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FACDIS Summer Teacher Institute

Middle East Lesson Plan Unit

The Middle East is a controversial and contentious region in both world history and current events. Because of the Middle East's prominent place in global conflicts and the media, there are often misconceptions and misunderstandings about both the region and its people. There are many stereotypes and biases that exist towards the Middle East and its population. Therefore, in order to have a knowledgeable and informed conversation about the Middle East, it is necessary to lay some groundwork and present some background information.

This unit of lesson plans is designed for a sixth grade history course. In sixth grade, students study United States history from approximately 1865 to present. The Middle East has played a prominent place in the last thirty years of American history, as the United States has had a influential role in the region for many years. This unit of lesson plans will serve to provide students with an introduction to the geography, history, politics, and economics of the Middle East. As the course focuses on American History, a large thorough unit on the Middle East does not best fit into the objectives of the course. However, it is important for students to examine the various aspects of the Middle East in some regard in order to have a well established understanding of the region. This will serve to enhance conversation on recent events in the Middle East that have involved the United States. This unit is comprised of seven lesson plans and should take approximately ten to eleven days to complete in a sixth grade social studies class of approximately 45 minutes.

Introduction to the Middle East and its Culture

6th Grade Social Studies Class

6th Grade Social Studies Standards:

SS6.G.5 - Locate the major waterways of North America, South America, Europe and the Middle East and examine their impact on transportation and trade.

SS.6.H.CL6.1 - Analyze the role of natural resources in Middle Eastern conflicts.

SS.6.H.CL6.2 - Describe the role geo-politics played in historic events.

SS.6.H.CL6.3 - Identify the key figures in Middle Eastern conflicts and investigate the US reaction to these events (Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, terrorism, 9/11, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan).

Lesson One: Introduction to the Middle East Region

Objective:

Students will discuss and debate how to identify the Middle East as a region. In this discussion, students will utilize numerous maps and images to understand the difficulties in clearly defining what countries comprise the Middle East.

6th Grade Social Studies Standards:

SS6.G.5 - Locate the major waterways of North America, South America, Europe and the Middle East and examine their impact on transportation and trade.

SS.6.H.CL6.1 - Analyze the role of natural resources in Middle Eastern conflicts.

SS.6.H.CL6.2 - Describe the role geo-politics played in historic events.

SS.6.H.CL6.3 - Identify the key figures in Middle Eastern conflicts and investigate the US reaction to these events (Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, terrorism, 9/11, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan).

Materials:

The materials required for this lesson will include blank world maps, a PowerPoint presentation of various map projections of the Middle East, Laptop Computer, Projector.

Lesson:

Students will begin the class period by viewing the video "Total Ignorance: Where's Libya, Iraq, and Iran" on YouTube. This video will serve to illustrate to the students that there is a lack of knowledge amongst American peoples concerning the geography of the Middle East. After the video, students will then be

given a blank world map and be asked to identify what they consider the region of the Middle East to be. This exercise will allow students to understand that there are varied understandings and perceptions as to how to correctly define and identify the Middle East. Students will then view a PowerPoint of various map projections of the Middle East to further understand that there is no clear or distinct Middle East region. Following the PowerPoint, students will then discuss the name of the region itself - the Middle East. This discussion will allow the students to understand that the term is an ambiguous term as well as a European construct. The information provided in this lesson will provide students a background knowledge of the region for following class discussions on the Middle East.

Lesson Two: Historical Background of the Middle East

Objective:

Students will understand the geopolitics and history of the Middle East of a region. This class exercise will allow students to understand how European imperialism created and shaped the states of the Middle East. Students will discuss the countries that participated in colonizing the Middle East and how this imperialism affected the borders in the region and created conflicts and tensions that had not existed prior to European influence.

6th Grade Social Studies Standards:

SS6.G.5 - Locate the major waterways of North America, South America, Europe and the Middle East and examine their impact on transportation and trade.

SS.6.H.CL6.1 - Analyze the role of natural resources in Middle Eastern conflicts.

SS.6.H.CL6.2 - Describe the role geo-politics played in historic events.

SS.6.H.CL6.3 - Identify the key figures in Middle Eastern conflicts and investigate the US reaction to these events (Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, terrorism, 9/11, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan).

Materials:

This lesson will require a number of materials, including a PowerPoint lecture on the history of imperialism in the Middle East. Additionally, this lesson will also require a projector, laptop computer, and students worksheets.

Lesson:

Students will begin the lesson by defining imperialism and discussing the role of European nations in colonizing and shaping regions of the world. After, students will view a PowerPoint lecture on European imperialism in the Middle East. This lecture will focus on the history of imperialism in the region and will also consider how imperialism reshaped the borders and redefined the region. As students view and discuss the PowerPoint, they will complete a guided notes exercise. After the lecture, students will view a segment of the Jon Stewart show entitled "Sir Archibald Mapsalot III" which humorously acknowledges

the flaws in the European method of dividing the Middle East into states by drawing lines on a map, thus creating borders that had never existed and created issues among the populations.

Lesson Three: Imagining the Middle East: Stereotypes vs. Reality

Objective:

Students will discuss and examine how the Middle East is imagined, as both a region and the perceptions of those that live there. Students will analyze stereotypes of the Middle East and compare to stereotypes other nations have about the United States and particularly West Virginia to understand that these beliefs do not truly represent the groups of people.

6th Grade Social Studies Standards:

SS6.G.5 - Locate the major waterways of North America, South America, Europe and the Middle East and examine their impact on transportation and trade.

SS.6.H.CL6.1 - Analyze the role of natural resources in Middle Eastern conflicts.

SS.6.H.CL6.2 - Describe the role geo-politics played in historic events.

SS.6.H.CL6.3 - Identify the key figures in Middle Eastern conflicts and investigate the US reaction to these events (Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, terrorism, 9/11, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan).

Materials:

Materials for this exercise will include various video clips that represent stereotypes of both the Middle East and America. Additionally, this lesson will utilize a worksheet which discusses images considered stereotypical of the Middle East. A PowerPoint on the origins of this imagining of the Middle East will also be used. To view these resources, a computer, projector, and speakers will also be required.

Lesson:

Students will begin the lesson by compiling lists of what they think of when they think about the Middle East. This will serve to identify stereotypes and beliefs about the Middle East students may have that are not correct. Students will then define what a stereotype is and how they shape our views of peoples. Students will view clips in which British people describe some of the stereotypes they have for Americans to understand that we are not the only ones who have preconceived notions concerning groups of people. Additionally, students will discuss the stereotypes that people in the United States have concerning West Virginia. This will allow students to make a more personal connection with the idea that groups of people are stereotyped, as West Virginia is often perceived in a negative light by others. Students will conclude the lesson by completing a worksheet which will require them to view twelve images and identify whether they are images of the Middle East or of another region. This will reinforce the ideas from the lesson concerning stereotypes.

Lesson Four: Arab Spring

Objective:

Students will understand the origins and major events of the Arab Spring which began in Tunisia in 2010 and quickly spread to much of the Middle East. Students will understand how these revolutions reshaped and changed everyday life in the Middle East states.

6th Grade Social Studies Standards:

SS.6.G.5 - Locate the major waterways of North America, South America, Europe and the Middle East and examine their impact on transportation and trade.

SS.6.H.CL6.1 - Analyze the role of natural resources in Middle Eastern conflicts.

SS.6.H.CL6.2 - Describe the role geo-politics played in historic events.

SS.6.H.CL6.3 - Identify the key figures in Middle Eastern conflicts and investigate the US reaction to these events (Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, terrorism, 9/11, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan).

Materials:

Materials for this lesson will include information concerning the background and origins of the Arab Spring, as well as computers with Internet access and a guided worksheet.

Lesson:

Students will learn about the Arab Spring which began in 2010 and how the event shaped and reshaped the Middle East region. The discussion will begin with a conversation on the origins of the revolution so students will understand how the wave of reforms and changes and violence began. After this introductory conversation, students will examine the events of the Arab Spring on a state to state level. Students will be divided in pairs and assigned a Middle Eastern country which were impacted by the Arab Spring. Students will utilize the Middle East Protest Interactive Timeline on the Guardian's website to examine who their assigned countries were impacted and affected by the Arab Spring. Students will research their country and explore the numerous protests, political moves, regime changes, and international responses which occurred in that state. They will then prepare a two page paper in which they summarize the events in their assigned country. This lesson should take approximately two to three days to complete.

Lesson Five: Israel/Palestine Conflict

Objective:

Students will understand the Israeli/Palestinian conflict as one of the most contentious and pressing conflicts in the Middle East. To accomplish this, students will gain an understanding of the origins of the conflict by discussing the historical events of the conflict. Additionally, students will discuss the present day conflict in the region.

6th Grade Social Studies Standards:

SS.6.G.5 - Locate the major waterways of North America, South America, Europe and the Middle East and examine their impact on transportation and trade.

SS.6.H.CL6.1 - Analyze the role of natural resources in Middle Eastern conflicts.

SS.6.H.CL6.2 - Describe the role geo-politics played in historic events.

SS.6.H.CL6.3 - Identify the key figures in Middle Eastern conflicts and investigate the US reaction to these events (Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, terrorism, 9/11, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan).

Materials:

Materials for this lesson will include a PowerPoint lecture on the history and origins of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict and the conflict in present day. Additionally, students will need paper and pencils, and a computer and projector will also be utilized to discuss the material. Video clips from *Amreeka* and *Paradise Now* will also be used.

Lesson:

In this lesson, students will learn about the Israel/Palestine Conflict. This is an important event of the students to understand, as the United States is directly involved in the issue through its unwavering support of Israel. Students will view and discuss a PowerPoint lecture on the origins and historical background of the dispute between Israel and Palestine. Additionally, students will discuss the present day aspects of the dispute by viewing news clips and short film clips from movies such as *Amreeka* and *Paradise Now* which humanize and represent the struggles of the conflict on a more personal level. Students will then be divided into groups of four to five members. As a group, they will discuss the Palestinian/Israeli Conflict and come up with ideas or solutions to resolve the dispute. This lesson should take approximately two days.

Lesson Six: Introduction to Islam

Objective:

Students will understand the basic tenants and origins of Islam and how the religion is practiced in the Middle East and the whole world. Additionally, students will understand how Islam is viewed in America and how extremist groups have used Islam to promote and spread terrorism around the globe.

6th Grade Social Studies Standards:

SS6.G.5 - Locate the major waterways of North America, South America, Europe and the Middle East and examine their impact on transportation and trade.

SS.6.H.CL6.1 - Analyze the role of natural resources in Middle Eastern conflicts.

SS.6.H.CL6.2 - Describe the role geo-politics played in historic events.

SS.6.H.CL6.3 - Identify the key figures in Middle Eastern conflicts and investigate the US reaction to these events (Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, terrorism, 9/11, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan).

Materials:

The materials for this lesson will include a PowerPoint lecture on the basic tenants of Islam and origins of the religion. This lesson will also require a computer, projector, and an episode of *30 Days*.

Lesson:

Students will discuss the basic beliefs and origins of Islam and its prominence in the Middle East region by viewing a PowerPoint lecture detailing this information. Students will also discuss how Islam is viewed and stereotyped in America. To accomplish this, students will view an episode of the television program *30 Days* in which a man from West Virginia travels to live with a Muslim family in Michigan for 30 days and lives as a Muslim for the whole timeframe. This will serve to show how people view Islam in America, as well as how many of these notions are incorrect. Students will also examine how Islam is used by radical groups to promote terrorism. This lesson should take approximately two days to complete.

Lesson Seven: Current Events in the Middle East

Objective:

Students will examine the Middle East's prominent place in the global events. This will include conversation on the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the rise of ISIS, and other conflicts and issues in the region.

6th Grade Social Studies Standards:

SS6.G.5 - Locate the major waterways of North America, South America, Europe and the Middle East and examine their impact on transportation and trade.

SS.6.H.CL6.1 - Analyze the role of natural resources in Middle Eastern conflicts.

SS.6.H.CL6.2 - Describe the role geo-politics played in historic events.

SS.6.H.CL6.3 - Identify the key figures in Middle Eastern conflicts and investigate the US reaction to these events (Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, terrorism, 9/11, wars in Iraq and Afghanistan).

Materials:

In this lesson, the materials will include a brief film on September 11, 2001, news clips about various events and attacks in the Middle East, a PowerPoint lecture detailing the issues in the region today, as well as a computer and projector to show the lecture and video clips.

Lesson:

Students will examine the recent events in the Middle East by first viewing a brief film on the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. After, students will discuss the recent conflicts and issues in the Middle East by viewing a PowerPoint lecture on the subject, as well as various clips from news media sources. After this, students will create timelines detailing events in the Middle East from September 11, 2001 to present day. This will allow students to understand that the Middle East is an important region to study, as it holds a prominent place in the world and current events. This lesson should take about two days.