

Lesson Title: Maya News Report

Grade Level: 9-12

Subject: World History or Early Civilizations

Standard:

Students will demonstrate knowledge of complex societies and civilizations in the Americas.

Content Objectives:

- Students will analyze patterns of long distance trade and the relationships between Maya city-states centered in Mesoamerica.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to use graphic organizers.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to use print and electronic media to do research and analyze data.

Language Objectives:

- Students will write sentences using context clues in a simulated news story, such as a newspaper article or a script for an audio or video recording.

Differentiation Strategies:

- Process and Product to address multiple intelligences, learning styles, and reading ability.

Materials (content):

Computers with ability to record and edit audio, computers with the ability to edit video, video camera or recording device, Desktop publishing or word processor software, video: *Mayan Mystery* (at Metacafe.com - <http://bit.ly/NNpSA>, Internet access to suggested web sites for historical information: <http://digitalmeesh.com/maya/history.html>, <http://jaguar-sun.com>, <http://mexicanhistory.org/maya.htm>, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/maya/glyphs.html>, textbook and supplemental readings about ancient Mayan history, culture and their accomplishments.

Key Vocabulary:

Allies, archaeologist, artifact, city-state, decipher, hieroglyphic,

Procedure (process):

1. Whole class instruction: Explain to students that they will explore the ancient civilization of the Maya during the classical period, from A.D. 300 to A.D. 900. This time in Maya civilization was marked by the growth of city-states and by imperial wars between them. Provide students background about the Maya through video and whole class instruction about Mayan history, culture, and accomplishments.
 - a. Overview of timeline of Mayan History and advances
 - i. Watch video on internet: *Mayan Mystery* –OR- Read supplied textbook or supplemental material about Ancient Maya
 - b. Overview of Mayan calendar and use of hieroglyphics
 - i. Students will individually use their laptop computers to access the Internet and PBS-Nova interactive web site that challenges students to interpret Mayan hieroglyphics
 - c. Explain to students that their task will be to research and prepare a news story about major events of the Maya during this period. Events may include a great war planned for a special astronomical date or the capture of a rival king and his city-state.
 - d. Present unit menu to students and explain that they will choose the format for their news report. News reports may be in one of these forms:
 - i. a magazine article, with sidebars providing background information;
 - ii. a major newspaper article or editorial;

- iii. an audio podcast that simulates a radio news report which may include an interview of a witness;
 - iv. a video vodcast that simulates a television news report or show.
 - e. Inform students that although they are reporting on historical events, they should strive to give their news stories a present-day immediacy.
2. Students will work in small groups of 2-3 people. Provide each group with a list of the classical period city-states, including, but not limited to, Tikal, Clakmul, Piedras Negras, Caracol, Copa'n, and Uaxactun.
 - a. Groups will randomly select a city-state for their news report, but it will be limited so that no more than two groups can report on any one city-state.
3. Students will use the Internet to research, gather information, and analyze the history of their selected city-state. Student groups will use this information to select an appropriate topic for their news story.
4. Students will create a rough draft for their news story in the form of either a storyboard, concept-map, or outline.
 - a. Storyboards, outlines, and concept-maps will be created using webspiration.com or creately.com.
5. Students will define roles for each member of their group in the production of the final product. Roles include copywriter, editor, reporter, producer, camera operator, audio recorder, etc.
6. Students will publish their news story for display or playback for sharing with entire class.
7. Students will reflect on their learning by choosing to either participate in a group/class discussion or to write a reflective summary of their experience.

Assessment (product):

- Magazine article, News article, podcast, vodcast

Differentiation Strategies and why:

Process: choice of watching video or reading text for background information

Product: Unit Menu – choice between creating:

- Magazine article
- Newspaper article
- Radio news report
- Television news report

I choose to differentiate the process by giving them a choice in how they would be exposed to background information and how they would reflect on their learning. I also differentiated the product that students will use to demonstrate learning by giving four different format options for the project product. These options should lend to students demonstrating comparable levels of learning, but through their differences they will appeal to different learning styles and intelligences, which should lead to a more rich learning experience for the student. I initially intended to differentiate the content by providing tiered tasks, but I am struggling with how to implement different tiers and still achieve the same outcomes.

As for differentiating the process, I see this lesson as requiring students to have background knowledge about the Mayan culture, accomplishments, and history and I feel that the best way to achieve this with below grade level readers is to provide a variety of non-reading activities in addition to/combo with traditional reading strategies. One way to achieve this is by offering students an option to either watch a video or read from their text. I also feel that students will learn through reflection, but some will benefit more from a reflective group discussion, while others will gain more from an intrapersonal reflective activity.

Intelligences addressed and why:

- Verbal-Linguistic: research of key concepts, simulated news reporting (storytelling)
- Interpersonal: group work, simulation of radio or television news reporter
- Intrapersonal: use of computer and internet to research, word processing in desktop publishing

- Visual: watch video, create graphic organizer, desktop publishing of magazine or newspaper article,
- Logical: use of search engines to locate information, use of storyboard, concept-map, or outline to organize information
- Musical: recording podcast or vodcast
- Bodily: group work, using computer to access Internet, using computer to complete desktop published news article, record and edit audio, record and edit video, sharing completed projects, role playing (Simulated news reporting)

Technology used and why:

- Video presentation for background information: Allows students with below grade level reading skills and auditory learners to be presented with complex information and concepts in a non-text format.
- Computer for:
 - Internet access: An alternative to a textbook or teacher materials for researching and accessing source documents and information. Students can choose which sources best meet their needs, learning styles, and reading abilities. Some Internet sources may include audio or video presentations, where others may use more graphics, which will be used as alternatives to resources that are text based.
 - Graphic organizers: Computer based storyboards, concept-maps, and outlines provide students the ability as individuals and as a group to create, organize, and edit information, and that will be more easily readable by other students, including those with below grade reading levels.
 - Word processor or desktop publishing: Allows students with limited English proficiency to create, organize, and edit text-based information that can be enhanced by images and graphics in such a way that it is more easily created and readable by students with reading skills below grade level.
- Audio and video recording and editing: Computer based audio recording software allow students to easily and efficiently capture, preview, and mix or edit audio and video files into one final product. This allows students to use hands on materials and equipment, the freedom to move around, and at the same time process and present complex information in non-textual formats to demonstrate their knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the topic and concepts.

Assumptions for this lesson

- Before this lesson, students will have been trained and know how to:
 - access and use webpsiration.com or creately.com
 - use desktop publishing software
 - create a podcast or a vodcast, including how to capture, edit, and publish the audio or video.

***Resources:**

- <http://bit.ly/NNpSA> (Video: Mayan Mystery @ metacafe.com)
- <http://digitalmeesh.com/maya/history.html>
- <http://jaguar-sun.com>
- <http://mexicanhistory.org/maya.htm>
- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/maya/glyphs.html>
- <http://www.learner.org/exhibits/collapse>
- <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2008/08/maya-issue/maya-photography.html>
- <http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/med/>
- <http://mywebpsiration.com>
- <http://www.creately.com>
- <http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/programs/mayanewsreport/>

This lesson is based on and uses information from Audrey Carangelo's lesson plan "A Classical Maya News Report" – found on the Discovery Education web site:
<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/programs/mayanewsreport/>