


Lesson Plan Outline:

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The Western Hemisphere

🔹 Essential Questions:

What are the main geographical components of the Western Hemisphere? How are other peoples in other countries similar and different from us in the United States?

🔹 Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Identify the United States and other countries on a map of the Western Hemisphere
- Recognize that there are similarities and differences between different countries with regards to population, geography, government, language, religion, values and symbols.
- Develop their understanding of the Global Community – neighboring countries and interdependence

🔹 New York State Standards:

- Social Studies Standards:
 - o Standard One: History of the United States and New York
 - o Standard Three: Geography
 - o Standard Five: Civics, Citizenship, and Government
- Language Arts Standard:

- o Standard 1: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding
- o Standard 2: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression
- o Standard 3: Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.
- Arts Standards:
 - o Standard 2: Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in arts in various roles.

🔥Time/Length: Approximately 2-3 hours in class over a couple days, possible 15-30 minutes at home/outside of class

🔥Materials:

- Maps of the Western Hemisphere, North, South and Central America
- Pictures of flags of all Western Hemisphere countries, sticky-clay (to affix flags to map)
- Glue, markers and other arts & crafts (for arts project)
- Library, Reference books and/or internet access
 - o accessibility to flag website: *CIA - The World Factbook -- Flags of the World*
<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/docs/flagsoftheworld.html>

🔥Anticipatory Set: (around 15 minutes)

(for younger kids watch brief video segment: Our_Country.asf from *This Is Our Country* video. It covers what a country is, what borders are, what neighbor countries are – from the US perspective.)

For older kids:

- Check students' prior knowledge of other Western Hemisphere countries by writing on board student-offered country names and information they know about these countries.
- VOCABULARY: Culture, sub-cultures, national symbols, global community, interdependence

Procedure:

🔥PART I (Day one) ½ hour to 45 minutes structured/class time – depending on student participation in class, and an hour or more using internet Virtual Learning Guide, the library and any additional time they want to spend outside of school.

1. FLAGS
 - a. Present cut-outs (cardstock or posterboard) of flags of every country in the Western Hemisphere
 - b. Have students look through and choose a flag
 - c. After choosing their flag, have them use the key provided to identify the country that the flag belongs to.
 - d. Locate the country on the map and stick their flag on that country
2. CULTURES
 - a. Discuss the concept of culture, identify some of the major cultural similarities we all have in the United States (i.e. language, government)

- and sub-cultures such as religion, ethnicity, geographical location (rural, urban)
- b. Split into (random) groups of three or four – have each group identify a scribe and have them write down as many cultural ideas they can come up with for the US.
 - c. Have groups share their ideas and concepts with the class. Ask students to think for a few minutes about why understanding other peoples and cultures is important and then have them share with the class.
3. **Introduce assignment.** Students will use resources in the classroom or in the library, or they may use other resources including friends or relatives with personal experience about the country whose flag they chose to find out as much information as they can on that country. Students will prepare a summary presentation about their country for the Part II of this lesson. (Next day? Later in the week?) They can use arts & crafts, poster board, write a story, poem etcetera. The students will use their graphic organizer to collect the information. The summary presentation should include, at the very least, the five asterisked topics (Country name, Location, Language(s) spoken, Border countries, Government type) I will show them a couple sample presentations that I completed.

PART II (Day two) about 20-30 minutes for presentations – depending on amount of info and student questions. 15-20 minutes for the game. 15-20 minutes for the reflection

1. Have each student set up their presentation at their desk. One at a time, each student will stand up and give his/her presentation on their country, going to the map and pointing out where the country is as well. The rest of the class will be encouraged to take notes on each the presentation and ask questions as there will be a game later and they will want to have as much information as possible about each country.
2. "What country am I?" game
 - a. The class will separate into four teams. They will select a team name. All the completed G. O. worksheets will be placed in a box. Each team will choose a 'reader' who will stand in the front of the room and will randomly pick a sheet out of the box to read from. Saying one sentence at a time, the reader will state some facts on the fact sheet about the country – sentences to be structured with: "I have a population of..." (waits and then continues) "I am bordered by (one of the border countries)" "The main language spoken is ..." etcetera and the team members will confer and when they think they got it press the 'buzzer'. If they do have it, they get a point, and get to choose a different student from their group to read the next question (the other student will return to their team). If they do not choose the correct country, the questions resume for the other three teams. The teacher will observe to determine if there are any students having trouble or not participating.
3. After the game, they will answer some reflection questions. They are to choose either the country they researched or one than one of the other students researched and answer the questions reflectively, using the summary presentation, graphic organizer and their own notes for that country. If more than one student wants to reflect on the same country, they can choose to do another or wait and complete their reflection when the information is available.

Closure: about 10 minutes – depending on student participation

Ask if any of the students wants to share anything from their reflective journal

questions

Review the concepts of culture and country

Assessment:

1. Student Assessment:
 - a. "What country am I?" game
 - b. Reviewing their presentations, their completed G.O. and their journals. Checking for comprehension, good research practices and attention to detail
2. Lesson Plan Assessment:
 - a. Observing the students for enthusiasm for the topic, and desire for additional learning
 - b. Reviewing student work for overall success and understanding of material and consistent success in following given directions

Modifications:

1. Provide more time for research and reflection parts of assignment
2. Instead of individual students each researching a country, have teams of two or three work on one country to give any special needs student the additional support and encouragement they might need.
3. Insure that there is software available or someone to read the text of websites or other resources.

REFERENCES:

VIDEOS:

(for younger kids - < 4th grade -)

This Is Our Country. 100% Educational Videos. 2002.

unitedstreaming. 23 April 2007

<<http://www.unitedstreaming.com/>>

World Geography North America: Canada, Mexico and Central America, and the Caribbean. Discovery Channel School. 2004.

unitedstreaming. 23 April 2007

<<http://www.unitedstreaming.com>>

Video segment: The Challenges of Life in Central America (02:20) from Central America Today: Life in Central America. United Learning. 1998.

unitedstreaming. 23 April 2007

<<http://www.unitedstreaming.com/>>

WEBSITES:

U.S. State Department, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs

<<http://www.state.gov/p/wha/>>

National Geographic – Geography

map exploring and making <<http://plasma.nationalgeographic.com/mapmachine/>>

BOOKS:

Immigration from South America by Tracy Barnett

Environments of the Western Hemisphere (Comparing Cultures) by John C. Gold