



### Goal

To assist students in developing Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking Skills.

#### Specific Goals:

1. GED students with sufficient skills in critical thinking and problem solving to advance them to either the next level or to obtain their GED.
2. 60% of students will either advance to the next level or will score high enough to take their GED test.

#### Project

Place students in groups so that they will help each other in all tasks assigned. Use personal experiences and relate them to each subject being taught.

#### Action Steps

1. Explain project to students and solicit their input.
2. Set up groups of students by 10/3/05.
3. Implement project by 10/10/05 and assign first project. Project is to write ghost story told to each student by a parent or another adult. Story is not to have student's name and will be distributed to another group so that each group can decide on the characters and the mood of the story. Ending was left off so that each group could come up with at least 3 endings.
4. First project due on 10/31/05.

#### Resources

1. Personal story.
2. Computer.

3. Character Diagram.
4. Story Pictures.

Continue with group projects in all other subjects, specially in Math.

10/31/05: Groups were set up where each person would be able to play different roles. Tasks assigned so that the same person would not be the lead each time. Each person will have an opportunity to be a reader, a leader and a scribe.

1. Students brought stories told to them by their mother or grandmother and read story.
2. Stories were exchanged and each student read the story.
3. A Story Plot diagram, Star diagram or Story map was used to break down the story and identify the characters and the plot of the story.
4. Students were asked to tell any other story they remembered from their childhood.

Students were divided into groups in every subject and each table was and continues to be assigned certain tasks with each member of the group getting the opportunity to be the leader of the group. This has reduced the challenge of certain students always wanting to take over answering questions out loud.

#### Achievement

1. By using the group method, students seem to learn better and seem to grasp the material, specially math word problems, if they are part of a group and know that they can also rely on their fellow students to assist them.
2. 28 students advanced to the next level, with 10 of these students obtaining their GED and graduating December 2005.

#### Left to do / Next Steps

1. Continue to work with students that remain and assist them in obtaining the skills to advance to the next level.
2. Place these students in different groups where they will be the tenured student and others will look to them for assistance.

#### Resources Needed:

1. Additional time with computers.

This has been greatly enhanced with the use of the COW ( computer on wheels ) now available to the classroom.

### Lessons Learned:

1. Not all persons want to be leaders.
2. Students learn at different rates and through different methods. Recent workshop on Learning Styles has greatly assisted in identifying the different learning skills of each student.
3. Have learned that some students need to see problems being worked out on the board as well as have a piece of paper in their hands.
4. Students have ways of doing problems that make sense to the rest of the students and these students are encouraged to write their method on the board for all to benefit from this method.
5. If a student learns a certain way, and it is working for them, do not try to change their way of learning.

Students were tested with the GED Pre-Test exams on September 2005, December 2005, and March 2006. Some of the students tested in March 2005 and December 2005 were advanced to the next level. Those students remaining were again tested in March 2006. Attached are the scores received by each student on: Reading, Science, Social Studies, Writing, and Math.

Tests given in September 2005 represent one month of instruction where students completed all assignments on their own and did not ask their fellow students for assistance. Questions were assigned to each individual to answer on their own. Person had to read the question and provide support for their answer.

Tests given in December 2005 represent two months of instruction where students completed all assignments in groups and were allowed to ask fellow students for assistance. Questions were assigned to the group, each person in the group had an opportunity to lead, assign questions, read the passages, and provide supporting details for the group's answers. A different student was chosen as the leader with each assignment.

### FINDINGS

1. Students were willing to take the responsibility of being the leader of the group.
2. Students participated more in class projects.
3. Students were more comfortable in taking exams.
4. Grades improved in all areas on instruction.