

Lesson Plan and Teacher Tip Submission Area

Name: Kathi Kearney

School information: Noble VI School, Berwick, ME (Noble VI is a single-grade, 6th grade center)

Email address: kkearney@sad60.k12.me.us

(Your email is not required, only provide it if you don't mind other teachers emailing you a question)

Are you submitting a:

-Teaching Tip

Which book is the Lesson Plan/Teaching Tip for?

Aristotle Leads the Way

What section/topic in the text is your lesson/tip about?

Chapter 16, "Euclid in His Elements"

Type in any comments/Teaching Tips here:

I teach gifted 6th grade students, and last year in the History of Science class I had a number of advanced math students, including several who were completing high school Algebra I or Algebra II. After reading and discussing the chapter and some of Euclid's contributions, I decided that it would be good for all the students to actually try reading some of Euclid's "Elements" themselves. While searching online for a good reading copy (in translation), I came across a website that not only has the text of "Elements" but includes a variety of very interesting manipulatable java applets to explore "Elements" in more detail:

<http://aleph0.clarku.edu/~djoyce/java/elements/elements.html>

I explained to the students that I didn't expect them to understand everything, as they had not had even a high school level course in Geometry and most students did not try tackling "Elements" until college level (if at all), and that I knew the reading level would be very high, but that I wanted them to just try reading and exploring a little bit of the site so that they could become familiar with how "Elements" had originally been

written (of course, this was an English translation). I asked them to try out the java applets that accompany this particular online version to illustrate Euclid's postulates, common notions, and propositions.

We used the computer lab so that each student had individual access to the site (although the Algebra I and Algebra II students preferred to work in pairs).

Not only were students very engaged by this activity but they asked to spend a second class session continuing to read and explore "Elements" on this website!

It was amazing to watch students access and be excited about reading and exploring Euclid's ancient words, combined with their use of the distinct 21st-century manipulatable java applets to illustrate his work!