**Day One – Introduction**

Objectives:

• Students will make correlations between learned information about the Middle East and Mesopotamia.

Geography Theme:

• Introduction and refresher to all geographic themes.

Lesson Overview:

The teacher will teach this lesson as an introduction to the Mesopotamian river culture. The teacher will write the words “Mesopotamia” and “Middle East” on the board. The teacher will then ask the students to write these words on a piece of paper and to create a web for each word with the information they already know. After the students have a few minutes to do the activity ask that all students write down one or two concepts from their paper on the board under each word. Have the students try to write down something new, but if they don’t have anything new to add just have them write what they have. After all the students have written something on the board start going over the words with the class and asking for definitions. If there is some misinformation, fix it as you go. As the teacher is going over the information have the students add what’s on the board to their own sheet, and have them also write down important terms that will come up later in the unit.

After the students have written everything that is important move on to the artifact box to show a basic overview of what the students will be learning in the unit. Explain the use of the artifact box as a tool to help create concrete correlations to the new information. Explain to the students that they will be creating an artifact box at the end of the unit and will need to save everything they do to place in it. While explaining the artifact box have the students try to figure out which artifact shows which geographic theme (if they need help have them look at a geographical themed poster in the room), and have them write down their answer on an exit slip.

Assessments:

• Collect the webs to see how the students did and return the next day.

• Collect the exit slip, use the artifact box handout, and use the rubric below to score.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 5pts.  Students correctly aligned all themes with the appropriate artifact. | 4pts.  Students correctly aligned 4 themes with the appropriate artifact. | 3pts.  Students correctly aligned 3 themes with the appropriate artifact. | 2pts.  Students correctly aligned 2 themes with the appropriate artifact. | 1pt.  Students correctly aligned 1 theme with the appropriate artifact. | 0pts.  Students didn’t align any themes with the appropriate artifact. |

**Day Two**

Objectives:

• Students will make correlations between current political boundaries and landforms, and past locations and landforms.

• Students will be able to locate Mesopotamia on both a current and historic map.

• Students will be able to identify important land formations and natural barriers that existed around Mesopotamia.

Geography Theme:

• Location, Place, & Region

Lesson Overview:

The teacher will pass out the blank current map (see resources) to each student. The students may then get into groups of two to three. The students will use atlases, globes, and the Internet (if available) to fill in 15 current landform and country names on the map. The students will be instructed to come up to the teacher to check if all the current information is filled in correctly on their individual maps. The teacher will check this by using the current filled in map (see resources). While the students are filling in their maps the teacher will put the historical map up on the overhead.

After the students have finished filling in the current information on their maps they will need to choose 15 historical sites from the overhead and copy them down on their maps. They will also need to create a map key and/or color code to identify different landforms, types of places, and religious sites. The students will also need to place cardinal directions on their maps, and lines of latitude and longitude.

Towards the end of the class time begin a class discussion on the map of Mesopotamia that is displayed on the overhead. Discuss the locations of current cities and countries found on the map. Discussing major rivers (Euphrates and Tigris) and their importance to life in Mesopotamia. Also, discuss any finding the students made about the Fertile Crescent, and then show the Fertile Crescent map. Compare how the land features changed between the past and today.

Assessments:

• Collect the maps and grade by using the rubric below.

• Have students save for final project.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Current Locations, Landforms and Places. | 15pts.  15 Current Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. | 12pts.  14-12 Current Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. | 9pts.  11-9 Current Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. | 6pts.  8-6 Current Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. | 3pt.  5-2 Current Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. | 0pts.  1 or less Current Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. |
| Ancient Locations, Landforms and Places. | 15pts.  15 Ancient Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. | 12pts.  14-12 Ancient Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. | 9pts.  11-9 Ancient Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. | 6pts.  8-6 Ancient Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. | 3pt.  5-2 Ancient Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. | 0pts.  1 or less Ancient Locations, places and landforms in the proper locations. |
| Map Key/ Color Code | 5pts.  Items on key clearly labeled and understandable. | 4pts.  Minor issues with spelling or differentiation. | 3pts.  A few issues with spelling or differentiation. | 2pts.  Many issues with spelling and differentiation. | 1pt.  Poor work, hard to understand. | 0pts.  Did not attempt key. |
| Cardinal directions and lines of latitude. | 5pts.  Labeled correctly and in the correct location. |  | 3pts.  A few issues with labeling or placement. |  | 1pt. Attempted with many errors. | 0pts.  Did not attempt. |

**Day Three and Four**

Objectives:

• Students will learn the importance of the cuneiform writing in Ancient Mesopotamia, and how it affected how we communicate today.

• Students will be able to encode and decode basic cuneiform writing.

Geography Theme:

• Movement (Communication)

Lesson Overview:

-Activity One-

• Cuneiform Web Quest

 - Pass out Cuneiform Web Quest sheets with the following instructions and questions on it. Have students work on this activity either on their own or in small groups depending on the amount of computers available. After the students are finished with the activity go over the answers as a class and discuss each as necessary. Have the student completely answer the questions and turn in a sheet per student (even if they are in groups).

“Today you will be doing a web quest on the Ancient Mesopotamian writing form known as Cuneiform.  Using the following websites, resources from our classroom, and 1 other website you find on your own, answer the following questions.  Be sure to read all of the material listed at each site, as you may have to use information from multiple resources to answer the questions. List all websites and sources you use for this activity.”

1. Why was mud used to make the clay tablets used by ancient Mesopotamians?

2. What group of people lived in Mesopotamia and was the first to develop writing?

3. Before writing letters to tell about an object or idea, what did the Sumerians use?

4. Draw the ideogram for a sheep.

5. In what year was it believed that cuneiform was first used in legal texts, literature, and school texts?

6. What type of shape is used to form the signs used to write cuneiform?

7. How did cuneiform emerge and evolve in Ancient Mesopotamia?

8. What types of transactions or records were recorded using clay tablets and cuneiform?

9. What was a seal and why was it important?

10. What Latin word is cuneiform derived from and what does it mean?

-Resources-

Website One - <http://www.funsci.com/fun3_en/tablets/tab.htm>

Website Two - <http://www.smm.org/anthropology/cuneiform>

Website Three - [*http://www.richeast.org/htwm/cune/cune.html*](http://www.richeast.org/htwm/cune/cune.html)

Your Website –

Other Resources -

Assessments:

• Collect web quest activity sheet and use rubric below to grade.

• Have students save for final project.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Web Quest Questions | 10pts.  Answered all 10 questions correctly. | 8pts.  Answered all 9-8 questions correctly. | 6pts.  Answered all 7-6 questions correctly. | 4pts.  Answered all 5-4 questions correctly. | 2pts.  Answered all 3-2 questions correctly. | 0pts.  Answered 1 or less correctly. |
| Complete sentences and proper grammar. | 10pts.  Complete sentences and free of grammar errors. | 8pts.  Complete sentences and with 1-3 grammar errors. | 6pts.  Mostly complete sentences and with 4-8 grammar errors. | 4pts.  Some incomplete sentences and 8 to 12 grammar errors. | 2pts.  Many incomplete sentences and more than 13 grammar errors. | 0pts.  Nothing turned in. |
| Resources | 5pts.  All 5 resources listed and used. | 4pts.  All 4 resources listed and used. | 3pts.  All 3 resources listed and used. | 2pts.  All 2 resources listed and used. | 1pt.  All 1 resources listed and used. | 0pts.  NO resources listed or used. |

- Activity Two-

As groups finish or as a whole group second day activity have the students actually create a clay tablet and writing tool. Use the instructions from the website <http://www.funsci.com/fun3_en/tablets/tab.htm> to prepare and to create 2 decent sized tablets. After they have created their tablet have them use the cuneiform symbols from the website <http://www.omniglot.com/writing/sumerian.htm> to write a few lines on their tablet. Have the students prewrite on a piece of paper before writing on their clay tablet. When they are finished have them set their tablets off to side of the room to be taken down to the art teacher to be fired later.

Assessments:

• As the students are turning in their tablets check them to make sure they are legible and that the student has their prewriting to decipher their tablets.

• All students should do assignment and earn full credit for the assignment.

• Have students save for final project.

Annotated Bibliography: (Specific to Assignment)

• *Unit 1: Mesopotamia.* Jogtheweb. n.d. Retrieved August 3, 2013.

- This website gives and overview of Mesopotamia and offers a cuneiform web quest that was used above.

• *Sumerian Cuneiform.* Omniglot: 2013. Retrieved August 5, 2013.

- This website gives an overview of Cuneiform and what each symbol means.

**Day Five**

Objectives:

• Students will learn the importance oral story telling and communication.

• Students will be create their own stories that resemble the story of Gilgamesh.

Geography Theme:

• Movement (Communication)

Lesson Overview:

The teacher will begin the lesson by asking if the students have been told a story with a hero in it by a parent, grandparent, or guardian. List the students’ stories on the board as they are stated. After all students have had a chance to voice an idea introduce the story of Gilgamesh. The teacher will put the story of Gilgamesh PowerPoint on the overheard. The teacher will discuss with the class how stories were not written down, but told orally. Discuss why it was important for stories to be carried on whether they are written down or orally. Ask the students what would possibly happen to the story over time if only told by memory. Begin reading the story of Gilgamesh by having a different student read each slide to the class. Compare and contrast the story of Gilgamesh to stories that the students have heard. What are the similarities? What are the differences? Have the students write their ideas down on the board.

\*\*\* For more advanced students or a more complete study of Gilgamesh use the complete pdf version at the following site and substitute it in place of the PowerPoint. http://www.sjsu.edu/people/cynthia.rostankowski/courses/119a/s4/The%20Epic%20of%20Gilgamesh.pdf. \*\*\*

After reviewing the story of Gilgamesh have the students write their own short stories about a hero they create. When the students are finished with their stories have them share them orally with the class.

Assessments:

• Collect stories and use rubric below to grade.

• Have students save for final project.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Story Development. | 10pts.  Multiple paragraphs and well developed. | 8pts.  Multiple paragraphs and with minor errors in developing. | 6pts.  Multiple paragraphs and with a few errors in developing. | 4pts.  Story has one paragraph with 3-6 errors in developing. | 2pts.  One paragraph and poor development. | 0pts.  Didn’t complete assignment. |
| Complete sentences and proper grammar. | 10pts.  Complete sentences and free of grammar errors. | 8pts.  Complete sentences and with 1-3 grammar errors. | 6pts.  Mostly complete sentences and with 4-8 grammar errors. | 4pts.  Some incomplete sentences and 8 to 12 grammar errors. | 2pts.  Many incomplete sentences and more than 13 grammar errors. | 0pts.  Nothing turned in. |
| Oration | 5pts.  Story is told clearly with no choppiness. | 4pts.  Story is told almost clearly with very little choppiness. | 3pts.  Story is told in a quiet clear tone with some choppiness. | 2pts.  Story is told in a quiet clear tone with lots choppiness. | 1pt.  Speaker was inaudible, or hard to understand. | 0pts.  NO story to tell. |

**Day Six**

Objectives:

• Students will explore the importance of the Ziggurat to the Mesopotamian culture.

• The students will create their own Ziggurat modeling ancient building techniques and design.

• The students will draw a correlation between the Mesopotamian Ziggurat and the Egyptian Pyramid.

Geography Theme:

• Relationship Between Places

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson the students will learn about the importance of the Ziggurat to the Mesopotamian culture. The teacher needs to do a search of the term “Ziggurat” and pull up some pictures of actual Ziggurats and drawings of what they used to look like on the overhead. As the class is looking at these pictures go over the information below and draw correlations between the Egyptian pyramids and the Mesopotamian Ziggurat. Also discuss the rectangle shape of the building and it’s use of layering levels on top of one another.

• Ziggurat Information

In ancient Sumerian culture, each city-state was responsible to their major patron god or goddess. Some of the most outstanding structures in Sumerian cities were the ziggurats, large platforms on which temples were built to honor the patron gods and goddesses. The ziggurat was built using mud bricks, a material that was readily available and found along the Euphrates River. The temple structure was built up from a square or rectangular central area or shrine surrounded by a number of rooms used by the priests. The Ziggurat was located at the city center as it was considered the most important building in the city. The closer you lived to the Ziggurat the more important you were.

Cult statues were created and were placed in the shrine or "cella" along with an offering table also made from mud brick. The exterior was made more interesting with the use of columns and half-columns and regularly spaced buttresses and recesses. The interior was sometimes painted with animal and figural scenes as well as geometric motifs.

Two of the most impressive ziggurats were the White Temple and the Nanna Ziggurat that existed at Uruk and Ur. These ziggurats towered above the cities and proclaimed the wealth, prestige, and stability of the city’s authority and glorified its gods. The tall structures symbolically symbolized the link between heaven and earth, humans and their gods.

• After the discussion have the students create their own Ziggurat using either clay or model magic. Have them try to be as detailed as possible and to save on to their Ziggurat for their final project. Also have the students write a short description of their Ziggurat and the god that it was built for. Remind them that the more detailed the better.

Assessments:

• Construction of Ziggurat and written description.

• Have students save for final project.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Story Development. | 10pts.  Multiple paragraphs and well developed. | 8pts.  Multiple paragraphs and with minor errors in developing. | 6pts.  Multiple paragraphs and with a few errors in developing. | 4pts.  Story has one paragraph with 3-6 errors in developing. | 2pts.  One paragraph and poor development. | 0pts.  Didn’t complete assignment. |
| Complete sentences and proper grammar. | 10pts.  Complete sentences and free of grammar errors. | 8pts.  Complete sentences and with 1-3 grammar errors. | 6pts.  Mostly complete sentences and with 4-8 grammar errors. | 4pts.  Some incomplete sentences and 8 to 12 grammar errors. | 2pts.  Many incomplete sentences and more than 13 grammar errors. | 0pts.  Nothing turned in. |
| Model | 5pts.  Ziggurat is very detailed and well built. | 4pts.  Ziggurat has many details and well built. | 3pts.  Ziggurat has many details and built with a few errors. | 2pts.  Ziggurat has a few details and built with a few errors. | 1pt.  Ziggurat has a many errors and little detail. | 0pts.  Ziggurat is still a pile of clay. |

**Day Seven, Eight, and Nine (maybe Ten)**

**Final Project**

Objectives:

• Students will draw conclusions and make connections between their artifacts and what they represent.

Geography Theme:

• All Five Geographic Themes.

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson the students will take all the information that they have learned and tie it all together into a final project. They will be focusing creating the “missing elements” that we have not gone over discussing the Mesopotamian Culture using the <http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/index.html> website for ideas. The students will need to include all of the items they have created in the unit’s activities and create 5 more artifacts covering other topics. Use the following as a guide to explain to your students or to create a worksheet to hand out.

- Activity -

“Now that you have explored the cultural patterns of one culture you are interested in exploring, it is time to create your artifact box. An artifact box is like a suitcase, full of items that represent the culture you explored.

I showed you an example in class at the beginning of the lesson to go over the Mesopotamian culture that we are studying. I chose the items to show what sorts of items you might find packed in an artifact box of your own. (Go over box and already created items again). In the next 3 days you will create your own artifact box, create more artifacts in addition to the ones you have already created, and then give a short oral presentation to the class.

You will need to first find a box that you can decorate to show highlights of the Mesopotamian culture. You will then use the Mesopotamia for kids website (<http://mesopotamia.mrdonn.org/index.html>) to see other topics that we haven’t covered in class are create 5 more artifacts to put in your box. Feel free to use other websites to come up with more information on the topics found on the Mesopotamia for kids website.

Some ideas found on the site are (but not limited to):

• Agriculture

• Economy

• Daily Life

• Inventions, and many more!!!

After you are finished creating your box and additional artifacts you will need to prepare a short oral report to explain your artifact box, the artifacts within, and why they are important to the Mesopotamian people. The reports will begin to be given on the third day of this project time.

You may use the rubric to review what you will need to do for this project.

Assessments:

• Collect and grade the written oral report, and artifact boxes.

• Grade the oral report using that portion of the given rubric below.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Artifact Box | 5pts.  Neatly decorated, laid out, and labeled. | 4pts.  Neatly decorated, laid out, and most items are labeled. | 3pts.  The box decorated well, some issues with layout, and most items are labeled. | 2pts.  The box is decorated, with layout issues, and labeling issues present. | 1pt.  Major problems with decoration, layout, and labels. | 0pts.  Didn’t complete assignment. |
| Artifacts in box. | 10pts.  All ten artifacts are in box and appropriately labeled. | 8pts.  8-9 artifacts are in the box and appropriately labeled. | 6pts.  7-6 artifacts are in the box and/or most of them are labeled. | 4pts.  5-4 artifacts are in the box and/or most of them are labeled. | 2pts.  3-2 artifacts are in the box and/or most of them are labeled. | 0pts.  1 or less artifacts in box and/or no items are labeled. |
| Artifacts appropriately represent the topic. | 10pts.  All ten artifacts clearly represent the topics they are associated with. | 8pts.  8-9 artifacts clearly represent the topics they are associated with. | 6pts.  7-6 artifacts clearly represent the topics they are associated with.. | 4pts.  5-4 artifacts clearly represent the topics they are associated with. | 2pts.  3-2 artifacts clearly represent the topics they are associated with. | 0pts.  1 or less artifacts clearly represent the topics they are associated with.. |
| Complete sentences and proper grammar in report. | 10pts.  Written oral report has complete sentences and free of grammar errors. | 8pts.  Written oral report has complete sentences and with 1-3 grammar errors. | 6pts.  Written oral report has mostly complete sentences and with 4-8 grammar errors. | 4pts.  Written oral report has some incomplete sentences and 8 to 12 grammar errors. | 2pts.  Written oral report has many incomplete sentences and more than 13 grammar errors. | 0pts.  Nothing turned in. |
| Discussion of Artifacts in written report. | 5pts.  All artifacts are discussed in the report. | 4pts.  Didn’t discuss 1 artifact in the report. | 3pts.  Didn’t discuss up to 3 artifacts in the report. | 2pts.  Didn’t discuss up to 5 artifacts in the report. | 1pt.  Didn’t discuss up to 7 artifacts in the report. | 0pts.  Didn’t discuss more than 8 artifacts in the report. |
| Oration | 15pts.  Report is told clearly and covers all artifacts. | 12pts.  Report is told clearly and covered most of the artifacts. | 9pts.  Report is told in a quiet clear tone and/or covered most the artifacts. | 6pts.  Story is told in a quiet clear tone and didn’t cover half of the artifacts. | 3pt.  Speaker was inaudible, or hard to understand. Less than half of the artifacts were covered. | 0pts.  NO oral report given. |