

TOPS Lesson Plan

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Stage One

You and Me Across the Sea – Different Yet Still the Same

Unit Focus

- Children often think of people who live in other countries as having a lifestyle and culture totally different from theirs. With this “uncommonality” in their minds, other people and cultures can become “them and us”. The more I travel, the more I understand that we are all just people with many common threads that weave the patterns of our lives. When children learn to see these common traits, their thinking can evolve from the “them and us” mentality to a “we” mentality that can ultimately guide them to understand that the peoples of the world should work together rather than against each other.

Big Concepts

- Students will compare and contrast their lifestyles in the United States with lifestyles of German children to find similarities and differences between the two countries.

Essential Understandings

- No matter where and how they live, human beings share common needs, wants, activities, and lifestyles that can serve to unite us as people.

Essential Questions

- If you moved to Germany, what would change in your life?
- If you moved to Germany, what would remain the same in your life?

West Virginia State Content Standards

- SS.3.1.5 – give examples of how people working together can accomplish goals that individuals working alone cannot
- SS.3.1.6 – explain and cite examples of how groups can make a difference in the community.
- SS.3.4.1 – describe and use the basic elements of maps and globes
- SS.3.4.2 – identify north, south, east, west, borders, longitude and latitude, equator, north and south poles and times zones using a map
- SS.3.5.4 – make historical inferences by analyzing artifacts and pictures
- SS.3.5.7 – explain the importance of respect for diversity in the heritage, culture, ideas and opinions of others.
- SS.3.5.10 – organize information from various reference sources to prepare short reports and presentations.

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Stage Two: Individual Summative Assessment

Assessment Type

Using books, internet, pictures, documents, and orally presented material, students will interpret and analyze information to form a written comparison and contrast of student lifestyles in the United States and Germany.

Short Scenario

Your friend Micki has told you that her father is being transferred to Germany, and the family will be moving with him. They do not speak German, they don't know very much about Germany, and they are nervous about moving away. You would like to help her feel more comfortable about the move by helping her realize that people all over the world are in some ways very much the same. Please tell her three things that you know people living in Germany have in common with people living in the United States and one thing that she can expect to be different. Compile your ideas in a letter so that Micki can take it with her and reread it whenever she's feeling a little frightened.

Directions / Criteria

- Use a friendly letter format.
- You should have four paragraphs. Begin each new paragraph with a new main idea about something that Germans and Americans have in common or do differently from each other.
- Include two to three details about the main idea of each paragraph.
- Your letter should have a good closing sentence.

Go Beyond!

- Both countries have wonderful things to see and do. Make a list of special cities Micki can visit with a list of things she can see and do in each city.
- Find and list two or three good websites that will help Micki better understand Germany and its people.
- Let Micki know that some German food will be familiar. Make a list of five foods commonly found in the United States that originally came from Germany.

Grading Rubric

0 – assignment is not attempted

1 – letter format is incorrect, three main ideas are not evident, details are missing

2 – letter format is mostly correct, four main ideas are evident, but details or closing sentence are missing or incorrect

3 – letter format is mostly correct, four main ideas are evident, some details are included and are correct, closing sentence may be missing or not relevant to the letter

4 – letter format is correct, four main ideas are evident, all details are included and are correct, closing sentence is included and is relevant to the letter.

5 – all requirements for a “4” are completed as well as one correctly completed “Go Beyond” choice

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Stage Three

Instructional Strategies and Learning Activities

- Work together to develop class and individual K-W-L charts to display collective class knowledge about Germany. Update these charts daily to review and refresh previous days' activities.
- Find, color, and label the United States and Germany on a world map. As an extension, the European Union can also be colored and labeled with the understanding that Germany is a part of the EU.
- Label and color oceans and seas near each country.
- Read together the nonfiction book Countries of the World: Germany published by Red Brick Learning as well as other grade appropriate nonfiction selections about Germany and its people. To order Countries of the World: Germany go online to www.redbricklearning.com. Do a search for Countries of the World. Click on Classroom Library, and click on Germany to view the book.
- Read together well-known German literature such as Grimm's Fairy Tales, Little Red Riding Hood, the Emil series, and Pippi Longstocking (not a German author but a well-loved German children's series).
- Children can visit the following websites during free time or center activities to further knowledge of Germany and complete the accompanying study guide.
 - <http://topics-mag.com/edition11/games-section.htm> (click on games of tag)
 - www.germany.info/relaunch/culture/life/G_Kids/ (click on "living" then "school" and "home")
- Show and discuss selected personal photos and stories from T.O.P. teacher study trips to Germany to further aid understanding of German life and culture. Of special interest will be photos from the elementary school visit.
- Assign – Using knowledge gained from previously described lessons, students will work in pairs to complete the accompanying Venn diagram to identify similarities and differences between the United States and Germany.
- Each pair of students will record one similarity and one difference on a class-sized Venn diagram posted in the front of the room. No duplications are permitted.
- As a class, discuss ideas generated by partner work and Venn diagrams.
- Using ideas generated by the class Venn diagram, students may update and revise their personal Venn diagrams.
- Using K-W-L charts and Venn diagrams as references, children will individually complete the summative friendly letter assessment.

Name _____

Website Lesson Study Guide - Using the Internet to Compare Germany and the United States

1. Log on to <http://topics-mag.com/edition11/games-section.htm>
Click on “games of tag”
Find and read about the German tag game.
Teach the game to some friends at recess and play the game together.
Answer the following questions:

Did you like the game? Why or why not? _____

What funny or frustrating things happened while you were playing the game? _____

2. Log on to www.germany.info/relaunch/culture/life/G_Kids/
Click on “living” then click on “school”.
Read about the first day of school for first-graders in Germany and answer the following question.

How is a German first-grader’s first day of school different than in the United States? Would this be a good tradition to begin in the U.S.?

3. Log onto www.germany.info/relaunch/culture/life/G_Kids/
Click on “living” then click on “home”
Read about the lives of German children at home and answer the following question.

Do you think that German children and U.S. children are more alike or more different? Give reasons for your answer.

Name _____

Venn Diagram Lesson - Comparing Germany and the United States

Use the Venn diagram below to compare and contrast Germany and the United States. You may work alone or share ideas with a partner. This paper may be used for ideas to complete your summative assessment, so be sure to do good work.

Germany

Germany and the United States

The United States

Name _____

Venn Diagram Lesson - Comparing Germany and the United States

Use the Venn diagram below to compare and contrast Germany and the United States. You may work alone or share ideas with a partner. This paper may be used for ideas to complete your summative assessment, so be sure to do good work.

The form is a Venn diagram template for comparing Germany and the United States. It consists of three main sections, each with horizontal lines for writing:

- Germany:** The top section, labeled "Germany", contains 12 horizontal lines.
- Germany and the United States:** The middle section, labeled "Germany and the United States", contains 12 horizontal lines.
- The United States:** The bottom section, labeled "The United States", contains 12 horizontal lines.

Friendly Letter Assessment

(Teachers: use if desired or assign on notebook paper without this format to assist)

_____ (date)

_____, (greeting)

(body) _____

Lined area for writing the body of the letter.

_____, (closing)

_____ (signature)