



SOCIAL STUDIES LESSON PLANNER

Title: Comparing Cultures

Grade: 2

BACKGROUND:

Does this lesson fit into an ongoing focus (if so, describe) or does it stand alone?

Students will have to use what they have learned about the different Canadian communities to determine which one is represented in this story's setting.

STEP 1: What essential questions do we want to answer?

In the end what do we want our kids to know and be able to do?

The students will identify some specific characteristics of an Acadian community. The students will identify some specific characteristics of their own communities. The students will identify ways their personal identities are influenced by the community they live in. The students will identify ways in which communities are shaped by their histories.

STEP 2: What outcomes are we addressing in this unit?

General Outcome (s)

2.1 Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how geography, culture, language, heritage, economics and resources shape and change Canada's communities.

Specific Outcomes

2.1.3 investigate the cultural and linguistic characteristics of an Inuit, an Acadian and a prairie community in Canada by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions for inquiry:

- *What are the cultural characteristics of the communities (eg., special symbols, landmarks, languages spoken, shared stories or traditions, monuments, schools, churches?)*
- *What are the traditions and celebrations in the communities that connect the people to the past and to each other?*
- *How are the communities strengthened by their stories, traditions and events of the past?*

STEP 3: How will we answer the questions?

What will the learning activities be?

1) Read the story to the students – *Claire's Gift* or *Les Vacances de Claire* by Maxine Trottier.

2) Ask students whether the setting suggests it is an Acadian, an Inuit or a prairie community. Ask them to determine what evidence they are using to make this judgment? Students will have to use what they have learned about the different Canadian communities to determine which one is represented in this story's setting. This discussion should bring out the characteristics (village, ocean, boats, docks, fishing, lobster traps, and use of the French language) of the Acadian setting in the book. ***(It should also provide an opportunity for critical thinking as they categorize, compare, contrast, and consider the evidence and use it to justify answers.)***

3) Another aspect of the setting is the time. What evidence in the book suggests the setting is in the past? Might any of the customs (eg., rug making), practices (eg., baking bread outdoors) or leisure activities (eg., rug hooking and kite flying) be continued into the present? ***(That the historical perspective of our community's history influences our current identity can be examined through this discussion.)*** You might use a quick T-chart or VENN diagram to illustrate some of the past/present comparisons. Depending on the experiences of the class, this can be a large group activity (to model the T-chart or VENN diagram) or a small group activity.

4) Ask the students if this story could also take place in the present? What might be different about the story if it were set in the present? The students can be invited to copy one of the illustrations in the book, but update the parts of the picture to what it would look like in the present. For example, on pages 6 and 7, a current picture might still have lobster traps and fishing nets, but the women would be wearing pants and the horse drawn cart might be a fish truck.

5) To further examine how the past influences the present, students might be asked to identify the habits, customs, traditions, and leisure activities from the Acadian community's past that might have shaped the present? What might be different about the life of someone currently living in an Acadian community right now - compared to your students' lives - because of the community's coastal history? For example, curling and hockey may be popular among the children in Lacombe but may not be popular activities in an Acadian community. An opportunity for researching this on the Internet or by writing to a school in an Acadian community may provide answers.

6) In the end, Claire made a rug for her aunt. In what ways did the rug represent Claire's life? In what ways did the rug represent the Acadian culture? What cultural objects might represent the Inuit culture in the same way? (soap stone carving, for eg.) ***(The identity of a***

7) Claire had to live with her aunt while her parents were unable to look after her. This catalyst for discussion could open doors to talking delicately and respectfully about the various people who look after each other in a community for short or long periods of time. *(This examines the citizenship aspect of a community and the way it takes responsibility for its members due to civic responsibilities and shared values.)* For example, communities have day care providers - some of whom are government funded - and foster homes for children who need placements for longer periods. Many children live in foster homes or with other relatives, and open and respectful discussions will help them feel their situations are fully acceptable, just as more traditional ones are. *(Talking only about 'the family' is using exclusive language.)*

8) In the same way that Claire went to live with her aunt for the summer, the students might be asked to imagine with whom they might live if they had to live with someone else for a short while (this would be approached so the children wouldn't be afraid). For example, if the adult(s) they live with decided to go on a trip or a mission (with Red Cross, for eg.) to another country for a month, where might the students live? *(This activity allows for many opportunities to think critically by doing some decision-making.)* They might say right away that they want to live with their friends. But, to make an informed decision, the students should generate criteria for what would be required in a place to stay. For example, there would have to be at least one adult and enough space to provide shelter for another person. They might add access to recreation as another criteria. With criteria determined, the students would then have to make judgments regarding the best places to stay.

STEP 4: How will we know we have learned?

Assessment strategies?

If students do the activity of illustrating a page from the book, assessment could be based on the number of changes made to update it to the present. The picture could represent an Acadian community based on previous lessons, and reflect an understanding of what changes could be made to update the illustration to the present. Students can express their understanding of the Acadian culture's history by listing the physical, geographic and linguistic characteristics that link the past to the present.

If students make a 'rug' to represent themselves or their communities, they can be assessed according to the number of symbols they choose and the students' justifications for selecting each symbol.

If they do the activity that requires them to examine criteria for selecting an alternative place to live for a short time, they can be assessed according to the application of the criteria and their justifications for the choices they make.

STEP 5: What modifications might we need to make to this lesson to meet the needs of all learners?

STEP 6: What resources will we use?

Colleagues, reference books, audio-visual materials, related literature, music, art, internet, and guest speakers.

Claire's Gift or Les Vacances de Claire by Maxine Trottier.

