A Trail To Every Classroom (TTEC)  
Curriculum Development Tool  

UNIT DESIGN COVER SHEET  

Author contact: Marilyn Thompson, Linda Burnett  

School name, state and town: The Mountain School, Winhall, VT  

Title: Learning Gone Wild  

Abstract/Vignette: The AT is a natural resource for enjoyment, health education, and recreation which lies within minutes of our school community, thus affording us the opportunity to foster future stewards of the trail.  

Grade level(s): Please check all that apply.  
☐ K-2  ☑ 3-5  ☑ 6-8  ☐ 9-12  ☐ College and Lifelong Learning  

Discipline: Please check all that apply.  
☐ Art and Music  ☑ Health and PE  ☐ Foreign Language  
☑ Literature and Language Arts  ☐ Mathematics  ☑ Science  
☐ Social Studies and Geography  ☐ History  ☐ Technology  

Year Developed: 2011  

Period (month, week, year): 3.5 years  

Teaching environment:  
☑ In the Classroom (indoors)  ☑ On the Trail  
☐ In the Community  ☐ Online/Virtual
A Trail to Place-Based Service-Learning Curriculum

Service Project
Our idea is for the service project to come organically from students based on experiences on the AT.
Possibilities include:
- Kiosk maintenance
- Collaborate with local Chamber of Commerce to be more “hiker friendly”
- Because we have developed a three year plan, our service project will be different each year.

Partnerships & Benefit(s)
- Green Mountain Club
- The Mountain School
- Chamber of Commerce
- Through hikers
- TTEC
- Teamwork
- Community building
- Building self-confidence and character
- Public speaking
- Stewardship

State Standards
Science
- GE S:45
- GE S:49
- GE S:50
Health
- HE 5
- HE 6
- HE 7
Writing
- W 17
- W 18
- W 19

Essential Questions (Unit Objectives)
- How do I utilize the AT to support my health and physical fitness?
- What can we do to manage and preserve the AT?
- How can knowledge of AT trails be shared to encourage others to access trails for the purposes of becoming future stewards?

Big Idea
The AT is a natural resource for enjoyment, health education, and recreation which lies within minutes of our school community, thus affording us the opportunity to foster future stewards of the trail.

Skills and Habits of Mind
- Critical thinking skills
- Students will develop love of nature that instills the desire to manage and preserve the natural resources in their environment
- Develop an inquisitive nature
- Understanding cause and effect
- Develop effective communication skills
- Hike safe
- Leave no trace

Student Role (Youth Voice)
- Students will write about experiences
- Students will generate rules and expectations for the hiking club
- Students will create an action plan for subsequent years
- Students will choose areas of interest for future research and exploration
- Students will plan and implement end of season culminating event

Community Connections
- Opportunity to strengthen school and community partnerships
- Opportunity to connect with other communities along the AT
- Bridging relationships between elementary and middle school students

Resources
Describe resources (books, articles, materials, supplies) you will use to support this unit?
- Project Learning Tree
- Leave No Trace
- TTEC materials
- Wild Places, National Geographic

Models & Examples
How will students understand the expectations for their project? What exemplars of student work will they see?
- Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move” healthy lifestyles challenge
- Collaborative Problem-Based Project rubrics
- Presentation at school-wide learning exhibition

Reflection
How will reflection be built into your curriculum and activities?
- Students will keep a nature journal
- Debriefing protocol
- Fitness plan tracking

Final Celebration
How will you celebrate the success of your unit and share its results with the school and community?
- Year one will culminate with a family hike to Bromley Peak
- Students will be involved in planning the day and act as student leaders and role models on the hike
- Students will write up a notice for the school newsletter and local newspaper announcing the event
- Award ceremony
- Certificates
- Power Point presentation

Student Assessment
How will you assess student learning? How will you know if they have met the goals for the established outcomes?
- Assessment of student learning will be through observation of student participation and engagement during the club's first year, and retention of students in year two
- Journals will also reflect student understanding
- Anecdotal reflection; What went well? What could you work on? What did you learn?
Learning Gone Wild
at The Mountain School
We are surrounded by local natural resources which can be utilized for enjoyment, health and recreation.
The Mountain School
Wildcats are paving the trail inspired by Michelle Obama’s “Let’s Move” healthy lifestyles challenge. At the same time, students learn stewardship of local natural resources by developing a strong relationship to the Appalachian Trail.
Their connection to this scenic trail in turn makes them responsible young citizens. As volunteers they begin their own path of modeling service that can last a lifetime and beyond.
“Section Hike”
(Year Two)

- The Appalachian Trail becomes part of our thematic integrated curriculum, blazing a trail across the state standards.
- Student hikers become “Junior Rangers” teaching elementary students about the AT, LNT, and safe hiking.
“Thru Hike”
(Year Three)

- The elementary students become life-long stewards of the AT and develop peer relationships with students from other schools locally and globally.
Community Opportunities

- Get students involved in healthy activities on the AT
- Strengthen relationship between school and community
- Connecting people from other cultures to the AT
- Educate students, parents and staff about AT
Skills and Habits of Mind

- Critical thinking skills
- Students develop love of nature that instills the desire to manage and preserve the natural resources in their environment
- Develop an inquisitive nature
- Become health-minded
- Understanding cause and effect
- Effective communication and advocacy
Reach for the Summit!!