

# Our Italian Adventure

Peace and Social Justice



Interdisciplinary Studies

# In the Commons



before the transformation!

**A blend of our learners and learners from Trento** spent the afternoon with one of our Mentors, Marcelle Edwards. They explored their personal visions of peace and shared through story and art. The Peace flags that you see were brought by the Trento learners.

# Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies 11

## Why Interdisciplinary Studies?

Our global culture is complex and multidimensional. The Internet, travel and business have connected us with each other across continents creating what is often called a Global Village. Understanding contemporary social issues, history, diversity in culture, international development and the very practical ways that one can help create peace demands that we become interested in each other across diverse boundaries.



## Course Synopsis:

It is our belief that in order to build comprehensive and integral understanding in any one field of inquiry now requires an interdisciplinary approach. The purpose of this course is to study a chosen place and/or issue through a number of academic disciplines. Students research and prepare an extended field trip to a designated location where they will engage in a well-developed project. A significant portion of the preparation will be the exploration of the place/issue through a variety of lenses – cultural, political, historical, economic, social justice etc. which will lead to the identification and development of their project.

## This course is organized into 4 modules that are consecutive:

**Module 1:** Interdisciplinary Study: the concept, choosing the lenses, gathering resources, first sketch of the project.

In this unit learners will:

- Research the history of Interdisciplinary Studies via the Internet and local Library
- Create presentations (written and visual) to explain the concept and approach of Interdisciplinary Studies
- Choose the country and the project that their study will focus on
- Choose the learning resources that they will work with, including which field of inquiry, identifying at least two distinct academic disciplines

**Module 2:** Creating the Plan: detailed planning of the course project.

In this unit learners will:

- create a draft proposal for the project that their study will focus on, including the country, project goals, contacts and resources that will support the project.

- complete funding applications and requests for support from community organizations for their project
- present the project proposal to the course mentor(s) and their parents and other interested adults in the community

**Module 3:** Doing the Project: fulfilling the plan as designed in Unit 2

This unit involves:

- all of the preparation leading up to departure
- the time in the country of choice engaged in the course project
- individual journaling of the experience on a daily basis and other documentation
- the trip back home

**Module 4:** Reflections on the Learning: individual and group reflections on the experience of the project from an interdisciplinary point of view. This will include:

- presentation of individual journals to course teacher
- individual reports on the interdisciplinary aspect of their learning via the project
- group presentation to course mentor, parents and interested community members

**Portfolio Assessment:**

This course is assessed based on a portfolio of assignments which would include:

- written and mixed media assignments
- individual and group research and reporting
- project proposal presentation
- reflective journaling of the learning process

Criteria for all assignments and activities will be clearly explained in both verbal and written form. Students will receive feedback continuously and formal evaluation as expediently as possible.

**Learning Resources:**

Students will need access to a computer (and with a webcam if agreed to by an online learning group taking this course together) and to the Internet. They will explore online readings, use online libraries and other resource materials needed to construct or produce the project proposal.

# Some of our Activities

## September 11, 2009

The group met at Gyro Park with the intention of creating masks and planning a Gorilla Improv Social Action event.

We talked about peace and what it takes to bring awareness to our communities, we made paper cranes and thought about the story of 1000 Cranes for Peace. We decided to offer people on Baker Street a crane as a gift. We wrote inspirational messages inside the cranes for people to discover. The only words we decided to speak were “look inside”.



## We Did It

The group finished their peace masks, and walked in silence to Baker Street, which is main street in Nelson. We approached people with hands extended. As they accepted our gift we whispered “look inside”. People were puzzled, surprised, and sometimes looked moved.

## The Relationships Developed

Through sharing homes, events and activities we built relationships. Many young people commented that it seemed that we had known each other “forever”.



# The Road Trip

## **The Vans Were Great!**

We all piled into 4 Rent A Wreck vans to take to the road. Our agenda was to explore the “Up the Lake” roots of some of our learners. This would include stories of the Quakers who founded Argenta and ran an International Friends High School for many years. On route we stopped at Kokanee Park to see the spawning fish. The weather was great and we swam a number of times!



## **Nikkei Memorial Centre**

After a dry, hot and long introduction to the museum we were invited to investigate through photos and written word the experience of many interned Japanese Canadian citizens. The youth stood under the Peace Arch hand to hand.

## **Our Good-bye Potluck was amazing**

Singing, dancing, hugs and tears. Plus amazing orbs filled a number of photographs- like this one. Check-out the video: [Imagine \[HQ\]](#)

