

Social Studies Unit Plan

Pre-Planning Resources

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- Gallavan, N. P., & Maiden, S. R. (2017). Handouts for Studying Current Events. *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, 29(3), P1-P4. Retrieved from file:///Users/nia5000/Downloads/Current%20Events%20Handout%20(1).pdf
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Let's Take a Tour of the U.S Southwest and West Regions!

Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs) and Content Standards, and Anti-Bias Standards:

- **4 – G1.0.1** Identify questions geographers ask in examining the United States (e.g., Where it is? What is it like there? How is it connected to other places?).
- **4 – G1.0.3** Identify and describe the characteristics and purposes (e.g., measure distance, determine relative location, classify a region) of a variety of geographic tools and technologies (e.g., globe, map, satellite image).
- **4 – G1.0.5** Use maps to describe elevation, climate, and patterns of population density in the United States.
- **4 – G2.0.2** Compare human and physical characteristics of a region to which Michigan belongs (e.g., Great Lakes, Midwest) with those of another region in the United States.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2**
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.7**
Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- **JU.3-5.13** I know that words, behaviors, rules and laws that treat people unfairly based on their group identities cause real harm.
- **JU.3-5.14** I know that life is easier for some people and harder for others based on who they are and where they were born.

Big Ideas/Enduring Understandings:

- Where we live affects how we live
- Using maps and separating the U.S into regions is a way of helping us read our world and the people in it
- Understanding the past helps us better understand and act on problems today
- Words, behaviors, rules, and laws treat people unfairly based on their group identities and can cause real harm

Essential Questions:

- How does where we live affect how we live?
- How does using maps and separating the U.S into regions help us read our word and the people in it?
- How does understanding the past help us better understand and act on problems today?
- How do words, behaviors, rules, and laws treat affect groups of people?

Unit Objectives:

- Students will be able to trace the path of the tour through the Southwest/West on a map of the region
- Students will be able to apply map skills to locate important sites in the Southwest/West
- Students will be able to identify the challenges faced by the people along the U.S- Mexico border
- Students will be able to identify the physical and human features of the Southwest/West region
- Students will be able to answer geography questions for the Southwest/West region (Where is it? What is it like there? What has man made in this region?)
- Students will be able to compare the Southwest/West region with Michigan (and the Midwest) in terms of its geography and people
- Students will be able to describe how geography and history have shaped life in the Southwest/West
- Students will be able to explain why life is easier for some people and harder for others based on where they live, and the people they encounter

Rationale

By participating in a research project highlighting specific regions of the U.S, students will familiarize themselves with the importance of geography knowledge and citizenship. During the research project students will learn how to use reliable resources, and gain skills of data collecting. Students will also be given the chance to make connections to a specific place and the region of study. Along with presenting their data, students will be given the opportunity for inquiry when generating further questions about a location. The subject content is meaningful in the development of citizenship because geography allows students to construct a sense of place. Students are building a basis of thinking by reading the world and understanding how they can participate in it.

Prior Knowledge

Students have been learning about the regions of the United States. Each social studies unit has been devoted to one region of the U.S. The textbook that our curriculum follows lists about 8 different locations within the region that are "tour stops" for the students to visit. The tour stops consist of popular sites, parks, monuments, and cities. The students understand that each region is made up of different states, different places, and different history. Writing will be integrated into the social studies unit and they will be writing and researching. Students know how to make presentations using Google slides and are aware of how to search for information on the internet.

Pre-Assessment: Seeing Student Thinking

Seeing Student Thinking

Topic: The Southwest and West Regions of the U.S

Assumptions YOU made/make about your students understanding of your topic.

My students have already had experience learning about different regions. This school year has been devoted to how the United States is divided and each unit we teach has been focused on one particular region of the United States. I assumed that my students might understand that regions help us divide places (not only the U.S), and that regions help us understand that people may not live the same as us due to geographical factors.

Questions Ask/Or Describe Activity

1. What does the word "region" mean to you? Why do you think it is important that the U.S is divided into regions?
2. What do you know about the Southwest and West regions?
3. What makes these regions different from the region we live in?

What did the students know about the topic? What elements of topic did students seem to be unclear with or have uncertainties?

- Students said that regions help us when we tell someone about where we live (location)
- Students were aware of some of the physical features of the regions: The Southwest has desert, The Southwest is hotter (people live differently or dress differently than us due to climate), there are mountains in the West, The West has both cold parts and warm parts (mountains affect this)
- Students were aware of some of the states in each region
- One student talked about how Hawaii has the wettest place on Earth and that the largest herb grows there
- One student named a National Park in Colorado that they read in a book
- One student knew that Mexico was under Texas
- Students were not very clear about how Mexico might affect the U.S since it is so close (they mentioned Mexico might influence the food in the SW, might bring diseases to the SW)
- Students were uncertain of the name of states when I showed them a map of each region
- Students were uncertain about specific examples of how people live differently in other regions

How did the activity affirm or challenge your assumptions about what your students know? How will this information influence your unit.

- The activity was useful because I showed them a map of the regions and they were open with telling me as much as they knew about those regions
- They seemed to understand that regions are split up places (not clear on why) but they understood the other regions were different from the region we live in
- This activity challenged my assumptions because I realized my students were not very aware of the current connections to these regions
- For example, one of my students knew that Mexico was below Texas but they did not bring up any current topics about that (completely understandable, but I was wondering if they would mention something)
- This activity will influence my unit because I will need to figure out how I am going to integrate current events, and sensitive topics into my lessons
- I would like to try to connect more to places that interest the students because it seems to me that they feel that the other regions do not affect them in any way

What I learned from the Seeing Student Thinking assignment:

- The students I used for the assignment shared more than I assumed, and it was interesting to see what they knew about the region. I think this information will change my unit plan by helping me guide what locations I will focus on and how I should structure their research
- The students were not very aware of what current events are related to these regions. I think this will influence my unit in many ways because I will need to think about specific practices I will use to integrate current events (possibly sensitive topics) into the unit

Formative and Summative Assessments

- Formative: After the gallery walk, students write down ideas, questions, and thoughts they develop about the Navajo artifacts to understand why they are important to the Southwest region
- Formative: (Graphic organizer) Students will use a checklist while they are creating their presentation
- Formative: (Graphic organizer) Students will complete a current event form before writing their essay
- Summative: Students will show their knowledge of the region learned by writing a persuasive/opinion essay discussing an issue or difficulty the Southwest/West region deals with. Students will take a stance on how this event could be addressed or what other information is important to know or learn in order to understand what is happening. The rubric below is what I will be using to assess if students met the end of unit goals and objectives.

Current Events Report Form

What is the title of your current-event article?

What is the name of the news this current event is from?

When did this event happen?

Where did this event occur? Describe the place impacted by this event:

Who lives in this place? Who else is involved?

Write a summary of this event, using at least 6 sentences. Begin with a topic sentence Describe causes of the event and its effects

Write one question for further research on the Internet or to ask the class during discussion

Persuasive Writing Scoring Guide

COMPONENT	6	5	4	3	2	1
Focus	Takes a clear position and supports it consistently with well-chosen reasons and/or examples; may use persuasive strategy to convey an argument.	Takes a clear position and supports it with relevant reasons and/or examples through much of the essay.	Takes a clear position and supports it with some relevant reasons and/or examples; there is some development of the essay.	Takes a position and provides uneven support; may lack development in parts or be repetitive OR essay is no more than a well-written beginning.	Takes a position, but essay is underdeveloped.	Attempts to take a position (addresses topic), but position is very unclear OR takes a position, but provides minimal or no support; may only paraphrase the prompt.
Organization	Is focused and well organized, with effective use of transitions.	Is well organized, but may lack some transitions.	Is generally organized, but has few or no transitions among sections.	Is organized in parts of the essay; other parts are disjointed and/or lack transitions.	Is disorganized or unfocused in much of the essay OR is clear, but too brief.	Exhibits little or no apparent organization.
Sentence Fluency and Word Choice	Consistently exhibits variety in sentence structure and word choice.	Exhibits some variety in sentence structure and uses good word choice; occasionally, words may be used inaccurately.	Most sentences are well constructed but have similar structure; word choice lacks variety or flair.	Sentence structure may be simple and unvaried; word choice is mostly accurate.	Sentences lack formal structure; word choice may often be inaccurate.	Sentences run-on and appear incomplete or rambling; word choice may be inaccurate in much or the entire essay.
Conventions	Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation are few and do not interfere with understanding.	Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation do not interfere with understanding.	More frequent errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation, but they do not interfere with understanding.	Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation sometimes interfere with understanding.	Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation interfere with understanding in much of the essay.	Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation prevent reader from fully understanding essay.

Rubric for Southwest Tour Presentation

/1	Title Page (1) Name of place in the Southwest region
/3	Where is it? (3) Latitude and Longitude, what states are by it? What bodies of water are by it?
/5	What is it Like There? (5) Population, Climate (What kind of weather does this state have?), What kind of nature does this state have? What natural resources does this state have? Are there any resources that the state needs?
/2	Compared to Michigan (2) How is this place or people similar or different to Michigan? Why is that?
/3	Facts! (3) List 3 facts about the place
/1	Vocabulary Words (1) 1 word that is important for this place or people and the definitions
/1	I Would Still Like to Know More About (1) 1 question you still have about this place or people that you would like to research more about
/2	Source Page (2) Name 1 source that is a book Name 1 source that is a website
/7	Pictures (7) Relatable and accurate pictures on each slide
/10	Partner Presentation (10) Both students read, readable slides, pictures, speaking to the audience
/35	Final Grade

Rubric for West Tour Presentation

/1	Title Page (1) Name of state in the West region
/3	Where is it? (3) Latitude and Longitude, what states are by it? What bodies of water are by it?
/5	What is it Like There? (5) Date it became a state, Population, Climate (What kind of weather does this state have?), What kind of nature does this state have? What natural resources does this state have? Are there any resources that the state needs?
/2	Compared to Michigan (2) How is this place or people similar or different to Michigan? Why is that?
/5	Facts! (5) List 5 facts about the state
/1	Vocabulary Words (1) 1 word that is important for this place or people and the definitions
/1	I Would Still Like to Know More About (1) 1 question you still have about this place or people that you would like to research more about
/5	1 Tour Site (5) What is the tour site? Where is it in the state? Why is it special to the state? What are 2 facts we should know about the tour site
/2	Source Page (2) Name 1 source that is a book Name 1 source that is a website
/10	Partner Presentation (10) Both students read, readable slides, speaking to the audience
/35	Final Grade

Name: _____ Score: _____

Oral Presentation Rubric

	4—Excellent	3—Good	2—Fair	1—Needs Improvement
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds attention of entire audience with the use of direct eye contact, seldom looking at notes • Speaks with fluctuation in volume and inflection to maintain audience interest and emphasize key points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent use of direct eye contact with audience, but still returns to notes • Speaks with satisfactory variation of volume and inflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays minimal eye contact with audience, while reading mostly from the notes • Speaks in uneven volume with little or no inflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holds no eye contact with audience, as entire report is read from notes • Speaks in low volume and/or monotonous tone, which causes audience to disengage
Content/ Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates full knowledge by answering all class questions with explanations and elaboration • Provides clear purpose and subject; pertinent examples, facts, and/or statistics; supports conclusions/ideas with evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is at ease with expected answers to all questions, without elaboration • Has somewhat clear purpose and subject; some examples, facts, and/or statistics that support the subject; includes some data or evidence that supports conclusions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is uncomfortable with information and is able to answer only rudimentary questions • Attempts to define purpose and subject; provides weak examples, facts, and/or statistics, which do not adequately support the subject; includes very thin data or evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not have grasp of information and cannot answer questions about subject • Does not clearly define subject and purpose; provides weak or no support of subject; gives insufficient support for ideas or conclusions
Enthusiasm/ Audience Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates strong enthusiasm about topic during entire presentation • Significantly increases audience understanding and knowledge of topic; convinces an audience to recognize the validity and importance of the subject 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows some enthusiastic feelings about topic • Raises audience understanding and awareness of most points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows little or mixed feelings about the topic being presented • Raises audience understanding and knowledge of some points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows no interest in topic presented • Fails to increase audience understanding of knowledge of topic
Comments				

Lesson 1: Students will learn about geographical features of the Southwest region

The teacher will introduce the unit and the Southwest region. Teacher will activate prior knowledge by having a short discussion of what students may know about the region when given a map of the region. Students will participate in a “Geography Challenge” where they will be grouped with partners and will have cards that ask a geographical question about the Southwest region. Students will need to look at their map and write down the answers. There are 10 challenge cards. After the challenge the class will come back together to reflect on the answers and put the information on the blank region map. Students will then take a gallery walk of Southwest region (Navajo) artifacts. Students will use sticky notes to write down questions, thoughts, and ideas, about the artifacts and why they are important to this region.

Lesson 2: Students learn how to look for reliable resources and learn about the 5 themes of geography

The teacher will reflect on what students learned in the previous lesson. The students will be introduced to the research project and the teacher will discuss the importance of using reliable sources to get information. Students will learn about URL meanings. Students then review the 5 themes of Geography and how the themes will be important to the project. The teacher will introduce the research project and show the example slides. The teacher will also hand out the checklist that students will follow when creating the Google slides project.

Lesson 3: Students will conduct research on the Southwest region

Students will conduct research on their tour site by books or searching website resources. Students will be working with their partner and together they will fill out the Google slides template. The goal is for students to get 3-5 slides done.

Lesson 4: Students will conduct research on the Southwest region

Students will conduct research on their tour site by books or searching website resources. Students will be working with their partner and together they will fill out the Google slides template. The goal is for students to get 3-5 slides done.

Lesson 5: Students will share presentations of tour sites in the Southwest region and then have a discussion of current events of the region

Students will share their presentations. Half the class will share their locations. After students present the teacher will discuss the current events they have chosen, and the class will participate in a group discussion about how this current event affects us, what groups of people are affected by this, and how could we as citizens address this problem.

Lesson 6: Students will share presentations of tour sites in the Southwest region and then have a discussion of current events of the region

Students will share their presentations. Half the class will share their locations. After students present the teacher will discuss the current events they have chosen, and the class will participate in a group discussion about how this current event affects us, what groups of people are affected by this, and how could we as citizens address this problem. Then each student will pick one current event that was shared and write an opinion writing piece where they need to take a position on the event and share their ideas of how to address the issue or describe what kind of information is still needed to better understand what is happening.

Lesson 7: Where is the West region?

The teacher will introduce the unit and the West region. Teacher will activate prior knowledge by having a short discussion of what students may know about the region when given a map of the region. Students will participate in a “Geography Challenge” where they will be grouped with partners and will have cards that ask a geographical question about the West region. Students will need to look at their map and write down the answers. There are 10 challenge cards. After the challenge the class will come back together to reflect on the answers and put the information on the blank region map.

Lesson 8: Students will conduct research on the West region

Students will conduct research on their tour site by books or searching website resources. Students will be working with their partner and together they will fill out the Google slides template. The goal is for students to get 3-5 slides done.

Lesson 9: Students will conduct research on the West region

Students will conduct research on their tour site by books or searching website resources. Students will be working with their partner and together they will fill out the Google slides template. The goal is for students to get 3-5 slides done.

Lesson 10: Students will share presentations of tour sites in the West region and then have a discussion of current events of the region

Students will share their presentations. Half the class will share their locations. After students present the teacher will discuss the current events they have chosen, and the class will participate in a group discussion about how this current event affects us, what groups of people are affected by this, and how could we as citizens address this problem.

Lesson 11: Students will share presentations of tour sites in the West region and then have a discussion of current events of the region

Students will share their presentations. Half the class will share their locations. After students present the teacher will discuss the current events they have chosen, and the class will participate in a group discussion about how this current event affects us, what groups of people are affected by this, and how could we as citizens address this problem. Then each student will pick one current event that was shared and write an opinion writing piece where they need to take a position on the event and share their ideas of how to address the issue or describe what kind of information is still needed to better understand what is happening.

Lesson Title: Where is the Southwest region?

Time: 50-55 minutes

Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs) and Content Standards, and Anti-Bias Standards:

- **4 – G1.0.5** Use maps to describe elevation, climate, and patterns of population density in the United States.

Big Ideas/Enduring Understandings:

- Using maps and separating the U.S into regions is a way of helping us read our world and the people in it

Essential Questions:

- How does using maps and separating the U.S into regions help us read our world and the people in it?

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will be able to trace the path of the tour through the Southwest/West on a map of the region
- Students will be able to apply map skills to locate important sites in the Southwest/West

Materials needed:

- Computer, Elmo, Power Point instruction slide, social studies workbooks (22), pencils, interactive desk map (22), *Social Studies Alive* textbooks (22), Southwest region pictures, Geography challenge cards

Lesson 1: Where is the Southwest region?	Procedures and management	Academic, social & linguistic adaptations, resources, and support
Introduction	<p><i>Students will be coming in from recess and as they come in they will follow instruction on overhead projector:</i></p> <p>Social Studies!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quickly get a drink of water or use the bathroom 2. On your desk you will need your social studies workbook, your textbook and a sharp pencil 3. Sit in your desk quietly 4. Get excited for social studies!! <p><i>Teacher redirects student attention by ringing chime</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher: Can anyone tell me what regions of the United States we have learned about since the beginning of the school year? [Northeast, Southeast, Midwest] • Teacher: So we have covered a lot of regions so far! There are two more regions that we will cover in this unit and those are the last two regions of the United States. We are going to start with the Southwest region. • <i>Teacher puts up the interactive desk map on the Elmo and points to the Southwest region</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual instructions • Chime as a support to redirect attention • Verbally give instructions as well and make sure Alice can hear
Activity 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ask students to open their textbooks to page 152 and 153</i> • Teacher: This is the Southwest region and I want you to take a couple minutes to look at the map with the person next to you. I want you to notice what states are in this region. I also want you to think about, what do you notice about this region? What kind of physical features do you notice about this region? • <i>Teacher gives students a couple minutes to look at the map and then redirects attention by ringing the chime</i> • <i>Teacher will call on students using sticks and ask students to share something they noticed from looking at the map</i> • Teacher: Now that we looked at the physical features I want you to look at the map on page 152. We will be taking a tour of important places in the Southwest and the dots on the map show the location of places we will visit on the tour [demonstrate on the Elmo] • <i>Teacher will put visual with collage of tour sites on Elmo</i> • Teacher: Here is a picture of all the places we will learn about that are important to the Southwest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alice has a textbook in Braille • Visual pictures to identify features of the region

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> region. Teacher will have a short discussion about the tour sites and ask students to share what they know about those sites, if they have been there, and why they think that site is important Teacher: Great! Now that we know a little more about the Southwest region we are going to an activity that will help us learn more about the Southwest Region! 	
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher: We are going to start with our geography challenge! Teacher will divide students into pairs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alice and partner can do challenge in the hall (depending on how loud it gets in the classroom) Connor and Jeff may need accommodations for the amount of writing for each geography challenge answer Accommodation can be either writing every other question or prepare worksheet with answers. Answers will have blanks and both students will need to fill in the blanks as we are going over the answers
Activity 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher: Now I want you to decide which partner is going to be number 1 and number 2. Number 1s raise your hand. You will be responsible for question cards 1 to 5. Number 2s raise your hand. You will be responsible for question cards 6 to 10. In a minute number 1s will quietly walk to the table [model] and choose any question card that is 1 to 5. Take it back to your spot and you and your partner will both look at the maps together to answer the question and you will both write the answer in your workbook. After you have gone through questions 1 to 5 then partner 2 will get cards 6-10. When you and your partner are all finished you can go back to your seats and silently read 	
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once students start to finish teacher will redirect students by ringing the chime 	
Conclusion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher: Now that everyone has gotten a chance to answer the challenge questions we are going to share and check our answers. Teacher calls on students using stick and students share their answers to each challenge question. Teacher writes answers on overhead and students check their answer. Teacher: Now that we have gotten to know more about the Southwest region, is there anything that surprised you or that you want to know more about? Students share Students will then take a gallery walk of Southwest region (Navajo) artifacts. Students will use sticky notes to write down questions, thoughts, and ideas, about the artifacts and why they are important to this region. Students will share their sticky notes to the class. Teacher: So tomorrow we will be talking about what we will be doing with the Southwest region. I know that in previous units we usually do the same activities in our workbook but for the Southwest and West regions we are going to do something a little different with our tour sites! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have Alice paired with another student to help hand artifacts to her Alice can also Braille her ideas/questions or her partner can write them down

Lesson Title: Reliable Sources and the 5 Themes of Geography

Time: 50-55 minutes

Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs) and Content Standards, and Anti-Bias Standards:

- **4 – G1.0.1** Identify questions geographers ask in examining the United States (e.g., Where it is? What is it like there? How is it connected to other places?).
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.7**
Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

Big Ideas/Enduring Understandings:

- Where we live affects how we live

Essential Questions:

- How does where we live affect how we live?

Lesson Objective:

- Students will be able to answer geography questions for the Southwest/West region (Where is it? What is it like there? What has man made in this region?)

Materials needed:

- Computer, Elmo, Computer lab (22 computers available)

Lesson 2: Reliable sources and the 5 themes of Geography	Procedures and management	Academic, social & linguistic adaptations, resources, and support
Introduction	<p><i>Students will be coming in from recess and as they come in they will follow instruction on overhead projector:</i></p> <p>Social Studies!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quickly get a drink of water or use the bathroom 2. On your desk you will need your social studies workbook, your textbook and a sharp pencil 3. Sit in your desk quietly 4. Get excited for social studies!! <p><i>Teacher redirects student attention by ringing chime</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher: Can anyone tell me one thing they learned about the Southwest region? • Teacher: Great! So today we are going to talk about the Southwest tour sites and what we are going to do with those places! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual instructions • Chime as a support to redirect attention • Verbally give instructions as well and make sure Alice can hear
Activity 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher: Can anyone tell me if what the 5 themes of Geography are? • Teacher: [If student do not know] The five themes are: location, place, human/environment interactions, movement, and regions. These will all be important ideas in our research project. • <i>Teacher will have short discussion involving the 5 themes and why they are important to geography.</i> • <i>Why is location important?</i> • <i>What are some examples of ways humans affecting our environment?</i> • <i>Teacher will model an example of how a human impact could be positive and negative: For example, who has heard of the North Dakota pipeline?</i> • <i>Teacher will discuss that this event is made by humans but it can be seen as positive and negative for two different groups of people. For oil businesses this could be positive in getting oil across states, but negative for Native American tribes that are living in that area and think of that land as sacred.</i> • <i>Teacher will explain that this theme is closely related to current events and can be related to the current event they choose.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner talk/Small group talk • Make sure Alice is with only one person or if it is a small group, the group can work in the hall

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teacher will also model how to find a current event about the tour site, or about the state/region as a whole.</i> 	
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher: Now that we have talked about examples of what we are going to research, I want to take some time to talk about, well what is good research? 	
Activity 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher: Who can tell me a way we can make sure the website or book we are using is a trustworthy resource? • <i>Teacher will call on students, if students do not know:</i> • Teacher: Well I want to show you an acronym that you can ask yourself in order to see if it is a trustworthy resource. • <i>Teacher will introduce ROAR and what the acronyms stand for. Teacher will discuss why these questions are important to ask when looking at a resource</i> • <i>Teacher will provide examples and go over what URLs stand for.</i> • Teacher: So as you can see these are going to be questions we ask ourselves when we are researching our site. At the end of the presentation you will need to create a "Source" page which will list the resources you used to find information. It may be a book or a website but you must list it in your presentation so that we know where you got the information. 	
Conclusion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teacher will answer any questions that students have regarding what they just learned.</i> • Teacher: Now that you know first, what you will be researching (because of the checklist), and know how to make sure you are using trustworthy resources, we will start our research tomorrow with your partner. *If there is time, students can start research in computer lab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alice will do research with her partner on her laptop in the Braille room with Liz

Lesson Title: Presenting and Discussing Current Events

Time: 50-55 minutes

Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs) and Content Standards, and Anti-Bias Standards:

- **4 – G2.0.2** Compare human and physical characteristics of a region to which Michigan belongs (e.g., Great Lakes, Midwest) with those of another region in the United States.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2**
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.7**
Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

Big Ideas/Enduring Understandings:

- Where we live affects how we live
- Words, behaviors, rules, and laws treat people unfairly based on their group identities and can cause real harm

Essential Questions:

- How does where we live affect how we live?
- How do words, behaviors, rules, and laws treat affect groups of people?

Unit Objective:

- Students will be able to explain why life is easier for some people and harder for others based on where they live, and the people they encounter

Materials needed:

- Computer, Elmo, Pencils, Current event forms (22), Paper for opinion writing (22),

*Have student presentations ready to open on computer

Lesson 6: Presenting and discussing current events	Procedures and management	Academic, social & linguistic adaptations, resources, and support
Introduction	<p><i>Students will be coming in from recess and as they come in they will follow instruction on overhead projector:</i></p> <p>Social Studies!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quickly get a drink of water or use the bathroom 2. Sit in your desk quietly 3. Get excited for social studies!! <p><i>Teacher redirects student attention by ringing chime</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher: Can someone tell me one interesting fact they learned from the presentations shared yesterday? One fact they learned about a tour site that they didn't know before? ● <i>Teacher will call on students and have brief recap of what they learned yesterday</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Visual instructions ● Chime as a support to redirect attention ● Verbally give instructions as well and make sure Alice can hear
Activity 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher: Great! So just like yesterday the second half of our class will be presenting their tour sites. I want you to be paying close attention and also thinking about the current events that each group presents. They may be similar issues or different issues but they are all important to think about and they are all events that are ACTUALLY happening around us. 	
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Teacher sets up presentations [Students either volunteer to share presentation or teacher will choose the order]</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set up table for Alice to sit at so she can read her Braille notes for the slides ● Ask Connor if he would like me to read some of his slides (only if he is noticeably struggling while reading the slides)
Activity 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Groups share their presentations.</i> ● <i>Teacher will need to be prepared to discuss the current events introduced after each group presents OR wait until all the presentations are done</i> 	
Transition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Teacher: Now that we have heard some current events happening in the Southwest region I wanted to talk about ways we as citizens can address some of these events. 	

<p>Activity 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teacher will discuss ways in which the students can address these issues.</i> • <i>Possible discussion questions:</i> • What groups of people are affected by this? • Even though we are in Michigan, does this event affect us? How? • What else do we need to know about this current event (history, economics, etc.) in order to better understand what is happening? 	
<p>Transition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Teacher: Now that we have talked about these current events, we are going to put our thoughts to paper.</u> 	
<p>Activity 4</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teacher: You will be choosing one current event you have heard from the last two days, either about a specific tour site, a state, or the Southwest region and write an opinion essay on it. We have worked on opinion essays and so I know you all understand what this kind of writing means. You will choose a current event and state your opinion on how you think the problem could be solved or what other information we should learn more about in order to understand what is happening. You will need to include all of the details of an essay (introduction, middle, conclusion). The introduction and conclusion can be 3 sentences, but the middle paragraph needs to be 5 sentences. I am going to give you an about 5 minutes to plan out your writing. You will brainstorm your thoughts on this graphic organizer that is a current event form. I give you and then make those ideas into your essay.</i> • <i>Teacher will circulate classroom and help students if needed</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individually work with Jim and Cam with the graphic organizer if noticeably struggling during independent work time • Alice can type her response (prepare to have questions in Braille for her to answer) • Connor and Jeff may need accommodations for the amount of writing for opinion essay • Accommodation can be either writing reduced (2 sentences) or have students focus on the organizer to express knowledge (resource teacher can support as well with the writing piece)
<p>Conclusion:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Teacher: I noticed a lot of great opinion writing and people using great points and ideas to support their writing.</i> • <i>Teacher: I hope that you all learned more about the Southwest region and how that region is important to the United States. Even though the Southwest region is not the region we live in, it still affects us and there are definitely similarities in both regions. Next week we will start on the West region!</i> 	

3. Linguistic, social and academic challenges, resources and supports

I have one student who is visually impaired and have two students who have IEPs and require accommodations. From previous observations the two students who have IEPs do well in drawing pictures first to get their ideas across. They also will need extra time to finish work when there is writing involved (Both students have IEPs focused in writing instruction). After speaking with my mentor teacher and the resource teacher I may have to alter the writing unit for them by allowing them to communicate their ideas orally and a teacher will write these ideas down for them to copy on paper. My student who is visually impaired will need accommodations because our paraprofessional will not always be in the classroom during social studies lessons. She will be working with a partner or in a small group for most of the lesson activities. I will make sure that my instructions are clear and descriptive to ensure she understands what is happening in the lesson. She does most of her work on her Braille writer or on a laptop. For assignments that I have students write, I will have her type her responses. She will work with the paraprofessional on the research project since she will need direct support and she will need it in Braille.

Stage 4: Post-Teaching Reflection

1. Mentor Teacher Evaluation

TE803 2017 Unit Plan Assignment

Mentor Teacher/Field Instructor FEEDBACK FORM for Social Studies Teaching

Name(s) of Intern: Nia Chen
 Mentor Teacher: Lain Cramer Date: 4-25-17
 Field Instructor: _____

Category	Comments
Delivery Moves - Clarity of speech - Flow of lesson, with appropriate wait time - Use of proximity to support students attention	Nia prepared, managed, and delivered an excellent social studies unit for my class. Her lessons had appropriate flow and involvement; Nia used proximity and other management strategies; and she gave clear expectations.
Social Studies Content Moves - Uses big ideas and essential questions to frame the activity - Disciplinary core ideas presented are accurate and relevant to students	
Pedagogical moves - Gives clear directions (verbally, visually) - Manages transitions effectively - Invites student involvement and active learning - Engages diverse learners by connecting to their backgrounds and/or building on their prior knowledge	
Professional moves - Professional attire - Confidence in body language and speech - Positively attentive to student behavior - Comes prepared	
Other Comments Feedback Form	I didn't not have this form available to provide feedback, but my observations were positive

2. Reflection on Student Learning

After reflecting on my unit, I believe that students were able to develop new social studies skills that gave them a deeper understanding of Geography. One of my focuses for the unit was using research and having students learn more about specific places and people that are unique to a region in the United States. Students first learned the value of using reliable resources. Since our class uses a lot of technology, students needed to understand how to identify if a website or resource was trustworthy and accurate. I taught students the acronym, ROAR, which stands for reliable, objective, accurate, and relevant. When student encounter a website they should ask, "Can you trust it and back it up?", "Did an unbiased expert write it?", "Is the information correct and updated?", and "Does it answer your question?"

I believe that my students engaged further by using research and creating a presentation because they were able to draw on multiple resources, and students were learning about specific places in detail. They were making connections to these unique places and how they compare to their life in Michigan. During research time I would continually have students come up to me saying "Did you know that this happened in Texas?" One student brought in a book they had that showed which presidents made each state an official state. Students are very familiar with Google slides and giving them the freedom to be creative in showing their understanding of the objectives made the unit meaningful. We also made sure to go over the rubric together so that students were aware of what goals were expected of them. Students also needed to be able to work well with a partner and collaborate to create and practice presenting their slides. In my appendix I have included a few links of presentations that my students created, and you will notice the creative ways students organized their information and pictures.

Lastly students learned the value of understanding what is happening in the world around them and met my objective by exploring current events, discussing events, and also conducting a debate. Some students have not analyzed current events and so they were unfamiliar with how to make connections in a current event and how to discuss how these events might affect our lives. Students were able to use a graphic organizer or current event report form that had students record the general information of a current event as you would look when seeing if the article was reliable (When was it published, who wrote the article, is the article bias). Then as a class students worked on skills that required sentence stems and having a classroom discussion about the importance of the article. Students also developed skills in asking questions about the current event and answering, "What else do we need to know about the people or place of this event to better understand what is happening?"

3. Reflection on the Unit and Refining

I have gained a lot of knowledge in how to plan a social studies unit and how to implement it. The most growth I have seen in my planning comes from using standards such as the anti-bias standards to implement in my unit. Learning how to integrate those standards into teaching current events was a big challenge for me. I had no experience teaching current events so I felt that my unfamiliarity would show in my teaching. Learning to use these standards in my unit were very new experiences for me and at times difficult, but I have found a lot of benefits from learning how to use those features and I think will help me immensely as a move on to future classrooms. My mentor teacher was a great support in my decision to change the curriculum almost completely. I did not have a to use a specific test that was required by the school and so it allowed me to be creative with the activities and assessments I wanted to use.

I was very surprised at how well my students adapted to my new unit and how they were able to work together to research and make a presentation. I predicted that my students would enjoy creating Google slides, since they are familiar with the application, but I was impressed to see how students were finding new information that interested them and enjoyed sharing what they found with the class.

I was very nervous to teach about current events and especially how to guide students in meaningful discussion that got students to inquire and use deeper level thinking. I think that inquiry was an aspect of my social studies teaching that has grown the most throughout this experience. I found so much joy in the unit I created and how my students responded to my lessons. In fourth grade it is hard to expect how students will discuss current events, understand how the event affects us, and how to make real world connections. I was very impressed at how much my students already knew about simulating discussion and also creating a debate. I also was happy to see that after a few current events, they were able to generate their own questions and share what they wanted to know more about. Before I created my unit, I did not think of discussion to be a major factor in social studies teaching. Once I has one discussion with my class, I was so impressed with how curious my students were and what they were learning from just making a pro and con list based on a current event about the Grand Canyon.

As a teacher, we sometimes expect things to go wrong, especially if we do not give students any guidance. I found that the less guidance I gave to them, the more I could see their understanding evolving and it was so interesting to hear their ideas and thoughts throughout the unit. I think that this experience was very helpful in learning both the structure aspect of social studies teaching, and also building my confidence as a social studies teacher to make creative and impactful lessons for students to get excited about learning social studies.

Additional Elements:

Family/Parent Letter

Hello!

As Mrs. Cramer mentioned, I will start my lead teaching in the classroom for 6 weeks. This means I will be teaching all subjects and running classroom duties. I am very excited for this opportunity and I would like to share some information on what I will be teaching during this time.

For our social studies unit, we will be exploring the Southwest and West regions of the United States! This overall unit will focus on Geography as we answer, how does where we live affects us? We will be digging a little deeper into specific places that make these regions unique and we will be creating presentations to share with the class. First, we will learn about how to be good researchers. With this we will learn how to identify reliable resources and pull out certain information as we are researching. Students are familiar with Google slides, which will be the primary application we will use for organizing our research into a presentation. Presentations can also be accessed at home through their school email, so if you would like to see their progress or what they are learning, you are able to do so at home.

We will also be introducing current events that are related to these regions in the United States. With this, we will be talking about what is happening in these events, what groups of people are involved in this event, and how does this affect all of us in the United States? These will be the kinds of questions we will be discussing throughout the unit and we will make real world connections to what is happening around us.

I am very excited to start social studies next week! I would like to support you and your family to the best of my abilities so please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Have a great week!

Sincerely,

Ms. Chen

Appendix

Student Presentations for the Southwest Region:

Carlsbad Caverns- <file:///Users/nia5000/Downloads/Lupanoff,%20Alyssa,%20Stek,%20Ian,%20Slide%20show.pdf>

Pueblo of Zuni- <file:///Users/nia5000/Downloads/Ava%20And%20Bradyn%20Pueblo%20of%20Zuni.pdf>

Student Presentations for the West Region:

Alaska- <file:///Users/nia5000/Downloads/-Ians%20and%20nias%20West%20region%20presentation%20%20.pdf>

Colorado- <file:///Users/nia5000/Downloads/Ava%20and%20Joe%20West%20Region%20Presentation.pdf>