



spotlight

EDUCATOR PROJECTS AND IDEAS

Part 1: Planning of *The Peace Project* at Herbert Mills Elementary in Reynoldsburg, OH

PAST works with schools to help build and support a culture that engages students in authentic problem-solving within their schools and community. As thinking partners for the Herbert Mills STEM Elementary team, we brainstormed how students might answer the question, “How can we promote peace among ourselves, our school, and our community?”

Students and teachers articulate the problem-solving process by using The *Herbert Mills Engineering Design Process* (pictured on right). Our teaching teams also engage in design thinking and the design process in their own curriculum planning.

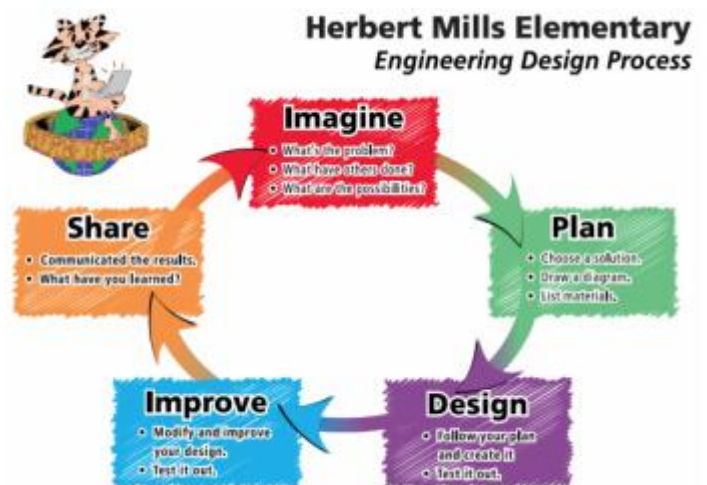
At the time of this publication, the teachers have *imagined*, and are currently *planning* and *designing*.

The Imagining

The Peace Project grew from the desire to expand upon the Dream Flag project (see photo above) from the previous year.

“Every year we try to do a global humanities-based project with students that includes a self-reflection element,” noted one of the teachers leading the project.

After reading about the *Kids’ Guernica Project* (<http://kids-guernica.blogspot.com>) the teachers were inspired to design the *Peace Project* to address with students what peace means them, within the school, and around the world. The teachers began by researching ideas and images online, and collaborated with their whole staff using Google Drive.



Source: http://www.reyn.org/herbertmillelementary_home.aspx



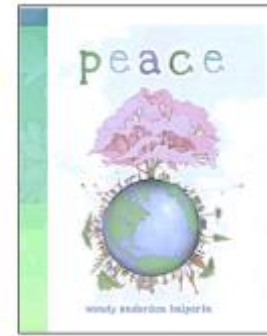
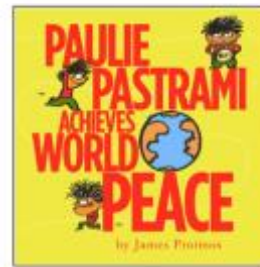


The Planning

Teachers used a shared To-Do list to track progress, list possibilities for activities and books appropriate for specific grades, and schedule planning meetings. The PAST team acted as thinking and reflective partners for the teachers during meetings, while researching community businesses that might help donate materials for the project (as well as for future projects)!

The Design

PAST supports teachers in creating authentic problems to address with students when doing projects. Authentic problems are relevant to the students solving them, and include a variety of solution paths and answers. The teachers' designed Guiding Questions on Google as the current driving and authentic problem questions for the project, although as in all Transdisciplinary Problem-Based Learning projects, problems can always evolve as the planning and project progresses!



Sources: www.teachwithpicturebooks.blogspot.com (left)
<http://www.simonandschuster.com> (right)

At *Morning Roar*, the school-wide meeting that launches each school day at Herbert Mills, students will be introduced to the project, and a member from the PAST team will share her *Guernica Project* experience with the students.

The project will be a compilation of poetry, literature, art, and photography with opportunities for science and mathematics exploration through classroom activities such as "A Recipe for Peace."

The products of the project will be created when each student receives a smooth stone that has been painted white. The students will create a design on their stones that symbolizes peace for them, personally. The stones will then be placed around the school garden as a display of the project and demonstration of learning. "This area was chosen because the students already take ownership in the garden where they plant vegetables and flowers on our school plant day," said one of the teachers helping to organize the school-wide project.

If you want to learn more about Herbert Mills STEM Elementary School, check out: http://www.reyn.org/herbertmillelementary_home.aspx

Help support the *Peace Project* at <https://www.gofundme.com/millspaceproject>.

Look for Part 2 of this story in July 2017!



Source: <http://myprimarypassion.stfi.re/2011/06/where-do-i-begin.html?sf=rpyppdoo#a>