RADCAB #3: Applying RADCAB to an Online Information Source

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, students apply Christensson's RADCAB model to evaluate a digital information source, usually a website. You must prepare the guiding question and choose a website, so this will take a bit of time to set up. I have chosen a non-professional web site that links to a unit on exploration, but you may choose any website you feel is suitable for the exercise. This is the second lesson designed to have the kids practice using the RADCAB model. Hopefully by now they are starting to gain some confidence in using RADCAB. This is hard conceptual work for most 5th graders. I often work through this exercise as a class and have them share their thinking with one another.

Lesson Plan:

Suggested Grades:

4-5

Objective:

Students will practice applying the RADCAB model to an online information source.

AASL 1.1.4: Find, **evaluate**, and select appropriate sources to answer questions.

Suggested Time:

45-50 minutes

Success Criteria:

Given a guiding question and website, students will correctly assess the suitability of the website as an information source.

Lesson Outline:

1. Introduction:

Briefly review the elements of the RADCAB model. Today we'll be applying the model to an online information source. The principles are the same, but the application is a bit different. Use what you know and try to think through this assignment. This one is more challenging than last week's work with a print source.

2. Main:

Introduce the website, task, and activity for the day. Students may use their own computers to access the website. Each student will take notes and write responses to each element of the RADCAB model. Students must explain their thinking and/or give examples. Short or one-word answers are not enough to answer this exercise.

Work through the assignment together, if necessary. The kids will easily get sidetracked into the content of the site and forget to evaluate the site according to the given criteria! Keeping them on task is challenging. You may wish to extend the lesson by 10-15 minutes, just so that they can read through the site, follow a few links, and get familiar with it before completing the assignment.

3. Conclusion:

Point out that they have:

1. Learned the RADCAB model
2. Applied RADCAB to a printed source (book)
3. Applied RADCAB to an online source (website)

We will continue to use and apply RADCAB with information sources. Encourage students to use the RADCAB model in all of their projects.

additional Resources:

1. Website: World Walk Travel Adventure http://davekunst1.com/
2. Student Handout, RADCAB Online Information Source

Notes:

You can use any website for this exercise. However, I chose Dave Kunst's web site because it ties to the Unit of Inquiry on exploration, the kids generally find it interesting, and he is an authority without being a large company or university. I believe that the site is unique in this regard and therefore a good one for the kids to use in their thinking.

Karen Christensson, a library media specialist in the U.S.A,, developed the RADCAB model for her lessons in 2002. I have found it to be an excellent tool for teaching these concepts, and I've never found a model I like better than hers.

I have purchased posters and bookmarks of the RADCAB model, and my students and teachers have loved them. I have yet to find a literacy curriculum or language curriculum that teaches these concepts better than Karen's model, so I encourage you to get familiar with it and place an order for some of the supporting materials.

RADCAB web site: http://www.radcab.com/

Key Terms:

Information Source Evaluation, Information Literacy, RADCAB, Relevance, Appropriateness, Detail, Currency, Authority, Bias, Web Site Evaluation.

student handout:

Student Handout, RADCAB Website Evaluation