

Create Your Own Civilization

Tanya Sampson
Elrose Composite School
Grade 9

Social Studies, ELA and Arts Education

Outcomes

Social Studies:

- Outcome: IN9.1 Explain what constitutes a society.
- Outcome: IN9.2 Compare the factors that shape worldviews in a society, including time and place, culture, language, religion, gender identity, socio-economic situation, and education.
- Outcome: IN9.3 Analyze the ways a worldview is expressed in the daily life of a society.
- Outcome: DR9.1 Examine the challenges involved in obtaining information about societies of the past.
- Outcome: DR9.3 Assess the relationship of the natural environment in the development of a society.
- Outcome: PA9.1 Examine concepts of power and authority in the governance of the societies studied.

ELA:

- Outcome: CC9.1b Create various visual, multimedia, oral, and written texts that explore identity (e.g., Exploring Loyalty, Love, and Relationships), social responsibility (e.g., Equal Opportunity), and efficacy (e.g., Surviving and Conquering).
- Outcome: CC9.2a Create and present an individual researched inquiry project related to a topic, theme, or issue studied in English language arts.
- Outcome: CC9.5a Create and present a variety of visual and multimedia presentations to best represent message for an intended audience and purpose.
- Outcome: CC9.6a Use oral language to interact purposefully, confidently, and appropriately in a variety of situations including participating in one-to-one, small group, and large group discussions (e.g., prompting and supporting others, solving problems, resolving conflicts, building consensus, articulating and explaining personal viewpoint, discussing preferences, speaking to extend current understanding, and celebrating special events and accomplishments).
- Outcome: CC9.8a Write to describe (a profile of a character), to narrate (a narrative essay), to explain and inform (a researched report), and to persuade (a review).

Arts Education:

- Outcome: CP9.7 Use voice, instruments, and technologies to express musical ideas.
- Outcome: CP9.9 Compose and perform sound compositions to express perspectives and raise awareness about a topic of concern to youth.
- Outcome: CP9.10 Create visual art works to express perspectives and raise awareness about a topic of concern to youth.

Summary

For this assignment, students will create and plan an island. They will consider various aspects of their civilization such as mapping, religion, culture, folklore, art, music, dance, agriculture, industry, government, and law and order. This assignment culminates in an oral presentation of the students' island which should include artifacts, maps, musical compositions etc. This project meets curriculum outcomes in grade 9 Social Studies, ELA and Arts Education.

Lesson Plan

The assignment is to create and plan an island! Each group will need at least one large piece of white paper, art supplies, and plenty of writing paper and pens. The students start by collaboratively mapping out their imaginary island. (You may do this as an individual or group assignment.) This is an activity in which creativity can be used for best advantage. You can decide if it is okay if they come up with something that might not be entirely realistic.

The groups of students will draw a map of the island in full color. Then, they will write essays describing the physical properties of the island and answering the questions below. As long as the students have made decisions and come to agreements together, **essays can be done as homework assignments or can be turned into simple questions if you do not want to go the essay route.** I would recommend using google docs for students who wish to do some work at home so they can collaborate.

In Create a Society, students focus on the civilization living on their island. Students have the opportunity to research and explore the various issues they must write about.

They can start by together answering these questions:

- What shape is the island? How big is it?
- Are there lots of sandy beaches? Forests or jungles? Villages, towns, or developed cities? What parts of the island (if any) are developed, and what parts (if any) are left untouched?
- What types of flora and fauna exist on the island?
- What is the weather like? How does it change with the seasons?

Cultural Aspects of the Project

Once the students have ascertained how many people live on the island and which parts they inhabit, they are ready to move on to this part of the assignment. Students have already made some decisions about how rural or developed the civilization is. Now is the time to build upon this.

Culture/Religion/Mythology/Folklore:

- Does the island society have a religion, mythology or folklore?
- Write a short folktale from this island.

*Make sure all of your ideas are tied into one consistent set of beliefs.

Art:

- What types of art do they have? (ie, paintings, pottery?)

- What materials on the island do they use in their art?
- Create your own representations of island art. (For example, students can create a picture of an island sculpture, island pottery, or island painting.)

Music:

- How do the island people make music?
- Do they have musical instruments, do they sing?
- What are the instruments made of?
- Create representations (drawings) of island musical instruments.
- Compose a piece of original island music. (I have students use www.musicshake.com)

Dance:

- Create an original island dance to go with the original island music.

Economical Aspects of the Society

The students have already discussed to some extent the level of development on the island. Now it is time to build upon these ideas and think about how they survive.

Agriculture/Industry:

- Is this an agricultural society?
- What do they grow?
- What animals do they keep?
- What do they use the animals for?
- Do they use animals for labor?
- Do they eat animals, or animal products (such as milk)?
- Is there any industry on the island?
- Do the island people have access to technology; have they developed their own technology? If yes, what kinds of technology do they have?
- Are there large businesses on the island, or factories? If yes, what do they produce? Or if not, is everything on a smaller scale?
- Is this island society independent, or do they trade goods and services with the rest of the world?
- Decide upon how they create and distribute goods and services among themselves.

Write a series of essays:

- 1) Write an essay describing food production and any agricultural practices on the island.
- 2) Write an essay describing the technology that they use, and what it is for. Be sure to include whether the island society interacts with the rest of the world, or remains its own independent block.

3) How do they create clothing? What is their clothing made of? Write an essay describing the materials used and the methods of production. Provide illustrations of island clothing/Make original island clothing.

4) Write a fourth essay, or include in the previous ones how food and services are distributed. Do the island people barter or use a system of money?

Government

Constitution:

- In this portion we will work on drawing up a constitution for the island. The constitution will define the role of government on the island, and any system of law and order that is in place by answering the questions below:
- What kind of government exists on the island? For example: Is it a true democracy, such as Ancient Greece?
- Is there a monarchy; are people born into political power?
- Is the society anarchistic?
- What role does the government play in the island peoples' lives? For example:
- Does the government own and dole out wealth, or does the government tax the people for certain purposes?
- What does the government do to benefit the people?
- What rights, if any, do the island people have?

Law and Order:

- Every society has some system of law and order.
- What rules govern your island society, and who enforces them? How are these laws enforced?

Travel Brochure

- For this persuasive writing activity, instruct them to create a travel brochure luring vacationers to come spend time on the island. Think of all the reasons that somebody would enjoy visiting the island, and write a persuasive essay encouraging people to do so.

The Presentation

Each group will give an oral presentation about the island they have developed. Students will be at the front of the class and display their map and any other visuals they have created. They can either read or simply describe the various aspects of their island world. A question and answer period should be included either by classmates or by the teacher, and that can lead to interesting discussions.

As you can see, this project has the ability to cover various subjects of study. Not only is it a great way to develop creative writing skills, it is a great way to complement other school subjects like Social Studies and Art, and a wonderful experience in cooperative and collaborative learning.

Assesment:**Diagnostic:**

Have students Brainstorm answers to the following questions to see what pre-existing knowledge they have about the topic.

Questions to consider:

- What do you think civilization means?
- Is Canada a civilization?
- How do civilizations get started?
- Is there a difference between a society and a civilization?
- What are some examples of civilizations?
- What makes them a civilization?
- Would you call your community a civilization?

Formative:

As the students answer questions about their civilization during while working on their project as well as during their final presentation, ask them more in depth questions to check for understanding. Ex. Why do your people dress that way? Does that reflect your own personal worldview? Etc.

Summative:

Grade the following assignments:

- Island Map
- Folk Tale
- Clothing Representation
- Music Composition
- Instrument Representation
- Constitution
- Travel Brochure
- Island Art
- Island Dance
- Oral Presentation Skills

*I have attached some sample rubrics that I have created on www.rubistar.com