

Using Folklore to Explore French Canadian Culture and Geography

Students learn to analyze text and recall characteristics of Canada using a French Canadian story.

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Grade Level	3
Duration	3-4 class periods

National Geography Standards

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT: THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS

4. The physical and human characteristics of places.

6. How culture and experience influence people’s perception of places.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENT: ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

14. How human actions modify the physical environment.

Arizona Geography Standards

Concept 4 Human Systems GRADE 3

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

PO 6 Discuss the major economic activities and land use (e.g. harvesting natural resources, agricultural, industrial, residential, commercial, recreation) of areas studied.

Other Standards

Arizona College and Career Ready Standards (Common Core) GRADE 3

Reading Literature Key Ideas and Details Concept 1 Data Analysis

3.RL.2 Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.

Writing Research to Build and Present Knowledge

3.W.8 Recall information from experiences or gather information from print/digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

Overview

Folklore can be defined as story-telling material passed down from one generation to the next through songs, legends, superstitions, and cultural practices like food and crafts. By studying folklore, students will have a better understanding of an area’s culture and geography.

Purpose

In this lesson students will gain a better understanding of French Canadian culture by analyzing a folktale and seeing images of Canada.

Materials

- Maps of Canada available at www.K12studycanada.org and <http://geoalliance.asu.edu/>
- Books and photographs of Quebec available at www.K12studycanada.org and www.international.gouv.gc.ca
- World of Words: International Collection of Children’s and Adolescent Literature available at www.wowlit.org
- Copies of the story, “The Flying Canoe” by Roch Carrier, Sheldon Cohen, and Sheila Fischman, Tundra Books, 2004 available at http://americanfolklore.net/folklore/2010/07/the_flying_canoe.html
- 3-5 index cards per student
- Scoring Guide
- Writing Checklist

Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. recall characteristics of the French Canadian culture including values and beliefs.
2. describe physical and human characteristics of Canada.
3. analyze text for unfamiliar or interesting phrases.

Procedures

SESSION ONE

1. Begin the lesson with the fact that Canada has several major cultures: Native (First Nation) Peoples, English, Asian, Inuit, Metis, and French. In the next few days, we are going to be learning about the French Canadian culture and Canada. Ask students to share what they know about the province of Quebec or the city of Quebec including any personal experiences. Begin a list of vocabulary words on a word wall or whiteboard as they appear frequently in the discussion.

2. Now share additional information about Quebec. This may include stories, books, maps of Canada and Quebec, and photographs. Be sure to include natural resources such as fishing, forests, and hydroelectric power generated from the vast amounts of water and images of daily life in the materials. Point out the influences of France and French culture on Canada whenever it is relevant.

SESSION TWO

3. Distribute copies of the story, "The Flying Crane." Introduce the story as a French Canadian folktale. It is a fictional story but from the story we can learn about the French Canadian culture. Read the story while students listen. As the story is read, stop and briefly discuss words that may be unfamiliar to the students. Add these words to the vocabulary list. Read the story a second time. After reading, ask students to recall some of the characteristics of Quebec/Canada that they saw in the images shown in the previous session. Refer back to these visual materials and the list of vocabulary words if necessary.

SESSION THREE

4. Distribute the index cards to students. Read the story again. This time model for the students how to pick out a segment of the text (words, phrases, or sentences) that they find interesting, significant, or confusing. Write this text on one side of an index card. Model how to write comments reflecting why they chose that particular quotation on the other side

of the card. Each student should complete his/her own index card.

5. Arrange students in mixed ability groups of three to four individuals. Instruct them to select one quotation to share and discuss with the group. Model this by reading a quotation and then asking one or two students to reflect on what was just read. After student comments are finished, then share a reflection about why that particular segment of text was chosen.

6. Have students follow this procedure. Instruct group members to take turns reading one of the segments they wrote. They should listen without comment to classmates' thoughts about what they see as interesting or significant about that particular piece of text. Finally, have groups share why they chose that particular portion of the story.

7. Now ask the students to create a list of the words or phrases that were characteristic of the French Canadian culture as shown in the story. Give them some examples—use of French language, reference to God and devil, names that sound French like Baptiste, etc. Make a list of these on the whiteboard. Leave visible so students can use for the writing assessment.

Assessment

Writing and Geography

Distribute Writing Checklist to students. Instruct them to write a description of Canada based on the story using the 1) word wall, 2) the list of French Canadian culture, and 3) visuals they have seen. It is expected that all students include information about forests, woodcutting, lumberjacks, winter, Catholic religion, and the French-speaking culture of Canada. For diverse learners (ELLs, Special Education), allow them to draw pictures and write some simple sentences using the key vocabulary words. The essay may be graded using the Scoring Guide with a score of 32 points considered mastery.

Reading

Index cards can be graded for completeness and correctness in regards to the assignment. Grade of satisfactory or unsatisfactory can be recorded.

Extensions

The lesson plan could be used as an introduction to teach about the many different cultures of Canada,

including the English, Asian, Metis, Inuit, and First Nations peoples.

Students could create “Heart Maps.” This is where students place events and people who are important in their own lives onto a heart template.

Sources

Kathy G. Short, “Save the Last Word for Me” and “Heart Maps” templates