

**Place Value: Researching and Identifying the
Resources of a Place**
Ossipee Central School

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Lesson Plans for “Place Value” Unit

Essential Questions: 1) what factors help to shape an ecosystem, a culture, and society? 2) What does place mean to a group of people within their culture/society?

Project Goals and Objectives:

- 1) Students will understand factors of an ecosystem.
- 2) Students will understand the interrelationships of humans and ecosystems.
- 3) Students will design and produce PowerPoint presentations of an ecosystem.
- 4) Students will design and produce PowerPoint presentations describing the cultures which have developed in response to an ecosystem.

Content Standards:

SS: GE: 2 Know why people settle in an area, how they make their living and the resources they use, why they dress or speak the way that they do, and what they do for entertainment.

SS: GE: 6:5:1 Understand the consequences of human modification of the physical environment.

SS: GE: 6:5:3 appreciate how characteristics of different physical environments provide opportunities or place constraints on human activities.

SS: GE: 6:5:4 assess why people have different viewpoints regarding resource use.

R: 6: 4 Identify characteristics of...myths...

Lesson 1: What do we know about the desert/boreal forest/grasslands?

Materials: Overhead, or chart paper and marker; 3 websites; computer for each student or pair of students.

Objective: Activate prior knowledge; explore resources.

Procedure: Teacher leads class in discussion and lists what students know about the assigned biome. Teacher provides 3 websites and instructs students to learn more about the class biome:

“Find at least one desert on each continent,” or “On a world map, locate the boreal forests (or grasslands) of the world.”

Assessment: Class list of what’s known; teacher observations of student use of computers and resources.

Lesson 2: Researching and making climographs.

Materials: Website with a climograph to serve as model; chart showing temperature and precipitation for world cities (e.g. “Climates of the World,” U.S. Department of Commerce, January, 1969; rev 1991) for each pair of students; graph paper and pencil for each student; computer for each student or pair of students.

Objective: Create a climograph.

Procedure: Teacher displays climograph to class; discusses with class how biomes have characteristic climates which can be efficiently described in graphs; reminds class that their description of their biome must include a climograph; and provides directions for using the major cities to locate climate data for the nearest desert/boreal forest/ grassland. Class members locate the data, and design and create their climographs using Excel spreadsheets, and/or on graph paper.

Assessment: Finished climographs.

Lesson 3: Begin researching the biome for class PowerPoint display.

Materials: Overhead or chart paper and markers; computer for each student or team of students.

Objective: Students engage in researching some aspect of assigned biome.

Procedure: Using what students already know about the assigned biome and what they have learned in their preliminary exploration of the resource websites, and using what they have learned in their work on the climographs, the teacher leads class in discussion of the aspects of the biome that need to be researched in greater depth in order to provide another 6th grade with the information they would need to survive in the assigned biome. Teacher and class generate a list of topics and which student or student pair will be responsible for researching that topic. Using the computers and the internet, students research and then develop a PowerPoint slide displaying the results of their research for inclusion in a class PowerPoint presentation. Several class sessions need to be devoted to collaborations between students and/or groups of students to allow for synthesizing their findings into an elegant presentation.

Assessment: Class PowerPoint presentation.

Lesson 4: Sharing of PowerPoint presentations among all three 6th grades.

Materials: 3 PowerPoint presentations; LCD monitor and screen.

Objective: Share/celebrate presentations; set the stage for part 2 of the project.

Procedure: Convene three classes in convenient location; invite all those who have helped or who may have an interest; display the PowerPoint slides; draw lots to determine which class will “survive” in which biome.

Assessment: This session is in essence an assessment; teachers will also observe student participation.

Lesson 5: How will we survive in the desert/boreal forest/grassland?

Materials: PowerPoint presentation which was drawn by lot in Lesson 4; LCD monitor and screen; overhead or chart paper and marker.

Objective: Begin the class’s “survival” in the allotted biome.

Procedure: Teacher displays the new PowerPoint and leads class in a discussion of how to survive in the new biome. Teacher leads class in generating a list of factors to consider in their survival (e.g. shelter, clothing) with names of students or pairs of students responsible for researching or developing those factors. As students and teams meet and collaborate, teacher observes, looking for choice points. These choice points are presented in whole-class discussions: “We seem to be heading in the direction of becoming an agricultural village...is this direction this group should continue in, or should we consider hunting?” Teacher notes the values implied in each choice (e.g. a decision may show bias toward individual expression, or conversely, toward communal survival).

OR

Procedure: Teacher leads class in decision-making and problem-solving as they simulate their day-to-day survival in their new biome. Students keep journals of their “days” and of their decisions. As in previous alternative, teacher notes the values implied in each choice and decision.

Assessment: A record of the decisions and choices made as the class develops methods of survival. The record may include but is not limited to: a map of the “village” showing habitations, food storage locations, and other artifacts of survival; journals; a PowerPoint slide displaying survival information from each student or team; any other product of students’ research, discussion and collaboration.

Lesson 5: Place Values

Materials: Myths from various peoples, and of various types to provide models for student work; paper/pencils and/or word processors.

Objective: Students will write myths embodying the “cultural” values that have emerged as the group survives in its new biome.

Procedure: Teacher leads the class in a discussion of the values that have been evidenced in the group’s decision-making as the group survives in its allotted biome. Teacher leads the class in a discussion of what myths are (e.g. stories that tell about the deep Truths of a culture), and what types of myth exist (e.g. creation, origins of evil, origins of important places and things, the end of the world, cultural mischief-maker). Students individually or in groups begin writing stories, and collaborate with other myth-writers to ensure consistency among the elements of their stories. Teacher circulates to see that student work reflects the values that have developed through the class’s efforts to survive. Students share their myths and as a class evaluate and analyze story elements, and offer suggestions for improved synthesis of story elements, the class’s survival “history,” and the values that have developed.

Assessment: The collection of myths.

Lesson 6: Sharing of cultures among all three 6th grades.

Materials: 3 PowerPoint presentations; LCD monitor and screen; myths and any other cultural expressions (e.g. music, leaders/rules/laws; artistic or artisanal artifacts) that the class has developed.

Objective: Share/celebrate “Place Values” and cultures that have developed out of those places and values.

Procedure: Convene three classes in convenient location; invite all those who have helped or who may have an interest; display the PowerPoint slides; present myths and other cultural expressions.

Assessment: This session is in essence an assessment; teachers will also observe student participation.

Notes:

1) Other lessons are also possible if a class or group becomes interested in some aspect of culture not mentioned or given much weight here because of time constraints. Collaborations with music, art, and physical education teachers would prove highly fruitful.

2) There has been no mention of differentiation in the lesson. It is assumed that each lesson and its product(s) addresses multiple intelligences and is adapted to the ability level of each class member. Higher achieving students may “run with” any and all of the tasks; lower achieving students can execute internet searches for assigned pictures, choose a survival skill or necessity and contribute to the group’s survival, and participate in myth-writing with support according to the level of need.

3) Lessons will take one to five class periods depending on the amount of time allowed for exploring the resources, for information searches, for collaboration and creation, and for final production of PowerPoint. and myths.