

Current and not so current events: An elementary-level lesson
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Social Studies Standards

4.1 Students demonstrate an understanding of the physical and human geographic features that define places and regions in California.

1. Explain and use the coordinate grid system of latitude and longitude to determine the absolute locations of places in California and on Earth.
3. Identify the state capital and describe the various regions of California, including how their characteristics and physical environments (e.g., water, landforms, vegetation, climate) affect human activity.

Language Arts Standards

2.0 Reading Comprehension

Students read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. They draw upon a variety of comprehension strategies as needed (e.g., generating and responding to essential questions, making predictions, comparing information from several sources). The selections in Recommended Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students. In addition to their regular school reading, students read one-half million words annually, including a good representation of grade-level-appropriate narrative and expository text (e.g., classic and contemporary literature, magazines, newspapers, online information).

Structural Features of Informational Materials

2.1 Identify structural patterns found in informational text (e.g., compare and contrast, cause and effect, sequential or chronological order, proposition and support) to strengthen comprehension.

1.0 Writing Strategies

Students write clear, coherent sentences and paragraphs that develop a central idea. Their writing shows they consider the audience and purpose. Students progress through the stages of the writing process (e.g., prewriting, drafting, revising, editing successive versions).

Organization and Focus

1.1 Select a focus, an organizational structure, and a point of view based upon purpose, audience, length, and format requirements.

1.2 Create multiple-paragraph compositions:

1. Provide an introductory paragraph.
2. Establish and support a central idea with a topic sentence at or near the beginning of the first paragraph.

3. Include supporting paragraphs with simple facts, details, and explanations.
4. Conclude with a paragraph that summarizes the points.
5. Use correct indentation.

1.3 Use traditional structures for conveying information (e.g., chronological order, cause and effect, similarity and difference, posing and answering a question).

Objective: Students will be able to read a newspaper article from the past and from the present and compare the issues being discussed from a historical and social viewpoint.

Background Knowledge:

Students will have completed current events and understand how to read a news article and summarize important information. Students will have been exposed to current events and will have an understanding of the world around them and how the events that occur can have a direct impact on their lives. Students will know about the different regions in California and their location. Students will also know how to find longitude and latitude.

Anticipatory Set:

Have stacks of newspapers and magazines in the front of the classroom have some clips from the local news and local newsletters. Ask students why we have newspapers. Why were newspapers started? How does the news get there? What can we find in the newspaper? After explaining all of the different sections of newspapers including Sports, local, world, comics, classified, entertainment, living, opinion, and so forth, explain that newspapers keep people informed of the events going on in the world around them. Talk to students about headlines. What is a headline? What would be a good headline to describe our class today?

Explain to students that we work with current events so that we can be aware of the world around us and how those events can affect our lives. Tell students that today we are going to be looking at current events that happen in California. (note: for a few weeks before the lesson go through the newspaper or search online for articles related to California. Articles that focus on environmental issues and economics are ideal.)

Guided practice:

Read a current event article as class and summarize the content together. Next, identify the location in California on a map. Find the longitude and latitude of the location to reinforce geography skills. Discuss the impact the article has on the state, our county, our city, our school, our class and the individual students. Next as a class we will connect to the database of newspapers and search the topic we are discussing. We will discuss key words we might use to search and why those words would be important. Once we have searched we will look at different articles to see if they are similar in any way to the first article we read as a class. After looking at a few articles we will print one up and summarize it as a class and do all of the same things we did with the first current event. As a class we will discuss the impact the events in the article have on us today. Focusing

on helping the students understand the impact history has on our lives today and how the news of today will impact the future.

Independent/ group practice:

Have students work in pairs to read and discuss 2 articles. Have students summarize the articles in a paragraph. Students should include the location of where the event happened. Students will find that location on a map of California and mark the location on a blank map of California and identify the region and approximate longitude and latitude. The first article that students will read will be an article from a recent newspaper or magazine. The students will discuss the impact the events have on the state, our county, our city, our school, our class and the students themselves. Next the students will go to the online database of newspapers and search for articles that might be related to the article. As the students search for articles the teacher will monitor their searches and help students with the vocabulary and understanding of the articles. (Note. For classes with students who do not have the access or ability to computers with Internet access the teacher may have pre selected articles for students to compare and this will cut down on time the teacher spends guiding students to relevant articles.) Once students have selected and read a relevant article, they will summarize, locate and follow the same pattern as I modeled with the class. The students will present their articles and take questions from the class concerning the impact the articles have had on our lives.

Assessment:

Students will be assessed both formally and informally. The informal assessment will take place while the students are working in their groups. As the students work the teacher will monitor their progress. The formal assessment will be the presentation in front of the class and the final product that is turned in.