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EDITOR'S NOTES

In the first article, “Do you Know What an Archeologist Does? Exploring Cultural Heritage in Real-World and Digital Contexts,” by Victoria Damjanovic and Laura Harrison, the authors introduce the readers to a project that highlights digital heritage in early childhood. The highlighted teachers partnered with an anthropologically-trained archaeologist who utilizes advanced digital technologies to enhance public understanding of cultural heritage. This collaboration emphasized social studies and reinforced archaeology as the scientific study of prehistory and history through excavation and artifact analysis.

Amy Allen provides the readers with Teaching Young Learners with the C3 Framework: “More than Hanukkah and the Holocaust: Teaching about Judaism in Elementary School,” as well as the pullout (Selections from Student Workbook: “What Makes Judaism Unique?”) for this issue. In the article, Allen describes one way to teach about religion in elementary school social studies using the C3 Framework IDM model. The compelling question that guides the lesson focuses specifically on whether Judaism is a race, religion, or ethnicity. Each compelling and supporting question in the lesson is connected to one or more picture books that complicate student understandings of what it means to be Jewish. Students use these texts to develop answers to the questions. Throughout the lesson, students are asked to engage in formative performance tasks, but teachers are also encouraged to intentionally facilitate classroom discussions using structured discussion strategies. The lesson culminates by asking students to think critically about why Jews have been discriminated against in the past and speak out against current acts of persecution.

In the third article of the issue, Kristy A. Brugar provides us with “Everything is L.O.C.A.L.! Making Curricular Connections with History Close to Home.” In this piece, Brugar outlines ways in which elementary educators can integrate local history across the curriculum and engage elementary students. She argues that this approach is a powerful opportunity to engage students’ interests and excitement. Exploration into local history is an instructional experience that demands a variety of content, skills, and strategies while focusing on the learning of people, places, and events.

The fourth article, “Along the River: Children Exploring Ancient and Modern Communities,” is authored by Jeffery D. Nokes, a university professor, and Gina P. Nokes, a second-grade teacher. The authors provide the reader an opportunity to see how second-grade children can use a twelfth-century painting as historical evidence to identify transportation modes, economic activities, and cultural features of Bianjing, an ancient Chinese city. They compare Bianjing with their community using modern mapping technology. Through this approach, art, history, geography, economics, technology, and civics are integrated into an engaging inquiry lesson.

In the final article of this issue, Michelle Bauml authors a piece entitled “I Do, We Do, You Do: Teaching Map Skills in Early Grades.” In this article, Bauml describes how an “I do, we do, you do” scaffolded approach for explicit instruction can be utilized to teach map skills to students in kindergarten through grade 2. She argues that classroom teachers who are familiar with explicit instruction may frequently use the model for reading and math instruction while overlooking its potential for teaching geography skills. Benefits of using explicit instruction to teach map skills include setting students up for success with ample opportunities to practice and supporting growth in spatial thinking. ■