A River, Dead or Alive: Native Americans and European Colonists' Treatment of a River

Students learn how two cultures differed in their uses of the Nashua River.

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Grade Level: 4-5
Duration: 2 class periods

National Geography Standards

ELEMENT TWO: PLACES AND REGIONS
6. How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

ELEMENT FOUR: HUMAN SYSTEMS
12. The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement.

ELEMENT FIVE: ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY
14. How human actions modify the physical environment.

Arizona Geography Standards

Grade 4
Strand 4 Geography
Concept 5 Environment and Society
PO 1 Describe human dependence on the physical environment and natural resources to satisfy basic needs.

Grade 5
Strand 4 Geography
Concept 5 Environment and Society
PO 1 Describe the ways European colonists and Native Americans viewed, adapted, and used the environment

Other Arizona Standards

Social Studies
Grade 4
Strand 1 American History
Concept 10: Contemporary United States
PO2 Discuss the connections between current and historical events and issues from content studied in Strand 1 using information from class discussions and various resources.

Grade 5
Concept 2: Exploration and Colonization
PO 1 Recognize that Native American tribes resided throughout North America before the period of European exploration and colonization.
Concept 10: Contemporary United States
PO2 Discuss the connections between current and historical events and issues from content studied in Strand 1 using information from class discussions and various resources.

ELA Common Core Standards
Reading
Literature
Key Ideas and Details
4.RI.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
4.RI.3 Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
5.RI.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
5.RI.3 Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas,
A River, Dead or Alive

Overview

The North American continent is a place of rich and abundant natural resources. How should these resources be used?

Purpose

In this lesson, students will learn the different philosophies of the Native Americans and European Colonists on the usage of natural resources by studying the Nashua River.

Materials

- The book A River Ran Wild by Lynne Cherry. (Several copies of the book would be ideal.)
- Graphic Organizer for Causes and Effects of the uses of the Nashua River by Native Americans
- Graphic Organizer for Causes and Effects of the uses of the Nashua River by European Colonists
- Two large pieces of paper

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Determine the uses and the causes and effects of both the Native American and the European Colonists use of the Nashua River.
- Write an expository paragraph about the uses of the river by the Native Americans and the effects of these uses.
- OR
- Write an expository paragraph about the uses of the river by European Colonists and the effects of these uses.

Procedures

or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

Informational Text Craft and Structure

4.RI.5 Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.

Writing Text Types and Purposes

4.W.2 and 5.W.2 Write informative explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.

b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.

c. Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially).

d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

ARIZONA
GEORGRAPHIC ALLIANCE
A River, Dead or Alive

Prior to teaching this lesson, review with the students the skill of determining cause and effect.
1. Divide the students into groups (depending on how many copies of the book are available).

2. Students read the book, *The River Ran Wild* by Lynne Cherry. If there is only one book, then read the book to students.

3. Locate the Nashua River on a map of the New England Region.

4. Discuss with the class how the Native Americans used and lived with the Nashua River. Write the uses and the effects of these uses (both positive and negative) on a large piece of paper for the class to see. Each person then copies these uses and the effects of these uses on their individual Graphic Organizer for Native Americans.

5. Discuss with the class how the European Colonists used and lived with the Nashua River. Write the uses and the effects of these uses (both positive and negative) on a large piece of paper for the class to see. Each person then copies these uses, their causes, and the effects of these uses on the Graphic Organizer for European Colonists.

6. Divide the class in half. Half of the students write an expository paragraph about how the Native Americans used the river. Give these instructions: "You are a Native American who lives on the Nashua River in the 1500's. Explain three ways that you use the river and the effects of these uses in a paragraph with a topic sentence, detail sentences, and a concluding sentence."

The other half of the class writes an expository paragraph about how the European Colonists used the river. The teacher gives these instructions: "You are a European Colonist who lives near the Nashua River in the 1600's. Explain three ways that you use the river and the effects of these uses in a paragraph with a topic sentence, detail sentences, and a concluding sentence."

**Assessment**

Assess the students' Graphic Organizers of both the uses and effects of those uses of the river by Native Americans and European Colonists. Points can be assigned to each category.

The Six Writing Traits can be used to grade the expository paragraphs with emphasis on the traits of Organization (i.e., topic sentence, detail sentences, and a concluding sentence) and Ideas (i.e., each paragraph includes three uses of the river and the effects of those uses). A score of 4 or higher will be considered mastery.

**Extensions**

The students list the uses of the Nashua River by the Native Americans and then list the effects from those uses. Do the same for European colonists. Then the students decide which of these uses are positive and which are negative.

Make a Venn diagram showing the similarities and differences in the uses of the river by the Native Americans and the European Colonists.

List the uses of the river after industrialization occurs and the effects on the river.

The students could make a time line of the activities on the river through the years.

**Sources**

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