Social Studies Unit: “Where would you rather live, the Midwest or Southwest?”

Grade: Four

Time Needed: 10 periods of 20-60 minutes

Rationale and Overview: This unit is being designed to get the students into the drivers seat of their education. After much discussion with my cooperating teacher we agreed that I would conduct an overview of the new information in the Southwest. Students will then be broken up into pairs and then become experts on a given topic and present this information to the class. This is an important task for these fourth graders who have not had many chances to speak in front of their classmates.

National Standards:
NCSS Standard I (Culture) Sub standards a, c, d
NCSS Standard II (Time, Continuity, & Change) Sub standards b, d, e
NCSS Standard III (People, Places, & Environment) Sub standards a, b, f, i, j
NCSS Standard VII (Production, Distribution, & Consumption) Sub standards e, f, h
NCSS Standard VIII (Science, Technology, & Society) Sub standards a, b

Overall Goal: Students will choose a region they would rather live in based on the overview and presentations. Students will also be able to correctly identify the states and capitols of the Southwest region.

* Please see Appendix A for Brainstorming of possible activities
* Please see Appendix B for possible outline of Social Studies and Science units

Specific Objectives: The students will…
- Research assigned lesson of text.
- Develop at least five facts that would make someone want to live in that region.
- Share facts with partner to help develop a list of seven facts that would make someone want to live in that region.
- Share facts with teacher to ensure appropriateness of the facts.
- Type up facts on the computer.
- Create at least two illustrations relating to the facts.
- Create a poster with the seven facts, two illustrations and a title.
- Present information to class using the poster as an aide.
- Reflect on the presentations and decide which region is more appealing, support with at least four facts from the various presentations.

Inquiry or Focus questions:
- What makes a location desirable to live in?
- What makes the Southwest/Midwest unique?
- How were Native Americans treated in both regions? What would you have rather seen happen during the times of expansion?
- What is unique about the economy of the Midwest and the Southwest?
- What kind of farming is appropriate in the Midwest and Southwest, why?
• What are common weather patterns for the Midwest and Southwest, what causes these patterns?
• What building structures are unique to each region? Why were they originally built there?
• What caused people to move to the Southwest and Midwest regions?

List of Resources:

Resources in the Library: There are approximately 20 non-fiction books on the Southwest and approximately 15 non-fiction books on the Midwest in the school library. All of the books have been pulled by my request and put into two separate bins (one for the Midwest and one for the Southwest) and are located in the north east corner of the library. On the days that the books will be required for the class to work with them, the librarian has agreed to allow us to take the books up to our classroom. We will be able to have the books in the classroom for three days, and then they will be returned to the library in the appropriate bins and back into the north east corner of the library. The library also has a few short films on both the Midwest and Southwest in the past and present. After viewing the films I have decided to show only the one from the Southwest because of the quality and information provided. This film is an overview of what each of the states are like in the region from the eyes of a student who appears to be a fourth grader as well.

Resources in the Classroom: In the classroom I will be making use a variety of materials. There are some resource books that my cooperating teacher has accumulated over the years regarding the Midwest and the Southwest. I will also be posting up more maps in the back of the classroom that focus in on both the Midwest and Southwest. Students will be using their textbooks and I will be making use of the teachers edition of the text as well.

Resources outside of the Classroom:
One mother has volunteered to allow her child to bring in pictures from a family trip to the Grand Canyon. These pictures will be in a photo album in the back of the classroom by the maps. Since the computer lab is always tied up, and the computer in the back of the classroom rarely works, it will not be a possibility to use the internet to search for information.

Student assessment plan:
Throughout the unit I will be assessing the students’ progress through their group work on their specified lesson. Students will conference with me to show me their progress through their retrieval chart, turn in copies of their 7 facts before they can type them up, discuss their illustration ideas before they can begin work, show me a rough draft of what their poster will look like, present their information to the class, turn in a reflection on their decision of where they would rather live based on the rubric requirements, and finally be tested on the states and capitols of the four states of the Southwest.

Standards Based Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
### Facts Chosen

- **8 or more facts** were chosen to represent specific lesson. Facts are excellent examples of life in the region that would convince a student to want to live in that region. Student is able to fully explain the facts from readings.
- **7 facts** chosen to represent specific lesson. Facts are great examples of life in the region that would convince a student to want to live in the region. Student is able to explain the facts from the readings.
- **6 facts** chosen to represent specific lesson. Facts are good examples of life in the region that would convince a student to want to live in the region. Student is able to partially explain the facts from the readings.
- **5 facts** chosen to represent specific lesson. Facts are relevant, but are poor examples of life in the region that would convince a student to want to live in the region. Student is able to partially explain the facts from the readings only after some prompting from the teacher.

### Region Chosen

- **Student chooses region based on facts learned from the presentations.** Over 4 separate facts are listed and explained why they are important to that student to live in that region.
- **Student chooses region based on facts learned from the presentations.** Four separate facts are listed and explained why they are important to that student to live in that region.
- **Student chooses region based on some facts learned from the presentations.** Three separate facts are listed and explained why they are important to that student to live in the region. One or more facts are from prior opinions, not from presentations.
- **Student chooses region based on a fact learned from the presentation.** Two separate facts are listed and partially explained why they are important to that student to live in the region. One fact is from prior opinions, not from presentations.

### Total Points Earned: _________

### Comments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Class Time</strong></td>
<td>Used time well during each class period. Focused on getting the project done. Never distracted others.</td>
<td>Used time well during each class period. Usually focused on getting the project done and never</td>
<td>Used some of the time well during each class period. There was some focus on getting the project done</td>
<td>Did not use class time to focus on the project OR often distracted others.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rubric For Poster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Class Time</strong></td>
<td>Used time well during each class period. Focused on getting the project done. Never distracted others.</td>
<td>Used time well during each class period. Usually focused on getting the project done and never</td>
<td>Used some of the time well during each class period. There was some focus on getting the project done</td>
<td>Did not use class time to focus on the project OR often distracted others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics - Clarity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics are all in focus and the content easily viewed and identified from 6 ft. away.</td>
<td>Most graphics are in focus and the content easily viewed and identified from 6 ft. away.</td>
<td>Most graphics are in focus and the content is easily viewed and identified from 4 ft. away.</td>
<td>Many graphics are not clear or are too small.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with Peers</td>
<td>Almost always listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group. Tries to keep people working well together.</td>
<td>Usually listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group. Does not cause &quot;waves&quot; in the group.</td>
<td>Often listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group but sometimes is not a good team member.</td>
<td>Rarely listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group. Often is not a good team member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Gained</td>
<td>Student can accurately answer all questions related to facts in the poster and processes used to create the poster.</td>
<td>Student can accurately answer most questions related to facts in the poster and processes used to create the poster.</td>
<td>Student can accurately answer about 75% of questions related to facts in the poster and processes used to create the poster.</td>
<td>Student appears to have insufficient knowledge about the facts or processes used in the poster.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Presentation Rubric**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparedness</td>
<td>Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.</td>
<td>Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.</td>
<td>The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.</td>
<td>Student does not seem at all prepared to present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listens to Other Presentations</td>
<td>Listens intently. Does not make distracting noises or movements.</td>
<td>Listens intently but has one distracting noise or movement.</td>
<td>Sometimes does not appear to be listening but is not distracting.</td>
<td>Sometimes does not appear to be listening and has distracting noises or movements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volume</td>
<td>Volume is loud enough to be heard by all audience members throughout the presentation.</td>
<td>Volume is loud enough to be heard by all audience members at least 90% of the time.</td>
<td>Volume is loud enough to be heard by all audience members at least 80% of the time.</td>
<td>Volume often too soft to be heard by all audience members.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Points Earned: ______

Comments:

Name ___________________________________

Instructions: Please write out the name and capital of the labeled states of the Southwest. Do your best with spelling.

1. ___________________________________

2. ___________________________________
Lesson Plans:

Day One: Introduction (60 minutes)

Objectives for the activity: Students will review the Midwest and be introduced to the Southwest.

Materials to be used: Overhead projector, overhead pen, half sheet of construction paper, map of United States with Southwest region states labeled (1, 2, 3, 4), scissors, glue stick, pencil, social studies textbook, Social Studies notebook.

Introduction: I will pose the question to the students where is the Southwest and what they think of when they hear the word Southwest. We will then have a short discussion on what they think.

Procedure or methods of instruction: We are going to fill in our study guides for the Southwest. Students will use their textbooks to fill in the four states and capitols on the paper provided. After they show me their work they will be able to cut and paste the map and key onto the construction paper, making sure that they are both readable if held up for a person sitting across from them to read. We are then going to create two KWL charts, one on the Southwest and one on the Midwest. Students will create their own K and W of the KWL charts in their Social Studies notebooks and then share with the class after approximately ten minutes of work time.

Summary and closure: As a class we will then complete a Venn-Diagram of what we already know about the two regions, focusing on as many similarities between the two regions.

Day Two: Review of the Midwest (30 minutes)

Objectives for the activity: Review the knowledge gained from earlier on in the year on the Midwest.

Materials to be used: Overhead Projector, overhead pen, teacher book with notes, Social Studies notebooks.

Introduction: Go over the portion of the Venn Diagram relating to the Midwest, making any notations of any other items of importance that should also be included.

Procedure or methods of instruction: This is going to be a short review of the material that the students have already covered. Before the lesson I will read through the two chapters and make notes on post-it notes throughout the various lessons (the post-it notes are still in the teacher manual as a request of my cooperating teacher). I will go through the notes and pose various questions for the students, asking them why they think about the various issues that arise from the Midwest.

Summary and closure: We will end the day by filling in the L part of the KWL chart. Students will be able to fill this into their Social Studies notebooks as we go through the information.

Day Three: Overview of the Southwest (55 minutes)
Objectives for the activity: Overview the information in the Southwest region unit of the text.

Materials to be used: Overhead Projector, overhead pen, teacher book with notes, Social Studies notebooks, The Southwest film (10 minutes)

Introduction: Go over the portion of the Venn Diagram relating to the Southwest, making any notations of any other items of importance that should also be included. We will then watch the short film on the Southwest (remember to put Gunnar’s f.m. receiver underneath the television).

Procedure or methods of instruction: This is going to be a short overview of the material some of the students will focus in on. Since only half will be looking closely at the Southwest it is important for all students to get a base knowledge of what is really going on in that small hot region. Before the lesson I will read through the two chapters and make notes on post-it notes throughout the various lessons (the post-it notes are still in the teacher manual as a request of my cooperating teacher). I will go through the notes and pose various questions for the students, asking them why they think about the various issues that arise from the Southwest, and what makes the Southwest unique in our country.

Summary and closure: We will end the day by filling in the L part of the KWL chart. Students will be able to fill this into their Social Studies notebooks as we go through the information. *This does not mean that we are done using the KWL charts, students will be filling them in more and more as we go through the presentations later on.*

*When the students are in the computer lab at the end of day three, I am going to rearrange the desks in the classroom according to a new seating chart created by me. The students will be sitting next to their partner, and the pairs will be seated next to the group who is covering the same topic but for the other region (for example, both groups working on the economy will be side by side). The seating chart accommodates for a student who wears hearing aides to be in the second row of desks, the students who need to be reminded to stay on task in the front row, and most students who have conflicts with one another are separated. Twelve of the fourteen groups are groups of two students, one boy and one girl. The last two groups are made up of three students, each with at least one boy in the group. When the unit is done it will be time to change the desk arrangement again, into more of a group work setting. Please see Appendix C for a copy of the seating chart.*

Day Four: Begin Retrieval Charts (45 minutes)

Objectives for the activity: Introduce students to the idea of expert groups and get started on the retrieval chart for their particular lesson.

Materials to be used: Retrieval chart (Please see appendix d), content rubric, pencil, social studies textbook

Introduction: Students will learn what it means to become an expert on a topic. We will discuss what that means, and what work they will have to accomplish to get this done.

Procedure or methods of instruction: Students will receive their retrieval charts which will be filled in with the names of who will be in the group. The lesson topic and page numbers will also be listed in the appropriate areas of the paper. We will do a walk through of what the retrieval chart is asking them to do. It is important that the students realize that the facts that they are going to be recording need to be facts that would make
someone want to live in that area. Students will then have work time to start going through the lesson and fill in their retrieval chart. As students are recording the information they will be encouraged to write down ideas for illustrations on the back of their retrieval chart that they could draw out.

Summary and closure: Students will be told to place their retrieval chart in their textbooks where they have finished working so that tomorrow they can begin working right away.

Day Five: Finish up work on Retrieval Chart (40 minutes)
Objectives for the activity: Finish up the retrieval charts
Materials to be used: Retrieval Chart, textbook, pencils
Procedure or methods of instruction: Students will take out their retrieval charts and finish up their work on the charts. If they finish up before the time is up for work time they will be encouraged to look at the alternate resources in the corner of the classroom.
Summary and closure: Students will bring home their retrieval charts to finalize any parts that are not complete and to begin any illustration ideas they may have.

Day Six: Finalize a list of 7 facts (60 minutes)
Objectives for the activity: Groups will conference with me
Materials to be used: Retrieval chart, teacher text with notes
Introduction: Students will have about 10 minutes to talk with their partner to get a final list of seven facts to include in their presentation. Students will then write out these facts on a separate sheet of paper and start sketching ideas for the poster.
Procedure or methods of instruction: Once groups finish up their work I will begin calling groups to the back table to talk about what they had found. If I feel they are missing some important parts of the lesson I will help them see that. As groups finish writing out their facts and sketches they will work on the final copies of their illustrations. All illustrations and facts will be mounted onto the poster board (this prevents from a group screwing up on the poster board and needing a new poster board to work on.
Summary and closure: Students will be reminded to have a final copy of the facts ready by tomorrow. They will also need to finish up their illustrations on the white construction paper by day eight.

Day Seven: Type up facts and mount on paper (60 minutes)
Objectives for the activity: Type up facts, cut them out and mount onto construction paper
Materials to be used: Computer lab, facts sheet, various colors of construction paper, scissors, paste
Introduction: Students will line up with their facts and partner in line in front or behind them.
Procedure or methods of instruction: Once we get to the computer lab students will sit next to their partners. The two groups of three will sit in the middle rows of computers. Students will then type up their facts, making sure that each person does about the same amount of work. They will then have the option to play around with the fonts of the text and both agree on a font to use. Then the person with the most amount of text on their
page will determine how big the font will be set at by getting their facts as large as
possible, yet keeping it at one page. When students finish up they will walk back up to
the classroom (where the cooperating teacher will be) and begin cutting out the facts and
mounting them onto the construction paper.
**Summary and closure:** I will remind the students that tomorrow they will need to come
with their completed facts and illustrations

**Day Eight: Create poster and presentation (60 minutes)**

*The social studies aspect will be completed by the cooperating teacher as I will be
running a science lab with half of the class in the science lab. After an hour the
groups will switch to the other room with their partners to get the work done.*

**Objectives for the activity:** Bring all elements of poster together

**Materials to be used:** Poster board (14 total), art bins (markers, crayons, colored pencils,
glue stick, scissors), construction paper, final illustrations, mounted facts, sample poster

**Introduction:** Students will see a sample poster of seven mounted facts, illustration and
title to help them understand how to use the space they have on their poster board.

**Procedure or methods of instruction:** Students will lay out the elements of their poster
board without pasting them down. The cooperating teacher will approve them to begin
pasting down the elements. When the students are done they will be able to decide who
will talk about the various elements of the poster. (There will be a 20 minute period at the
end of the day where students will be able to practice again with their partner)

**Summary and closure:** The first eight groups who will present on day nine will be
announced. The remaining six groups will go on day ten. We will go over the
presentation rubric one last time, highlighting that it is important that the students reread
their lesson tonight so they can answer questions from the audience.

**Day Nine Presentations Begin (30-40 minutes)**

**Objectives for the activity:** Groups 1-8 will present

**Materials to be used:** Easel, tape, poster boards, rubrics, KWL charts, Social Studies
notebooks, overhead projector, overhead pen, pencils

**Introduction:** Students will be instructed to be a good audience to their peers. They will
be marked down for inappropriate behavior during the next two days of presentations.

**Procedure or methods of instruction:** Groups will present (groups will take about 2-3
minutes to present). Students need to pay attention so they will be able to write out their
response on day ten about where they would live. When they are done with their
presentation I will ask a clarifying question to each of the presenters to ensure they did
know the information that they presented. Students can ask questions as well, if the
question covers something that was not in the text I will do my best to help the presenters
answer the questions.

**Summary and closure:** As a class we will take out our KWL charts and work on the L
portion of the chart. These will come in handy on day ten when students write out their
responses. Students will be reminded that they will be testing on the states and capitols on
day ten as well.

**Day Ten: Finish presentations, write reflections, test on states (60 minutes)**
Objectives for the activity: Groups 9-14 will present, finish KWL chart, write reflection, test on states and capitols

Materials to be used: Easel, tape, overhead projector, overhead pen, notebooks, pencils, blank paper, rubric, states and capitols test

Introduction: Students will be reminded to be good listeners to get ideas for their reflections.

Procedure or methods of instruction: Groups will present (groups will take about 2-3 minutes to present). Students need to pay attention so they will be able to write out their response today about where they would live. When they are done with their presentation I will ask a clarifying question to each of the presenters to ensure they did know the information that they presented. Students can ask questions as well, if the question covers something that was not in the text I will do my best to help the presenters answer the questions. When all the presentations are done we will finish up the KWL chart. Students will then have time to complete their reflection on where they would rather live based on what they learned in the presentations. Students need to include at least four facts from the presentation to get full credit. When students are done with their response they will turn them in and take the states and capitols test on the Southwest.

Summary and closure: To close this unit we will get out of our seats and have the class stand on the east wall if they would live in the Midwest, and the west wall if they would live in the Southwest. Students will then have a chance to share one fact that convinced them to live in their chosen region.

Reflective paper: Please see Appendix E
Examples of student work:

Where would you live?