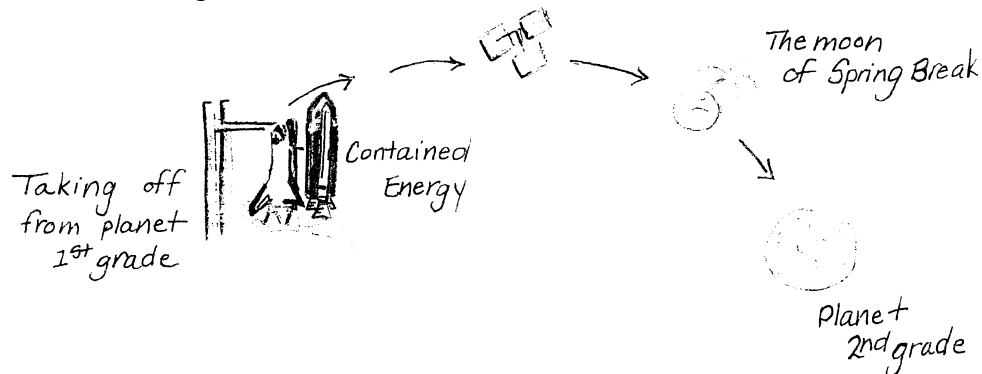


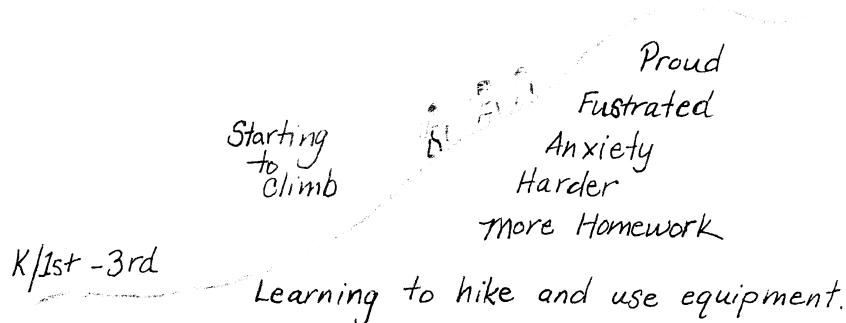
Feelings, Friends and the Brain General Thematic Outline Kindergarten – 8th Grade

Kindergarten – 3rd Grade: Friends and Feelings

- Weekly half hour discussions focused on specific topics related to over arching theme of feelings and friends. Typical concepts include: inclusion/exclusion, establishing friendships, resolving conflicts, multiple friendships, focused attention and impulse control, understanding feelings (Winnie the Pooh characters), and academic motivation.
- Space Shuttle Analog



4th Grade: The 4th Grade Mountain



- Discussion of how the academic journey starts to get steeper as shift from “learning to read” to “reading to learn”. Emphasis on understanding how our brains work and how to respect and support classmates.
- The Frontal Lobe: Story of P. Gage and executive functioning (the president of the brain). Includes discussion of attention, impulse control, organization, time management, and movement control), strategies for all areas, and spectrum nature of FL functioning (boys vs. girls, ADHD)

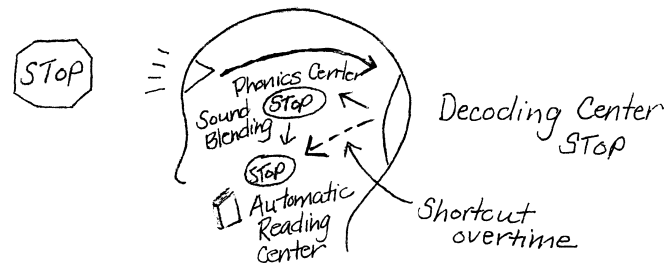
Frontal Lobe.
Functioning

“The President”



- Attention
- Organization
- Impulse Control
- Movement Control
- Time Management

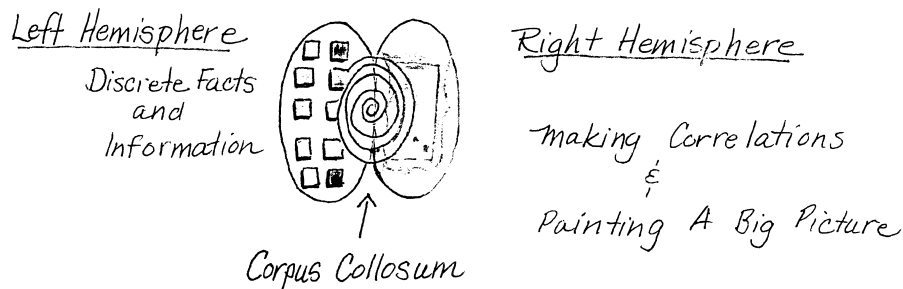
- **Learning Differences:** A look at how the brain learns to read. Includes discussion of phonics vs. whole word reading, Dyslexia, and strategies for supporting reading. Also includes a look at auditory processing delays.



- **Emotions:** A look at the Limbic system and how emotions affect the entire body. Includes discussion of neurochemistry, the role of all emotions, one's genetic temperament (using Winnie the Pooh characters), acute set backs in functioning, and strategies for emotional resiliency. Particular emphasis on frustration and anxiety associated with academics.



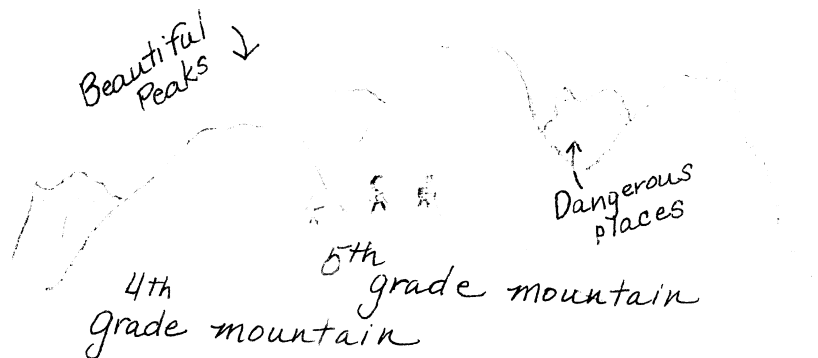
- **Social Process:** Understanding cross-hemisphere transference and the ability to process nonverbal cues and emotions. Includes looking at the spectrum nature of these abilities (boys vs. girls, social butterflies vs. wall flowers), strategies for increasing awareness, and NVLD/Aspergers Syndrome.



- **Personal Motivation and Responsibility.** Includes looking at the three types of reinforcement and how to increase your motivation.

Several months into the year, a small weekly group for fourth graders is started. This half hour group gives targeted support for students struggling with the above areas. Each student has a personal goal and notebooks are used to keep handouts generated from discussions on organization, memory strategies, social issues, grades, effort, and any other topics brought up.

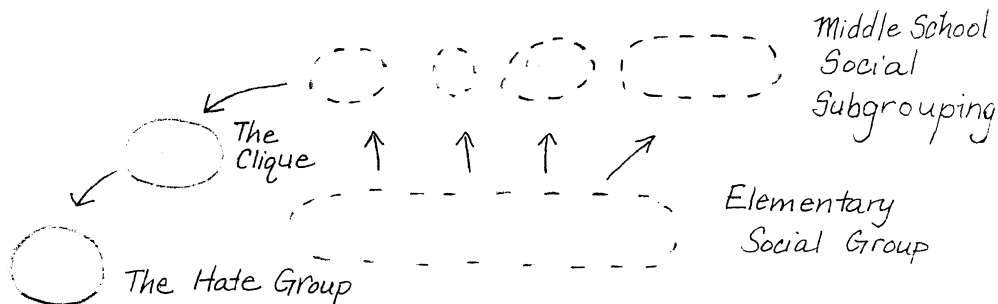
5th Grade: All The Mountains



- First three months focus on contemporary events in the news and how some are beautiful mountains that we should try to replicate and others are ugly ones which we should avoid or try to change.
- Differentiated Learning and Instruction. Starting with ways to bake a cake and then shifts to the 8 intelligences. Emphasis is placed on students' understanding of themselves and strategies for enhancing learning in all modalities.
- Consumer Awareness. A look at our consumer society and what advertisers "tell you" vs. what they "don't tell you". Specifics include: toys, tobacco, alcohol and dieting.

A drop-in lunch club for 5th graders which focuses on ethnicity and general support is also offered.

6th Grade: Social Stratification

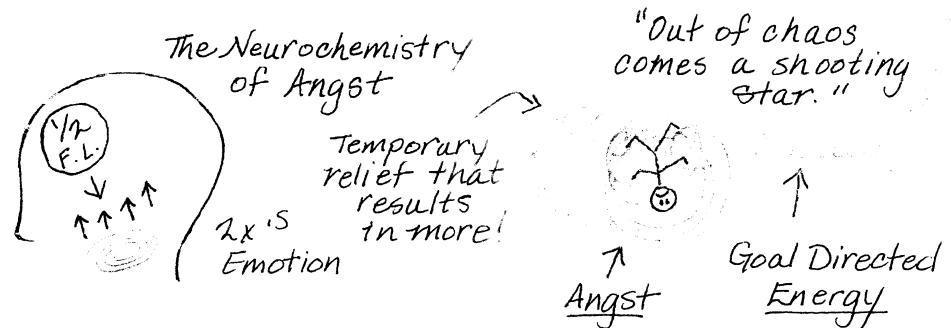


- Looks at the normal process of social diversification and concept of specialization (i.e. time spent and development of skills) which sub-grouping allows for. Further exploration of how all sub-groups (athletic, music, hobbies, etc.) develop and are equal in nature. The focus then turns to beginning phases of exclusiveness, cliques, gangs, and hate groups. Concludes with a study of Bosnia and Nazi Germany and how these regimes developed as well as one's moral responsibility to stand up for others.

Middle school classes are 40 minutes approximately every other week. Classes always begin with 10-15 minutes of open sharing regarding Joys, Successes, Worries and Sorrows for all students. Stratification theme can be replaced by any particular topics which arise in the community at any given time (i.e. report cards, school dance behavior, events in the world).

Drop-in lunch clubs are also offered for middle school students. This includes one for 6th graders, one for 7th & 8th graders, a diversity club and a girls club.

7th Grade: Teen Angst



- Explores the development of the Frontal Lobe in adolescence and increased risk of impulsive behavior. It also looks at the increased activity of the limbic system and how emotionality of adolescence combines with impulsivity to create angst. The goal of directing angst into positive outcomes is explored first, followed by a look at the many ways teens try to relieve angst and feel control, only to find that their angst has increased (i.e. bullying, tobacco products, drugs and alcohol, cutting, eating disorders, etc.).

8th Grade: Realities of High School

- Begins with a discussion of Logic, Risk and Values and strategies for reducing risk. It then turns to brainstorming various realities (i.e.: drugs and alcohol, peer pressure, driving, violence, suicide, academic stress, body image, and sexuality) and how concepts of logic, risk and values apply. Emphasis is placed on students developing their own values and standards as well as the importance of asking for help as a way to increase resiliency.

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