

World Cultures Class

Title: World Cultures Class

Curriculum: World Cultures/Social Studies/Cultural Awareness

Grade-Level Span: Middle School or High School

PURPOSE: Teaching students how to become aware of the world around them – one step at a time.

DESCRIPTION: Being that are becoming an ever global society, it is imperative that we understand this new “society” that we belong to and its people, customs, ways of life, news, and events. This course shows students how to start becoming knowledgeable about the world so that we can actively participate, make decisions, and interact with it.

The world is vast, so how do I get started in learning about it? One step at a time!
The class is self-directed, there are no textbooks, the teacher is not the expert who is dispensing information, and students are responsible for finding relevant information for the topics that they choose to study.

| ACTIVITIES | CURRICULUM STANDARDS | NETS PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | INFORMATION LITERACY STANDARD |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| <p>News Updates – Electronic or Traditional Students will read, collect, and report on international/cultural news because it is the first step in getting acquainted with what is happening around the world. Students and teacher determine the appropriate number of international/cultural news items per day, week, or month they must read and collect and they work together on how the information and background research should be presented.* Deadlines are established by students and teacher together. News may come from the internet, newspapers, podcasts, and/or magazines.</p> | Social Studies | 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.(1-4), 3(1.4), 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 9 |
| <p>Experts on a Country/Culture Students and teacher determine the appropriate number of Country/Culture items that students investigate, become experts on, and present to other students.** Deadlines are established by students and teacher, working together. Information may come from blogs, internet, newspapers, magazines, books, encyclopedias, etc...</p> | Social Studies | 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.(1-4), 3.(1-4), 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 7.1, 7.2, 8.(1-3), 9 |

| | | | |
|---|----------------|-------------------------|--|
| <p>Guest Speakers/Interviews Students and teacher invite people from other cultures/countries to come and speak to class about their culture, country. Students are expected to actively participate in visit and after visit; students are required to draw conclusions, recap, and/or give opinions about what the guest speaker presented via class discussion or journaling.</p> | Social Studies | 3.2, 4.2, 5.3 | 1.5, 2, 4.1, 4.2, 9 |
| <p>Electronic or Paper Portfolios of Work Students will demonstrate all work, from the trimester/semester, and reflections in a portfolio to demonstrate their learning.</p> | Social Studies | 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 5.3 | 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 2.(1-4), 3.(1-4), 4.1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 8.(1-3), 9 |
| <p>International Movie Choice Students and instructor select movies, from the internet or other resources, that demonstrate other cultures, customs, or ways of living and they view the movie in class. ***</p> | Social Studies | 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 5.1, 5.3 | 1.1, 1.4, 2.(1.4), 5.2, 6.2, 9 |
| <p>Connection to what we have learned project Somehow, students are to make a presentation or write a paper about what they have learned this semester/trimester and share it with the class. Grading is determined by students and instructor.****</p> | Social Studies | 3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2 | 1.2, 1.3, 2.(1.4), 3.(1-4), 4.1, 5.2, 9 5.3, 6.2, 9.1 |

* Students should be able to document the source of their news article, investigate where in the world the article is talking about (for example, if there is an article about Afghanistan, students are required to know and demonstrate where Afghanistan is located on the map). I also like students to offer their opinions, thoughts, or reflections about the news item.

** Students are required to present materials in a variety of ways (i.e. paper copies, presentations, electronic media such as power point, news letter format, or book format.)

*** We view movies in class and discuss it, in hopes that it will spark another project for students to investigate...and this is when they become more self-directed in their learning. For example, we saw the movie called Hotel Rwanda, and from their, I had students that began projects about international genocide, African Countries, Rwanda, and people/groups (Amnesty International, Red Cross, volunteers, Peace Corps, etc.) who are helping disadvantaged people around the world.

**** Making personal videos about what students have learned over the semester/trimester or relating a personal story and how their perspective might have changed over this time would be a great idea final project!

TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

- Internet for current international news items, search international movies, and country investigations like Wikipedia, Cia.gov., lonely planet, etc..
- PowerPoint or a presentation Program to form an electronic portfolio
- Newspapers and/or magazines with international news
- People of other cultures/countries to be guest speakers and resources
- Daily access to computers
- Various computer programs such as Inspiration, PowerPoint, a word processing, etc.

ASSESSMENT:

Assessment is established between students and instructor before projects begin in a rubric, a point value system, or whatever type of evaluation is determined between students and instructor.

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COMMENTS:

(Have you taught this learning activity before? What are the great ah ha's/experiences you had?)

I have taught this 1-semester/trimester class for 2 years, and each year it gets better and better.

The big ah-ha's this year: Student's take more ownership if they help in setting the grading criteria, can self-direct, and are allowed to study a topic of their choice. To get them started, they investigate a few countries, become experts on that country, develop a presentation format, and present their knowledge to the rest of the class. Later in the class after we have seen some great cultural movies (i.e. *Hotel Rwanda*, *Koyla*, *Il Monstruo*, etc..) and have stumbled on a topic that they are passionate about (like

genocide around the world, Native American Cultures, communism, world religions, etc.) they may deviate from the countries research and move into topics of their choice.

I would also like to integrate cinema graphic techniques and discuss why the film makers created the movies in the way that they did.

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