

As a 6th grade Social Studies teacher, teaching units on Africa and Latin America, I am always looking for ways to tie what I teach back to my students and their lives in Nebraska. Attending the Fort Robinson workshop has allowed me a new and unique opportunity to do this. As I was at Fort Robinson learning about the Lakota I was struck by many of the similarities between their fight for existence and that of the Aztecs, Incas, and Mayas. I decided I would like to help my students see that as well.

I have created a lesson that was inspired by what I learned at Fort Robinson. I want my students to do a research-based project on the Aztecs, Incas, Mayas, and Lakota. In groups of two my students will research one of the groups and present what they learned to the class. Their research will include how their group lived before the arrival of the European and/or American settlers, how their group reacted to the arrival of the European and/or American settlers, and finally what is happening currently with their group. They will put these ideas together in a PowerPoint presentation. Once all the groups have presented we will, as a class come up with a list of similarities and differences between the groups.

One of the ideas that was presented to us many times at Fort Robinson was the idea that the story has not ended. It continues now and we need to teach not only the history of the Native Americans, but also what is happening today. I think this project will help students see that the story hasn't ended, that it continues today as well help them make connections between their own state and country and Latin America.

Lesson Plan Title: Comparison between the conquest of the Lakota, Aztec, Maya, and Incas by Europeans

Grade Level: 6th Grade

Concept / Topic To Teach: Students will look at the differences and similarities between the different cultures and what happened to them during the conquest of people and land by the Europeans and/or American settlers and government. The goal is to tie what the students are learning about the Aztecs, Incas, and Mayas to their existing knowledge about their state and the Lakota.

Required Materials: Computers, Subscription databases (online) or a list of websites for students to use, paper, pens, and projectors

Anticipatory Set: We will start by coming up with a list first as an individual, then a small group, then as a whole class of what we think we already know about each group. This can include anything we have learned about the Lakota, Aztec, Inca, and Maya in the past.

Step-By-Step Procedures:

We will be researching 4 different cultures and how the European and/or American conquests affected the cultures. The end project will be a PowerPoint presentation based on their research. We will tie it all together in the end with a comparison of the similarities and differences between the groups.

Day 1: We will be spent in the library with the librarian learning how to correctly use the internet and subscription databases for research purposes. We will learn about plagiarism, note taking, and how to site sources. We will be using preapproved sites for the research.

Each student will pick a partner to work on the project with. Once everyone has a partner they will be assigned one culture to research. They will be specifically researching what happened to the group as a result of the European or American settlers conquest of the land and people.

Day 2: We will spend the day in the library, with our librarian, learning about the subscription databases that we have available. (CIA World Fact Book, Culture Grams, World Book, Gale Collection, Noodle tools, Grolier Online, and Nettekker.)

Days 3-5: We will spend researching using the above databases and answering the questions listed below. The groups will need to take notes and turn the notes in with their final projects.

The research will consist of looking into 3 different questions.

1. Your culture before the Europeans and/or American settlers arrival.
2. Your cultures reaction to the arrival of the Europeans and/or American settlers.
3. Your culture after the arrival of the Europeans and/or American settlers (Including current life.)

Day 6: We spend the day in the classroom organizing notes into PowerPoint slides. Each group will be expected to have between 6-12 slides. Each group will need to create a template for each slide and have it approved before beginning work on their final project. Each slide should answer one of the above questions, more than one slide may be used for a question. At least 3 slides must include a picture.

Days 7-8: Once the slides have been approved by a teacher the group may begin working on the actual slideshow. Making sure to save them to their school accounts.

Day 9: Group PowerPoint presentations.

Closing Set: After the groups present we will come back together as a class to put together a large Venn Diagram about how the conquest and lives of the 4 cultures was/are similar and different.

