

Model Lesson
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TITLE: Exploring Canadian Cities - A Day to Remember

OVERVIEW:

This lesson is part of a research skills unit focusing on Canada. The purpose of this lesson is to gather information and draw conclusions about how the location of a city influences its activities and culture.

GEOGRAPHIC QUESTION:

How does the geographic location of a city influence its activities and culture?

CONNECTION TO THE CURRICULUM:

This lesson is part of a larger unit in a Language Arts class. The LA focus is to build skills in research, expository writing, and oral presentations. The topic of this specific lesson is to research information about a Canadian city. Students use atlases, pamphlets, library materials, and the internet to gather information.

Links to math – create a population pyramid or make a climagraph

Links to art – poster project

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS:

STANDARD 4: The physical and human characteristics of places.

STANDARD 12: The process, patterns, and functions of human settlement.

OREGON STATE CONTENT STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS:

English Communication CCG:

- Investigate topics of interest and importance, selecting appropriate media sources and using effective research processes.

Oregon Geography Content Standards:

- Use maps and other geographic tools and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a special perspective.
- Locate major physical and human (cultural) features of the Earth.

GRADE LEVEL: Grades 6-8

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- research information on the geographical features, climate, and cultural activities of a Canadian city.
- plan a day in the city with a schedule of activities.
- synthesize information and create a large poster about the city.
- discuss how the geographic location of a city influences its activities and culture
- present the poster and schedule of activities to the class

MATERIALS:

Maps of Canada

Maps of specific provinces (available at <http://www.canadainfolink.ca/blankmap.htm>)

Library research materials

Paper, markers, glue

Poster paper

Pamphlets and printed materials gathered from the cities (optional, but handy)

Computers with internet access

Printed list of helpful websites *

Graphic organizer for note-taking on city*

Handout to make schedule of the day*

Rubric for scoring poster*

Speaking scoring guide*

*provided with lesson

PRESENTATION STEPS:

Anticipatory set: (One class period)

Imagine that someone your age is visiting your family from a foreign country. He/she only has one day to spend in your town or city. How would you schedule the day to show what the area is like (geographically and culturally) and what activities are unique to your area/city? In small groups, brainstorm and list ideas. Write the best two ideas on separate post-it notes and stick to bulletin board. Group ideas into categories (cultural, athletic, nature...) Create a schedule for the day. Present schedule to class and briefly explain why your choices will show the guest what the physical geography and cultural geography of the selected city are like.

Steps to complete lesson:

Step One: Research

In small groups, have students research information about a major Canadian, preferably a capital city. Use library reference materials, printed materials acquired from the city (by mail) and internet websites (see list of web sources). Use the graphic organizer to take notes.

Step Two: Plan

Plan a day in the city with a schedule of activities (handout provided). Your plan must include:

- the date you are going. Consider weather, temperature and activities.
- where you will eat three meals (be specific). How do your choices reflect the city?
- where you'll spend the night and why.
- how you'll get to where you're going using transportation methods available in the city. Why?
- four to five activities specific to that city (parks, museums, tourist attractions, plays, musical events, sporting events...) What is your reason for each activity?

Make sure you choose a lot of different types of activities to show the cultural and physical geographic (climate, landforms, vegetation, transportation systems, settlement patterns...) features of the city. Be able to explain your choices.

Step Three: Synthesize information

Synthesize information and create a large poster about the city. Working in your group, create a poster on butcher paper. Your goal is to show to others what great things the city has to offer. Use pictures, words, symbols, etc. Show both the cultural and interesting geographic features of the city. Your activity schedule should be part of the poster.

Step Four: Discuss

To prepare for the presentation, discuss how the geographic location of the city influences its activities and culture. Which activities on your schedule can only be done in that particular city? Why? What makes this city unique? Does your poster reflect this? Split up the presentation and decide who will present each part.

Step Five: Present

Present the poster and schedule of activities to the class. This can be done informally or as a formal speech. If formal, review expectations for an introduction, body and conclusion and give time for practice. Put posters on the walls for all to see when done. (See speech scoring guide and rubric for poster.)

ASSESSMENT:

The poster will be assessed using a teacher-made rubric. The oral presentation will be assessed using the Oregon State scoring guide for speaking.

ADAPTATIONS AND EXTENSIONS:

- English Language Learners (ELL) – This is a good lesson for ELL students because there is a lot of group work and hands-on activity. There will be time for talking and negotiating for meaning if the groups are mixed with ELL and non-ELL students. It is critical that the Anticipatory Set is done so that the task is clear.
- Special Education (SPED) - SPED students are placed in mixed groups, so they should be fairly successful with this activity. There are many different tasks involved and each student can work in their strength area (reading, drawing, internet expertise...) The tasks can also be modified as appropriate.
- Talented and Gifted (TAG) – TAG students will have the opportunity to go into greater depth when researching the city. Some activities that can be added to the lesson are planning a second day in the city, letters or emails to the city Chamber of Commerce or Tourism Bureau, and climagraphs.