

# Welcome to Wales

By Dawn Wildfang

## Unit Overview

The rationale behind these lesson plans is to introduce students to a different part of the world. I believe it is essential that our students be aware of the various geographical regions, its people, and culture, especially not that the world is becoming more of a global community. Students should be aware and exposed to what other places have to offer them. By noticing similarities and differences of other places, students become engaged in what it might be like to live somewhere else.

My eight lesson plans cover my geographic question, which asks: How would your life be similar/different if you went to school or lived in Wales? At a fourth grade level, I was able to address this question through writing a picture book called Welcome to Wales. The book is told from an eight-year-old Welsh girl's point of view. She explains her beautiful country throughout the book, along with aspects about her personal life.

With Welcome to Wales being told from a young girl's point of view, it is easy for elementary students to relate to what she is saying. American students are more engaged in this story, since it actually depicts a real girl and not a character. Also, from a culturally diverse standpoint, Catrin (the girl in the book) is bilingual. Therefore, her life coincides with many of those students who are new to our country and are learning English in the classroom.

Overall, students will bring another region of the world a little bit closer to their own home. In the end, they will see that kids are almost the same no matter where one travels.

# Introduction to Wales

**Overview:** This lesson introduces students to a new culture that is different from their own. Although there are many differences, students will see that there are always going to be similarities as well. Throughout this lesson, students will become aware of the different ways in which people view and relate to places and regions around the world. Knowing and understanding similarities and differences leads to more toleration and acceptance of different cultures that students will encounter during their life.

**Geographic Question:** How would your life be similar/different if you went to school or lived in Wales?

**Grade:** 4

## National Standard

- Students will know and understand the similarities and differences among cultural regions.

## Oregon Content Standards

- Students will understand the distribution and movement of people, ideas, and products.
- Students will communicate knowledge of the topic, including relevant examples, facts, anecdotes, and details.
- Students will use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph structure, sentence construction, and other writing conventions.

## Materials

- KWL Chart (can be made out of butcher paper, on a chalk/white board, or on the overhead).
- Welcome to Wales, by Dawn Louise Wildfang
- Paper and pencils for the students
- A map of Wales (or the world to show where Wales is compared to where you live).

## Objectives

- After a discussion and story on the country of Wales, students will be able to describe (through guided question and answering) how their community and region is different from that of Wales.
- In groups of four or five, students will write at least five differences or similarities they discovered (on one sheet of paper – between Wales and the U.S.), and ask at least two geographic questions that deal with this topic. Sentences and questions should be in complete sentences.

## **Presentation**

- Ask the students to raise their hand if they have ever heard of Wales – the country. Where do you think it is? What do you think it is like? What language do you think they speak?
- Have a KWL chart (what I **K**now, what I **W**ant to know, and what I’**v**e **L**earned) about Wales. Ask students what they know about that country. Write down their answer, even if it is wrong. Next, ask them what they want to know. Again, write down their ideas.
- Read the story Welcome to Wales by Dawn Louise Wildfang. It is a story narrated by an eight-year-old Welsh girl named Catrin.
- As you read through the story, note the similarities and differences between where you live in the United States and Wales. For instance, notice that the children are wearing uniforms at school, signs are written in two languages, and that you see castles every once in a while. Have the students take notes on things that really interest them or to jot down questions they may want to ask.
- As you point things out in the pictures, ask your students critical thinking questions. Why do you think people built castles near water or on hills? (Defense) Do you think it is important that people in Wales continue to speak Welsh? Why or why not? (Opinion question)
- Encourage students to ask their own questions about what they see. Have them comment on what they think about life in Wales. Is it similar or different to their state? Why or why not?
- Have the students break into their groups of four or five. Let them know that you are looking for at least five differences and similarities between Wales and the area in which they live. Make sure they know that they are expected to write at least two geographic questions about Wales and/or how it compares with the area in which they live.
- Take one question (or something newly acquired) from each group. Address and comment on how it applies to what they will be learning about Wales.
- Complete the KWL chart. Fill in the “What I learned” section, and compare/contrast what they already know. Was it true? Did you cover what they wanted to know?

## **Assessment**

Students will be assessed in this lesson through participation, completing their geographic questions, and what they learned sentences stated in the objectives.

# Physical Features – Similar and Different

**Overview:** Everyone is familiar with advertisements enticing you to buy a particular product or to travel to a certain destination, especially children. Therefore, exploring the media of advertising (something with which children are familiar), they will be able to use their background knowledge to devise an ad that would lure people to visit Wales (based off of what they have learned).

**Geographic Question:** How would your life be similar/different if you went to school or lived in Wales?

**Grade:** 4

## National Standard

- Students will be able to know and understand the similarities and differences among physical regions.

## Oregon Content Standards

- Students will explain how humans and the physical environment impact and influence each other.
- Students will speak effectively for a variety of audiences and purposes and listen effectively to gather information.

## Materials

- Welcome to Wales, by Dawn Louise Wildfang
- A map of Wales, the British Isles, or Europe
- KWL Chart from the previous lesson
- Assessment checklist
- Comments and geographic questions from an Introduction to Wales
- Tag or poster board
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils

## Objective

- After a discussion of the physical features in Welcome to Wales and tourism within their own state, students (in groups of four or five) will role-play an advertisement that entices tourists to visit Wales.

## Presentation

- Ask students if they have ever seen an advertisement that made them want to go somewhere. Where was it? Why did you feel like you wanted to go there? (If you haven't talked about persuasion in your classroom, now would be a great opportunity to do so).
- Have students think about your state. What could they say or do (in an advertisement) to lure someone to visit it?
- Let them know that with the use of Welcome to Wales and their knowledge of advertisements, they will be able to create their own for the country of Wales.

- Discuss the questions and comments from an Introduction to Wales. This review will help them prepare for their project. Also, discuss the way in which they will be graded for this project – with a little checklist. Let each student have a copy so they know what is expected of them.
- Review the KWL chart from Introduction to Wales. IS there anything else they could add to it in order to improve their ad? Is there any more they want to know? Any new information that they do know? Anything new that they learned?
- Discuss the physical features of Wales using the pictures in the Welcome to Wales book. Are there hills? Oceans? Beaches? Rocks? Volcanoes? Trees and grasses? Rivers? Lakes? Are any of these things accessible for tourists to use? Are the castles a part of the physical features? How? Why? Have the students think why they would want to visit this country with what they know about its physical features.
- Have the students take notes of the discussion in order to use valuable information for their ad.
- Once the discussion is finished, have students break into groups of four or five. They can use tag or poster board with the markers for visuals. Let them know that the way in which they present their ad is up to them. They could write a script to act out, or draw a poster to explain, no matter what they do, they are expected to persuade people to visit Wales
- Remind students to think of the advertisements that made them want to go somewhere. This will give them ideas as to how they could present their ad.
- If any groups finish early, have them practice until everyone is ready to go. Finally let them perform.
- Give a positive comment on the student’s work. Ask them if they learned anything new from one another. Did anyone feel that their advertisement made them want to visit Wales? Why or why not?
- Have students clean up their area.

### **Assessment**

#### Advertisement Checklist

\_\_\_\_\_ Everyone in my group had a role and participated in the project.

\_\_\_\_\_ We faced the audience and spoke clearly.

\_\_\_\_\_ We spoke so everyone could hear us.

\_\_\_\_\_ Our visuals were neat and readable.

\_\_\_\_\_ We used at least three topics learned in class in our advertisement.

\_\_\_\_\_ Our advertisement was persuasive.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

# Your School, My School

**Overview:** This lesson looks at the difference between Catrin's school system and one from the United States. The premise behind this lesson is to depict how different perspectives (or different ways to do things) are just as effective as doing it your own personal way. Understanding that differences can be as good as what one knows opens to the door to tolerance and acceptance between various cultures.

**Geographic Question:** How would your life be similar/different if you went to school or lived in Wales?

**Grade:** 4

## National Standard

- How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

## State Content Standards

- Students will understand the distribution and movement of people, ideas, and products.
- Students will communicate knowledge of the topic, including relevant examples, facts, anecdotes, and details.
- Students will use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph structure, sentence construction, and other writing conventions.

## Materials

- Welcome to Wales, by Dawn Louise Wildfang
- Paper and pencils for students
- KWL Chart
- Venn Diagram
- Paragraph Expectations Assessment

## Objective

- After a discussion on the similarities and differences between students in Wales and the United States, students will write at least one paragraph that describes which school system they prefer and why.

## Presentation

- Have students think of some fast food restaurants. When they raise their hand, put their idea on the chalk/white board or butcher paper. Then ask them to raise their hand if McDonald's is their favorite, Burger King, Carl's Jr., and so on.
- Ask them what they notice about their favorites. Discuss how we have a different opinion on which one is the best. Ask them if that means the others are not any good? Usually, the others are good too, we just prefer different things. Tell the students that this is true about most everything, including schools (which is what you are going to be teaching in this lesson).

- Make a KWL chart for what the students know about the schools in Wales. Then, review the school section of Welcome to Wales.
- Discuss with the students the different captions in the book and how that compares to the school that they attend. For example, do you wear uniforms, pray before you eat at school, use another language, play sports, etc. What are the similarities and differences?
- With that question, devise a Venn diagram with you class. Make sure they all have a piece of paper in order to follow along. Let the students give you ideas on similarities, differences, and the things that are the same.
- Once you are finished with the diagram, tell the students that they will be writing at least a paragraph on which school they prefer and why. They can use their diagram to back up their reasoning. Make sure you remind the students that differences are not bad, they're just another way of doing something – another way of perceiving something.
- When students are finished, complete the KWL chart. What did they learn about the schools in Wales?
- Read a couple of students' paragraphs (anonymously). Remind people that it is normal to perceive things differently. Your preference is not wrong or right, it's what is good for you – the individual.

### **Assessment**

#### Paragraph Expectations

\_\_\_\_\_ I used complete sentences in my paragraph

\_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to indent my paragraph.

\_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to use grammar and punctuation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I checked my spelling.

\_\_\_\_\_ I used my background knowledge to back up my reasoning.

# A Day in the Life of a Welsh Student

**Overview:** This lesson allows the students the opportunity to express themselves and what they know through creativity. This lesson works into an extended lesson you could do after the Wales unit – make a book about the students in your classroom. Therefore, whenever a visitor comes into your classroom, they will be able to see the culture that operates within a small setting.

**Geographic Question:** How would your life be similar/different if you went to school or lived in Wales?

**Grade:** 4

## National Standard

- How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

## Oregon Content Standards

- Students will use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph structure, sentence construction, and other writing conventions.
- Students will speak effectively for a variety of audiences and purposes and listen effectively to gather information.

## Materials

- Welcome to Wales, by Dawn Louise Wildfang
- Poster or tag board
- Pens, markers, colors, pencils, etc.

## Objective

- After reviewing Catrin and her peers' experiences as Welsh students, students will (in groups of 4 or 5) create a poster that describes (through pictures or written words) at least three similarities between Catrin and what it is like to be a student in their own school.

## Presentation

- Ask students what it means to have something in common with someone. How do you feel when you find out that someone likes and or does the same thing as you? Is it easier for you to become their friend?
- Tell the students that they will be looking at the similarities (things they have in common) with Catrin and other Welsh students.
- Tell the students that no matter where they go in the world, they will find someone who has something in common with them. It could be as easy as liking the same movie star, or as unusual as wearing the same outfit. Either way, similarities (and differences) are great conversation starters.
- Review the student section of Welcome to Wales. Ask the students to focus on the similarities between their school experiences and Catrin's. It may help them to take notes.

- Tell the students that they are going to be making a poster (in groups of four or five) that not only describes them and their school experiences, but also the experiences they have in common with students in Wales. Make sure they label each experience with which country it belongs. When students are finished, they could be hung up in your room.
- Ask students to share their poster with the rest of the class. Why did they choose to include what they did?

**Assessment**

Students will be assessed according to the lesson objective. Did their poster include at least three similarities between the two countries/schools?

# Ideal School

**Overview:** This lesson uses what students learned, throughout their unit on Wales, and compiles it into a proposal of an ideal school. Within this proposal, students will take ideas from Welsh and American schools. Thus, they are combining what they feel is the best of both worlds in order to create a dream school. Not only does this incorporate a student's creativity, but it also shows the teacher how much knowledge his or her student acquired during this unit.

**Geographic Question:** How would your life be similar/different if you went to school or lived in Wales?

**Grade:** 4

## National Standard

- How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

## Oregon Content Standards

- Students will communicate knowledge of the topic, including relevant examples, facts, anecdotes, and details.
- Students will structure information in clear sequence, making connections and transitions among ideas, paragraphs, and sentences.
- Students will use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph structure, sentence construction, and other writing conventions.

## Materials

- Welcome to Wales, by Dawn Louise Wildfang
- Notebook paper and pencils
- Proposal assessment
- Venn Diagram (may need butcher paper or chalk/white board)

## Objective

- After a quick review discussion on Welcome to Wales, students will write at least a one-page proposal (with complete sentences and use of conventions) of their ideal school.

## Presentation

- Ask students if they had the chance to create their own school, would they do it? What would they do, make, what would be the rules, what would they wear, what would be their responsibilities?
- Let the students know that they're going to get the opportunity to write a proposal for a new school. This means, if it is accepted, the school could be constructed.

- Let the students know that in order to build their school, they need to use their favorite things about their own school, and those they learned about in schools in Wales. In other words, they can take ideas from both places and use them to create a school that is ideal to them.
- Have a quick discussion about both school systems. Create a Venn diagram during this brainstorming activity to provide a visual for your students to use as they are writing their proposal. Also, make Welcome to Wales accessible to them (if possible).
- Make the students aware that they will be graded on their spelling, grammar, paragraphs, and complete sentences. Give them a copy of their proposal assessment so they know what to expect.
- Let them get to work.
- Once the students are finished, have them trade papers with someone at their group in order to peer edit their work.
- After everyone is done, ask if anybody would like to share their proposal with the rest of the class.

### **Assessment**

#### Proposal Assessment

\_\_\_\_\_ I used complete sentences in my paragraph.

\_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to indent my paragraph.

\_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to use grammar and punctuation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I checked my spelling.

\_\_\_\_\_ I used my background knowledge to back up my reasoning.

# Welsh Pen Pals

**Overview:** The purpose of this lesson is to build a bond with cross-cultural schools around the world in hopes to collapse the barrier of uncertainty.

**Geographic Question:** How would your life be similar/different if you went to school or lived in Wales?

**Grade:** 4

**National Standard:** How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

## Oregon Content Standards

- Students will understand the distribution and movement of people, ideas, and products.
- Students will use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph structure, sentence construction, and other writing conventions.

## Materials

- Notebook paper and pencils
- Letter Expectations assessment

## Objectives

- After a unit on Wales, students will be able to write a descriptive letter (with no spelling or grammatical errors) that will be sent to a Welsh school.
- Within the student's letter, he/she will be able to ask at least five questions that inquire about the life of the student to which he/she is writing.

## Presentation

- How many of you like to receive mail? I know I do. How would you like to get some mail from another country? There's a way this can be done.
- Tell the students that they get the opportunity to write letters to other students in Wales that are their same age and in the same grade.
- Make sure they know you letter expectations (for the assessment piece).
- Talk about what is and is not appropriate in a letter. Write these ideas down on a piece of butcher paper or chalk/white board.
- Let the students know how long it takes for a letter to get to Wales (on average 10 or 11 days). Let them know that once it gets there, their pen pal needs time to respond, then send it back. It could take up to a month (or more) before they get a letter back.
- Let the students brainstorm on what they would like to write and let them get to work!
- Have the students turn their letters in for editing purposes before they get sent off.
- Ask if any student would like to share their letter with the rest of the class. If not, clean up.

## **Assessment**

### Letter Expectations

\_\_\_\_\_ I asked my pen pal at least five questions.

\_\_\_\_\_ I told my pen pal about myself, including my age, grade, favorite subject, and what I like to do in my spare time.

\_\_\_\_\_ I told my pen pal at least three things I know about Wales.

\_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to include my mail and e-mail address.

\_\_\_\_\_ I used complete sentences in my paragraphs.

\_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to indent my paragraphs.

\_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to use grammar and punctuation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I checked my spelling.

# American and Welsh Folk Tales/Legends

**Overview:** No matter what country a person comes from, a history rich in literature comes with it. Therefore, through the national standard, students will experience (through folk tales/legends) first hand how culture and experience influences people's perceptions of places and regions.

**Geographic Question:** How would your life be similar/different if you went to school or lived in Wales?

**Grade:** 4

## National Standard

- How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

## Oregon Content Standards

- Students will communicate knowledge of the topic, including relevant examples, facts, anecdotes, and details.
- Students will structure information in clear sequence, making connections and transitions among ideas, paragraphs, and sentences.
- Students will use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph structure, sentence construction, and other writing conventions.

## Materials

- Paul Bunyon and His Blue Ox, by Patsy A. Jensen. Troll. 1994.
- Arthur and the Sword, by Robert Sabuda. Simon & Schuster Children's. 1995.
- Venn diagram with butcher paper or chalk/white board
- Pencils and notebook paper
- Folk Tale Checklist (assessment)

## Objective

- After reading King Arthur and Paul Bunyon, students will create their own folk tale/legend (at least one page with complete sentences and correct conventions) that combines their favorite part of the two stories.

## Presentation

- Raise your hand if you know what a folk tale/legend is. It is a story that usually has part truth and part fiction. It takes something that is real and adds a little spice to it. Sometimes it is hard to determine what is folk tale/legend and what is not.
- Raise your hand if you can tell me of a folk tale or legend with which you are familiar.
- After you discuss with your students about folk tales/legends, explain that you are going to read them one from America, then one from Wales. After the story, they are going to compare and contrast the two using a Venn diagram. Make sure they know that you are looking for people who are participating.

- It doesn't matter which folk tale you read first. Make sure you involve the students with the story. Ask them to make predictions, what do the pictures tell them, etc.
- Once you're finished with both of the stories, start working on the Venn diagram. Ask the students what was similar with in the two stories, what was different, and what they had in common.
- Have the students make their own Venn diagram at their desk while you are doing it on the board. Therefore, they will have their own personal reference at their fingertips.
- Once you are finished with the diagram, have the students write their own folk tale/legend combining the two stories you just read. For instance, the title could be "Paul Bunyon and the Sword," or "Arthur and his Blue Ox." Let the kids be creative, have fun with it. Make sure they are familiar with how they will be assessed.
- Make sure they explain interesting facts in their story about the amazing feats their hero's accomplished.
- Ask if there are any students who would like to share their folk tale. Ask them why did they choose to write it the way they did? Have them turn in their work. If any student would like to share their story, let them do so.

### **Assessment**

\_\_\_\_\_ I used complete sentences in my folk tale.

\_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to indent my paragraphs.

\_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to use grammar and punctuation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I checked my spelling.

\_\_\_\_\_ I used my background knowledge, of the two folk tales, to back up my reasoning.

# A Day in My Life

**Overview:** Students love talking about themselves. Therefore, what better way to celebrate their personality, culture, and experiences than by putting it in a book for all to read. Within this book, students will realize that there are a lot of similarities and differences between the students in the classroom. Thus, this book will depict the wonderful world of being a unique individual.

**Geographic Question:** How would your life be similar/different if you went to school or lived in Wales?

**Grade:** 4

## National Standard

- How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

## Oregon Content Standards

- Students will understand the distribution and movement of people, ideas, and products.
- Students will explain how humans and the physical environment impact and influence each other.
- Students will use correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, paragraph structure, sentence construction, and other writing conventions.

## Materials

- Book checklist
- Notebook paper and pencils
- Disposable camera
- Laminator
- Binder

## Objective

- After studying a day in a Welsh student's life, students will write their own book (with their own pictures and complete sentences), that depicts what a day is like in their life.

## Presentation

- We've learned about students in another country, now we're going to learn about students in our own classroom! Just like students from other areas, we too have similarities and differences within our own room.
- Let the students know that you will be passing out a book checklist. This list includes everything they are expected to put into their book. They are absolutely encouraged to add more information.
- Also, have a disposable camera that students can "check-out". Let them know that they have a limit as to how many pictures they take. The limit and pictures that should be included in their book is provided on the book checklist.

- Students may start their rough draft in class. They can continue working on it until their photos are developed and are ready to be put into their book.
- Once the pictures are developed, have the students write captions for them. For instance, a picture of a student at softball practice could say, “This is my playing my favorite sport, softball.”
- Once the story is complete and edited, and the pictures have all of their captions, then the teacher can put the book together. The book can be laminated, then bound together. If these supplies are not available at your school, a print shop should be able to do this for you.
- Ask the students if they would like to share their book with the class.
- Have them think back to their comparison with Wales. What was similar and what was different?

### **Assessment**

#### Book Checklist

- \_\_\_\_\_ I used complete sentences in my story.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to indent my paragraphs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I remembered to use grammar and punctuation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I checked my spelling.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I used my background knowledge to back up my reasoning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I took pictures of my house.
- \_\_\_\_\_ My family
- \_\_\_\_\_ My pets
- \_\_\_\_\_ My sports
- \_\_\_\_\_ My friends
- \_\_\_\_\_ I only took five pictures.