

“Let’s Get Current” in World Geography

Lesson Design: Sarah M. Stolfi, Washington Middle School, History/Social Studies, Grades 6-8, 3 to 5, 45 minute class periods.

Introduction: This lesson demonstrates the task of news reporting and using research skills to understand local and foreign geographic place(s). This lesson applies the Five Geographic Themes to answer important geographic questions and make comparisons between our hometown and a foreign place. This lesson aligns with Common Core standards and provides multiple source material for students to examine evidence and draw conclusions. In this lesson, students will take on the role of a news reporter, examining multiple resources both locally and of those of foreign countries to explain daily life in both historical and present context. Due to its broad geographic connections, this lesson can be applied to any geographic unit. This lesson is ideal for use with a web-enabled smartphone or tablet.

Geographic Connections: Application includes the Five Geographic Themes, Movement, Region, Human Environmental Interaction, Location and Place, with connections to both human and physical Geography.

Vocabulary: Lead, Headline, News, Newsworthy, Evaluate, Source, Relevance, Movement, Place, Human Environmental Interaction, Location and Region, *vocabulary words will vary depending on the level of selected materials

Stage 1 – Desired Results

Common Core Content Standard(s): *Specific to Grades 6-8*

Literacy:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.5 Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.6 Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8 Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

Writing:

- CCSS.ELA-literacy.CCRA.W.2. Write informative/explanatory text to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- CCSS.ELA-literacy.CCRA.W4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose and audience.
- CCSS.ELA-literacy.CCRA.W6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Speaking:

- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
- CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.7.5 Include multimedia components and visual displays in presentations to clarify claims and finding and emphasize salient points.

Understanding (s)/Goals:

Students will understand that:

- There are multiple mediums by which news can be shared
- Within news there are multiple perspectives
- News can be used as evidence to show the culture and historical context of a place

Essential Question(s) Related to Theme(s):

- What influences geography?
- How do we make global connections?

Student Objectives (Outcomes):

Students will be able to:

- Research the **relationship** between **five themes of geography** both **domestic** and **foreign** using a variety of **news mediums**
- Create a **multimedia visual display** *comparing and contrasting local and foreign culture*
- Present ideas in both **written** and **oral format** clearly; **descriptions, facts, details,** and **examples** are used; **appropriate eye contact, adequate volume,** and **clear pronunciation** are used

Stage 2 – Assessment Evidence

Performance Task(s):

- Students take the role of news reporters in five themes investigations. Students may be divided into groupings either hetero or homogenously. These groups may be self-divided, or can be differentiated according to teacher placement.

Other Evidence:

- Pre/ Post assessment graphic organizer “What do we already know about this place and what new learning took place today?” – *Formative assessment*
- Five themes virtual wall on Padlet – *Formative assessment*
- Written news article on foreign country and oral report comparing and contrasting local and foreign culture – *Summative assessment*

Stage 3 – Learning Plan

Learning Activities:

Day 1: *What is News?*

Teacher will place in students “reporter” groups (recommendation, 2-3 students per group). Review techniques of reporting news (*See Appendix A, What is it News?*).

Student will examine page of QR codes featuring local news articles, photographs and links to videos of local events/news. Students can scan each item using a QR code reader (smartphone app) use each medium to identify physical and human geographic characterizes of our hometown (*See Appendix B, QR Codes*).

Using a smart phone or tablet student will create a *virtual* wall to display this information. Virtual walls can be created by students using, www.padlet.com (Allow additional time for

usage instruction). Students will use the virtual wall to tell a story about our hometown and display the geographic connections to the five themes.

Teacher note(s):

- Groups can be formed by student choice or prearranged by teacher in ability groupings (hetero/homogenous groups).
- If technology or smart phones are not available to the students (BYOD), the class can utilize a computer lab where students. Additionally QR coded resource/articles can be printed out for reading.
- Additional technology modifications include a paper graphic organizer for use instead the virtual wall activity.
- Modifications may be made for IEP and/or certain learning populations, such as a partially completed paper 5 themes graphic organizer. Printing the QR coded articles and photographs can also serve as modification for students with special needs.
- Enrichment tasks may be used for lesson/unit extension.

Day(s) 2 and 3: ***Global News Reporting***

Student reporting groups will select a country to research. Country selection must be unique to each group and related to the area of study. Student will design a global news report connecting the five themes (*See Appendix C, What is a Source?*) and (*See Appendix D, Global News Report*).

Student will need web enabled Smart Phones to find articles that they can use to generate their reports. Students will complete the Global News Report (*See Appendix D*) sheet as a group.

Teacher note(s):

- Groups can be formed by student choice or prearranged by teacher in ability groupings (hetero/homogenous groups).
- If technology or smart phones are not available to the students (BYOD), the class can utilize a computer lab. Additionally, teacher can print out articles about each country for students use in the classroom.
- Modifications may be made for IEP and/or certain learning populations, such as a partially completed global news report sheet. Printing the articles and photographs can also serve as modification for students with special needs.
- Enrichment tasks may be used for lesson/unit extension.

Day (s) 3-5: Report on the News with a *Virtual Poster Presentation*

Students will utilize www.Easel.ly.com to create virtual posters (Allow additional time for usage instruction). Posters compare and contrast life in our hometown with life in a foreign country. Posters can be designed using Easel.ly's free software on a smart phone, tablet or a traditional computer.

Students will utilize virtual wall and global news reporter sheet to complete virtual posters.

Students will design a news report (oral presentation) to share with the class. Students may use a script and can wear costumes if appropriate. Presentations have an introduction, detailed content and closure. Student delivery will be measured on general appearance, use of voice, eye contact, body movements, use of voice, volume, speed, and poise. Students will require time to practice presentations. Students can self assess their progress on rubric.

Teacher note(s):

- Additional technology modifications include a poster paper instead of www.Easel.ly.com virtual posters.
- Modifications may be made for IEP and/or certain learning populations, such as printing the articles and photographs can also serve as modification for students with special needs.
- Enrichment tasks may be used for lesson/unit extension.
- Students can record lessons on a smart phone and upload them on to a class website for virtual sharing.

Resource List/Bibliography:

www.padlet.com (Formerly Wall wisher) virtual wall

www.QRstuff.com QR code generator

www.Easel.ly.com Virtual poster creator

How Are You Going to Use This Unit?

This lesson will be used in 7th grade World Geography classroom at Washington Middle School in Meriden, CT. This lesson is designed to help students make connections between our hometown and foreign places and can be utilized throughout the school year. Our 7th grade social studies curriculum design features four geographic areas of study, Latin America, The Middle East and Northern Africa, Sub-Saharan African and Asia and the Pacific and due to the somewhat generic nature of the lesson, it can be adapted and is suitable for use with any of these units.

Appendix List

- A: Why is it News?
- B: Global News Report
- C: What is a Source?
- D: Global News Report
- E: Self assessment rubric

Appendix A

Why is it news?

Each day, newspaper editors around the world must make decisions about which stories they will publish. Stories make it into newspapers for many different reasons. Invite students to look at the stories that have made the front page of a local newspaper during the last few days and to talk about why each of those stories made headlines. Among the reasons students might come up with are these:

- Timeliness -- News that is happening right now, news of interest to readers right now.
- Relevance -- The story happened nearby or is about a concern of local interest.
- Magnitude -- The story is great in size or number; for example, a tornado that destroys a couple houses might not make the news but a story about a tornado that devastates a community would be very newsworthy.
- Unexpectedness -- Something unusual, or something that occurs without warning.
- Impact -- News that will affect a large number of readers.
- Reference to someone famous or important -- News about a prominent person or personality.
- Oddity -- A unique or unusual situation.
- Conflict -- A major struggle in the news.
- Reference to something negative -- Bad news often "sells" better than good news.
- Continuity -- A follow-up or continuation to a story that has been in the news or is familiar.
- Emotions -- Emotions (such as fear, jealousy, love, or hate) increase interest in a story.
- Progress -- News of new hope, new achievement, new improvements.

Appendix B

QR Codes For Five Themes of Geography Virtual Wall



No Answers Yet on Why Ducks Died



National Guard Band to End Tour in Meriden



Meriden's Daffodil Festival

QR Codes Five Themes Continued



Resto Pleads No Guilty in Convenience Store Killing



Maloney High Spartan Vs. Bristol Eastern



Dress Code



Kids Raise Awareness About Drunk Driving

Appendix C

What is a Source?

Appropriate "mediums" for your global report include:

Newspaper (Print)

- The Hartford Courant (Local/State/National/World)
- The New York Times (National/World)
- Boston Globe (National/World)

News magazines

- Time Magazine
- Newsweek
- National Geographic Magazine

Online Newspapers and News Sites

- <http://www.nytimes.com/> (The New York Time Online)
- <http://www.ctnow.com/> (The Hartford Courant Online)
- <http://www.nhregister.com/> (The New Haven Register Online)
- <http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/> (The Boston Globe Online)
- <http://www.cnn.com/> (CNN TV news print site)
- <http://www.foxnews.com/> (Fox TV news print site)
- <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/> (NBC TV news print site)
- <http://abcnews.go.com/> (ABC TV news print site)
- <http://www.cbsnews.com/> (CBS TV news print site)

Appendix E

Global News Report

Enter Lead/Headline

Enter the Five W's

Who

What

Where

When

Why

Three Supporting Details

Conclusion

Appendix D

STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT Check List

YES

NO

Questions: (Writing Techniques)

Did I write in "my own voice"?		
Did I use Spell Check?		
Did I use Grammar check?		
Did I use correct punctuation?		
Did I spend enough time writing?		
Did my paragraphs have more than three sentences?		
Is my writing clear and focused?		
Are my ideas presented in a clear and coherent order?		

Questions: (Attention to Detail)

Did I use the graphic organizer?		
Did I have a clear belief statement?		
Do I have specific information to support the belief statement?		
Did I read my article aloud when I was done?		
Was I on task?		
Did I have a peer review my work?		

Questions: Presentation Quality

Was my presentation at least two minutes?		
We (I) delivered a clear and organized presentation?		
Spoke about similarities of hometown/foreign place		
Spoke about difference of hometown/foreign place		
Use of voice, volume speed was appropriate		
Body movements and poise were appropriate		