STEP 8TH Grade Transition Program
ELA Curriculum

Essential Question:
How do my past and my future connect with who I am today?

Project:
Students will complete a scrapbook containing old photographs and new photographs with narrative connecting the photographs to their lives. Students will examine who they are today, including what roles they assume in different settings. They’ll examine who they were in the past and how they are preparing for their future. In conjunction with this project, they’ll interview an adult member of the Randolph community and explore how that person made it to where he or she is today.

Supplies:
Science-fair style poster boards (1 for each ELA class)
Binders with clear plastic covering to insert documents (one for each student)
Sheet protectors (many for each student)
Digital cameras
Nice color paper, decorative stationary, etc. for the scrapbooks

Lesson One
1. Interview one another
   a. Teacher provides most interview questions
   b. Students create some interview questions
   c. Students interview one another in pairs
   d. Students present their findings

Lesson Two
2. Write a letter to the teacher
   a. Teacher provides exemplar of letter format
   b. Letter Content:
      i. How do I feel about school?
      ii. Why am I here?
      iii. What do I hope to get out of these four weeks?
      iv. What do I think of myself overall?
      v. Additional information I’d like the teacher to know about me

Lesson Three
3. Identifying who I am today
   a. “I Am” poem
      i. Teacher models creation of the poem
      ii. Teacher provides graphic organizer (character map) for students to brainstorm the roles they take on in life
b. Introduce ELA Project
   i. Teacher explains goals and outcomes of the project

c. Homework
   i. Students should bring in pictures from their past or that represent their past

Lesson Four
4. The Story behind the picture
   a. Teacher models how to write a story based on a personal photo (students can use the internet or magazines to locate photos, if they can’t find any of their own)
   b. Students write one short narrative related to the photograph

Lesson Five
5. Interviewing
   a. Teacher models an interview with another adult
      i. Theme of the interview – How did you get ‘here’?
      ii. Whole-class summarizes the interview
   b. Students receive the assignment for who they will interview
      i. Students begin working on questions for the interview
      ii. Teachers circulate to assist

Lesson Six (ELA Project Day)
6. Project Day
   c. Teachers review planned interview questions and students make amendments, as needed
   d. Students go out to complete their interviews in the community

Additional Lessons
   Students use interview results to compose articles on the person they interviewed.