easily identified to outsiders and would be authentic to one subject area, but not necessarily social studies. There are examples of art, music, and math lessons that are very interactive and could be very engaging to students, but they lack specific social studies content. In the elementary math lesson for example (featured in the chapter "Interdisciplinary Strategies for Math and Social Studies"), all of the lesson objectives relate to math skills like identifying types of angles and measuring angles. There are no social studies objectives for the students to meet. The only reference to social studies is the use of a children's book called *Sir Cumference and the Great Knight of Angleland* (Neuschwander, 2001), which is a book that introduces geometry terms with a setting in the Middle Ages. The extension activities of the lesson describe a few activities that could be done to extend learning about the Middle Ages, but using a book with a history-related setting does not make the lesson a social studies lesson.

One distinction that Lintner takes care to make in his Introduction is the difference between the terms "integrated" and "interdisciplinary." Lintner references Beane (1997) and Jacobs (1997) to describe how an integrated curriculum is more student-driven and based on student inquiry, and an interdisciplinary curriculum is more subject- and teacher-centered. He writes that making these distinctions is important, because "Teachers may say that they 'integrate' without truly knowing what this implies" (p. 3). However, the authors of the chapters in the book do use these terms interchangeably, making it unclear why this distinction is important. What the "integrated" and "interdisciplinary" curricula have in common is that they combine more than one subject under a theme or issue. Many of the chapters in this book don't provide ideas for possible themes that classroom teachers could use to unite the subject areas. In some cases, it is

uncertain whether the subjects being integrated with social studies are even subjects at all.

For example, the chapter titled "Things Said and Done: Using Digital Tools to Enhance Historical Memory" showcases several great examples of how teachers can incorporate technology to enhance social studies lessons. The authors Lee, Manfra, and List mention several digital tools like audio recording software, website creation sites, moviemaking software, and Wikipedia and describe how to incorporate these tools into social studies lessons to enhance students' skills in examining multiple sources, researching information, presenting others' stories, and evaluating sources for bias. The lessons these authors provide are very high quality social studies lessons that allow students to practice these social studies skills while engaging in the content and the technology. However, it is a bit murky as to whether "digital tools" are considered a discipline or a subject area—one could argue they are simply tools (Hamilton, 2014). This chapter features great examples of social studies strategies and lessons that effectively use technology in an engaging way, but not necessarily integrated lessons. If the lessons or strategies described how to teach students the purpose of using specific tools and how they are applied effectively and ineffectively, then "technology" could be considered a subject area or discipline. One could assume that part of the social studies lessons in this chapter does include this instruction, but it is not explicit for teachers who may want to incorporate these technologies. (The closest example is the lesson on how political groups altered a Paul Revere Wikipedia page for their own purpose, but this lesson focuses more on historical memory as opposed to how Wikipedia is a digital tool that can be altered by anyone).

This inconsistency appears in other chapters such as one focused on special education and one on working with English language learners (ELL). The special education chapter ("Don't Forget Me!" by Minarik and Coughlin) makes important points about the necessity of classroom teachers co-teaching with special education teachers and the importance of interdisciplinary instruction to engage special education students. The section that gives strategies for teachers to effectively co-teach a social studies class with a special education teacher is especially

helpful and very much needed for practicing teachers. However, the lesson plans provided in that chapter don't always focus on social studies content. For example, the elementary lesson's objectives and most of the lesson activities are only related to creating visual representations of geometric shapes. The lesson does connect between these math skills and the Jamestown settlement, but math is the only subject area assessed. This lesson is labeled as a "Social Studies and Special Education Lesson." In reality, there is very little social studies in this lesson, and the title implies that "special education" is a subject area or discipline.

The ELL chapter ("Making Social Studies Accessible and Engaging for English Language Learners" by O'Brien and Cruz) does a great job of describing how teachers can adapt social studies lessons to be more accessible to language learners with specific strategies and tools that are relatively easy to apply (visual aids, graphic organizers) and are beneficial for all students. However, it is unclear what two subject areas are being integrated within the lessons. The lesson titles are even misleading: "Integrated Lesson Plans: Social Studies and English Language Learners." This implies that the learners are the subject area—perhaps the subject should be language learning objectives, English-Language Arts, or literacy.
The structure of the book, with three distinct lessons for different grade levels at the end of each chapter makes it difficult for teachers to see how integration can happen under a theme or within a unit. There is one exception, which is the chapter on integrating literacy and social studies ("Social Studies and Literacy: Exploring Interdisciplinary Teaching in a Professional Development School Setting" by MacPhee). Social studies is most often integrated with literacy. Many social studies and literacy skills are similar (skills like distinguishing between fact and opinion, writing expository texts, and delivering a persuasive presentation) that a literacy block in an elementary classroom could use literature to introduce social studies content to students or allow time for students to practice these skills (Alleman & Brophy, 2010).

MacPhee's chapter focuses only on elementary social studies, which is a different approach from the others in the book. While describing her work with pre-service and

in-service teachers in a professional development school, she provided a narrative of how she and an elementary classroom teacher designed a social studies unit on westward expansion that integrated literacy. She described the planning process of how she and the teacher chose social studies objectives as well as the reading skills to be taught in the unit, she described how they planned lessons within the school's master schedule, and how she co-taught lessons with the classroom teacher to model integrated instruction for her pre-service teachers who were in the classroom as well. MacPhee provided the template they used for the unit, the projects and research topics they gave to their elementary students, and the literature materials they used. Like every other chapter in the book, there are three lesson plans at the end of this chapter, but unlike the other chapters, they are all elementary lessons for fifth grade. The lessons are all from the westward expansion unit that MacPhee described planning throughout the chapter. This shows how an integrated unit works, where social studies and literacy may not necessarily need to be integrated into one lesson, but as part of a larger, themed unit.

MacPhee's chapter is an example of how complicated integration can be—it requires an extensive amount of pre-planning and purpose. Effective integration doesn't happen by accident. In a sense, the practice of integration is anything but simple. Lintner recognizes that teachers need to start somewhere, and there does need to be more research on implementation of integration and interdisciplinary teaching that is meant for practitioners. However, "starting simply" runs a risk of engaging in undesirable integration (Alleman & Brophy, 2010) that Lintner warns against in his Introduction. A book like this should be more ambitious, consistently showing examples of effective integration, and all of its complexities. There are many great examples in this book of great social studies lessons, helpful considerations for teachers who work with diverse learners, and with the MacPhee chapter, a look at the amount of planning and collaboration needed to make integration successful. This book also reminds us of how much more work needs to be done with giving teachers examples of effective integration. Example lessons should have social studies objectives as well as objectives from other subject areas. Instead of showing how to set "dry facts to music," (p. 139) we should be

promoting active and challenging social studies instruction that involves discussion and promotes critical thinking, not made up of dry facts.

If we want to make integrated/interdisciplinary lessons simpler for teachers to begin, then taking care to make the distinction between the two terms might be important. If integrated lessons are more student-driven and more resemble project-based learning, teachers may need a lot of support to successfully design an integrated curriculum. More research will be needed to show teachers examples of successful integrated curricula for students at all grade levels. It might be a good first step to start with showing teachers ways to begin with interdisciplinary lessons that they conceptualize and plan. Teachers need examples of interdisciplinary lessons that focus on the implementation of the CCSS, which is a reality in many K-12 classrooms all over the country. An example lesson that focuses on how one CCSS for reading informational text or argument writing could be integrated with social studies content and skills would be a great place to start.

There is a need for those in the field of social studies research to show teachers practical examples of integration and interdisciplinary lessons. This book is definitely necessary to help practitioners, but we need to make sure we're not sacrificing the exemplary for the simple. We need to provide teachers with ideas on integration and interdisciplinary lessons that are "simple" while simultaneously providing them with examples of lessons that enhance all integrated subjects without losing sight of social studies.

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