

Elders Wisdom, Children's Song

Student-Designed Honor Songs: A Curricular Project
Park Spanish Immersion Elementary School in St. Louis Park

MN Art Standard Strand	Steps
Step 1: Connect	<p>Nominate and interview elder(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Center the purpose of the project as honoring others <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate with students and families to nominate elders from diverse backgrounds, then have students vote to select one for their class <input type="checkbox"/> Invite Elders to the classroom(s) for two full-class interviews <input type="checkbox"/> Record and transcribe Elder interviews
Step 2: Respond	<p>Analyze transcripts to identify topics and lyrics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Identify 5-6 topics that are most prevalent in the elders' interview <input type="checkbox"/> Students analyze the transcript and, using the Elder's "Words of Wisdom", collaboratively craft the lyrics for the refrain and verses.
Step 3: Create	<p>Improvise melodies and finalize lyrics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> With student input, select a genre that aligns with the Elder's story and/or preferences. <input type="checkbox"/> Students improvise melodies to the refrain and verse lyrics. Once ready, they record their melodies and vote to select one for the refrain and verses. <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher assembles the musical components into the song. <input type="checkbox"/> Adjust the lyrics and music to ensure they flow naturally together
Step 4: Perform	<p>Rehearse songs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Incorporate student and community instrumentalists <input type="checkbox"/> Provide students with access to recordings/tracks for at-home practicing <p>Community-based celebration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prepare paragraphs about the Elder to be read aloud <input type="checkbox"/> Choose student emcees and readers <input type="checkbox"/> Invite Elders and community to free and open celebration event

If you have any questions, feel unsure about next steps, or would like to brainstorm ideas with us, we're happy to help!

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Adapted from the work of local artist [Larry Long](#)

