Trunks of Hope: T-Shirt Design Mission for Elephant Conservation

Next Generation Science Standards:

- MS-LS2 Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics
- MS-ETS1 Engineering Design
- MS-LS4 Biological Evolution: Unity and Diversity

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts (ELA):

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6-8.1 (Reading: Informational Text)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6-8.7 (Reading: Informational Text)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6-8.7 (Writing)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6-8.8 (Writing)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6-8.4 (Speaking and Listening)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6-8.5 (Speaking and Listening)

Canadian Curriculums Ontario and BC *(The plan can be modified to suit Provincial Curriculum Standards in ALL Provinces in Canada.)*

BC Curriculum – Social Studies

- Grade 6 - Social Studies - Complex Global Problems

BC Curriculum – Science

- Grade 4 – Science - Curricular Competency
- Grade 7 – Science – Curricular Competency
- Grade 11 – Environmental Science

Ontario Curriculum - Science

- Grade 2 – Science - Life Systems Growth and changes in animals
- Grade 4 – Science - Life Systems – Habitats and Communities
- Grade 6 – Science – Understanding Life Systems

Grade Level: Upper Elementary, Middle or Secondary Students

Learning Objectives:

- Students will engage in structured discussions to develop creative strategies for raising awareness to support elephant conservation.
- Students will collaborate in teams to design t-shirts promoting elephant conservation.

Materials Needed:

- Computer with internet access for research and showing video
- Whiteboard and markers
- Art supplies (paper, colored pencils or markers)
- Informational resources about elephant conservation
- Camera (for documenting the process and submitting the final design)

Warm-Up Activity:

- Show a short video about elephants and their conservation.
  - Suggested Video Link: Endangered Elephants: A Race Against Extinction
- Initiate a 'Think-Pair-Share' activity by asking students the following question: Why are elephants in danger of being extinct and what can you do to help save the elephant population?
  - Students think individually about the video.
  - Students pair up with a partner and discuss their thoughts.
  - Pairs decide which insights to share with the class.

Lesson Hook: "Designing for a Cause with Elephanatics"

- "Imagine your artwork making a real difference in the world. Today, we have a unique and exciting opportunity. We're partnering with Elephanatics, a nonprofit organization dedicated to saving elephants. But they need our help! Elephants, these magnificent and intelligent creatures, are facing serious threats. They need our voices, our creativity, and our action. That's where each of you comes in. Your mission is to design a t-shirt. But not just any t-shirt. This will be a symbol of hope, awareness, and support for elephant conservation. Your designs will be more than just artwork; they will carry a powerful message. The best part? The design your classes choose will actually be used by Elephanatics in their campaigns to raise funds for elephant conservation. Imagine someone wearing a t-shirt with your design, contributing to saving these incredible animals! You're not just students in a classroom today – you're artists with a cause, designers for change. Let's put our creativity to work and make a design that speaks for the elephants. Are you ready to create something that can make a difference in the world?"

Hold an Information Session:

- Discuss the role of awareness campaigns and fundraising in conservation efforts. Share a few examples of t-shirts that have helped raise money to support causes. Have students focus on what aspects make the shirts effective.
- Present facts about elephant conservation using a 'Gallery Walk' where students move around the classroom to view different information stations about elephants and a variety of t-shirt designs and campaigns that involve endangered animals. This can include photos, print ads, commercials, and TikTok videos.
- Facilitate a class discussion where students share their key reflections and questions from the Gallery Walk.

Form Teams and Conduct a Snowball Discussion:

- **Introduction to Snowball Discussion:**
  - Explain the concept of a 'Snowball Discussion' to the students. It's a method where ideas start individually, then grow and develop through small-group discussions, finally culminating in a team consensus.
  - Emphasize the importance of respecting all ideas and building upon them collaboratively.
- **Individual Idea Generation:**
  - Begin by giving each student a few minutes to brainstorm ideas for the t-shirt design independently.
  - Encourage them to think about themes, slogans, images, and colors related to elephant conservation.
  - Provide paper and pencils for students to jot down or sketch their initial ideas.
  - Have students fold a piece of paper in half. On one side, they should write down words or phrases they want included in their design. On the other side, they should sketch or describe any images they included in their design.
- **Pairing Up for Initial Discussion:**
  - After individual brainstorming, students pair up with a classmate.
  - In their pairs, they share their ideas, discuss the strengths of each, and consider how they might combine or improve upon them.
  - This step allows students to refine their ideas and consider new perspectives.
- **Forming Small Groups:**
  - Pairs then join with another pair to form small groups of four. In these groups, students share their combined ideas from the pair discussions.
  - Each group discusses the merits of the ideas presented, further developing and amalgamating them into more cohesive concepts.
  - Encourage students to consider practical aspects like how the design will look on a t-shirt and its appeal to potential buyers.
- **Creating Teams:**
  - Several small groups can then come together to form larger teams. Ideally, each team should have around 4-5 members.
  - In these teams, students share the refined ideas from their small groups, opening up for a broader discussion.
  - Teams should aim to reach a consensus on a few key ideas or concepts that they feel best represent their collective vision for the t-shirt design.
- **Sketching Design Ideas in Teams:**
  - Now, within their teams, students start sketching their t-shirt design ideas based on the agreed-upon concepts.
  - Encourage collaboration in this creative process, with students building on each other's strengths, whether it's in art, writing, or conceptualization.
- **Encouraging Creativity and Message Clarity:**
  - Throughout the brainstorming and design process, reinforce the importance of creativity and clarity of message in their designs.
  - Remind students that the goal is to create a t-shirt that effectively communicates the message of elephant conservation and resonates with a broad audience.
- **Teacher's Role:**
  - As the facilitator, circulate among the teams, offering guidance and ensuring that discussions remain focused and productive.
  - Offer encouragement and constructive feedback to help teams refine their ideas

Engage in 'Critique Circles' for Peer Feedback on T-Shirt Designs:

- **Organize Group-Based Critique Circles:**
  - Arrange the class into multiple circles, with each circle comprising different groups.
  - Groups of students present their collective t-shirt designs to each other.
- **Explain the Rules and Objectives for Groups:**

    - Explain the purpose of the Critique Circle, emphasizing constructive feedback, respect, and collaborative improvement of designs.
    - Clarify that feedback should be directed towards the design and the teamwork reflected in it, rather than individual contributions.
- **Presenting Group Designs:**
    - One group at a time presents their t-shirt design to their circle. The presentation can be done by a single representative or as a team effort.
    - The presenting group explains their collective concept, the message behind their design, and any particular elements they'd like feedback on.
- **Structured Group Feedback:**
    - After each group's presentation, members from other groups in the circle provide feedback.
    - Members of the presenting group should take notes of the feedback.
    - Implement a timer to ensure balanced feedback time for each group.
    - Encourage constructive comments that reflect on the overall design and how effectively it communicates its message.
- **Rotate and Repeat the Process:**
    - After one group has received feedback, move to the next group in the circle.
    - Continue this process until all groups in the circle have presented and received feedback.
- **Group Reflection:**
    - Once the Critique Circle is complete, allow time for each group to reflect on the feedback and discuss how they might integrate it into their design.
- **Teacher's Role:**
    - Monitor the discussions in each circle, stepping in to guide, clarify, or refocus discussions as needed.
    - Ensure that the feedback remains constructive and relevant to each group's design.

Implement a 'Class Showcase and Selection' Process for T-Shirt Design Presentations:

- **Team Presentations:**
    - Each team prepares to present their t-shirt design to the entire class, including a brief explanation of their design concept, the message it conveys, and any unique features.
    - Teams can use visual aids, such as drawings or digital representations, to effectively showcase their design.
- **Class Viewing and Feedback:**
    - As each team presents, the rest of the class observes and takes notes.
    - Encourage students to consider how well each design represents the theme of elephant conservation and its potential appeal in a fundraising context.
    - After each presentation, allow a short Q&A session for clarification or feedback.
- **Voting for the Final Design:**
    - After all teams have presented, conduct a voting session to select the design that will represent the class and be shared with Elephanatics.
    - Provide each student with a ballot to vote for their preferred design.
    - Collect and count the ballots. The design with the most votes is selected as the class representative.
    - Announce the winning design to the class, acknowledging the team's effort and creativity.
- **Celebrating All Participants:**
    - Offer constructive feedback to all teams, highlighting the strengths and creativity shown in each design.
    - Emphasize the collaborative effort and the importance of each contribution, regardless of the winning design.
    - Acknowledge the hard work of all students and the spirit of collaboration in the project.
    - Celebrate the collective effort towards a noble cause.
- **Preparing for Elephanatics Submission:**
    - Work with the winning team to prepare their design for submission to Elephanatics.
        - Have the winning team take a photo with their T-shirt design and email it and a photo of just the design to elephanaticsinfo@gmail.com. From there, the design will be turned into a T-shirt sold worldwide to help raise awareness and funds to protect the elephants.

Conclude with a 'Reflective Sharing' Activity:

- **Individual Reflection:** Have students individually reflect on the importance of elephant conservation, focusing on what they've learned and why the cause matters.
- **Group Sharing:** Organize a circle for students to share their thoughts. Encourage concise statements about the significance of saving elephants and additional conservation efforts.
- **Exploring Further Actions:** Facilitate a brief discussion on other ways to contribute to elephant conservation, like community awareness activities or supporting conservation organizations.
- **Reflect on Impact:** End the class by having students share how this project has shaped their understanding of elephant conservation and how they can apply these lessons in the future.

Assessment Rubrics:

Rubric #1: Engagement and Contribution in Discussion Strategies

Criteria	Exemplary (4 points)	Proficient (3 points)	Basic (2 points)	Needs Improvement (1 point)
Participation	Actively participates and leads in all discussions.	Participates in most discussions.	Participates when prompted.	Rarely participates in discussions.
Quality of Contribution	Contributions are insightful, enhancing the depth of the discussion.	Contributions are relevant and thoughtful.	Contributions are somewhat relevant but lack depth.	Contributions are off-topic or minimal.

Rubric #2: Team Collaboration and Participation in the T-Shirt Design Process

Criteria	Exemplary (4 points)	Proficient (3 points)	Basic (2 points)	Needs Improvement (1 point)
Planning Contribution	Highly involved in planning, offering innovative ideas and strategies.	Actively participates in planning with good ideas and strategies.	Participates in planning but with limited ideas and input.	Shows little to no involvement in planning.
Teamwork	Consistently collaborates effectively, showing leadership and support.	Collaborates well with team members.	Sometimes collaborates with the team.	Struggles to collaborate effectively with the team.
Role Fulfillment	Fully engages in an assigned role, contributing significantly to the team.	Effectively fulfills the assigned role.	Partially fulfills the assigned role.	Does not effectively fulfill the assigned role.

Rubric #3: Quality and Creativity of the T-Shirt Designs

Criteria	Exemplary (4 points)	Proficient (3 points)	Basic (2 points)	Needs Improvement (1 point)
Message Clarity	The message is exceptionally clear, impactful, and well-integrated into the design.	The message is clear and well conveyed through the design.	The message is somewhat clear but lacks strong integration into the design.	The message is unclear or poorly integrated into the design.
Creativity	The design is highly original and demonstrates exceptional creativity.	Design shows creativity and originality.	The design shows some creativity but is somewhat conventional.	Design lacks creativity and originality.
Aesthetic Appeal	The design is exceptionally appealing and professionally presented.	The design is visually appealing and well-presented.	The design is somewhat appealing with a basic presentation.	The design lacks visual appeal and has a poor presentation.