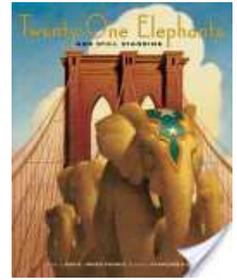


April 2013

Dear Community,

The Brooklyn Bridge is one of New York City's most iconic landmarks. Completed in 1883 after 14 years of construction this beautiful piece of architecture connects the sister boroughs of Brooklyn and Manhattan. *Twenty-One Elephants and Still Standing* by April Jones Prince is a great realistic fiction book about how P.T. Barnum used the biggest passengers imaginable to show the public how safe and sturdy the Brooklyn Bridge was upon its completion.



This book can be used in a variety of ways in all content areas, especially Social Studies. Your students can further explore and research the history of the Brooklyn Bridge and the people responsible for designing and constructing it. Students can also do research on other prominent NYC landmarks and compare and contrast them to the Brooklyn Bridge. As an art and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) extension students can create models of prominent New York City Landmarks. These ideas are great for addressing the Common Core Shift of reading a balance of literary and informational texts. There are multiple websites and videos available with additional information. Here are a few links to support this work:

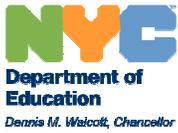
-  <http://www.history.com/news/history-blog/building-the-brooklyn-bridge>
-  <http://www.pbs.org/kenburns/brooklynbridge/educators/>
-  http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/buildingbig/educator/act_suspension_ei.html
-  <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehDDADOenIA>

This book lends itself to our Common Core Reading Standards in Informational Text. Some of the CCSS addressed are:

-  Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
-  Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text.
-  Use text features and search tools to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.
-  Use information gained from illustrations and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text.
-  Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text.

In continuing to push our student's thinking by asking higher level questions, using Thinking Maps to organize our thoughts, and increase our academic vocabulary knowledge, the Teacher Leaders Team worked very hard to put together a list of examples of thinking map activities, higher order thinking questions, and vocabulary words to help support your work.

Thinking Maps	Possible Activities
Circle Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Brainstorm and list everything you learned about the Brooklyn Bridge after reading the book.  Brainstorm possible reasons why elephants were used to show the strength of the bridge.  Brainstorm and list what you know about bridges.  Brainstorm historical landmarks in NYC and/or in the world.
Bubble Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Describe the Brooklyn Bridge using text-based evidence in your frame of reference.  What adjectives would describe P.T. Barnum?
Double Bubble Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Compare and contrast how P.T. Barnum and the people in the city felt about the Brooklyn Bridge.  Create a double bubble map comparing and contrasting the bridge From <i>Twenty-One Elephants</i> to the bridge from <i>The Three Billy Goats Gruff</i>.



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Tree Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Categorize words from the book that show different feelings about the bridge. ✚ Research and categorize major New York City and/or world landmarks, including the Brooklyn Bridge.
Brace Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Create a brace map for the different parts of the bridge.
Flow Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Create a flow map to describe how the people in the city felt about the bridge at the beginning, middle and end of the story. ✚ Place the major events of the story in order.
Multi-Flow Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Create a multi-flow map with the main event: P.T. Barnum’s elephants cross the Brooklyn Bridge. ✚ Create a multi-flow map with the main event: The Brooklyn Bridge is opened.
Bridge Map	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Create a bridge map with the relating factor “felt the bridge.” School teachers felt the bridge was worth the wait or other people felt the bridge was unsafe. ✚ Create a bridge map with the relating factor “is a landmark in.” The Brooklyn Bridge is a landmark in New York City, U.S.A. as the Eiffel Tower is a landmark in Paris, France.

As we continue our school-wide goal of growing our student’s academic vocabulary knowledge, it is very important that our students gain a strong understanding of the meaning of the words below in different contexts, as well as be able to use them in speaking and in writing. Our hope is that throughout the month you reinforce the meaning of these words and have your students engaged in various activities around them.

<i>Twenty-One Elephants and Still Standing Vocabulary Words</i>			
Gawking	Bigwigs	Exquisite	Gallant
Infinite	Amidst	Virtues	Sauntered
Dwarfed	Magnificent	Amuse	Pachyderm
Landmark	Strolls	Astound	Savored
Delight	Aloft	Waggle	Sway

Happy reading! We can’t wait to see and hear about other creations that your students may build!

Sincerely,

Dr. Davidson, Mrs. LaPorte, and the Teacher Leaders Team