

Pen-Pal Project

Developing Multi-Modal Literacy in an Inner-City Context

The Sterling Hope Center
Greenville, South Carolina

Overview:

The purpose of the Pen-Pal Project is to develop multi-modal literacy among the students at The Sterling Hope Center through sustained electronic correspondence with IDS students at North Greenville University. The project, inspired by “Project Renaissance” at SUNY-Albany, will afford rich learning experiences both to students at the Center and students at the University. The Sterling Center students will practice electronic writing skills in the context of an inevitable linguistic and social “modeling.” A deeper recognition of actual college “role-models” will emerge through participation in a literate community, which is, more importantly, a community that cares for others. The students from NGU will also experience educative growth, growth of a distinct interdisciplinary sort, as the respective disciplinary couplings are put into a practical setting, and, as it were, put to the test! The expectation here is that students will also discover a real-life catalyst for the integration of faith and learning (and discover, perhaps, a glimpse of a career path that is in keeping with their IDS training and their faithfulness in following the service-oriented mandates of Christ).

Skills/Dispositions Practiced by NGU Students:

- Analysis and interpretation
- Sensitivity to bias
- Flexibility
- Creative use of disciplinary couplings
- Delayed gratification in a work setting
- The pragmatic use of interdisciplinary concepts, our “Passwords” from the sophomore class (e.g., acculturation, ambiguity, analysis, semiotics, hegemony, etc.)
- Integration of faith and learning in a practical setting

Examples of the Application of Disciplinary Couplings:

- Mass Communications and English: explore the role of visuality in learning to write.
- Music and Education: explore sound and rhythm as vehicles for learning.
- American Studies: explore literacy and democracy.

Specific Project Assignments:

- Meet the pen-pal, establish correspondence, *encourage literacy in creative ways.*
- Write a report outlining the project, including a documentation of the learning of both parties, and a summary of possible interdisciplinary applications.

