



Rockheights Middle School

Under the guidance of one of our MEd graduates, and teacher at the school, David Futter, Grade 6 & 7 students at Rockheights Middle School in Victoria, B.C. are embarking on a variation of a Whole School Project (www.ierg.net/wsp). Called "The Cairn Park Project" students are engaging in a multi-disciplinary investigation of a local park located adjacent to the school in the High Rock Neighbourhood of Esquimalt. What is special about Cairn park is that it is a Garry Oak preserve. There are unique species within the park and it is part of a series of preserves within the Capital Region.

Through the project grade six and seven students will study the park from a variety of disciplinary lenses. They will investigate the park from various scientific angles such as the Biology (plant species, indigenous animals, endangered species), Climatology (climate and weather patterns), Geology, and Biodiversity, as well as History (pre and post contact), Language Arts (creative writing, journals, report writing, myths and legends), Fine Arts (multimedia representations of their findings), Technology (digital presentation of the project such as a webpage, a blog), and Mathematics (graphing, data collection). Students will have the opportunity to expand their writing skills to include French language writing and French oral presentations where applicable.

The objective of this project is to allow students to develop a sense of awareness regarding the natural ecosystem found in High Rock park. Students will generate questions about the diversity of life, the history including the aboriginal significance, and the importance in our community of this Garry Oak ecosystem. Throughout the project, students will collaborate with peers, teachers and community members to hypothesize and develop questions to guide their learning based on the learning goals defined by the province in a variety of curriculum areas including science, language arts, math, social studies, visual arts and drama. Students will have the opportunity to use current technology, specifically iPads to document their learning. Through the use of this technology students will develop digital literacy skills that are necessary for competency in communication in the digital age.