

Home in the Desert: Lesson for *This House is Made of Mud*

Students learn important lessons about natural and human characteristics of a place, as they practice language arts skills.

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Grade Level	3
Duration	2 class periods

National Geography Standards

ELEMENT TWO: PLACES AND REGIONS

4. The physical and human characteristics of places

ELEMENT FIVE: ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

16. The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution and importance of resources

Arizona Geography Strand

Grade 3

Concept 1: The World in Spatial Terms

PO 6. *Recognize characteristics of human and physical features.*

Concept 4: Human Systems

PO 4. Describe elements of culture of a community or nation (e.g., food, clothing, housing, sports, customs, beliefs) in areas studied.

Concept 5: Environment and Society

PO 1. Identify ways (e.g., farming, building structures and dams, creating transportation routes, overgrazing, mining, logging) in which humans depend upon, adapt to, and impact the earth.

Other Arizona Standards

ELA Common Core Standards

Reading

Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

3.RI.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

3.RI.7 Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

3.RI.9 Compare and contrast the most important points and key details presented in two texts on the same topic.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes

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

- Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.
- Use linking words and phrases (e.g., also, another, and, more, but) to connect ideas within categories of information.
- Provide a concluding statement or section.

Conventions of Standard English

3.L.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- Explain the function of nouns,

pronouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in general and their functions in particular sentences.

- b. Form and use regular and irregular plural nouns.
- c. Use abstract nouns (e.g., childhood).
- d. Form and use regular and irregular verbs.
- e. Form and use the simple (e.g., I walked; I walk; I will walk) verb tenses.
- f. Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.
- g. Form and use comparative and superlative adjectives and adverbs, and choose between them depending on what is to be modified.
- h. Use coordinating and subordinating conjunctions.
- i. Produce simple, compound, and complex sentences.

AZ.3.L.1

- j. Write and organize a paragraph that groups sentences about a topic.

3.L.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

- a. Capitalize appropriate words in titles.
- b. Use commas in addresses.
- c. Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.
- d. Form and use possessives.
- e. Use conventional spelling for high-frequency and other studied words and for adding suffixes to base words (e.g., sitting, smiled, cries, happiness).
- f. Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., word families, position-based spellings, syllable patterns, ending rules, meaningful word parts) in writing words.
- g. Consult reference materials, including beginning dictionaries, as needed to check and correct spellings.

Overview

How does a family depend on and modify the environment to create a home?

Purpose

In this lesson students will learn about the natural and human characteristics of a place, while practicing their language arts skills.

Materials

- A set of 6 copies for small group instruction of This House is Made of Mud by Ken Buchanan
- White board or chart paper
- Worksheet: "Geographic Characteristics of Place"
- Writing paper

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- ✓ Describe characteristics of places, including landforms, bodies of water, natural resources, and weather.
- ✓ Describe human characteristics of places including houses, school, neighborhood, and communities.
- ✓ Describe how people depend on the physical environment and its natural resources to satisfy their basic needs.
- ✓ Compare the characteristics of place from the story to the characteristics of their own home environment.
- ✓ Write a description of their home that includes the characteristics of place that were discussed in the book.

Procedures

BEFORE READING

1. Have students read the title and look at the cover to make predictions on what they think the book will be about. Discuss the predictions and picture clues.
2. Then ask, "Where do you think this story takes place? What do you see in the picture that makes you think that? What do you know about the desert?"
3. Record predictions and facts students know about a desert. Use this record to change or confirm predictions as students read through the text.

DURING READING

4. Students read each double page spread to themselves. When they have finished reading, use guiding questions to elicit student discussion within the group on the students' prior knowledge, new vocabulary, etc.

AFTER READING

5. Go back to the student predictions and confirm if they were correct and how their thinking changed as they read the story. Add any new vocabulary to the bottom of the chart for students to refer to as they do the independent activity.

Questions for Discussion

- ✓ What are our basic needs?
- ✓ How did the characters in the story use natural resources to meet their needs?
- ✓ What resources do we use to meet our basic needs?
- ✓ Which of these are natural resources?
- ✓ How do we change the environment when we use these resources for our needs?

- ✓ What do we know about the place, or setting, of this story?
- ✓ Can you think of any other books you have read that have similar characteristics?
- ✓ How is this setting different from the place where you live?

INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY

1. Students complete the chart on worksheet "Geographic Characteristics of Place."
2. Students use the chart as a planning tool for writing a paper comparing the characteristics of place in the text to that of their own homes.

Assessment

Reading standards should be assessed during guided reading group through discussion and observation. Monitoring notes should be taken by the teacher to address student needs.

Information recorded on worksheet "Geographic Characteristics of Place" should be assessed for geographic content knowledge.

The writing piece should be assessed using the 6 traits writing rubric for organization and conventions.

Extensions

Where else in the world do people build houses from mud?

What are the benefits of using mud as a building material? What are some of the difficulties of using mud to build a house?

Is the house in the story an accurate portrayal of a hogan from Arizona?

Sources

This House Is Made of Mud/Esta Casa Esta Hecha De Lodo by Ken Buchanan, Libba Tracy (Illustrator), Patricia Hinton Davison (Translator), 1994, Rising Moon, Bilingual Edition (ISBN 0873585801)