

Sample Lesson Plan for Eighth Grade

Level: Eighth Grade

This lesson is appropriate at the very beginning of the year. This lesson includes a quick review of the Social Studies major areas, from fourth grade through eighth grade. Through this lesson, students will review basic geographic concepts while also exploring a website that will be useful throughout this academic year. (Suggestions for ways to connect the website with goals and specific objectives are given at the end of this lesson.)

Materials:

*Maps to be projected on screen for all students to see: World map, Western Hemisphere map, North America map, United States map with divisions for each state, North Carolina map with county divisions, Durham County map, and Durham City map.

* A sheet of notebook paper for each student

* “History Beneath Our Feet” website, projected for all students to see and/or use.

Procedure:

1. Tell students that this year for their social studies they will be “zooming in,” but first we will look at what they have already studied in the years past. Project the world map, and as you briefly review the major continents and major oceans, ask “Which grade did you study...?” (Fifth Grade: North America, including Central America; Sixth Grade: South America and Europe; Seventh Grade: Africa, Asia, and Australia)
2. “Zoom in,” using a map of the Western Hemisphere, and then a map of North America.
3. Tell students that we are going to “zoom in” even further. Show a map of the United States with divisions for each state, and have a student point out North Carolina, which was the basis of their social studies for fourth grade and will be the focus for eighth grade, but with more emphasis on the

history, while also reviewing the geography, the government, and economics.

4. Explain that while focusing on the state of North Carolina, we will also be studying our state's part in the history of our country, which was studied in fifth grade.
5. Tell them that we will "zoom in" again, and now project a map of North Carolina with the divisions for counties. Have a student point out the area that is Durham County.
6. "Zoom in" again, now using a map of Durham County, with the area marked for Durham City. (The teacher might also mark other places of interest, such as the site of the school, the major neighborhoods that attend that specific school, etc.)
7. Now for the final "zoom"! Project a map of Durham City, and tell the students that they will also study the way Durham plays an important part in our state's history.
8. Ask the students to think of names of persons who are important to the history of Durham. Ask for volunteers to share the names.
9. Let your students know that there is an easy way to generate a list of possibilities----by first thinking of names of streets. Have students list names of streets in their neighborhoods, those they travel back and forth to school or activities, streets where their friends or relatives live. (You may also want to pass out some maps of the City of Durham, and let the students work in pairs or small groups to generate a list of street names.)
10. Ask your students to circle the names of any streets that sound like the name could be a last name, like Mangum and Watts and Foster.
11. Tell students that cities often name streets, parks, schools, and buildings as a way to honor the work of specific persons. The names of these important Durhamites are all around us, often right beneath our feet.
12. In fact, there is a new website that focuses on this city of ours, "History Beneath Our Feet." Go to the website, or if in a computer lab, have the students go to the website,
www.museumofdurhamhistory.org/beneathourfeet.
13. Introduce the headings of the websites: Home, To Student, To Teacher, About Us.

Ask your students to click on “To Student”, and one person could read the letter out loud.

14. There are three choices for the next step. To help the students to begin exploring, you might ask one-third of the class to click “Person”, one-third of the class to click “Streets”, and one-third “Landmarks”.
15. Give students time to explore the website, and let them know that this website will be a valuable resource at many points during this year’s study of North Carolina.
16. On the board, write headings for different time periods that will be studied this year: Colonial Times, Revolutionary War, 1812 and up to 1860, Civil War and Reconstruction, Great Depression and World War II, 1946 to present.
17. Ask each student to choose one person he/she found while looking through the website, and write that person’s name under the correct time period. (You may want to save that list, or leave it posted as a reminder to use the website at those points throughout the school year.)

Goals and Objectives that connect with the website, “History Beneath Our Feet”:

This website can be a useful resource, especially beginning with the study of the Civil War and Reconstruction time period (Goal 4) and continuing up to the present day (Goals 8 and 9).

Goal 5 (1870-1930) connects very well with this website. Objective 5.01 is “Identify the role played by the agriculture, textile, tobacco, and furniture industries in North Carolina, and analyze their importance in the economic development of the state.” What a great time to refer students to “History Beneath Our Feet” to find out more about Washington Duke, James Buchanan Duke, Caleb B. Green, Edward James Parrish, Julian Shakespeare Carr, R.F. Morris, William Mangum and others!