



LESSON INFORMATION



Subject Area: World Cultures and Geography



Grade Level: Grade 6



Time Frame/Duration: six-eight 55-minute class periods

OVERVIEW OF LESSON

Students will work collaboratively as journalists to interview an expert and write an article about human interaction with the environment. To complete this assignment, learners will complete an “Inquiry Arc” by developing questions and planning inquiries, applying disciplinary concepts and tools, evaluating sources and using evidence, and communicating conclusions and taking informed action.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to

1. Identify and analyze ways people have adapted to or modified the physical environment by interviewing an expert about the pros and cons of an adaptation or modifications in a specific place or region and writing an article about the interview

ESSENTIAL / GUIDING QUESTIONS

What are the questions being asked and potentially answered for this lesson?

1. How do people adapt to their environment?
2. How do people modify the environment?
3. How should people interact with the environment?
4. How does geography influence the way people live?
5. What are the costs and benefits of adaptations and modifications to the environment?

CONNECTION TO CURRICULUM / UNIT

During the US/Canada unit or at the end of the year as a culminating project.

BASIC TERMS AND VOCABULARY

*adaptation * modification * infrastructure * economy * society * government * environment * regulation*

POWERFUL GEOGRAPHY FOCUS

Careers and Jobs: emergency management director | environmental conservation officer | greenhouse gas reduction specialist | hydrologist | park ranger | urban planner | geography professor | journalist | reporter

Career Categories: media and entertainment, sciences, environmental matters, housing development

KEYWORDS

6-day lesson, adaptation, creative path, environment and society, infrastructure, inquiry model, interviews, journalism, lesson plan, media, middle school, modification, North America, powerful geography, social studies, US and Canada

GEOGRAPHIC SKILLS

- ☒ Asking Geographic Questions
- ☒ Acquiring Geographic Information
- ☒ Organizing Geographic Information
- ☒ Analyzing Geographic Information
- ☒ Answering Geographic Questions

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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STANDARDS (STATE AND/OR NATIONAL)**Social Studies Grade 6 (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills Standards)**

- *(5) Geography. The student understands the impact of interactions between people and the physical environment on the development and conditions of places and regions. The student is expected to:*
 - (B) identify and analyze ways people have adapted to the physical environment in various places and regions;
 - (C) identify and analyze ways people have modified the physical environment such as mining, irrigation, and transportation infrastructure.
- *(19) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including technology. The student is expected to:*
 - (B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions.
- *(20) Social studies skills. The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data. The student is expected to:*
 - (A) answer geographic questions, including: *Where is it located? Why is it there? What is significant about its location? How is its location related to the location of other people, places, and environments? Using latitude and longitude, where is it located?*

RESOURCE / MATERIALS NEEDED*For Students:*

- Primary Resource/Textbook (SE)
- Digital device with internet access
- Zoom, Skype, Google Hangout, etc.
- Word Processor

For Teachers:

- Primary Resource/Textbook (TE)

PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES

[Inquiry Arc](#)
[Think, Pair, Share](#)
[Fishbowl Protocol](#)
[3, 2, 1 Summary](#)

PRE-REQUISITE KNOWLEDGE

-> Consider using the Career Connections and the [AAGs Jobs and Careers Website](#) to contact relevant experts to solicit support for this assignment.

-> Browse the Powerful Geography [Student Resources](#) and Job Summaries.

-> Consider curating a graphic organizer for students to complete.

LESSON DEVELOPMENT

STARTING THE LESSON

1. Ask students to look out of the classroom window and list as many things as they can that represent an adaptation or modification of the natural environment.
 - a. *Clarify what the term adapt means in relationship to one's physical environment by asking students to brainstorm ways in which they have adapted to their own local environment. Some examples might include wearing cooler clothing in summer and heavier clothing in winter, watching the weather to decide whether to take an umbrella to school, or getting up earlier to account for traveling a long distance to school [using an environmental modification called a road].*
 - b. *Point out to students that people most often modify their environment because of a need/want presented by the environment.*
2. Ask students to think, pair, and share some potential pros and cons of the adaptations or modifications they listed.
 - a. *Use the feedback provided to assess the level of understanding students currently have about the topic as well as to identify areas of interest or engagement that students can connect with throughout the lesson.*

THE LESSON

3. Ask students to work in small groups to brainstorm examples of adaptations and modifications to the physical environment and create a graphic organizer to categorize the examples they identify as either an adaptation or modification. Then have students annotate each list with explanations of the reasons each adaptation or modification was made and the impacts (positive and/or negative) the adaptation or modification has on the economy, society, government, and/or environment.
 - a. *Using photos or pictures from the text, internet, or other source, have students analyze ways in which people adapted to or modified their environment.*
 - i. *Examples of adaptations may include raised houses in flood prone areas or island communities; protective clothing in hot, dry desert climates; use of appropriate animals for the environment – water buffalo, camels, oxen; housing made of naturally available materials; food choices made from naturally available resources; and so on. For instance, American Indians on the High Plains didn't just eat and use buffalo because they loved the taste or preferred buffalo hide clothing, they adapted their lifestyle to "fit" the most available resource – the millions of wild buffalo.*
 - ii. *Examples of modification may include mining, irrigation, transportation infrastructure, and/or important local modifications such as the seawall in Galveston or flood control projects across the state.*

4. Ask students to present their graphic organizers and explain and defend their categorizations and explanations.
 - a. *Clarify and verify as needed.*
5. Ask students to find a partner to work collaboratively with as journalists to interview an expert about the pros and cons of an adaptation or modification in a specific place or region they listed and write an article about the interview.
6. Using the internet as a resource, help students prepare for and conduct an interview by first identifying relevant experts with expertise in the area of adaptation or modification they selected and soliciting their willingness to be interviewed on the subject.
7. Once students secure their interview subjects, help students learn to use an analysis model to prepare questions for their interview which may include questions like: Who are you and what is your role?; Why did the people make that modification or adaptation?; What types of technology had to be available in order to make the modification?; What positive consequences did that modification have?; What negative consequences did that modification have?; What might be the long-term effects of the modification?; Is there a need for some form of rule or regulation to control the changes?
8. Using Zoom, Skype, Google Hangout, or other video conference application, help students conduct and record their interviews.
9. Using a word processor, help students write an article about the interview and the responses recorded.

ENDING THE LESSON AND CLOSING PRODUCT

10. Have students submit, read, and evaluate each other's articles using a fishbowl protocol discussion (or other discussion protocol) to discuss the implications of the information shared.
 - a. *Consider discussing similar questions to those used in the interview like: Why did the people make that modification?; What types of technology had to be available in order to make the modification?; What positive consequences did that modification have?; What negative consequences did that modification have?; What might be the long-term effects of the modification?; Is there a need for some form of rule or regulation to control the changes?*

DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

- Using the Powerful Geography Pre-Student Questionnaire, assign students a person to interview based upon their own interests.
- Interviews do not have to just be visual, students may choose to write, based upon their comfort level.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

In conclusion, have students reflect on their learning and their aspirations by completing a [3, 2, 1 summary](#) (or other assessment protocol) to collect evidence of their learning and analyze ways this experience can influence their future aspirations.

EXTENSION AND ENRICHMENT

Have students develop and present an idea to address the negative consequences of the adaptation/modification that they researched.