

Archives on the Arctic: Connecting to Global Issues with Primary Sources

Lesson Plan: Compare/Contrast - Native Americans in Tree-less Landscapes

Submitted by: Dennis Rees

Date: September 1, 2013

Description:

This lesson compares and contrasts two groups of people--the Great Plains Indians and the Inuit—and considers not only their similarities and differences but particularly how each adapted to living in an environment with few or no trees.

Grade Level(s):

Grade 6

Subject(s):

American History, Geography

Duration:

2 class periods

Goal:

The goal is to have students learn how the Inuit of Canada's Arctic adapted to their environment and develop historical thinking skills by taking notes and analyzing primary source materials displayed in a PowerPoint presentation.

Objectives:

Students will:

- view a PowerPoint on the Inuit of Northern Canada and take notes.
- complete a Venn diagram comparing/contrasting Canada's Inuit with the Great Plains tribes of the United States.
- compose a 5-8 paragraph writing assignment that compares/contrasts the Inuit with the Great Plains Indians.

Standards:

- This lesson meets the following Arizona state social studies standards for Grade 6:
 - Strand 1: American History - Concept 2: Early Civilizations
PO.1: Describe the characteristics of hunting and gathering societies in the Americas.
 - Strand 4: Geography - Concept 2: Places and Regions
PO.1: Identify regions studies in Strand 2 using a variety of criteria (e.g. climate, landforms, culture, vegetation).
- This lesson meets the following National Council for the Social Studies standards:
 - Standard 1 Culture: Human beings create, learn, share, and adapt to culture.
 - Standard 3 People, Places, and Environment: The study of people, places, and environments enables us to understand the relationship between human populations and the physical world.
- This lesson meets the following Arizona Common Core Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects for Grades 6-8:
 - 6-8WHST.2 Write informative/explanatory texts, including narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes

Background Information:

Students need to have prior knowledge of how to complete a Venn diagram and how to compose a compare/contrast essay as the purpose of this lesson is not how to do this, but to employ those skills.

Primary Source Documents/Resources:

- <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/91481043>
- <http://cdm15330.contentdm.oclc.org/u?p15330coll22,38036>
- <http://cdm15330.contentdm.oclc.org/u?p15330coll22,33194>
- <http://cdm15330.contentdm.oclc.org/u?p15330coll22,27193>
- <http://cdm15330.contentdm.oclc.org/u?p15330coll22,22525>
- <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002722488>
- <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00652923>
- <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/99615161>
- <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2005691861>
- <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004665525>
- <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2006679127>

Materials:

- *What If There Were No Trees?* PowerPoint (provided separately as Supplement 1)
- Student copies of “Great Plains - Inuit Information Sheet” (see Page 3 below).
- Copy of “Teacher’s Guide for Information Sheet” (see Page 4 below).
- Student copies of “Compare-Contrast of Plains Tribes and Inuit Worksheet” (see Page 5 below).

Procedures:

Session One

1. Begin class by having the students brainstorm this question, “What do people need from their environment in order to survive?” Record their responses on the board. Then inform the students that in this lesson they will be focusing on just five things: shelter, food, fuel, clothing, and transportation.
2. Distribute the “Great Plains Indians - Inuit Information Sheet”. Explain to students that they will be view a PowerPoint presentation about these native North American peoples and that they are to record notes on the handout about how each group used items from their environment to meet the five needs being considered.
3. Show the “What If There Were No Trees?” PowerPoint presentation. Be sure to allow enough time for students to record information and to answer any questions they may have about the images they are viewing.
4. As a class, review the “Great Plains Indians - Inuit Information Sheet” to make sure students have accurate data and so they may add any missing details. Inform students that the handout will also be used the next day.

Session Two

5. Distribute the “Compare-Contrast of Great Plains Indians and Inuit” handout. Explain to students they will be using their worksheet from the last class period (Great Plains Indians - Inuit Information Sheet) to write a compare-contrast essay about their two groups. Allot time to clarify any questions they may have and then allow them to work on it for the rest of the class period. If needed, it may be completed as a homework assignment.

Evaluation/Assessment:

Student will be asked to write a 5-8 sentence paragraph. This is an excellent way to prepare students at this grade level for writing formal expository essays in later grades. Criteria for grading will be the 6 Traits of Writing with emphasis on content, ideas, and conventions. A score of 4 or higher in each trait is considered mastery.

Possible Extension:

Have students research/explore what would happen to Inuit traditions/culture if environmental conditions such as global warming change their environment. Follow-up with class discussion or have students create own PowerPoints.

Great Plains Indians - Inuit Information Sheet

Great Plains	Inuit
Physical Region:	Physical Region:
Shelter:	Shelter:
Food:	Food:
Fuel:	Fuel:
Clothing:	Clothing:
Transportation:	Transportation:

Teacher's Guide for Information Sheet

(Sample answers students may give)

Great Plains	Inuit
Physical Region: grassland few trees	Physical Region: land of ice, snow, water no trees
Shelter: tipi made of wooden poles and buffalo hide floor lined with animal hides fire pit for warmth	Shelter: igloo made of blocks of snow; lined with animal skins fire platform for warmth tupiq (tent) made of animals skins over a frame of bones or wood in summer
Food: hunted buffalo, antelope, rabbit, grouse cooked or dried	Food: fished; hunted whale, walrus, seal, and caribou eaten raw, dried, or boiled
Fuel: buffalo dung; wood (when available)	Fuel: seal and whale oil; animal dung; wood (when available)
Clothing: tanned hides of buffalo or antelope added fur, feathers, glass beads	Clothing: sealskin; tanned hides of caribou, polar bear added fur of polar bear, Arctic fox, wolf
Transportation: travois horse	Transportation: kayak dog sled

Student Name: _____

Compare-Contrast Worksheet: Great Plains Indians and Inuit Peoples

Directions: On the Venn diagram below, show the differences and similarities between the Great Plains Indians and the Inuit. Use the left circle to list characteristics of the Great Plains Indians and the right circle to list characteristics of the Inuit. Use the area of overlap between the two circles for shared characteristics. When done, use the back of this paper to write a 5 to 8 sentence paragraph about the differences and similarities between these two groups of people.

Writing Tip: Be sure that your paragraph's structure includes a topic sentence that raises interest, 2 or 3 sentences that describe differences, 2 or 3 sentences that describe similarities, and a concluding sentence that leaves a strong impression.

