

# **Set-BC Synergy Project Final Outcome Report**

## **Johnston Heights Secondary School**

### **General Description**

#### Vision and Goals

The vision was for grade 8 students to explore the school community of Johnston Heights Secondary both as it is in the present and some of its history and communicate that in a welcome video for future students. Johnston Heights Secondary is an IB world school. The IB program believes in action and service as integral parts of the program. (IBO, 2017) We felt that this project would enable students to take action by applying their learning in making a positive impact the future students of the Johnston Heights community.

The goals were:

1. To have to find their sense of place in the school and local community. In doing so, the goal is to give students a context in which they will create a vision for their own contributions to the community as they continue on as Johnston Heights students and future citizens of the community.
2. To have students explore and understand their school history and local community.
3. To have students create a stronger connection with their school and local community.
4. To build core competency/approaches to learning (ATL) skills in collaboration, communication, research and use of technology.

#### **Who was involved?**

This project involved the following groups:

- Grade 8 students (~260 students)
- Human Geography 11 students (~28 students)
- A teacher team made up of Grade 8 Social Studies teachers, Service Coordinators, IB Coordinator, teacher-librarian, and Yearbook teacher

#### Anticipated Outcomes:

We had hoped to have students explore the school community in order to better understand the context in which they learn and become aware of what opportunities are available to them. The premise was to create a video to inform future students of valuable information that they would need to be successful. In doing so we hoped that this would also strengthen the current students' own understanding of the school community and their connection to it. We also

thought that doing this at the grade 8 level would have lasting benefits for them and the school community as they will be here for the next 4 years.

### **Themes and Activities**

The main themes that we explored were school community, identity, and school culture. We also focused on communication and research skills. The following is an outline of the activities that took place to explore these themes:

- Human Geography 11 researched the local community and used the ARCGIS mapping system to explore the local community and plot important locations that they felt students should know about. This included the local library and rec centre, popular restaurants and cafés, local services, transit, etc. Two planners from the City of Surrey came to help them use this application. This produced a map with plotted points similar to a Google Map which was shared with grade 8 students later in the year.
- The project was then turned over to our grade 8 pods. We staggered it so that one pod completed it at a time. The following is a list of activities that were completed with each pod:
  - Scavenger Hunt to explore the Johnston Heights school community. See Appendix A
  - Think/Pair/Share to answer the question “When you started at Johnston Heights, what do you wish you had known?”
  - Brainstorm of the following themes
    - Reducing Inequalities
    - MYP Identity
    - History & Traditions
    - Culture & Belonging
    - Extracurricular Opportunities & Resources
    - Community Connections
    - Place & Space
  - Based on these themes, students were asked to select one to research in groups.
  - Students were then given a lesson on storyboarding and using iMovie. They were asked to do a mini storyboard and video to gain some experience in video editing. This was an adjustment we made in the second rotation of the project which proved to be beneficial in producing better quality videos.
  - Students then went out to film their videos.
  - Students were given two classes to edit their videos. Teachers and Service coordinators were there to support the students during these classes.
  - Finale Film Festival – each pod has a film festival in the theatre where they were able to watch each group’s video.

## **Use of Technology**

The following list details the technology used for each component of the project:

- Go Pro Cameras – used to film parts of the student video
- iPads & iPhones – used to film the bulk of the student videos
- ARC GIS - software for creating maps
- MacBook laptops – used to create ARC GIS maps & for video editing
- iMovie software – used for video editing

## **Description of how the project proceeded**

The project planning began in September when we met with the core group of teachers that would be involved. This group included our 3 Service Learning Coordinators, 4 grade 8 Social Studies teachers, our Human Geography teacher, our IB coordinator and the teacher-librarian. At this meeting, we discussed the best way to administer the project. We decided that since we had such a large number of students that would be participating, we would stagger the project and complete it in 3 cycles. We have 3 grade 8 pods so we felt it made sense to do it this way for a couple of reasons. Firstly, working with one smaller group at a time would make everything more manageable. Secondly, it would give us a chance to reflect and modify or adapt anything that would improve the experience and the outcome for students. As we were following the inquiry cycle in this project we felt that this too would follow the inquiry cycle of plan, act, reflect. This proved to pay off for us later as we did indeed make adjustments along the way.

In terms of training, some teachers were trained in house on iMovie and we watched some YouTube videos on how to work with the Go-Pro cameras. Clara Salja, one of our student teachers was very savvy with iMovie and she was also quick to learn the Go Pro cameras. She gave us a little in-service and tip session as well.

The students were introduced to the technology in a lesson that focussed on using the cameras. They were taught about camera angles, tips on filming such as pace, centering, etc. They were given an opportunity to try out the technology before they actually filmed their own project. After filming, the students were given another lesson on iMovie and the main features of video editing.

## Challenges and Solutions

As we worked through the project, we did face several challenges. Below is a list of the challenges and how we addressed them. Most of the issues came up in the first round that we did with the first pod so we were able to make some adjustments for the subsequent pods.

- **Logistics** – The groups were big enough for filming, but too big for editing. To address this we gave them each a role in the editing process. For example, one person was had to do the captions and one had to work on the accompanying music. While two group members worked on their parts, the other two had to watch other groups' videos to give feedback and suggestions to improve the final product.
- **Filming** – We discovered that filming was not intuitive and required more practice. Students did not review what they had filmed to see if there were any issues with their video until they did the editing part. In order to address this, we incorporated reflective time at the end of the filming lessons and added more check-ins with the teacher as they went along. They also were asked to put reminders on their storyboards of parts that had to be re-filmed.
- **Time** – the students needed more time than we allotted with the first pod. We extended the unit for the subsequent pods. We added an extra filming and an extra editing block. We still feel that we could add more time if we were to do it again.
- **Inquiry** – Although this allowed them the freedom to pursue what they were interested in, we found that some themes we were hoping for did not emerge from the initial brainstorming session. We guided them a bit more in the subsequent pods, by asking them to think about different students and different perspectives. This helped to broaden the themes that emerged.
- **Loss of Focus** – some groups got sidetracked from their original idea and the film did not reflect their original storyboard. The added check-ins and reflection time at the end of each block helped to improve this in the subsequent pods.
- **More Go Pro Cameras** - While having the Go Pro cameras was a motivator, it was challenging because we only had 2 for a class of students. It was difficult to share them because it took too much time for the students to understand how to use them and then have time to film with them. We didn't really have a workable solution for this during the project. If we were to do it again, we would try to have more cameras and do more practice with them with the students.

## Our Successes

Both the students and teachers involved experienced significant successes by the learning experiences fostered through this project. Here are a few of the highlights:

- **Students and teachers learned new technological skills.**

By using the laptops, Go Pro cameras, and relevant software students gained skills in editing, filming, problem-solving, and digital research. They were able to experiment with different technology and also were able to access information to solve technical issues. They learned how to edit, how to upload video, how to access DIY videos, and how to use the different options on iMovie to enhance their videos.

- **Students improved their core competency/approaches to learning skills.**

This project allowed students to develop better communication skills. They had to communicate their message through video to a larger audience. They also gained social and collaboration skills as they had to work together with other students to complete the summative task. Students also worked on their research skills as they had to find out the information that they needed to include in their videos by interviewing staff members as part of their research.

- **Students felt a sense of pride and contribution.**

Because they were contributing ideas to a final video for incoming students next year, students felt a sense of pride in their work and contributing to a legitimate product that would be used next year. They feel a sense of being ambassadors and mentors for incoming students. We feel that this will have lasting effects for the rest of their time at Johnston Heights.

- **Students have a better understanding of the history of Johnston Heights and the opportunities available to them in the next 4 years.**

By completing this project, students have a better understanding of the school culture and community. They know where to access information and services. They also have made connections with staff that they may not have before doing this project. This will pay off for them and our school community over the next four years as they really have a sense of what Johnston Heights is all about.

- **Collaborative Connections**

This project provided opportunities to strengthen collaborative relationships between teachers. Our team worked well together and came together to make this project work. Everyone contributed what they could and played a significant role in the completed this project. Each member offered their expertise and asked others for help when needed.

- **Future Opportunities**

As a result of this project, we are looking at transforming it into an interdisciplinary unit between English and Design next year. Although this project is coming to an end with SET-BC, we see it as a new beginning in that we will refine it and build it in to something we do annually with our students. We recognize that it is an ideal unit to include in our English and Design classes as both courses will have the time to devote to developing key skills both in terms of communication and technology.

## **Recommendations for Future Teams**

As a result of our debrief sessions and reflection on this experience we would offer the following recommendations:

- Allot enough time to learn the technology component and offer time to practice using the technology. Build in extra blocks of time in case they are needed so students do not feel rushed in the editing and filming stage.
- Have more frequent check-ins with the students and build in check points. For example, at the end of each class have students note down what was completed that day and a plan for the next day.
- Build in time to reflect and review through the process of filming. This will ensure that students stay on track and stick to the plan they have developed.
- Include enough lessons on video production, filming, and editing. We realized that this was a lot to ask for in an academic course so pairing it with Design for an interdisciplinary unit would be better and would produce better quality final products.
- If you are doing a project such as this grade wide, it is more manageable to stagger it and do it in rotations. This helps with planning, administering the project, and sharing the technology. It also allows time to adapt and change things if needed.
- Understanding the vision for the final product is helpful. Having an example to show them made it the summative task clear and they knew what was expected of them. This was another benefit of doing this in rotations. We were able to have an example for the second and third pod which gave us better final products overall.

All in all, we feel that the students and teachers involved with this project benefitted from this opportunity. Both students and teachers were able to explore new skills and develop their

knowledge in the areas of technology, communication, collaboration and team work. We are looking forward to build on this knowledge next year with an interdisciplinary unit.

We would like to thank SET-BC for the opportunity to conduct this project and for the equipment and support during the course of this project. We feel that the students and staff involved are richer for it.

**Johnston Heights Synergy Team**

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## Appendix A

## SCAVENGER HUNT

In pairs, solve as many of the clues as possible. For each clue, post pics/videos on your JH Service Instagram accounts (use option to post multiple in one post), and use the hashtag #greenpodhunt and tag @jhss.service ☺ Have fun exploring the school!

CHECK	CLUE
	<b>Theme: Accessibility</b>
	Find a gender neutral bathroom
	3 places that you can get food in the school
	Find a place/person that you can go to talk to if you are having a conflict
	Find a place where you can pray
	If you do not have a digital device, where could you go to use/borrow technology?
	<b>Theme: MYP Identity</b>
	Take a picture/video of somebody embodying a learner profile attribute
	Where is the official IB school logo?
	Take a Selfie with the IB co-ordinator or Interdisciplinary co-ordinator
	Take a picture/video of you demonstrating an ATL skill
	Take a selfie with an MYP rubric
	<b>Theme: History &amp; Traditions</b>
	Take a picture/video of yourself pretending to be the animal depicted at one of the lanes/places in the school
	Take selfie on the site of the old Johnston Heights building
	How many trophies has the JH dance team won?
	Who was the principal of JH when you were born (2004)?
	What does Wing Wing the school mascot look like?
	<b>Theme: Culture &amp; Belonging</b>
	Take a selfie with someone with heritage from a different country with their flag in the background
	A place you would go if you wanted to learn more about Aboriginal culture
	What is an Eyrie? Take a selfie with a friend there
	Where would you go if you wanted to join JH leadership?
	What are the different areas of fine arts?
	<b>Theme: Extra-Curricular Opportunities &amp; Resources</b>
	Take a photo with a Johnston Heights sports jersey
	Where does the JH breakdance club practice?
	Selfie with the math club sign (or teacher)
	Pretend to study where the Homework Club meets
	Where would you go to get information on purchasing a yearbook?
	<b>Theme: School Connections</b>
	Find the BASES room and introduce yourself to someone there
	Ask an EA what their favourite thing is about working with students (video)
	Where would you go, if you needed to speak with someone about your mental well being (or change courses)?
	Find an Inclusion teacher and teach them the Korean 'finger heart'
	Who do you see if you need to call home or forgot your schedule?
	<b>Theme: Place &amp; Space</b>
	If you are on a lockdown, what do you do?
	Take a picture of the elusive 4th staircase in the school
	Where would you go if you wanted grow vegetables at school?
	Make a video of how to open a locker
	Take a selfie while drinking from the best water fountain in the school



