

# Juggling With Crispin

The level of reading comprehension and class participation rose with the implementation of this project.

## Curriculum/State Standard

The project aligns with Virginia's Standards of Learning (SOL), in that the students make planned oral presentations, read and learn the meanings of unfamiliar words, read a variety of literary forms, including fiction and nonfiction, and the students demonstrate comprehension of a variety of literary forms. Finally, the students listen, draw conclusions, and share responses in subject-related group learning activities.

## Overview

Students were given a novel of their own to implement the sticky note strategy. A juggler came in after the novel to teach the students how to juggle like the main character in the novel, *Crispin: The Cross of Lead*. Human chess, a PowerPoint country report, and a juggling performance assessment were used to finish the unit. I found that students were reading more carefully and were eager to share what they had highlighted or written while reading. *Crispin: The Cross of Lead* may have been the first book that some of our students have owned, and the juggling experience was a first for most. Juggling is a kinesthetic form of

learning, and attaining the goal of juggling etched itself into the memory of each student. We feel that students need successful experiences to achieve happiness in life and valuable self esteem.

## Objectives

- The student will gain knowledge of him/herself as goals are achieved from personal effort.
- The student will learn to juggle in the classroom along with the main character, as he learns in the novel.
- The student will improve reading comprehension by writing spontaneous questions, concerns, and comments in a personal novel.
- The student will perform for an audience just like the main character successfully performs in the novel.

## Materials

*Crispin: The Cross of Lead* paperback novels, *Crispin: The Cross of Lead* literature guides, and a *Juggling for the Complete Klutz*

*Continued on the back . . .*

# 5-7

GRADE LEVEL



LANGUAGE



MATH

Misc

MISCELLANEOUS



SCIENCE



HISTORY



SOCIAL STUDIES

# 3

WEEKS

# \$500

TOTAL BUDGET

## “Juggling With Crispin” project continued . . .

### **Readiness Activity**

Students completed a KWL chart with their knowledge of 14<sup>th</sup> century England, the feudal system, and were asked to reflect on a time when they were accused of something they didn't do and explain the situation in a journal. These student experiences and ideas were discussed prior to reading the novel.

### **Strategies/Activities**

Students were given their own books to read at school/at home. Prior to reading the novel, *Crispin: The Cross of Lead* by Avi, teachers modeled the sticky note strategy for the students. The strategy involved highlighting and using sticky notes. While reading, students used highlighters, sticky notes, and even the margins in the novel to mark questions, comments, confusion, and connections made in the reading. Unknown vocabulary words and elements of fiction were also marked. Students were encouraged to write a key word on the top of the sticky note that juts out of the book for easy reference.

### **Culminating Activity**

Students juggled for the community of Swift Creek Elementary, they played two games of human chess (dressed up like their randomly chosen chess piece), and they created a PowerPoint of the country of England, the setting of the novel.

### **Evaluation**

Each student took an Accelerated Reader post-test after the novel unit. Three paragraph essays, movie poster projects, or dioramas were choices for the end of unit project. Also, students partook in a performance assessment of juggling and presented the story of Crispin to administration, faculty, staff, and other school students at Swift Creek Elementary.