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Linking China Past and Present to PYP Units of Inquiry through Thinking Routines

Introduction:

The purpose of this project is to help elementary age students develop a better understanding of both the rich history and the rapidly changing modern day China using information and images gathered during a month long seminar in China as part of the Fulbright-Hays delegation. The curriculum project I have created consists of three lesson plans, each targeted to a specific grade and Unit of Inquiry as indicated below. However, each lesson could be adapted or modified to use with a younger or older elementary grade.

The Primary Years Program is a curriculum framework that is inquiry based, in which students use their experiences and prior knowledge to formulate questions to learn new concepts and construct meaning. The PYP is comprised of six trans-disciplinary themes that allow students to explore topics across content areas. These overarching themes of *Who we are*, *Where we are in place and time*, *How we express ourselves*, *How the world works*, *How we organize ourselves* and *Sharing the planet*, inform and guide each grade level’s six units of inquiry each year. The identified lines of inquiry, the key concepts targeted, and the learning objectives for each lesson are detailed below. Each lesson contains a thinking routine. Through the use of thinking routines in the classroom all students are actively engaged in discussion. These routines help children to verbalize and visualize their thinking, cultivating active participation and processing.

Curriculum Project:

I. Unit of Inquiry: *People Around the World* (developed for Grade 1)

The central idea/learning outcome developed for this unit is “We might be different from other people, but our similarities can help us respect our differences.”

The lines of inquiry for this unit of study are:

- What are our own ways of life?
• What are some ways of life around the world different than from our own?
• How can we respect these differences?

Key Concepts: Form, Perspective, Responsibility
Related Concepts: Opinions, diversity, family, identity, heritage and traditions
Attributes: Inquirer, Open-Minded, Risk-Taker
Attitudes: Empathy, Respect, Tolerance

Learning objectives:
Writing:
  Ideas/Content
  • Generates ideas with increasing independence
  • Writing is understandable with some details

  Organization/Purpose
  • Begins to use writing to convey meaning
  • Begins to organize ideas in a sequence
  • Begins to plan work with support (web, list, graphic organizer)
  • Begins to write a range of text forms and for a range of purposes across some content areas with some control

Social Sciences:
• Interpret and use data from multimedia resources.
• Research, discuss and document a topic
• Pose questions from relevant material
• Find answers to posed questions from resources such as simple texts and other multimedia resources
• Use texts and other multimedia resources to begin making hypothesize
• Categorize facts according to given or independently suggested criteria

Lesson Plan:
Using the thinking routine “I Used to Think, Now I think”, the students will brainstorm ways in which they think schools in China might be both similar to and different than schools in the U.S. The student responses will be recorded on the board so they have a visual reference. Students will then watch a power point presentation (see Keynote PDF) of images from a variety of schools in China. Once they have seen the presentation, the students will first complete the thinking routine to see how their thinking may have changed. Next, students will create a Venn diagram (template attached) to illustrate how they have compared and contrasted the experiences of a Chinese school day and an American one. Finally, students will write a short paragraph using information gathered on the Venn diagram.

II. Unit of Inquiry: People on the Move (developed for Grade 3)

The central idea/learning outcome for this unit is: “Migration can transform human beings and communities.”

Lines of inquiry of this unit of study are:

- What are the reasons people move?
- How does migration change people or a community?
- What views do newcomers have towards their new environment? What views can local people have about outsiders joining their community?
- Does the community impact the immigrant, or does the immigrant impact the community?
- Why do people choose to include or exclude newcomers? Do we have a responsibility towards newcomers?

Key Concepts: Function, Connection, Perspective
Related Concepts: Culture, Communities, Belonging, Identity
Attributes: Open-Minded, Reflective, Inquirer
Attitudes: Empathy, Tolerance, Respect

Learning Objectives:

Social Sciences:
• Apply understanding of movement to local, regional, and global issues
• Give simple reasons why people migrate
• Apply understanding of human/environmental interactions to local, regional, and global issues
• Describe ways in which people change as they adapt to their physical and cultural environment
• Describe ways in which the physical and cultural environment changes as a result of human action

Lesson Plan: Students will use the rapid urbanization of China as a case study of why people might migrate. The teacher will provide some background information about the current population statistics in China (please see CIA World Fact Book) highlighting that the majority of the Chinese population now lives in an urban area. Students will view images of Chongqing, Beijing, Shanghai and Xi’an that I took during the month of July 2014, to better understand the scale of these cities. Students will also view a shot of Shanghai before and after, from 1987-2012. Students will be led through a "See, Think, Wonder" routine (template attached). After studying the photographs of the various settings, students will record what they see in each, what they think is happening, and what they wonder or have questions about. Finally, the teacher will lead the class in discussion about what factors may have led to the dramatic urbanization in China such as job opportunities, education and poverty. (Images 1, 2 and 3 are from Chongqing, images 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 are from Beijing, and images 9, 10 and 11 are from Shanghai).
Image 1: City-scape taken at night from a boat on the Yangtze river. The golden towers are the nearly 400-room Sheraton Chongqing hotel.
Image 2: City-scape taken during the day of downtown Chongqing. The bridge in the image is one of a dozen bridges in the city.
Image 3: City-scape taken from high above the city at a Taoist temple.
Image 4: Taken at Tiananmen Square in Beijing looking onto the entrance of the Forbidden City.
Image 5: A house being torn down in a *hutong* in Beijing. Hutongs are centuries old neighborhoods comprised of connected alleyways lined by traditional courtyard residences.
Image 6: Mid afternoon traffic in Beijing, taken from a tour bus.

Image 7: Smog hangs over a residential neighborhood in Beijing, flanked by skyscraper apartment buildings in the background.
Image 8: A tourist street in Beijing, near the hutong neighborhood from image 5.
Image 9: The Bund in Shanghai at night. The Bund is a famous riverfront pedestrian area that people visit to view the varied architectural styles of the buildings that form the city skyline.

Image 10: A modern skyscraper, Tomorrow Square, rises above older structures in Shanghai. It is the 5th tallest building in Shanghai.

Image 11: Cityscape of Shanghai, featuring the Oriental Pearl Tower. The Oriental Pearl Tower is an iconic symbol of the city’s famed modern architecture.
III. Unit of Inquiry: I believe, You believe (developed for Grade 4)

The central idea/learning outcome for this unit is that “Beliefs are expressed in different ways, but there are many common elements.”

The lines of inquiry for this unit are:

- What are the different belief systems?
- What is the importance of various religious symbols?
- How do people demonstrate beliefs and how they are viewed by others?

Key Concepts: Form, Function, Perspective

Related Concepts: Identity, prejudice, religion, beliefs, spirituality

Attributes: Open minded, Risk-taker, Caring

Attitudes: Commitment, Cooperation, Curiosity,

Learning Objectives:

Social sciences:

- Understand factors that shape events
- Identify the main characters and the role they play in shaping an event
- Identify the setting, its values, and its perspectives in shaping an event
- Identify the sequence of events and their relation to one another
- List the causes that lead to an event
- Interpret and use data from multimedia resources
- Identify the main idea and supporting details in a text
- Provide personal reflection to information in a text
- Use photographs/paintings/artifacts to hypothesize about lifestyles and beliefs
- Locate appropriate resources to find information to research question
- Compose responses to research/inquiry questions using more than one source

Lesson Plan: Students will be shown a series of images that I took in China in July 2014 of both Buddhist and Taoist objects/symbols (attached). Individually or in pairs, student will choose one photograph and complete a "Think, Puzzle, Explore" (template attached) thinking routine about the symbol. Students will then conduct research to answer the
following questions: 1) What is the object/symbol? 2) What religion does it represent? and 3) What is the significance of the object/symbol? Students will share their findings and have a culminating discussion to talk about how these religious objects/symbols reveal similarities and differences between the two religions. For information about the photographs please refer to notes below.

Notes on photographs:

Image 1: Buddhist prayer wheel at the Guangren Lama Temple in Xi’an. The Tibetan Buddhist prayer wheels contain a roll of paper on which the sacred mantra is written many times. Buddhists believe that when you spin the wheel, the mantra gets repeated over and over again, spreading blessings and well being.

Image 2: A lotus flower at the Guangren Lama Temple in Xi’an. As it grows in muddy water, yet turns into a beautiful flower as it rises above that water, the lotus flower represents both good fortune and purity in Buddhism.

Image 3: Statue of Buddha at the Guangren Lama Temple in Xi’an. Statues of Buddha are commonly golden and quite large, symbolizing the Buddha’s significance and that he should be revered.

Image 4: Offerings at a shrine at the Guangren Lama Temple in Xi’an. Offerings are one of the most common Buddhist rituals and can include money, food or candles. Offerings show respect to Buddha and are thought to encourage generosity.

Image 5: Incense burner at the Guangren Lama Temple in Xi’an. Incense is burned at all Buddhist temples as an offering to Buddha. Incense is thought to allow poor moral conduct to burn away and to remind people to behave morally.
Image 6: A shrine with offerings in a make shift cave next to the main temple at the Laojundong Taoist Temple in Chongqing. Caves are thought to be sacred places that contain purified qi, or life force.

Image 7: A shrine with a statue of the Three Pure Ones at the Laojundong Taoist Temple in Chongqing. The Three Pure Ones-the God of Long Life, the God of Wealth, and the God of Happiness- are considered to be the highest gods in the Taoist religion.

Image 8: Incense burner at the entrance to Laojundong Taoist Temple in Chongqing. In Taoism, the ritual of burning incense before you enter the temple is meant to symbolize the act of purification.

Image 9: Table with cups of water on one side and candles on the other, at the Laojundong Taoist Temple in Chongqing. In Taoism, water and fire are two of the Five Elements that make up everything in the world. Water is considered to be a feminine element (yin) while fire is considered to be a masculine element (yang). Taoists believe that everyone has both yin and yang, creating an important balance.
Bibliography:


Websites:

http://afe.easia.columbia.edu

http://countries.mrdonn.org/china.html

http://www.visiblethinkingpz.org

www.usborne-quicklinks.com

Other on-line resources:


http://www.ncuscr.org/files/Pyle%20project.pdf
See think wonder

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you <strong>see</strong> in these images?</th>
<th>What are you <strong>thinking</strong> as you look at these images?</th>
<th>What <strong>wonderings</strong> do you have about these images?</th>
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Think, Puzzle, Explore
Before you begin your research, list details in the first two columns to help guide you.
Fill in the last column when you have finished your research.

Object:

| What do you THINK you know about this object? | What questions or PUZZLES do you have? | What will you EXPLORE about this object? |