Newsflash

firelight FOUNDATION

August 29, 2013

Dear Friends,

We hope you enjoy this week's edition of the Newsflash!

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

(Resource) What is a Good School?
(Resource) Exploratory Learning: A Toolkit to Turn Elementary School Kids Into "Neighborhood Detectives"
(Resource) Tips on how to get started in Local Fundraising
(Open for Applications) Coca Cola Foundation

(Resource) What is a Good School?

What is a good school? It is different things to different people. Some people emphasize buildings and the environment. Others think relationships and governance are more important.

Over one thousand people of different ages and backgrounds across Tanzania responded to a competition on “What is a Good School?” organized by HakiElimu. The aim was to stimulate debate on the meaning of quality education. The variety and depth of the response demonstrates that people across Tanzania are thinking about education and have ideas to share.

This booklet summarizes the issues raised and publishes 17 of the best essays and drawings received. We hope they will inspire students, parents, teachers and policy makers to pay greater attention to the quality of education, and to implement creative ideas that will make a real difference.

HakiElimu (www.hakielimu.org) is an independent civil society organization which seeks to realize equity, quality, human rights and democracy in education and society. We facilitate communities to access information, transform schools and influence policy-making; stimulate imaginative public dialogue and organizing for change; promote

critical research, analysis and advocacy; and collaborate with partners to advance social justice.

The booklet is available as a free download in both English and Swahili:
http://bit.ly/16B5jJd (English) - 1.7 MB
http://bit.ly/14nnm62 (Swahili) - 1.6 MB

(Resource) Exploratory Learning: A Toolkit to Turn Elementary School Kids Into "Neighborhood Detectives"

A post written by Allison Arieff on **GOOD** (http://bit.ly/1d8Mv9c)

In collaboration with two wonderful first grade teachers, we've put together this terrific tool kit: the projects within it demonstrate that, for elementary school kids in particular, there are a million things to learn and discover while taking a walk around the block.

The Neighborhood Tool Kit takes its inspiration from Ms. Linnea and Mr. James' first grade class at Children's Day School in San Francisco. The school is located in the heart of the city's Mission District where a walk in any direction provides a unique sensory experience. The 22 students set out on several journeys: from home to school, and from school to local business and landmarks (like the historic Mission Dolores across the street or the busy Bi-Rite Market two blocks south). Sights, smells and sounds of the streets were experienced and recorded. Maps were made. Interviews with neighbors, teachers, family members were conducted. Stories were written, art created.

The ideas and projects here are meant to inspire (and we think they can be a valuable addition to curriculum). They can be adapted to class size, neighborhood, age group. In getting kids to observe their world up close, we also hope to be inspiring future urban planners, community activists, entrepreneurs. With this tool kit, kids can see what might be possible—even on their own block.

Neighborhood Study Toolkit

For the past several months, the first grade class at Children's Day School, located in San Francisco's Mission District, has been exploring their neighborhoods. The students began by discussing what they think a neighborhood is and what they expect to see as neighborhood "detectives" in their school community. Each student made a map of their own neighborhood. Their explorations have taken them on many adventures around our school community, and has inspired each of them to have similar adventures in their own neighborhoods.

The neighborhood study is based on the premise that first-hand experiences are the most dynamic and generative types of learning for children at this age. Neighborhoods -

diverse environments for living, working and playing—provide a dynamic setting for first graders to learn about themselves, their peers, their surroundings and the meaning of community.

Assignment #1: Mapmaking: A Tool for Hitching Children's Lives to Their Places

"Mapmaking, in the broad sense of the word, is as important to making us human as music, language, art, and mathematics…Mapmaking helps children to build a sense of commitment to a place and community - to inspire kids to care deeply and to want to make a difference, stewardship springs from connectedness." - David Sobel

We began our neighborhood study by each making a map of our own neighborhood, the area we spend most of our time in, where we play, where we live. The only thing each child had to include on their personal map was their home. Beyond that, it was up to them to show the places that felt special and important. This activity helped to provide the children with a sense of grounding and knowing when beginning to talk about such a big concept as neighborhoods.

We asked the following questions to support the children's work:

~ What is a map?

~ What makes a good map?

~ What makes reading maps easy or hard?

~ Other than your home, what are the important places in your neighborhood you may want to add to your map?

We then mapped our classroom.

While beginning to explore our school neighborhood, the children simultaneously explored their own neighborhoods....which takes us to Assignment 2: A Neighborhood Collage.

Assignment #2: A Neighborhood Collage

This assignment asks that your child create a representation, an expression, of their neighborhood in relation to themselves. Let's call it, "All About My Neighborhood!"

This assignment is a team endeavor, as you support your child in coming to a deeper understanding of the community he or she lives in. Your child can decorate their board as they wish. Be creative! Take out scissors, glue, paint, fabric, construction paper, family, photographs, magazine cut-outs, etc. Before getting started, take some time to

explore such questions as:

~ What neighborhood do I live in?

~ What is the name of my street?

~ Who are my neighbors?

~ What do I enjoy doing in my neighborhood?

~ What are my favorite places in my neighborhood? (i.e., park, restaurant, local book store)

~ Where do we get our groceries?

~ Where are places in my neighborhood that the community comes together? (i.e., local farmer's market, ice-cream shop, church)

~ What is important to me about my neighborhood?

~ What makes my neighborhood special?

~ Do I have a special landmark in my neighborhood?

~ How can I best show the community I live in?

Your child may want to include a flyer from a local shop, a photograph of him/herself outside of their favorite restaurant, or playing at their local park.

This is a project that can be carried out in one sitting or in short intervals depending on your child's temperament. Our hope is that your child will invest themselves in their creation and feel pride in sharing it with their peers. We look forward to creating a class neighborhood museum of these collages together.

Which brings us to Assignment #3: Neighborhood Walks…

Assignment #3: Neighborhood Walks

During the neighborhood project, the students ventured out, exploring and researching, in and around our school neighborhood, which in this case was the Mission District of San Francisco. They visited Mission Dolores Church, Bi-Rite Market, Dolores Park, and walked up and down the blocks connecting each of these places simply noticing, growing their awareness, making connections, and sequencing their steps.

You and your child, or you and your class, can do this in your school neighborhood, selecting the locations that make sense there.

Having carried out several mapping activities to launch our study, the children were inspired to create a large map of the area surrounding our school. In order to do this, we needed to put our detective hats on and explore all the nooks and crannies around our school. We decided to walk up and down the blocks connecting the different places we've taken trips to. We ventured out slowly and simply noticed, while challenging ourselves to increase our awareness and make connections. We called these jaunts Sensory Walks and would use only our eyes, ears, and noses to sharpen our awareness and develop our observation skills. Here are several guiding questions that we asked ourselves as we walked:

~ What are the colors of the buildings on this street?

~ What are the buildings made of?

~ What types of shops do you notice?

~ What do you see, hear, smell on the streets?

~ What types of jobs are being carried out?

~ We asked questions about the logic and order of the work being done on the streets. For example, 'If we see construction workers, what do you think they are doing? What are they building? How long will it take?'

Assignment #4: Mapping Activity: From Home to School

Once the children have done quite a bit of mapping work in their school neighborhood and their own, it is time to connect home to school. To gain a greater sense of one's community and represent the order of places along a line of travel (sequencing), the children were asked to draw a map of their route from home to school. This challenge also provided the children with an opportunity to look closely at the daily experience of going to and from school. This transition from home to school can be both exciting and difficult (especially when they are running late!). Making a map and talking about it gives them a way to share their experience, hearing other children's daily experience, and getting a sense of the community that they are all part of.

This activity is designed to help your child gain a greater sense of their community and represent the order of places along a line of travel (sequencing). This activity can help your child focus on what things they pass on the way to school and in what order. Your child's job this week is to…

A. Take note of his/her route to school for the next two mornings and consider your home in relation to school.

B. What are two important places you notice on the way to school? (i.e. stores, significant trees, places where friends or relatives live, places where you play, etc.)

C. What are two places that are potentially dangerous or could be scary? (i.e. street crossings with lots of traffic, train tracks, construction work, etc.)

Then, using the worksheets provided, draw pictures of the places you've taken note of and cut them out. Create/construct a collage of your route to school each day on a large piece of art paper.

A. Glue the picture of your home and school on opposite ends of your piece of paper.

B. Connect home and school by drawing the roads, streets, and/or paths that you ride or walk along each day. Try to remember corners where you make big turns.

C. Arrange your important and scary places along the roads between home and school. Glue them in the right places.

D. Place/Draw a picture of you riding or walking to school somewhere along the route to school.

Assignment #5: Neighborhood Interviews

This is a three-part assignment, designed to let students learn about the importance of neighborhoods to others in their community. They first interview a family member, then ask themselves what they like about their own neighborhood, and then, finally, interview school staff about where they live—and what they like about their own neighborhoods.

A: Interview a family member about the neighborhood they grew up in

Neighborhood Interview

Family Member: _____

1. When you were in first grade, where did you live?

2. What was your favorite place and why in your neighborhood?

3. What games did you play in your neighborhood?

B. Neighborhood Project Scavenger Hunt

My Neighborhood

What is your address?

Where do you play in your neighborhood?

What businesses are in your neighborhood?

What do you like about your neighborhood?

What would you change about your neighborhood if you could?

C: Interview School Staff

When the class sat down to brainstorm what makes a neighborhood, everyone agreed that "people" were the most important part of any neighborhood. With that in mind, the Neighborhood Detectives broke into teams and set out to interview several school staff members to learn about their neighborhood and some of their favorite places.

Interviewing people they know helps young students connect with familiar people and places This human element makes the concepts of neighborhoods, landmarks and maps more meaningful, concrete and personal for them.

The students interviewed staff members at school, about the neighborhoods they live in. Possible Interview subjects at your school:

- Front Desk Receptionist
- Librarian
- Kindergarten Teacher
- Custodian
- Art Teacher
- Principal

We asked them questions that the students helped to generate:

- What do you do at CDS?
- What neighborhood do you live in?
- What is your favorite place in your neighborhood?
- How do you get to school each day?
- Do you live near nature?

View the original post and photos here: http://bit.ly/1d8Mv9c

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(Resource) Tips on how to get started in Local Fundraising by Michael Norton

This two-part guide provides insight into how organizations can effectively fundraise from within their local communities. The guide outlines:

- Legal and tax situations to consider
- Building on local tradition by finding out what other organizations are doing to fundraise
- Tapping into local networks for support
- Reflecting on current fundraising strategies and lessons learned
- The basics on how to ask for financial support

Download the guide for free from The Resource Alliance: http://bit.ly/14IFFPs - 139 KB

(Open for Applications) Coca Cola Foundation

The Coca-Cola Foundation offers community support programs that lead to the improvement of the quality of life of the communities. Its community investment priorities reflect the global and local nature of the business and focuses on those global pillars where The Coca-Cola Company can make a unique and sustainable difference: water stewardship, active healthy living, community recycling, and education.

Organizations outside of the United States can apply forfunding support from the Foundation. However, they are required to prove their charitable status.

The Coca-Cola Foundation and its affiliated regional foundations do not generally support:

- Individuals (For scholarship information, visit The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation website.)
- Organizations that discriminate based on race, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, age ordisability
- Religious endeavors
- Political, legislative, lobbying or organizations
- Movie, film or television documentaries
- Website development
- Concerts or other entertainment events
- Beauty contests, fashion shows or hair shows
- Fraternal organizations and related events
- Local sports or athletic teams

- Travel or organized field trips
- Family reunions
- Marketing sponsorships or cause marketing or advertising projects (For marketing sponsorship requests, visit the Contact Us section)
- U.S. based local schools, including charter schools, pre-schools, elementary schools, middle schools or high schools
- U.S.-based organizations that do not have tax-exempt status under Section 501(c) (3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code, or the equivalent
- Organizations formed outside the U. S. that do not have a charitable equivalency status under the laws and provisions of their respective government

All requests for community support in the form of grants or sponsorships for consideration by The Coca-Cola Company, The Coca-Cola Foundation or any of its affiliated regional foundations must be submitted through an online application system. Those proposals meeting specific guidelines, and further our strategic goals and objectives, will be considered for funding. Applications that are faxed or mailed will be returned to the organization with an invitation to apply through the online application.

Applications are accepted year round. To apply, please visit: http://bit.ly/16k10hX

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website: http://www.firelightfoundation.org/resources/newsflash/.

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org.

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