

Ancient Mediterranean Trade Fair

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MENDOCINO MIDDLE SCHOOL

MENDOCINO, CALIFORNIA

Subjects: Ancient World History and Visual Arts

Level: Grade 6

Length of Unit: Teaching in segments throughout the school year. Two weeks for trade fair culmination.

Connections with the Textbook: This unit could serve as a bridge between the Neolithic farming unit and a concentrated study of ancient civilizations or be dropped in after an introduction to the Sumer and the nature of ancient river civilizations. In either case, the idea is to present the ancient world as groups of peoples in constant communication and influencing each other, rather than as separate entities isolated by distance and time (except for war).

Readings for the Teacher:

(Note: Readings and other resources for students are listed after the Introduction.)

Boardman, John. *Greek Art*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1996.

Curtis, John. *Ancient Persia*. London: British Museum Publ., 2000.

Jenkins, Ian. *Greek and Roman Life*. London: British Museum Publ., 1986.

Stead, Miriam. *Egyptian Life*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986.

Tatton-Brown, Veronica. *Ancient Cyprus*. London: British Museum Publ., 1997.

Willis, F. Roy. *Western Civilization*. Lexington, Mass.: Heath, 1985.

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

Mendocino is a rural village with a population of 1,500, located on California's north coast. Tourism is replacing the declining fishing and logging industries as the economic base. Its liberal community supports innovative teaching methods and experimental programs. The public high school's enrollment is 350 students, and the "Windows to the Future" curriculum (history, language arts, and technology) has brought recognition and numerous grants to our school district from the AutoDesk Foundation, National

Aeronautic and Space Administration, Pacific Bell, and Apple Computer. Such funding has enabled the creation of the district-owned Mendocino Community Network which provides all classrooms and teachers' homes with free internet access and technology support. Two alternative secondary programs, the Community School and Pacific Academy, provide additional educational options. More than 80% of the students who graduate from the Mendocino Schools go on to higher education.

The Middle School enrolls approximately 250 students, and the curriculum is project-based with variable, flexible scheduling by grade-level teams. The integration of the arts and technology is a high priority at all sites in this district. I have taught history and visual arts at the Middle School for eleven years. My lesson plans are based on our school's configuration: three 6th grade Social Studies classes with a total of 75–80 students. Because of our block scheduling and "project days," I will be able to group students in a variety of ways during the year.

Recently the Mendocino Unified School District was awarded a three-year Annenberg Foundation Grant to form a Rural Challenge Network with three other isolated Mendocino County schools (Point Arena, Laytonville, and Anderson Valley) for the purpose of bringing community resources into the schools and developing educational uses for internet technology in our rural setting.

Before implementing the teaching plan below, I will lay the foundation for my sixth-grade ancient history students by bringing them to a nearby archaeological dig where University of California, Berkeley archaeologists are examining evidence of a nineteenth-century Russian trading outpost. Preparation for this excursion will be the first phase of my teaching unit. As we study the ancient world civilizations, representative images of artifacts from each culture will be examined. Students will learn to identify the form and function of objects, note common characteristics, and learn a simple system to categorize by period. With respect to early Mediterranean trade, students will learn about basic resources needed for the production of everyday goods. Ultimately each student will make a copy of a representative "luxury good" from one of eight selected civilizations. As the culminating activity, sixth graders will stage a "trade fair" in order to experience vicariously the trading process in ancient times.

PART TWO: RESOURCES**STUDENT RESOURCES****Readings:**

Calliope Magazine: Sept. 1987 (Ancient Women), May/June 1991 (Lost Cities), Oct. 1993 (Mesopotamia), Nov./Dec. 1996 (Nubia)

Faces Magazine: May 1995 (Turkey)

Chisholm, Jane, and Anne Millard. *Early Civilizations*. Tulsa, Okla.: EDC Publishing, 1992.

Cork, Barbara, and Struan Reid. *The Usborne Young Scientist: Archaeology*. Tulsa, Okla.: EDC Publishing, 1991.

Editors of Time-Life Books. *China's Buried Kingdoms*. Alexandria, Va.: Time-Life Books, 1993.

Macaulay, David. *Motel of the Mysteries*. Boston: Houghton, 1979.

Marks, Anthony and Graham Tingay. *The Romans*. Tulsa, Okla.: EDC Publishing, 1990.

Message of Ancient Days. Boston: Houghton, 1991.

Oleson, John. *Greek Numismatic Art: Coins of the Arthur Stone Dewing Collection*. Cambridge, Mass.: Fogg Art Museum, 1975.

Peach, Susan, and Anne Millard. *The Greeks*. Tulsa, Okla.: EDC Publishing, 1990.

Stead, Miriam. *Egyptian Life*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986.

Tatton-Brown, Veronica. *Ancient Cyprus*. London: British Museum Publ., 1997.

Visual Resources (videotapes and videodiscs):

"Archaeology: Questioning the Past." VHS, 25 min., University of California Extension Center.

"On the Town, the Ancient Civilization Series." VHS, 29 min., Journal Films and Video.

"Trade, Cities, and the Landlocked Sea," The Birth of Europe Series. VHS, 55 min., Coronet, MTI Film and Video.

Louvre Videodisc, "Near and Middle Eastern, Egyptian, Greed and Roman Antiquities," Vol. 3. Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, Musée du Louvre.

Websites:

<http://www.ancientsites.com/> (Ancient Sites)

<http://eawc.evansville.edu/index.htm> (Exploring Ancient World Cultures—the Argos Project)

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/> (The Perseus Project)

Special Activity for Students (Simulation on Trade):

Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (known as SPICE). Living in a Global Age. To order, phone (800) 578-1114.

PART THREE: THE TEACHING PLAN**PHASE ONE: ARCHAEOLOGY (8 CLASS PERIODS)****1. Topic: Methods for Uncovering Artifacts**

Objective: Students will study how artifacts are discovered, excavated, and dated.

Readings and other Materials: student text (*A Message of Ancient Days*); Cork and Reid, *The Usborne Young Scientist: Archaeology*; and teacher handouts.

Classroom activities: lecture and discussion.

2. Topic: Methods for Evaluating Artifacts

Objective: Students will experience the complexity of evaluating artifacts through a series of activities.

Readings and other materials: Macaulay, *Motel of the Mysteries*; handout on "Apartment 4B" (in Macaulay); six unusual items not easily recognized (for interpretation); "Garbage Bag" for analysis; "mystery artifact" activity; and analysis of artifacts saved from similar classroom activities in previous year.

Classroom activities: Lecture, group interpretation, and discussion. Through a series of related activities, students see that there are various (and sometimes contradictory) opinions about the uses of objects. Discussion about how cultural bias can affect interpretation and the complexity of factors that are involved.

3. Topic: Excavating a Dig Site

Objective: Students will become familiar with the careful planning and organization involved; lesson will include methods of identifying an archaeological site, simple stratigraphy, basic equipment, and grid layout.

Classroom Activities: Lecture with overhead transparencies; slide show by guest speaker/ archaeologist on local excavation in progress; artifact display.

Field Trip: Students will travel to a local excavation site where they can observe archaeological methods. Overview and discussion of findings on site.

4. Topic: Doing a Mini-Dig

Objective: Students will excavate a miniature "shoebox" site.

Classroom activities: In groups of four, students will assign tasks, grid their "site," remove sand/ dirt from each square, and draw all items found using the standard grid layout forms. They will discuss their conclusions and present their findings to other groups.

LESSON PLANS

PHASE TWO: NATURAL RESOURCES & TRADE (10 CLASS PERIODS)**1. Topic: Understanding Resources and Trade**

Objective: Students will learn about the meaning of the terms resource, trade, and supply and demand.

Classroom Activity #1: Discussion about the meanings of terms. Teacher assigns each student to bring a simple item from home that can be traded. This might be an item of food, and inexpensive gadget or toy, or something handmade or from nature. Subsequent preliminary version of “trade fair” includes time to see what is available, bartering and trading of goods, and follow-up discussion about what was “valued” and what was not. This should lead to an understanding of scarcity, supply and demand. Discussion should include what students would do if the activity happened a second time—what would they bring (or not bring?).

Classroom Activity #2: Simulation of trade which examines availability of resources, scarcity, negotiation for needed items, and the balance of power in trading situations. Recommended for this simulation: Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE). “Living in a Global Age” (see listing above). This excellent activity will provoke lively discussion on trade issues.

2. Topic: How Are We Affected by International Trade?

Objective: Students will study how an everyday item can consist of numerous ingredients from around the world.

Classroom Activity #1: Students examine labels from clothing and list location where these items were manufactured. List origins of students’ families’ cars and other possessions. Readings and Materials: assorted packaged candy bars; library for research.

Classroom Activity #2: Students in groups of four do “The World in a Candy Bar” activity. Each group receives a different candy bar whose ingredients must be identified (see wrapper) and researched for country of origin. Items such as chocolate, coconut, and peanuts come from locales far removed from the school. Final group product should include a world map, definition and history of ingredients, probable trade route for each product to port of manufacture, and likely route for manufactured product to your local grocery store. Follow with a display and discussion of student work.

PHASE THREE: ANCIENT WORLD TRADE FAIR**1. Topic: Review of Culture, Selection and construction of Representative Artifact**

Objective: Students will choose artifacts from various cultures

which demonstrate the demand for artistic, luxury goods during ancient times. Students will identify approximate dates of artifacts and of stylistic changes.

Readings & Materials: library and Internet access; books listed on first page of this teaching plan; Ministère de la Culture, Louvre Videodisc, Vol.3, and laser disc player.

Throughout the year-long course, sixth graders will be learning about early civilizations in a variety of ways: teacher lecture, their text book (*A Message of Ancient Days*), video and slide presentations, simulations, and literature. During the year, sixth graders also learn to do independent research (note taking, outlining, writing from notes, revising, and making a bibliography) during a Language Arts/Social Studies three-month unit (team-taught). Use of the Internet for research is a requirement.

For the research component of the course, each student chooses a specific civilization, and students are then grouped according to civilizations they have chosen to study. Research topics are limited to the following cultures: Babylonian, Assyrian, Egyptian, Nubian, Minoan, Mycenaean, Phoenician, Cypriot, Carthaginian, Indus Valley, Q’in/Han era China, Greek, or Roman.

1. Classroom Activity #1: When research for historical papers is nearly complete, students will meet in groups by civilization (3 to 5 students each) to discuss specific information:
 - a. Review geography: Using classroom atlas, review boundaries, important cities, and geographic features.
 - b. Review chronology: Discuss earliest known events and historical development; made a comprehensive list with dates.
 - c. Review personalities: Discuss the achievements of individuals important to their civilization; make a list with brief description.
 - d. Research resources of their civilization; determine resources which were imported; identify major trading partners; list all of these.
 - e. Each student reviews images of “typical” luxury goods produced by his/her group’s culture to select one that the/she will make:

Babylonian: cylinder seal; cuneiform tablet & envelope
 Assyrian: relief (plaster)
 Egyptian: “gold” statue of Isis; tomb painting fragment
 Nubian: “gold and ivory” necklace; shawabti
 Indus Valley (Mohenjo Daro): child’s toy (clay)
 Han China: clay farmhouse or courtesan; “bronze” bell
 Cyprus: Base ring pot; clay mild bowl
 Minoan: figure of woman; painting on plaster
 Mycenaean: inlaid bronze knife
 Phoenician: “glass” beads

LESSON PLANS

Greece: "silver" coin; black-figured plate
 Carthage: clay oil lamp
 Roman: Painted portrait on plaster fragment

- f. Students locate additional images of artifact to work from by reviewing books and laser disk images in Louvre Videodisc. It is ideal if several students select the same artifact to make. Students determine materials needed and submit plans for teacher approval. Students may supply some of the materials, but basic items are to be provided on "work day(s)." Be sure to tell all students that they will be required to trade or sell all artifacts which are made.

Classroom Activity #2: Making artifacts for trade fair:

- a. Students sign up for one of three workshops to create artifacts:

Clay (cuneiform, toys, farmhouse, statue, plate)
 Plaster of Paris (bas relief, portraits)
 Model-making (coins, necklace, beads)

Materials needed: two kinds of clay (red and white), clay-working tools, plaster of paris and disposable molds or trays, papyrus, Fimo or Sculpey, thread and needles, metallic spray in gold, silver, and bronze, black and white acrylic paint, tempera paint and brushes

Note: ask parent volunteers or classroom aides to help on workshop days.

- b. Follow-up session for sanding, painting, or spraying artifacts.

Classroom Activity #3: Each student completes two drawings of his/her artifact which show it from two different perspectives. Drawings should be actual size and indicate dimensions. This will involve preliminary sketches and assistance for some students.

2. Topic: Classification of Artifacts

Objective: Students meet in civilization groups to compare and classify their artifacts.

Classroom Activity #1: Using reference materials, students will determine the "real" materials that their artifacts were made from in ancient times (gold, ivory, etc.). Each civilization group will compile a complete list of these materials.

Classroom Activity #2: Students will determine which of these materials were and were not available locally. Each group completes a list to be shared with the class for what items were "needed" during ancient times.

Classroom Activity #3: Groups share their findings with entire class and together determine probably trading partnerships and trade routes.

Classroom Activity #4: Using reference materials, students complete data cards for their artifacts which describe artifact (material represented, name of object, approximate date of artifact, and region made). Students categorize artifacts to demonstrate the evolution of these from archaic to classical to late period. Together each group tries to estimate the relative worth of their various items.

3. Topic: Simulated Trade Fair

Objective: Students will display objects with descriptions. (Opportunity for scheduling "open house" or library display.) All sixth graders examine items prior to trading.

Activity #1: Students prepare gym or multipurpose room for trade fair. Tables are set up and items displayed with description cards. Students sit with their artifacts in approximate relation to each culture's geographic setting, i.e., China is far removed from Greece, but Cyprus and Crete are near Egypt and Greece. Trading will consist of three rounds. Note: Phoenician group (6–8 students) will be the only group that can move from culture to culture negotiating trade.

Activity #2: Round One: Trading phase. The Phoenicians must work in pairs, and each pair must agree about all trading decisions. The Phoenicians begin by going singly to each of the cultures to inquire about individual artifacts desired. The Phoenicians have quantities of beads to offer in an effort to obtain requested items in Round One. Exception to Phoenician trading rule: cultures which have common borders or unimpeded sea route (Egypt and Nubia; Cyprus and Canaan). Allow 15 minutes for transactions to take place.

Round two: Tribute phase. One person from each group may choose to give a "gift" of his or her artifact to someone from another culture as a tribute or goodwill gesture. Round Three: Students are now allowed to offer candy to obtain items desired. Trading may now occur between neighbors or with the help of traveling Phoenicians. Allow 15–20 Minutes for this phase.

Activity #3: Reflection and Debriefing

Activity: Students do reflective writing with their responses to the following questions:

- + What artifact did you trade? What did you receive?
- + How did the transaction occur?
- + What were your thoughts and feelings about the worth of your object versus what you obtained?
- + What were your culture's advantages or disadvantages?

LESSON PLANS

- What items seemed to be “in demand?” Why?
- How did the introduction of candy affect trade? Why?
- Is there any item that you can think of that has a special value? Why?

Class discussion and re-teaching of basic economic and trade concepts, especially as these relate to ancient Mediterranean history and archaeological evidence. (Follow with slide show to confirm.)

FOLLOW-UP IDEA:

Collect, for use in the following school year, any artifacts that students consent to contribute for this purpose. Bury these in outside pit for excavation by next year's students when they begin their preparations for the ancient Mediterranean Trade Fair.