



City Life in Europe

The focus of this lesson plan is Paris and its many landmarks.

Subject

Geography

Grade level

6-8

Duration

Three class periods

Objectives

Students will

- review the geography of France and Paris;
- discuss the importance of major landmarks in Paris;
- create a postcard for one Parisian landmark.

Materials

- Computer with Internet access
- Large index cards (one per student)
- Materials to create postcards (markers, paint, colored pencils, glue, scissors poster board)
- Map of Europe (with scale large enough to show river Seine)
- *City Life in Europe* video and VCR (or DVD and DVD player)

Procedures

1. After watching *City Life in Europe*, ask students to find France and Paris on a map of Europe. What countries border France? (*Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Luxembourg, Belgium, Monaco*) What bodies of water border France? (*Atlantic Ocean, English Channel, Mediterranean Sea*) Which river runs through the city? (*Seine*)
2. Ask students to brainstorm reasons that Paris is an important city. Explain that Paris is the capital of France, and a cultural and economic center that has a rich history. For hundreds of years, a monarchy of kings and queens ruled France. During the French Revolution in 1789, the monarchy was overthrown, and France became a republic, or democratic government. Well-known landmarks in Paris include the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre.

3. Ask students to name some landmarks mentioned in the program. (*Louvre, Eiffel Tower, Seine River, Catacombs, Bastille, Pont Neuf, Arc de Triomphe, Pompidou Centre, Notre Dame*)
4. Tell students that their task is to imagine they are visiting one famous landmark so they can create a postcard from it. As they research their assigned landmark, they should also collect images. You may let students choose a landmark or assign them. Use the following list of famous landmarks as a starting point:
 - Louvre
 - Eiffel Tower
 - Notre Dame
 - Arc de Triomphe
 - Hôtel des Invalides
 - La Défense
 - Sacré-Coeur
 - Panthéon
 - Gare d'Orsay
 - Pompidou Centre
 - Metro
 - La Seine
 - Catacombs
5. As students research their landmark, encourage them to print out or sketch images from different perspectives. They should also collect the following information:
 - What is it?
 - When was it built?
 - Who built it?
 - What problem did it solve or what purpose did it serve?
 - What do you think it would be like to visit?
 - What might be the most interesting or impressive details?
6. Have students use print and online resources. The following Web sites may be helpful:

Popular Places of Paris

<http://www.paris-tourism.com/places/>

Monuments of Paris

<http://www.paris.org/Monuments/>

A View on Cities: Paris

<http://www.aviewoncities.com/paris.htm>

Discover France: Landmarks and Monuments (scroll down to "Monument Links")

http://www.discoverfrance.net/France/Paris/Paris_monuments.shtml

WebMuseum, Paris: History (Seine, Louvre, Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame)

<http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paris/hist/>

WebMuseum, Paris: Catacombs

<http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paris/cata/>

Louvre

<http://www.louvre.fr/louvrea.htm>

Pompidou Centre

<http://www.discoverfrance.net/France/Paris/Museums-Paris/Beaubourg.shtml>

7. Give students index cards for creating their postcards. Remind them that one side should be visual (an image, sketch, or collage). On the other side, students will write a note as if they've just visited the landmark; it should include some of the details from their research.
8. Have students pass the postcards around the room to learn about the different monuments. Then pin the cards on a classroom bulletin board (images facing out) and see if students can name all the landmarks.

Extensions

For the "London Fog" segment: Ask students to brainstorm words and phrases that describe London's fog. What effect did it have on the city's population? Have students write a poem about the fog.

For the "Europe United" segment: Talk about the importance of soccer in Europe. Do students think there's a sport in the United States that has a similar impact on people? Why or why not? Discuss some sports traditions in the U.S.

For the "Peter the Great" segment: Ask students to name the Russian city built by Peter the Great. (*Saint Petersburg*) Have them research this city and create postcards from Saint Petersburg, as they did for Paris. A good place to start is this Web site: <http://www.saint-petersburg.com/>.

For the "Life in Modern Russia" segment: What does your class know about Russia? Assign student pairs to research terms (such as Moscow, ruble, Kremlin, U.S.S.R., Volga River, Siberia, communism, borscht) or people (such as Leo Tolstoy, Marc Chagall, Vladimir Putin, Josef Stalin, Mikhail Gorbachev, Nikita Krushchev, or Mikhail Baryshnikov). On index cards have students write the word on one side and a clue or definition on the other side. Have each pair read their clue to the class. Lead a game of hangman, in which students guess the letters until they figure out the mystery word.

Evaluation

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

3 points: Students were active in class discussion; showed a strong understanding of the geography of France; cited several Paris landmarks from the video; created a clear, complete landmark postcard including at least one image and several details.

2 points: Students participated in class discussions; showed satisfactory understanding of the geography of France; cited some Paris landmarks from the video; created an adequate landmark postcard including at least one image and some details.

1 point: Students participated minimally in class discussions; showed minimal understanding of the geography of France; cited few or no Paris landmarks from the video; created an incomplete landmark postcard, with a missing or sloppy image and few or no details.

Vocabulary

catacomb

Definition: Underground burial chambers connected by tunnels

Context: In the 18th century, the cemeteries in Paris were filled to capacity, so bones were moved to catacombs outside the city.

landmark

Definition: An identifying feature of a landscape

Context: The Eiffel Tower in Paris is one of the world's most famous landmarks.

monarchy

Definition: A political system in which a country is ruled by kings and queens

Context: For hundreds of years, France was ruled by a monarchy, which included the king Louis XIV.

republic

Definition: Democracy; a political system in which a country is run by representatives elected by the people

Context: After the French Revolution in 1789, France became a republic.

Academic Standards

The National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) provides 18 national geography standards that the geographically informed person knows and understands. To view the standards online, go to <http://www.ncge.org>.

This lesson plan addresses the following NCGE standards:

- Places and Regions: The physical and human characteristics of places.
- Human Systems: The process, patterns, and functions of human settlement.

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of the NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org/>.

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- People, Places, and Environments

Credit

Joy Brewster, curriculum writer, editor, and consultant