

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

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Grade Level 3
Duration 2 class periods

National Standards

GEOGRAPHY

Element 2:

Places and Regions

4. The physical and human characteristics of places

Element 5:

Environment and Society

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

AZ Standards

ELA

Reading

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.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.

Arizona Social Science Standards

GEOGRAPHY

Human-environment interactions are essential aspects of human life in all societies.

3.G2.1 Explain how people modify and adapt to the Arizona environment. Key concepts include but are not limited to modification and adaptation of the environment by Paleo-Indians, Prehistoric-Indians, explorers, settlers, farmers, immigrants, migrants, and the 22 Arizona Indian Nations, and the use of Arizona's natural resources.

Overview

Homes around the world reflect the environment and natural resources available in this location. Understanding how a family depends on and modifies the environment to create a home is a basic geographic concept.

Purpose

In this lesson students will learn about the natural and human characteristics of Arizona while realizing that while everyone may have a home, not all homes are the same.

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
- Geographic Characteristics of Place graphic organizer
- Writing paper

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Describe physical 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.

Procedures

SESSION ONE

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.
4. Have 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.

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?
5. Go back to the student predictions and confirm if they were correct and/or 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.

SESSION TWO

1. Distribute the Geographic Characteristics of Place graphic organizer. Allow students to work in groups and enter in their information from the story and about their houses.
2. Have students use the graphic organizer to write a paper comparing the characteristics of place in the text to that of their own homes.

Assessment

Geography and ELA

Information recorded on the Geographic Characteristics of Place graphic organizer should be assessed for geographic content. Mastery will be considered 1 or more plausible characteristics in each of the boxes.

The writing piece should be assessed using the 6 traits writing rubric for Organization and Content. Mastery will be considered 4 or higher.

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?

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)