**Information**

*Grade 4*

*25 students – whole class lesson*

*Social Studies – 60 minutes*

**NYS Social Studies Standards – Elementary**

1. Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.

* Important ideas, social and cultural values, beliefs, and traditions from New York State and United States history illustrate the connections and interactions of people and events across time and from a variety of perspectives.
  + gather and organize information about the traditions transmitted by various groups living in their neighborhood and community
  + recognize how traditions and practices were passed from one generation to the next

**NYS Arts Standards – Elementary**

**Visual Arts**

2. Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in arts in various roles.

* Students will know and use a variety of visual arts materials, techniques, and processes. Students will know about resources and opportunities for participation in visual arts in the community (exhibitions, libraries, museums, galleries) and use appropriate materials (art reproductions, slides, print materials, electronic media). Students will be aware of vocational options available in the visual arts.

**Learning Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

* Describe what sideshows are and why they were created.

**Materials:**

* “Coney Island – Freaks” by Jeffery Stanton
  + Article
  + http://www.westland.net/coneyisland/articles/freaks.htm
* “Coney Island Freaks of Yesterday and Today”
  + Article
  + http://www.mentalfloss.com/blogs/archives/12341
* Coney Island Sideshow and Amusement Park – New York City History 1940
  + Youtube video
  + <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_LHjy8eZLVc>
* Coney Island Circus Sideshow Promo Reel 2003
  + Youtube video
  + <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iNc-g1lI5kM>
* Smartboard
* Drawing paper
* Colored pencils, crayons, markers

**Justification:**

Students are likely to remember what the sideshows are after creating a gallery of images of the various sideshow acts.

**Set / Implementation Procedures:**

*Last week, we learned about how Coney Island inspired people to create entertainment for us. We talked about the music and poetry that it inspired. Now, we’re going to explore some of the entertainment that Coney Island offers its visitors. Who has ever heard someone use the word “freak” before? It’s usually said to hurt someone’s feeling, right? Well, there are people at Coney Island who are happy to be called freaks. These people perform in sideshows. A sideshow is a small show or exhibition where people showoff what makes them different. Now, as we read the article on the Smartboard out loud, I want everyone to follow along. If you would like to hold your own copy, let me know.* Read “Coney Island – Freaks” as the students follow along. *I happen to have a short clip of some of the sideshows from 1940 which shows some of the sideshow acts that were mentioned in the article. Let’s take a look.* Play “Coney Island Sideshow and Amusement Park – New York City History 1940

* After watching, the first video clip, read the first half of “Coney Island Freaks of Yesterday and Today”. Look at the picture of the freaks from the old sideshow. After reading, let the students know that Coney Island is still the home of sideshow performances. Continue reading the rest of the article.
* Show “Coney Island Circus Sideshow Promo Reel 2003. Take a few minutes to discuss what was seen and how the acts are different from the original sideshow acts (The new acts are focused on what people can do, not on how they’re born.)
* Tell the students to choose their favorite act, either from the original acts or from the new ones. Instruct them to draw the act and label their work so that it can be displayed in an in class sideshow gallery.
* Call on students one at a time to get a piece of drawing paper and coloring tools and then go to their seats to work.
* To finish the lesson, have students share their work and why they felt a connection to that freak.

**Modifications:**

Some modifications are built into the lesson. For students who need to look at a reading to comprehend it, they can get a copy of the articles. For students who have difficulty reading, the article is being read aloud.

Other modifications include providing paint, clay, or pictures for collages for students whose motor skills are not developed enough to draw and color.

**Extensions/Follow-up Activities:**

* In the next lesson, students will further discuss the performers and how they felt about their oddities.
* Drawings will be displayed in an in-class sideshow gallery so that the students can reference each other’s work to remember the different acts.

**Assessment of Student Learning:**

Students will be assessed on through informal observation. The teacher will keep track of student responses during the discussions and closing. The teacher will also conference with students about their artwork.