



TLC Elementary School Lesson Plan Geography: Caribbean

Subject

Geography

Grade Level

3-5

Duration

One or two class periods

Objectives

Students will

- use the *Geography of the Caribbean* video, the Internet, and library sources to learn about the geography and culture of the Caribbean;
- learn about the importance of tourism to the region and create descriptive postcards; and
- use their descriptive postcards to share their knowledge of the different Caribbean nations and to discuss some of the issues the islands face.

Materials

- Pencils and erasers
- Fine-point black pens (optional)
- Crayons, colored pencils, or markers (optional)
- Computer with Internet access (optional)
- *Geography of the Caribbean* video and VCR
- Geography texts and library resources
- Travel magazines and brochures featuring the Caribbean
- White construction paper (cut into half sheets)
- Lined writing paper (cut into half sheets)
- Glue and scissors

Procedures

1. Introduce the lesson by discussing the environment, culture, and geography of the Caribbean. A good way to do this is to view portions of the *Geography of the Caribbean* video. Talk about the importance of tourism in the Caribbean economy. Tell students to imagine that they have taken a vacation to the Caribbean. What did they see there? What was the climate like? What were the people like? What did they see in the culture that was different from their own culture? Did they see interesting animals?

2. Talk about some of the things that were shown in the video and make a list of the major islands located in the Caribbean region (list should include Turks & Caicos, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Trinidad, Bahamas, Puerto Rico, and Jamaica).
3. Tell students they are going to make postcards for their imaginary Caribbean vacation. Students must make two postcards—each from a different Caribbean island on the class list. On one side of the postcards, they will create a collage using photos and illustrations found in the travel magazines and brochures. This collage should feature different aspects of the Caribbean, and can include images of people, art, animals, or the physical environment. Alternately, students can make their own illustrations that feature these same aspects.
4. Tell students that on the lined paper they will write letters to a relative or friend about their vacation experiences. (Once their collages are dry, they will attach their letters to the other (blank) side of the postcard.) Their letters should be creative and individual but must include these six criteria:
 - Name of the island nation they are “visiting”
 - Brief history of the country
 - Main industries
 - Cultural information (its music, art, customs, food, etc.)
 - Description of the country, including any unique geographical features
 - Issues the island faces (environmental, economic, political, or otherwise)
5. Give students time in class and as a homework assignment to create their collages and write their postcards. Allow room for creativity, but remind students to include the six criteria. Students may use travel magazines and brochures, geography texts, library resources, and the Internet to conduct their research and create their collages. These Web sites have good information on the Caribbean:
 - <http://www.caribbean-on-line.com/>
 - <http://www.caribbean.com/>
 - <http://www.caribbeandaily.com/>
 - <http://www.cep.unep.org/>
 - <http://www.scholars.nus.edu.sg/post/caribbean/nations.html>
6. Have students attach their finished letters to the blank sides of the postcards once the collages are dry. Talk about the different nations that comprise the Caribbean, and allow students to read some of their postcards aloud to the rest of the class. Discuss some of the issues the islands face and some possible ways to solve these problems.

Evaluation

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

3 points: Students actively participated in class discussions; used books, magazines, and other resources wisely; made highly attractive postcards that included different Caribbean images; wrote informative, creative letters about the islands they “visited” that correctly included all six criteria.

2 points: Students somewhat participated in class discussions; used books, magazines, and other resources to some degree; made presentable postcards; wrote somewhat informative letters that correctly included four of the six criteria.

1 point: Students did not participate in class discussions; were unable to use resource materials without guidance; did not finish their postcard collages or included images of things not found in the Caribbean; wrote incomplete or incoherent letters that included two of the six criteria.

Vocabulary literacy

Definition: The ability to read and write

Context: Literacy is uncommon in Haitian adults, where less than half of all Haitians over 15 are literate.

Creole

Definition: A language that originates from extended contact between two language communities, one of which is generally European; Creole incorporates features of both languages and is typically the mother tongue of a community.

Context: Creole is often spoken in Haitian homes.

coral polyp

Definition: Small, invertebrate marine animals; coral polyps grow together to form coral reefs and coral islands.

Context: Made of coral polyps, the Bahamas are coral islands.

tropical

Definition: A region or climate that is frost-free, with temperatures high enough to support a year-round growing season

Context: The Caribbean is a tropical region.

island

Definition: An area of land surrounded entirely by water

Context: The Caribbean region is a cluster of islands in the Caribbean Sea.

life expectancy

Definition: The average life span of a person

Context: In Haiti life expectancy is just over 49 years.

Academic Standards

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 standards:

- People, Places, and Environments
- Individual Development and Identity
- Global Connections

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 www.ncge.org.

This lesson plan addresses the following standards:

- Places and Regions
- Human Systems
- Physical Systems
- Environment and Society
- Applying Geography
- Geographic Skills

Credit

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