



Students learn to fight sandstorms using IT

China

Project name:

Pay More Attention to Sandstorms

Teacher:

Wang Jianpeng

School:

No. 1 Middle School, Guazhou County

Learning areas:

Geography

Objectives:

To give the involved students a personal experience of the severity of sandstorm and to improve their learning about the subject, so that they can communicate it to the wider community

Outcomes:

Students got a clearer picture about the causes of sandstorm and its disastrous impact on people's survival and life

“Through this project we can see the force of modern media and the change information technology brings to modern teaching.”

— Wang Jianpeng, No. 1 Middle School

In close connection with the local geographical features, this project is designed to give the involved students a personal experience of the severity of sandstorms and to improve their learning. The students made Web pages which included their study outcomes, in order to communicate with the rest of the society the importance of paying more attention to sandstorms.



Situation

Guazhou County is known as the “World Wind Bank”. Wind dominates most of the seasons, and every winter and spring strong wind cause heavy sandstorms that even result in water and power outages. Every year, the county suffers great losses: sandstorms affect

agriculture, industry, and people's life, as well as the study of local students. However, the local residents seem to have gotten used to this and their attitude toward environment protection remains to be scarce. This project gives the students a personal experience about the effect of sandstorms and encourages them to identify the causes of sandstorms with the support of their knowledge in geography and history.

Located in the Guazhou County in western China, this regular senior high school has more than 2,200 students and 180 teachers who are in charge of 45 regular classes.

“This project was a good chance to improve our sense about responsibility in building a better society.”

— Student from No. 1 Middle School in Guazhou County

Objectives

In this project the students call for a raised public awareness in the capacity of masters of the country's future. The idea is to help target students understand the formation of sandstorms and its disastrous impacts on people's survival and life, so that they can be closer to the solutions to the negative effects of the sandstorms. It is also supposed to help target students improve their skills to draw and fine-tune maps with drawing tools, and to be capable of acquiring, analyzing and processing well-defined information by means of information technology.

They were required to make Web pages with software such as Microsoft Office FrontPage, and to acquire, store and edit video information by digital camera and DV. To get the first-hand information, the students used video cameras to take pictures, showing the routes of sandstorms. To acquire deeper knowledge about sandstorms students learned to use search tools on the Internet, and to sort out and display the results they used Microsoft Office Word. The final results were subject learning websites made with Microsoft Office FrontPage.

Outcomes

Through this project the students got a clearer picture about the causes of sandstorm and its disastrous impact on people's survival and life. IT helped participating students to acquire information, analyze and sort out materials. Through the project, the students are expected to conduct a deeper process about the information with better skills.

Since traditional teaching is not expected to arouse the interest of the students who consider sandstorm commonplace, but know little about it, the project led the students to a deeper study based on the local geographical and climatic conditions. The project was also a good chance for the students to help each other and learn from each other. Discussions helped the students to achieve common progress, without eroding independent thinking.

This project offered the students a proving ground to bring to life their knowledge about information search, picture processing, video editing and Web page making. This assignment-driven teaching helped them to deliver a better result. Finally, the project sent out a clear message through featured websites to the rest of society that everyone should take the responsibility to protect environment.

“This project has raised awareness of environment protection and energy conservation among the students, and also through this project we can see the force of modern media and the change information technology brings to modern teaching”, says Wang Jianpeng, a teacher at No. 1 Middle School. “This project was a good chance to improve our sense about responsibility in building a better society”, said one of the students.