



Michigan State University
Fulbright-Hays Group Study Abroad 2009:
Nepal in the Contemporary World



Unit Plan by
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Title: Creating Myths and Legends from Nepal

Subject Areas: The full project is for middle school language arts classes. The first lesson on Nepal can also be used in a social studies class.

Grade Levels: 7

Length of Lesson: 1-6 weeks

Summary/Overview: Myths and Legends teach you about the country and culture from which they are based. This unit uses Nepal as the setting for a student written myth or legend that is a required genre for Michigan seventh grade language arts students.

The first part of the unit is made up of information to enhance traditional geography textbooks in the teaching of this small landlocked country. It is well suited to middle school geography classrooms.

Primary Objectives: To teach students about the developing country of Nepal. To demonstrate learning of the information on Nepal by creating a myth or legend based in this country.

Required Resources/Materials:

- Handouts provided in lesson plans
- Powerpoint presentation provided in these plans along with equipment for group presentation.
- Black line master map of Nepal with complete maps of Nepal to help students complete the required mapping assignment.
- Myths and legends from around the world, including Nepal, to immerse students in the genre.

Procedure:

Introduction to Nepal, myths and legends

- Ask students what they can tell you about Nepal. Ask them to define a myth, a legend.

- Explain that in this unit, students will be learning more about Nepal, myths and legends, to create an original story based in Nepal.

- Throughout the daily activities, use a myth or legend read aloud as a “warm up” to begin immersing students in the genre. I usually begin with *The Snow Wife*, by Robert D. SanSouci, because it has many of the components I’m looking for. (setting teaches about early Japan, creatures, currency/ trade, religious references, gods etc...) I use the handouts Myth / Legend Planning and Legends & Figurative Language, as I read daily stories to focus on components of the final product that I want to emphasize for the day. Reading selections should come from a variety of countries including Nepal.

- Begin the study of Nepal with the Almanac Profile sheet and the four individual profiles that include the information needed to complete the sheet. Students can work on their own or in teams. You can have them do one profile at a time and share the information, or have them complete the entire sheet with all four profiles.

- Before going over the answers to the Almanac Profile Sheet, show the four sections of PowerPoint pictures to help students visualize what the information is saying. This can be done one section at a time or all slides shown at the end. Students may find some information that they can add to their Almanac Profile Sheet as they watch.

Note: The PowerPoint includes lots of pictures, especially in the first section, so it takes lots of time to load. Be patient. Also keep in mind that the information on the profile sheet and the four profiles may not go line by line. You may find some information for the location section in the profile for government. However, most information is found in the labeled profile.

Mapping

- Prepare an outline map of Nepal. Make sure it is large enough to include a compass rose, key, scale, and required elements.
- Prepare reference maps for students with the needed information: city locations, river systems, Himalayan peaks and passes. OR, students could research the information they need to complete the assignment.
- Hand out **Nepal Physical Map** requirements sheet. You can vary the requirements based on the maps you have available for reference material.
- Students will create a physical map of Nepal that will be used as an illustration in their legend / myth project.

The Writing Assignment

- By the time the background information and mapping of Nepal is completed, students should have heard many examples of myths and legends. Now they are ready for the actual writing assignment.

- Students should begin brainstorming topics and select the topic that will make the best story using Nepal as the setting.

- Go over assignment requirements. (Hand out available)

- Begin prewriting, drafting, editing, revising...
- Introduce finishing the project, mandala for the cover, title page with flag, illustrations.

Assessments:

- Use rubric for grading final copy of myth / legend.

Michigan Content Expectations Met:

7th grade Eastern Hemisphere Studies

7-GI.2.1 Locate the major landforms, rivers, and climate regions of the Eastern Hemisphere

7-GI2.3 Use observations from air photos, photographs, films, as the basis for answering geographic questions about the human and physical characteristics of places and regions.

GI 3.1 Use the fundamental themes of geography (location, place, human environment interaction, movement, region) to describe regions or places on earth.

G2.1.1 Describe the landform features and the climate of the region under study.

G2.2.1 Describe the human characteristics of the region under study (including languages, religion, economic system, governmental system, cultural tradition).

G2.2.3 Analyze how culture and experience influence people's perception of places and regions (e.g., that beaches are places where tourists travel, cities have historic buildings...).

G4.3.1 Identify places in the Eastern Hemisphere that have been modified to be suitable for settlement by describing the modifications that were necessary (e.g., Nile River irrigation, planting trees in areas that have become desert in Africa).

7th grade English Language Arts

Reading:

R.NT.07.02 Analyze elements and style of narrative genres (e.g., myths, legends)

Listening and Viewing:

L.CN.07.02 Demonstrate the appropriate social skills of audience behavior (e.g., eye contact, quiet and still, attentive, supportive) during speeches and presentations.

Writing:

W.GN.07.01 Write a cohesive narrative piece that includes appropriate conventions to the genre (e.g., myth, legend) and employ literary and plot devices (e.g., internal and/or external conflicts, antagonists/protagonists, personification).

W.PR.07.02 Apply a variety of pre-writing strategies for narrative (e.g., story maps, plot structure diagram).

W.PR.07.04 Select and use titles, leads, and endings to achieve a specific purpose for specific audiences. (e.g., revise writing to ensure that content, structure, elements of style and voice, literary devices and textual features are consistent).

W.PR.07.05 Edit writing using proofreaders' checklists both individually and in peer editing groups.

W. GR. 07.01 Use style conventions and a variety of grammatical structures in writing including participial phrases, adverbial subordinate clauses, superlative adjectives and adverbs, present / past / future, continuous verb tenses, parentheses, singular and plural possessive forms, and indefinite pronouns.

Bibliography Unique to this lesson:

Maps:

- EKTA School Atlas, Chapagain, Ghimire, Thapa, EKTA books, Kathmandu, Nepal, copyright 2009, ISBN 99933-1-739-x

- Nepal in Maps, S.H. Shrestha, Educational Publishing House, Kathmandu, Nepal, copyright 2005

Myths / Legends:

- An Encounter with the Yeti and other Stories, Kesar Lall, Ratna Pustak Bhandar, Kathmandu, Nepal, copyright 1991

- Folk Tales From Nepal, Myths & Legends, Kesar Lall, Ratna Pustak Bhandar, Kathmandu, Nepal, copyright 2008, ISBN 978-99933-0-706-8

- Tales of the Yeti, Kesar Lall, Pilgrims' Book House, Kathmandu, Nepal, copyright 1988

Other:

- Mandala Colouring Book, Tania Sironic, Pilgrim Publishing House, India, copyright 2007, ISBN 81-7769-647-5