

Place-based Education in Public Schools

Hands-on Workshops with Jennifer Kramer and David Sobel



Jennifer Kramer

Jennifer Kramer is a 6th grade teacher at the K-6 Guilford Central School in Guilford, VT. She previously taught middle school social studies as well as a 5th /6th combination. She is a graduate of Middlebury College and Antioch University New England. She was recently awarded the Vermont VFW Teacher of the Year Award for middle school civics education. She specializes in creating real world, place-based education projects that

engage students in learning about and contributing to the history, economics, politics and cultural traditions of the community.

David Sobel

David Sobel is Senior Faculty in the Education Department at Antioch University New England in Keene, NH and he consults and speaks widely on child development and place-based education. He has authored eight books and more than 70 articles focused on children and nature for educators, parents, environmentalists and school administrators in the last 30 years. His most recent books are *Wild Play: Parenting Adventures in the Great Outdoors* published by Green Writers Press and *Nature Preschools and Forest Kindergartens: The Handbook for Outdoors Learning* published by Redleaf Press.

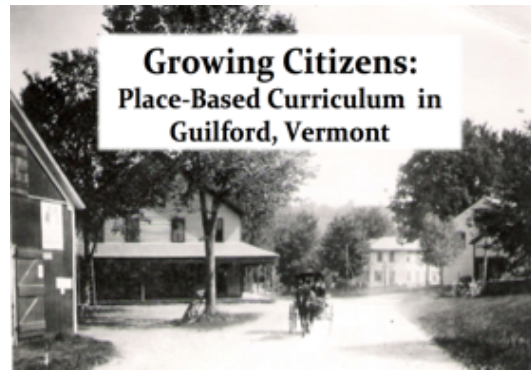


Jen has initiated a wide variety of groundbreaking place-based education classes in her school and community. She is available, with her able assistant David Sobel, to conduct teacher professional development workshops based on a variety of integrated projects. She has conducted workshops for the Flow of History in Vermont, Teaching the Hudson in New York, the University of Toronto Ontario Institute of Educational Studies, at the Burrenbeo Institute in Ireland and lots of places in between. Two hour to two day (or longer) workshops are available. Most workshops lead to the creation of a refined artistic project that integrates writing, science the arts and social studies. And math too if you want.

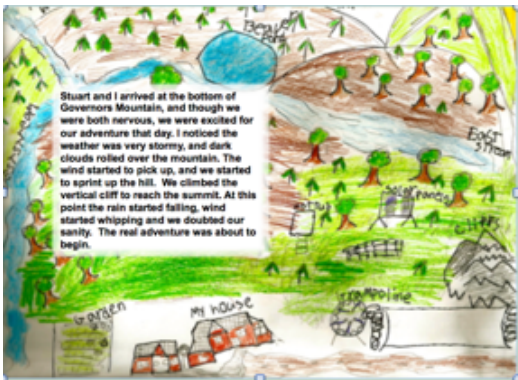
Workshops Available for Your School or Conference

Preserving Community and Teaching the Core Curriculum: A Case Study of the Guilford Country Store.

Good place-based curriculum develops academic skills, preserves community heritage, and contributes to community economic revitalization. When a community economic redevelopment organization needed help to preserve a country store, 7th and 8th graders at Guilford Central School stepped up to the plate. They developed storyboards, photo-shopped historic photos, interviewed seniors and past store owners, learned camera technology and audio recording, and mastered editing software to create a short documentary about the value of turning the store into a community center.



Exploding Neighborhood Maps: Mapmaking and Children's Literature



Using the children's book *Marshfield Dreams* by Ralph Fletcher as a master text, this workshop combines the power of map-making integrated with the writing of personal narratives. Children create neighborhood maps, follow a set of scaffolded steps to write a story based on a personal experience, and then bring them together into a very cool exploding map. Teachers will follow all the same steps.

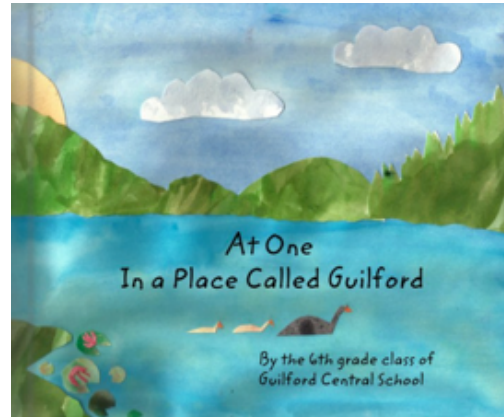
Florilegium: Learning and Illustrating the Flora of a Town Conservation Area

There's a natural area behind your school or on the edge of the playground or within a 10- minute walk of your school. Visit it over and over, learn its common and intriguing plants, map their locations and become an expert in on plant. Then follow a set of well-guided steps to create one page of a beautiful, illustrated medieval style florilegium.



At One in a Place Called Guilford

Based on a book by Lynne Plourde, *At One in a Place Called Maine*, children create a book about their hometown. They take a field trip to visit unique natural and cultural places, they review local historical photos, identify one place they want to illustrate, learn collage technique and write masterpiece sentences. The result is a beautiful published book like [this one viewable here](#).



Watershed Accordion Books: Exploring and Mapping a Local Watershed



There's no better way to understand a watershed than to get out and visit it, from beginning springs down through meanders and gorges till it flows into the Connecticut River. Learn how to investigate your stream using topographic maps and Google earth, and then illustrate the different sections of the stream while learning river geology and cultural history. The result is a beautiful accordion book.

Creating a Social History Interpretive Guide: The Latchis Theater

"How am I going to teach about ancient Greece in a place-based fashion in a rural town in southern Vermont?" Jen wondered. As she looked around her in the downtown movie theater she saw a history of Greek heritage, artifacts, myths in the interior design of the theater created by a Greek immigrant grocery store impresario turned theater designer. Her students went on to learn Greek culture through designing an interpretive brochure for the arts organization that owned the movie theater.



Guilford from 1760 to 2017: Writing Social History



The history of New England, or the United States, can be understood through a local lens. Explore the historical artifacts that capture local history from native peoples' settlement, to early colonization to the industrial revolution to the townfolk who left to fight in the Civil War and into the 21st century. Learn how to help each student develop an illustrated book of the history of your town and of the United States.

Pourquoi Stories: Explaining How the Coyote Got Its Howl

Building forts, becoming a member of a clan, foraging for wild foods, and writing survival journals led to students' deep understanding of local fauna. From saw whet owls to deer mice to turkey vultures to black bears and coyotes, children both became those animals and learned the natural history of their lifestyles. Reading Just So and Pourquoi stories, they then fabricated fanciful stories about how the moose got its antlers, how the jumping mouse got its long tail, how the coyote got its howl. Learn about local fauna and write (and of course tell and perform) your own pourquoi story.



To arrange a workshop contact Jennifer Kramer at jkramer@wsesu.org or David Sobel at dsobel@antioch.edu.