

Hear, Here: Mississippi River

Mississippi River

Standards

Environmental Literacy and Sustainability

ELS.C1.B.i: Connect-Sense of Place

Describe natural and cultural histories of a locality, explain the relationship between the two from a variety of perspectives, and identify how that creates a sense of place.

ELS.EX2.C.i: Explore-Cultural Systems Emphasis

Investigate how Wisconsin's natural systems have shaped the state's cultural systems. Investigate how access to renewable and nonrenewable natural resources necessary for survival influence human interactions between and within geographic regions.

English Language Arts (ELA)

W.4.3a-e: Writing- Text Types and Purposes

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

- a. Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- b. Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
- c. Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
- d. Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
- e. Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

SL.4.4: Speaking and Listening-Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

Science

SCI.ESS2.C.5: Earth and Space Science-The Roles of Water in Earth's Surface Processes

Most of Earth's water is in the ocean, and much of the Earth's freshwater is in glaciers or underground.

Lesson Goals/Objectives

Students will learn about:

- The primary elements of river systems and general information about the Mississippi River.
- The ways the Mississippi River (natural system) influences the people and culture of La Crosse (cultural system).

Students will be able to:

- Identify primary elements of river systems.

- Make connections between the Mississippi River (natural system) and the culture of La Crosse.
- Make connections between the Mississippi River and their own experiences through art and writing.

Instructional Activity/Procedures

1. Open the PowerPoint and make connections to any previously covered material/lessons on geography, the Mississippi River, or La Crosse.
2. Provide a road map for today's lesson. If the lesson will be done as a field trip (*in conjunction with the lessons "Mapping La Crosse Lesson Plan (Day 1) and "Mapping La Crosse Lesson Plan-Field Trip (Day 2)*), prepare the students for the trip.
3. Transition into Water and the Earth
 - a. Ask students the questions on the slide:
 - i. What are some different water sources?
 - ii. Where is most of earth's water located?
 - iii. Where is most of earth's **freshwater** located?
4. Pieces, Purposes, and Puzzles exercise
 - a. Ask students the general question: what do you know about rivers?
 - i. Answers will vary depending on the amount of material previously covered.
 - b. Get students to think deeper about river systems by having them think about the pieces/parts of rivers, the purposes of these parts, and any puzzles or questions they have about river systems.
5. Transition into Learning about Rivers.
 - a. Write the following seven words on the board: river, river source, floodplain, watershed/drainage basin, tributary, meander, river delta.
 - i. Going in order, ask the students if they know what the words mean. As you go through each word, bring up the definition on the PowerPoint.
 1. If you have previously covered material on rivers and geography, integrate that here.
6. Move to discussing the Mississippi River specifically.
 - a. Go through the material under the "Geography" and "History" sections. Use the map of the Mississippi River on the side of the slide as a reference.
 - b. Transition to the next slide by asking the following question: How has the natural physical history of the Mississippi River affected the cultural history of the La Crosse area and its people?
7. Discuss why the Mississippi River is important to the community of La Crosse.
 - a. Pose the questions on the slide:
 - i. What types of resources do we get from the river?
 - ii. Who/what travels on the river?
 - iii. How do we use the river?
 - iv. How does the river make us feel?
 - v. Why do we need the river?
 - b. Have a discussion about their answers.
 - i. Answers could include: people, trade, resources, food, happiness, fun, boats, etc.
8. Prepare to listen to three *Hear, Here* stories.

- a. Give a brief description of what oral history is (recordings of people's true stories) and why it is important (first person narrative of experiences).
9. Listen to Shawn Micallef's story.
 - a. Pull up Shawn's story for the students to listen to.
 - b. After listening to the story, ask the questions on the PowerPoint slide:
 - i. What time of day was Shawn in the park?
 - ii. What did Shawn see in the park?
 - iii. How did Shawn feel in his story?
 - iv. What did the river bring Shawn?
10. Listen to Sarah Jane Fellows' story.
 - a. Pull up Sarah's story for the students to listen to.
 - i. Optional: have students do an artful thinking exercise using the photo on the slide.
 - b. After listening to the story, ask the questions on the PowerPoint slide:
 - i. What types of animals would Sarah find at her grandfather's business?
 - ii. What was the business that Sarah's grandfather had?
 - iii. How did Sarah feel in her story?
 - iv. What did the river bring Sarah and her family?
11. Listen to Mai Chao's poem.
 - a. Pull up Mai's poem for the students to listen to.
 - i. Optional: have the students do an artful thinking exercise using the photo on the slide.
 - b. After listening to the poem, ask the questions on the PowerPoint slide:
 - i. Where are Mai and her mother from?
 - ii. How does she make connections between the Mekong and Mississippi Rivers?
 - iii. How did Mai feel in her poem?
 - iv. What did the river(s) bring Mai?
12. Transition into discussion on what the Mississippi River means to the students.
 - a. Do a quick brainstorm activity to get the students thinking and prepared for their individual activity.
13. Begin the activity (*if there are time constraints, this can be done out of class as an assignment*).
 - a. Pass out the blank paper to the students and set up any necessary art materials.
 - b. Ask the students to create an artwork about a special experience they've had with the Mississippi River. They should label important aspects of their drawings. They will also need to write a short paragraph explaining their work and inspiration, and how the river made them feel during this experience.
 - c. Inform the students that they will be sharing their work with each other when they are done.
 - d. Allow the students to work on their art and paragraph. The time allowed is flexible and should be adjusted per the instructor's discretion and can be done out of class.
14. Have the students share their artwork. Ask them to explain the event the artwork is depicting and how the river made them feel. Depending on time, these can be shared the next day, in small groups, or to the entire class. During this sharing activity, students should be engaging in conversation about their experience and artwork.

Evaluation

A rubric for the artwork and writing assignment is provided. They should be able to explain why they chose to depict this experience and how it made them feel.

Materials List

1. *Hear, Here* Mississippi River PowerPoint presentation
2. Art materials, such as: paper, colored pencils, crayons, markers, etc.
3. Lined paper
4. River Art and Story Rubric