

## Essential Questions for this Unit:

**I. Planning for Instruction and Assessment:**

- A. What should students understand, know, and be able to do by the end of this lesson? What formal and informal assessments (formative and/or summative) will be utilized to measure the learning?

*What Students Should Take From the Lesson?*

- Students should have a firm grasp/knowledge base of the Erie Canal.
- Students should understand the creation, history of, and present condition of the Erie Canal.
- Students should be able to take a firm stance on the Erie Canal, as to whether or not it was a positive or negative contribution to society, through the use of evidence and logical reasoning.
- Students should have a concrete understanding of the vocabulary associated with the Erie Canal, including definition comprehension, proper pronunciation, and correct spelling.
- Students should understand the rationale/reasoning behind the creation of the Erie Canal.
- Students should understand and be able to evaluate to what degree/extent geography influenced the construction/placement of the Erie Canal.

*What Informal/Formal Assessments Will Be Used to Assess Student Learning?*

- The True/False activity that is performed prior to watching the video and following the informational video will serve as an informal, formative, pre-assessment as to where the students stand in terms of Erie Canal background/knowledge.
  - The evaluation rubric will be used as a summative assessment of student's work, information retention/gain throughout the lesson.
  - The word scramble and word find activities will also serve as supplemental informal, formative assessments for the students to assess student vocabulary expansion and comprehension.
- B. With what common core learning standards and IEP goals are these lesson objectives aligned?
- The common core learning standards can be seen in the lesson plan attached.
  - The intended class has no students with IEPs; however, thirteen out of the twenty-two students in the class are ESL (English Second Language Learners) and require extensive vocabulary assistance, which can be seen through the fill-in-the-blank Erie Canal song activity, the word scramble, and the word find activities. The lesson also provides time for repetition of videos/spoken content, and word bank assistance for those students that require extra attention/assistance. Additionally, certain aspects of the lesson plan can be cut out if students need more time to comprehend.

C. What knowledge of the students is necessary to support and challenge the learners?

- In this particular class, 13 out of the 22 students are ESL (English Second Language Learners) and require additional assistance and repetition when it comes to directions. Many have difficulties reading and writing and take much longer to complete tasks than a typical fourth grader would. Three of the thirteen students speak very limited English and require additional attention from the teacher or aide. In most cases, an aide will come into the classroom and take them to their own table in the back of the room to receive one-to-one assistance with the assignment. Additionally, since these students know very limited amounts of English and there are no interpreters to assist them, two of the more advanced children in the class that speak their native language may need to assist them with certain concepts. However, for the most part, they are able to figure it out with additional assistance.

D. What research or theory supports your pedagogical decision-making?

- *Bloom's Taxonomy* affects the range of my activities, and the different types of questions I ask throughout the lesson, both essential questions and critical thinking/discussion questions that build off from one another, increasing student thought as the lessons progress in difficulty.
- *Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences* are the reasoning behind my range of activities that tend to the different learning styles/types since I believe that it is not only boring, but unfair to teach in a manner that only suits a particular type of learner. To me, it's all about changing it up, and providing each learner with an equal opportunity to succeed.

E. What teacher and students instructional resources and materials are utilized in this lesson?

- Teacher Instructional Resources: The lesson plan attached, the classroom Weebly which includes various activities along with directions on how to implement them into the lessons and each activity's Common Core affiliation (<http://peers-skit.weebly.com>), <http://www.YouTube.com>, <http://www.epodunk.com/routes/erie-canal/start.html>, <http://www.ncss.org/>, <http://www.corestandards.org/>
- Teacher Instructional Materials: A computer with internet access, speaker connection, and SMARTboard 11 software or higher, a SMARTboard, handouts provided in the attached lesson plan.
- Student Instructional Resources/Materials: Dictionaries, glossaries, history/geography textbooks, informational texts, encyclopedias, colored pencils/markers/crayons, handouts provided by the teacher, and a pencil.

## II. Assessment

A. How will assessments be used so you know when the students are successful in meeting today's lesson objectives?

- The True/False informal assessment will illustrate to me what the students learned, had prior knowledge of, and could use more instruction on.

- The student's abilities to complete the vocabulary word scramble and word find will illustrate to me the students understanding of the vocabulary presented in today's lesson.
  - The evaluation rubric will assess the student's work during the lesson, illustrating to me what could be improved upon for the succeeding day's lesson, and what seems to be working.
- B. How will assessments be used so your students know when they are successful in meeting today's lesson objectives?
- Students will each receive a sticker to put on their behavior/class participation chart (something each child in the class is assessed on daily and sent home with to get signed by their parents). Green smiley face stickers will indicate a job well done, yellow smiley face stickers will indicate that a student could use improvement, and red smiley face stickers will indicate that a student needs to improve his or her act and meet with the teacher to discuss what can be improved/worked upon. These stickers correlate to the evaluation rubric provided in the lesson plan that will be sent home with the students in their homework folder at the beginning of the unit to inform parents and students of what the stickers represent.
- C. Beyond today's lesson, how else will you assess student learning related to these objectives/standards? (for example: unit test, completed writing piece, portfolio assessment, universal screening, performance task)
- During the succeeding lesson, students will each be given their own personal journal. Students will be given time to decorate and personalize their journals to their own liking. Each day, students will engage in a virtual simulation of a trip down the Erie Canal. Following the tour and the day's lesson, students will write down what they learned, what they want to learn, and what they could use more help on. Weekly journal checks will be administered to assess student learning. At the end, creating a portfolio of knowledge and growth for each student.
  - If journals are too costly, students will be asked to complete informal, ticket out the door assessments, as outlined on the classroom Weebly. The Ticked Out the Door assessments will do the same job as the journals would, without the financial burden.
  - Formal writing pieces will be administered throughout the unit as illustrated on the classroom Weebly. Students will write about an array of topics/essential questions such as:
    - To what extent has the Erie Canal influenced you personally?
    - If you were responsible for the Erie Canal, what would you have done differently and why? Justify your answer.
    - Plan your own Erie Canal trip in present day, include all sights you wish to see, all costs, where you wish to stay and why, etc.
    - To what extent did geography influence the construction/placement of the Erie Canal?
    - In your opinion, was the Erie Canal beneficial to society? Why or why not?
    - What can be done to preserve the Erie Canal's history? What can you personally do? What can we as a class do? Etc.

### III.

Teacher Name: Lisa Peers
Date/Time: November 2013 Morning-During S.S. Instruction
Grade Level: 4 ESL Learners

#### **Instructing and Engaging Learners**

- A. Describe how you create a positive environment for learning toward the lesson objectives. Consider elements of student motivation.
- Students will be asked to relate to the Erie Canal, and share any experiences that they may have with the Erie Canal or that their friends/family may have had with the Erie Canal.
  - Students will be hooked into the lesson by knowing that at one point throughout the unit they will be able to design their own Erie Canal trip and maybe even take a field trip to the Erie Canal since School #50 is planning on doing so!
  - Students will be able to come up to the SMARTboard and use the erase-to-reveal effect to reveal correct answers, motivating them to work to find the correct answer and raise their hands with their responses so that they will be called upon and able to come up to the board.
  - Students that perform well throughout the entire lesson will receive a green sticker on their behavior chart for the day, something that will motivate students since parents have to sign their behavior charts each night. Additionally, any student that receives all green smileys throughout the unit will receive an extra special prize.
  - Students will be able to work together during the True/False activities to come to a class consensus on a single answer, encouraging collaboration and communication, making the lesson seem like a game show.
  - Students will be able to sing along to the Erie Canal song and eventually create their own Erie Canal song.
  - Lastly, students will be able to do a word scramble and/or word find at the end of class with the opportunity of receiving “Star Bucks”, a reward system used in this particular classroom/school.
- B. Describe the sequence of learning experiences in which students will participate to promote their critical thinking and understanding of social studies. Make sure to consider literature and technology experiences. What will an observer in your classroom see the students doing? What will an observer see you doing? What will an observer see other adults in your classroom doing?
1. Students will have background knowledge of the geography of NYS.
  2. Students will discuss the Erie Canal as a class (what they know about it, if they have ever visited, if any of their friend or family have, etc.)

3. Students will construct their own maps of the Erie Canal based upon previous knowledge of the geography of NYS that was learned during the previous unit. In the process, getting to use the SMARTboard!
  4. Students will complete a True/False activity prior to and after viewing a video on the history of the Erie Canal. Students will work as a class and communicate with one another to discover the correct answer, thus, creating a game-show feel.
  5. Students will listen to the Erie Canal Song and fill out a fill-in-the-blank worksheet. Students will then be called upon to give the correct response and come up to the SMARTboard and use the “erase to reveal” effect to reveal the correct response.
  6. If time permits, students will complete an Erie Canal Vocabulary Word Find and/or Word Scramble, to further students’ knowledge of vocabulary and possibly earn STARbucks (a reward system used in school #50).
- Observers will see the students work individually, in small groups, and as an entire class. Students will not only use various media to gain knowledge, but they will also have the opportunity to use the SMARTboard and engage in digitally rich learning experiences.
  - Observers will see me as the teacher, walking around observing student progress, assisting when necessary, and teaching from both the SMARTboard and in the traditional sense.
  - Observers will see other adults in the room assisting those ESL students with extremely limited English comprehension skills, and/or assisting students during individual and group work.

C. What questions will be presented to stimulate student thinking at multiple higher order levels?

- To what extent has the Erie Canal influenced your life thus far?
- Has the Erie Canal had a positive or negative impact on your life/your family’s life personally?
- What have you done to help/harm the Erie Canal?
- What can you do to improve the Erie Canal’s longevity and increase awareness throughout the school and community?
- What would you do if you got to plan your own trip down the Erie Canal?
- To what degree did geography influence the construction/placement of the Erie Canal?
- In your opinion, what rationale/reasoning led to the creation of the Erie Canal?
- If you were responsible for the construction of the Erie Canal, what would you have done differently and why? Justify your answer.
- If you could praise anyone for their contributions to the Erie Canal who would it be and why?
- In your opinion, who/what has been the most harmful to the Erie Canal?
- Why is the Erie Canal no longer used as a form of transportation and trade?
- What differences/similarities exist between the Canal at the time of its creation and in present day?

- D. How do you actively engage students in learning related to your objectives and how will you know if the students are truly engaged?
- To actively engage students, students will complete a series of activities that will not only stimulate student learning, but tend to the multiple intelligences and learning styles that exist within the classroom. Unlike the traditional lecture/lesson, students will be actively involved in the lesson through the various activities and opportunities to use the SMARTboard and compete for STARbucks, green smiley faces, and other rewards. I will know if students are actively engaged or not based upon their true/false responses following the video, their effectiveness in completing the various vocabulary activities at the end of the lesson, and their overall effort for the day's lesson which will be reflected in the evaluation chart and by their respective sticker.
- E. How do you provide opportunity for students to generalize, maintain, and/or self-direct the use of the new learning?
- In the successive lessons, students will be able to generalize content by forming opinions and conclusions based upon presented information. In this current lesson, students generalize material when being asked the essential question: to what degree did geography influence the construction/placement of the Erie Canal? Students will also have chances to demonstrate the knowledge they retained and/or forgot through various activities and assessments (both informal and formal). Students will then be able to self-direct their use of new learning through their journal entries which will begin in the succeeding lesson, and their opportunities to create their own Erie Canal songs/raps/poems, along with their pseudo trips to the Erie Canal which they will plan themselves and completely self-direct, taking what they wish to take from the experience based upon the effort they put forth.
- F. How have the learning experiences been designed or organized to meet the 5 major areas of development needs of various learners (i.e., social, emotional, cognitive, physical, linguistic) in your classroom (include modifications and accommodations to meet individual needs-could include the learning environment, group composition, assistive technology, universal design strategies)?
- Social: Students will have to cooperate with one another to come to a single answer on the True/False SMARTboard activity. This will benefit those students that speak limited English because they will be able to communicate with their peers that speak similar native languages if they have a question or need assistance.
  - Emotional: Students will watch various videos and view various primary documents/pictures that will illustrate to emotional learners what life was like at the time of the Erie Canal's creation along with how people felt in regards to the creation of the Erie Canal (both positive and negative accounts). Later on in the unit, emotional learners will also get to engage in case studies and several other engaging group discussions.

- Cognitive: Cognitive learners will have the opportunity to watch various videos and will enjoy being presented information in an array of media that will allow them to absorb information actively and first-hand through experience.
- Physical: Physical learners will enjoy that this lesson allows them to come up to the SMARTboard and actually move around unlike the traditional lesson. Additionally, later on in the unit, students will engage in a virtual Erie Canal tour in which students simulate their own boat ride through the Canal.
- Linguistic: Linguistic learners will enjoy being asked essential questions and being able to share their own thoughts and experiences associated with the topic. These students will also benefit greatly from the Erie Canal Song portion of today's lesson, and a latter lesson in which students will get to create their own rap, song, or poem about the Erie Canal!
  - For the most part, no modifications or accommodations will need to be made. Unless the three boys that know hardly any English are having a difficult time with the content, in which case, one of the more advanced students in the class that speaks the same language will have to be placed next to/or in the same group as those students. Other than that, group composition will remain random for the most part, ensuring that all students get to work with one another and are in a position in the classroom that is conducive of learning (meaning that the board can be seen easily, etc.), unless of course problems arise in which case, students will be moved to a spot in the classroom that will better suit their own learning style/preferences. No assistive technologies need to be used, however, the teachers at school #50 have started using a microphone when teaching, which can be implemented into this lesson, however, it does not have to be.

## Reflection

- A. How does your evidence help you plan for your next instructional steps?
- Students should have a basic understanding of the Erie Canal, and the vocabulary associated with it.
  - Students will be able to further examine the Erie Canal through the use of journal entries, canal trip simulations, jeopardy activities, and an array of other activities that are designed for a higher skillset and knowledge base.
  - Students will use the knowledge gained in this lesson as a starting block/basis for the knowledge that is to come in the successive lessons that will be accompanied by a series of formal, informal, and pre-assessments.
  - Students will be able to draw conclusions about the Erie Canal in lessons to follow, relating the Erie Canal to themselves as the content increases in difficulty.
  - Students will be able to respond coherently to Essential Questions of higher difficulty, and expand upon these responses using evidence, drawing connections between knowledge gained both in the classroom and through personal experiences.