

Best Practices of Technology Integration

Title: *“Canadian Canoe Trip”*

Subject: Language Arts and Social Studies

Intended Grade Level: 6

Description:

This unit involves an imaginary canoe trip through six major water bodies in Canada. Students research the geography of the various water bodies with text research, Grolier On-Line Encyclopedia and Atlas, and information received from an Internet project posted by our classroom on the Global SchoolNet web site. They then write a story about their pretend canoeing adventures based upon actual information received from students in Canada.

Narrative:

In the past, I have taught this unit using the social studies text as the basis for geographic research of the geography of the Canadian water bodies. We also tied in some Internet research in the computer lab last year by assigning partners one water body to research and then “jig sawing” information with note taking in another class lesson. Still, the students felt that some pieces were missing from the research they were finding. Students will probably be more enthused with the research component of their stories when they receive first hand information about the geography of Canada from Canadian students.

Curriculum Benchmarks:

[MI.ELA.1.MS.5](#)

Respond to a variety of oral, visual, written, and electronic texts by making connections to their personal lives and lives of others.

[MI.ELA.2.MS.3](#)

Plan and draft texts and revise and edit their own writings, and help others revise and edit their texts in such areas as content, perspective, and effect.

[MI.ELA.6.MS.4](#)

Document and enhance a developing voice through multiple media. Examples include reflections for their portfolios, audio and videotapes, and submissions for publications.

[MI.ELA.8.MS.1](#)

Select and use mechanics that enhance and clarify understanding. Examples include paragraphing, organizational patterns, variety in sentence structure, appropriate punctuation, grammatical construction, conventional spelling, and the use of connective devices such as previews and reviews.

Detailed Timeline:

10 lessons, each 75 minutes, including writing workshop time

Materials/Hardware/Software:

- 15 or more copies of Latin America and Canada Social Studies textbook by Macmillan/McGraw-Hill School Publishing Company, 1993. ISBN #0-02-146139-2 or other text book with Canadian geography
- Graphic organizer charts for note taking of research information copied on paper for students and transparency for overhead
- Class set of copies of map of Canada with the six noted water bodies
- Access to electronic reference materials such as Grolier's On-Line Atlas (*available by subscription*)
- Access to the Internet and e-mail for Internet research project
- Overhead projector

Teacher Preparation:

Register Canadian water body geography Internet project through Global SchoolNet a few months before the project is scheduled to begin. Become familiar with an on-line research tool such as Grolier's On-Line Encyclopedia and Atlas. Preview section of Social Studies textbook about the various types of geography in Canada. Locate the six water bodies of the St. Lawrence River, Ottawa River, Lake Superior, Lake Winnipeg, Mackenzie River, and Beaufort Sea on Canadian map. Create own graphic organizer with information about the geography, climate, facts, plants and animals of each water body. Prepare copies of graphic organizers, project direction sheet, and overheads for student instruction.

Student Preparation:

Students should have some basic knowledge of Canada through Social Studies instruction. This could be done as a self-contained class unit or as an interdisciplinary team unit. Students should also be familiar with basic computer lab instruction such as passwords, log-on instructions, and Internet directions.

Student Activities/Procedures:**Day 1:**

On the first day of the unit I present students with the Canoeing Canada Project sheet set up as a problem-based unit. The scenario is that they are an adventurer hired by an outdoor magazine to travel by canoe through six major water bodies of Canada. The supplies they are furnished with are listed and they have a truck to meet them and transport them across land where the water bodies do not meet. Their job is to write a brief description of their adventure and including the geography of each water body, plus contribute a few pictures or drawings for the article. The Project sheet is set up as a contract with job productions (requirements), job evaluation (working conditions), and deadlines set forth. After reviewing and signing the Project sheet, students examine a Canadian map to view the map of the route for the trip. At the end of the class time, students brainstorm their ideas for their adventure stories with the prewriting step of the

"Canadian Canoe Trip"

writing process.

Day 2:

Distribute graphic organizer (web) to students to use with computer lab research water bodies. Students are assigned a partner and one water body to research. They will list the water body in the center of the web and then list facts about geography, climate, plants/animals, and other facts on each of the four branches of the web. Model completing the web with overhead of the same sheet. Demonstrate how to access Grolier's On-Line Atlas with classroom computer and Tele-Visé (computer and television display cable) and the results of the Internet Project through e-mail from Global SchoolNet. Allow students to use the computer lab to research the details for the webs during the rest of class time.

Day 3:

Distribute note-taking chart to each student with spaces to record each of the four categories about each of the six water bodies. Partners share researched information about their assigned water body with the rest of the class. Using an overhead copy of the note-taking chart, the teacher models the note taking as each group presents their information and all students take notes about each water body. Distribute and discuss project rubric requirements. Teacher gives mini-lesson about writing introductions and students work on writing their own introductions during writing workshop time.

Day 4:

Teacher gives mini-lesson on proper use of quotation marks for conversation within their stories. Students then use the rest of class time for writer's workshop writing rough drafts of two paragraphs about the St. Lawrence River and the Ottawa River weaving geographic facts into their adventures. Teacher checks individual progress of each student.

Day 5:

Continue writer's workshop as students write paragraphs about Lake Superior and Lake Winnipeg. Teacher checks individual progress of each student.

Day 6:

Students continue writer's workshop writing paragraphs about the Mackenzie River and Beaufort Sea. Teacher checks individual progress.

Day 7:

Teacher gives mini-lesson on writing conclusions for stories. Students work on writing their own conclusions. Then allow time for students to proofread and edit with self and a peer. Students check own story with rubric requirements.

Day 8:

Students work on final copies of canoe trip story with pictures or drawings.

Day 9:

Students complete final copies of canoe trip story and design cover for the story.

Day 10:

Students complete self-evaluation of story with rubric and hand in assignments. Students are assigned to respond back to Global SchoolNet Internet Project participants to reflect upon their results for our assignment and to thank them for the participation.

Assessment/Evaluation:

Students will be assessed by the articles they produce according to the standards set forth in the rubric. Students will evaluate themselves with the same rubric that the teacher uses. Classrooms from Canada who participated in the project through Global SchoolNet will receive feedback and thanks from students. Some exceptional stories will have the opportunity to be published on the student page of the local newspaper with student and parent permission.

Follow Up Activities:

For the Language Arts class, letter writing could be tied into this assignment. Students could be required to write a business letter to the editor of an outdoor magazine to accompany the submission of the article.

Students could also brainstorm other ways to use Internet projects through Global SchoolNet with examination of upcoming units. Students could write proposals for their ideas to the teacher and class. Then the class could decide as a whole on the next Internet project.

Submitted by:

Name: Karen Carman

School District: Greenville Public Schools

School: Greenville Middle School

Address: 1321 Chase Road, Greenville, MI 48838

CANOE TRIP RUBRIC

(5 points each)

		Self	Teacher
Introduction:	Interesting and explains the route of the trip	_____	_____
Body:	Descriptive details and interesting events	_____	_____
	Paragraph for each water body:		
	St. Lawrence River	_____	_____
	Ottawa River	_____	_____
	Lake Superior	_____	_____
	Lake Winnipeg	_____	_____
	Mackenzie River	_____	_____
	Beaufort Sea	_____	_____
	Correct spelling, punctuation and neat handwriting	_____	_____
Conclusion:	Ends in an interesting way	_____	_____
	Pictures or drawings of trip	_____	_____
	Neat cover	_____	_____
Comments:			