

The China Gap

AP Human Geography

Digital Video Production: A Case Study Documentary of China

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Standards:

Develop spatial understanding, perspectives, and personal connections to the world.

1. Use different types of maps and geographic tools to analyze features on Earth to investigate and solve geographic questions.
2. Explain and interpret geographic variables that influence the interactions of people, places, and environments.

Objectives:

Students will digitally create and publish a documentary production of China for the purpose of demonstrating and passing along their understanding of AP Human Geography.

Students will use China to:

Population

- explain population pyramids and distinguish between characteristic shapes.
- apply the demographic transition model.
- analyze the impacts of anti-natalist policies.
- analyze the trends associated with key demographic terms. (i.e. total fertility rate, etc.)
- assess the impacts of population growth on resource consumption and distribution.

Migration

- distinguish between and give characteristics of different types of human movement.
- apply the contributions of Ravenstein to the study of human movement and migration.

Culture

- provide specific examples of folk culture.
- provide examples of specific popular cultural traits and discuss their diffusion.
- identify the characteristics and diffusion of major world religions.
- explain specific religious conflicts.
- distinguish between ethnic and universalizing religions.

Political Geography

- describe the problems of multinational states and stateless nations.
- list advantages and disadvantages of different types of boundaries and provide examples.

Economic Geography

- use economic indicators to classify countries as less developed or relatively developed.
- analyze how site and situation factors influence the location of manufacturing.

- discuss the problems created by industrialization.
- evaluate the impacts of development on resource consumption and subsequent policies.

Project Narrative

The greatest impact from studying in China will be felt within the classroom. Since my district has undergone changes in graduation requirements in an effort to better prepare students for the 21st century, I want my project plan to align well with these desired outcomes. The stated need from our district is for students to “demonstrate competency of Real World Applications, Creative Applications, Critical Thinking, Decision Making, Advocacy, and Adaptations to ever-changing personal and global contexts...” (Poudre School District Graduation Requirements). By designing a project that will incorporate these necessary skills along with the knowledge and understanding of China’s role in our changing world, students will emerge better prepared to face the challenges of modern society. The following project is specifically designed for High School level students enrolled in Advanced Placement Human Geography.

The Human Geography curriculum is thematic in nature and focuses on theories and models that can be applied to all regions of the world. At the onset of this project, students will have completed instruction in all of the areas featured in the case study. In addition, students will have developed skills in the spatial analysis of a variety of concepts. Therefore, the objective is to assess their level of mastery over the content as they apply their understanding specifically to China. For Human Geography, this would be completed as an end of year assessment.

My project plan focuses on technology and writing. Within this framework, students will be required to work collaboratively with a partner to coordinate their knowledge of China’s changing position within our global society. Through the process of digital video production, students will use China as a case study example to demonstrate their knowledge of culture, population, migration, political geography, economic geography, and resource issues. Digital video production utilizes voiceover technology to inform an audience while using photos or video resources to enhance the vocal narration. Students will be required to evaluate what they have learned throughout the year and assess what areas are the most significant within each of the required categories. They will need to select visual cues to help them represent their selected topics. Then, through the process of writing and editing, they will develop a narrative to accompany the photo or video segments within their story. Applications that can be used for this

project include such prepackaged programs as iMovie for Macs, Movie Maker for PCs, or a free download program called Photo Story 3 for PC users.

The process of digital video production requires students to execute the writing process while simultaneously collaborating with peers and mastering a form of technology. This will allow students to participate in the creation of a piece of writing that will require both personal and peer revision (DeVoss, et.al., 2010). Ultimately, the result will be a product that has been designed through negotiations among diverse individuals.

Students must be mindful that their purpose is to inform an audience of China's experience through the eyes of a geographer. Their product will be digitally published for the availability of a wider audience of parents and peers. They are not simply creating a report to be viewed exclusively by their instructor. Instead, we will allow fellow students and parents to view the finished stories online and provide positive feedback to the creators.

Through the development of 21st century skills, students will be able to thrive in an ever changing global community. By exploring China's dynamic role in the world today, students can apply writing techniques and peer collaboration methods through the use of technology to demonstrate learning. As an educator, I look forward to guiding my students as they learn what it means to move ahead with confidence.

Work Cited

DeVoss, D.N., Eidman-Aadahl, E., & Hicks, T. (2010). Because Digital Writing Matters: Improving Student Writing in Online and Multimedia Environments. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Learning Activities

The theme of this project is, “The China Gap”. This refers to the dramatic divide linked to a variety of features within China. Specifically, students will be addressing one of the following “gaps”: the generation gap, the culture gap, the ethnicity gap, the resource gap, the political gap, the economic gap, the gender gap, or the development gap. Include in this project packet are the following resources: 1) student instructions, 2) project guides, 3) instructor’s guide, 4) student planning page, 5) peer review guide, and 6) a student reflective question.

1) Student Instructions

This handout provides step-by-step instructions to students. It introduces them to the overall theme of the project and the resources that will accompany their planning.

2) Project Guides

This handout is specific to each “gap”. It provides students with a list of elements to consider in the creation of their project. This guide will give them a better sense of how the project will be graded. In addition, there are helpful resources designed to guide students’ thinking. Included here are relevant units of study, key terms, and recommended resources for each topic.

3) Instructor’s Guide

The instructor’s guide is specifically designed to assist teachers. Each “gap” is explained to provide context and relevant background information. These thoughts were compiled based on my study abroad experience, as well as my years of teaching Human Geography inside the classroom. The information here should not be considered all inclusive since students may discover different angles from which to approach the content. For additional ideas, visit the provided sources.

4) Student Planning Page

This resource can be most closely associated with a story board. It is used for planning a digital production and should be distributed to students electronically. They can manipulate the margins

and duplicate the template as needed. Here they will create their written narrative and associate it with visual details. They should also use it as a place to keep track of sources.

5) Peer Review Guide

This is a guide for students as they share their digital productions with one another. The learning for the project should not be limited to their personal case study topic. Instead, they will share their productions with one another, provide feedback, and evaluate the content from a geographic perspective. Since there are likely to be numerous video productions, it may be necessary to have students view and assess them digitally on their own. The instructor can then select the most effective productions to later view in class.

The Peer Review Guide is also a useful tool for students as they are going through the process of planning and creating their own projects. Knowing how they will be evaluated is essential for the creation of quality products. I would also suggest that this guide be used as a rubric for teachers. Assign a maximum score to each line of questioning and use it to help guide your evaluation.

6) Student Reflective Question

This is an opportunity for students to synthesize their learning. I suggest that it be administered as an in-class, handwritten, final culmination of the project. It is essential that students draw connections and have time to reflect on the value of the learning process.