



Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

Report Title: A Creative Odyssey to help our students thrive as writers. **Name:** Amanda Burks

Other Team Members: Ashlee Land

Program: Greater Houston Area Program

Trip Dates: 11/30/-0001 - 11/30/-0001 **Location Visited:** Greece

Post Fellowship Reporting Template: PFR Template 01

Project Summary: Atop the Acropolis in Athens stands a monument to the birthplace of democracy: the Parthenon. Surrounded by the urban sprawl of modern day Athens, it is a reminder that Greece is where past and present intersect. What better place to explore the imagination than where our own expectations of adventure would collide with the odysseys of myth and history? We traveled to the island of Crete to study creativity at the workshop of Shelly Berc and Alejandro Fogel. There we learned to examine our own creativity so we could implement creative strategies with our students. Each activity demonstrated that there are multiple creative means to myriad artistic ends; each individual must follow their own creative process in order to fulfill their creative potential. We were equally determined to provide our students with a personal connection to Greek mythology (an important aspect of our curriculum); so we explored archaeological sites with mythological significance in order to gain knowledge and to create an audiovisual record to enhance our students' enjoyment and understanding of Greek myths, as well as the influence of Greek culture on our language and literature. Our journeys through creative process and cultural past led to our discovery of this universal truth: Exploration, whether of imagination or location, is an odyssey of the soul. This soul-searching passion for learning and creating is what we have always desired for our students, and now we feel more inspired than ever to nurture our students' creative potentials and lifelong love of learning.

Career Impact: * Experienced the student-teacher relationship from a different and enlightening perspective.

* Engaged in a deeper professional relationship through mutual creative effort and joint development of classroom strategies promoting student creativity.

* Overcame personal mental and emotional obstacles and learned to value the creative process as integral to the pursuit of artistic products.

* Learned to make time for creative endeavors and exercises in everyday life.

* Developed a new respect for mythology by experiencing Greek culture and history first-hand.

Classroom/Community Impact:* Gathered knowledge from local guides, music and pictures/video for audiovisual resource (virtual tour), and multisensory manipulatives (statuettes, fact files, recipes/spices, music and books) that would otherwise be unavailable to students.

* Improved student teacher relationships by experiencing the classroom setting from a different perspective.

* Developed strategies to nurture students' creative potentials.

* Expanded learning to create multi-content area strategies and methods for creative thinking.

Open Response: * Creation of virtual mythological tour to enhance students' enjoyment and understanding of Greek mythology.

* Implementation of daily creative exercises to promote student creativity.

* Ongoing professional development presentations of content specific creativity strategies.

* Development of a school-wide literary magazine showcasing multiple artistic endeavors such as writing and artwork.

Quote: Creativity is about letting go of boundaries and having the courage to find and follow your inspiration. -Amanda Burks

Photos:



Automatic writing in a relaxed atmosphere to get creative juices flowing

Viewing creativity through the eyes of a student to better relate as a teacher



the palace of King Minos @ Knossos, home of the labyrinth of the Minotaur



What Greek trip is complete without climbing the Acropolis to see the Parthenon?



original 776 BC Olympic stadium reinforces academic expectations for athletes



a visit to the ancient Oracle at Delphi for creative inspiration



Mykonos, according to mythology, created through the 12 tasks of Hercules

We learned how nature and legend coexist at the caldera rim in Oia, Santorini