



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



Lesson Plan
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Title: A Comparison of the Birth of the United States' Democracy to the Birth of Nepal's Democracy

Subject Areas: Social Studies

Grade Levels: 5th through 8th

Length of Lesson: This is a year-long study with several main lessons at the beginning of the school year and the end of the school year. There is weekly follow-up.

Introduction: 4 lessons, each 45- 60 minutes

On-going weekly follow-up: 10 minutes

Culmination lesson: 45-60 minutes

Summary/Overview:

5th grade students learn about the beginning of the United States' democracy. Often this study is abstract as they read about the events from a textbook. At the moment, Nepal is in the process of writing its constitution as one of the world's youngest democracies. In this unit, students will begin by learning about Nepal's history to understand the implications for writing a constitution. Students will then learn how to find current events about Nepal on www.nepalnews.com to report to the class. Each student will get the opportunity to report to the class and the class will enjoy a report once a week. In the end students will compare and contrast Nepal's work toward democracy with that of the United States.

Primary Objectives:

1. Students will gain an understanding of building a democracy and writing a constitution.
2. Students will research current events and report them to the class.
3. Students will compare and contrast the United States' and Nepal's work towards democracy and writing a constitution.

Required Resources/Materials:

- Timeline of the US history from the BBC (for the purpose of these lessons you will only need the timeline until approximately 1800):
http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1230058.stm?ad=1

- Kid-friendly timeline of US history—see attachment #1
- Timeline of Nepali history from the BBC:
http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/country_profiles/1166516.stm?ad=1
- Kid-friendly timeline of Nepali history—see attachment #2
- Make a timeline:
http://www.teachnology.com/web_tools/materials/timelines/
- Look up current events related to Nepal: www.nepalnews.com
- Venn Diagram:
<http://www.2learn.ca/construct/graphicorg/venn/vennindex.html#>
- US History textbook
- Worksheets provided at the end of the lesson

Procedure:

Lesson 1: Begin by asking the students to make a list of everything they already know about the history of the United States (worksheet #1). (If students are stuck, you may ask some leading questions like, “Who lived in the US first?” “When did the US become a country?” “What holidays do we celebrate as a country and why?”) Allow the students to share with a partner for a few minutes so the partnerships can pick an item or items from their lists that they think are most important. Students can then share these with the class as the teacher writes a class list on chart paper (save this list for use in Lesson 2 and for the post-assessment). At this point, have the students attempt to put the list in chronological order to see what they know and see what misinterpretations exist (worksheet #2). This will serve as a pre-assessment for US history. Save this paper and have the students complete this same activity as a post-assessment at the end of the school year to compare results and hopefully enjoy the improved understanding.

Extensions:

1. Students can make a timeline of their own life.
2. Make an interactive and on-going timeline bulletin board. As the study of US history continues throughout the year and important events come up, have students add them to this class timeline.

Lesson 2: Students will browse their social studies textbooks to get a glimpse of the “story” of the US. Remind students to use informational text reading strategies (looking at titles, headings, pictures, and captions). Using their textbooks, students can revise the chronological list they made previously (worksheet #3). Engage the students in a discussion about the history of the US considering the “highlights” and having the students create a timeline with a partner on construction paper or adding the highlights to the class timeline (see Lesson #1 Extension #2). (In order for the subsequent lessons to be relevant, make sure the “highlights” include the Declaration of Independence and the ratification of the Constitution.)

Lesson 3: Students will begin their study of Nepal by brainstorming what they know about it (worksheet #4 direction #1). This knowledge is likely to be limited so supplement it with maps, globes, pictures, and artifacts. Share the timeline of Nepal’s history with the class

(see aforementioned link or attachment #2) by providing each student or pair of students with a copy of it. Have students notice and name similarities and differences between US history and Nepal's history.

Inform the students that Nepal is very special because Nepal is in the process of building a democracy and writing their constitution just like the US did 230 years ago. Let the students know that we will be keeping an eye on Nepal to stay connected to "current events" (also known as the history that is being made today) and to help us better understand US history. Have the students write a list of questions that they have about Nepal (worksheet #4 direction #2).

Lesson 4: There is a lot of talk about "political parties" in current events and history. This lesson is an attempt to help young students understand the concept of political parties.

Ask the students what they think of when they hear the word "party." They are likely to say a birthday party or similar celebration. Ask them if they've heard the word "party" used in any other ways. Maybe they will say that they've heard a hostess at a restaurant ask "How many in your party?" Elicit that a "party" is a group of people.

Ask the students if they would like to "party" with people who think the same way they do or who think differently than they do—are there benefits and drawbacks to both?

Ask the students how they feel when: there is no party to go to, or when there are too many parties to choose from.

Encourage students to realize that political parties are groups of people who think, and therefore, vote alike. Remind students that we have two main political parties in the US.

Review some of the Nepali timeline that uses the concept of "political parties." Have the students notice in 1962 there was a "party-less" system and ask them how they would feel if a king made all of their decisions for them. Students should be drawing conclusions that if a king was being unfair, like King George was to the colonies, that they would probably want a new way of doing things.

On-going lesson: To help students understand the process of writing and adopting a new constitution, students will keep a record of Nepal's current events by researching on-line. Once a week, students will go to www.nepalnews.com to find out what life is like in a new democracy as it tries to write its constitution. One student per week can report to the class what they have learned about that week's events while the other students keep an on-going record (worksheet #5).

Extensions:

1. Train one student to be the "reporter." The following week, that student can train the next student and so forth. This allows each student to be the trainer and the reporter.
2. When it's a student's day to be the reporter, encourage them to really get into it by dressing up and bringing props.

Culmination lesson: This lesson should be completed after the class has studied the era of the American Revolution and the New Nation in US History and gathered many reports

about Nepal's burgeoning democracy. Students will compare and contrast the birth of the US to the birth of the newly formed Nepali democracy by using a Venn diagram. Students should be able to articulate from this study that the process of becoming a democracy is a long and difficult one.

Assessments:

Worksheet #2 can be used a pre-assessment at the beginning of the school year. This can be reused at the end of the school year as a post-assessment.

Michigan Content Expectations Met:

- K1.6 Apply social studies concepts to better understand major current local, national, and world events, issues, and problems.
- P2.3 Know how to find and organize information from a variety of sources, analyze, interpret, support interpretations with evidence, critically evaluate, and present the information orally and in writing; report investigation results effectively.
- 5 P4.2.2 Participate in projects to help or inform others.
- This unit supports and extends the study of the American Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1800) in 5th grade.

Bibliography Unique to this lesson:

Bell, Brian. Insight Guide: Nepal. Singapore: Apa Publications Gmbh & Co., 2002.

State of Michigan's 5th grade GLCEs:

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/5thgradeSSGLCE_229669_7.pdf

Timeline of Nepali history from the BBC:

http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/country_profiles/1166516.stm?ad=1

Timeline of US history from the BBC:

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Name _____ # _____

Date _____

Worksheet #4



NEPAL



Direction 1: List everything you know about Nepal.

Direction 2: After a class discussion, list what you want to know.

Direction 3: At the end of your study of Nepal, write what you learned and new questions you have.

K	W	L	W
What I Know about Nepal	What I Want to know about Nepal	What I Learned about Nepal	What I Want to know now

Name _____ # _____
Attachment #1



TIMELINE OF US HISTORY



Early History

From 11,000 BC

Native Americans inhabited the land.

Age of Exploration

1492

Christopher Columbus landed in the Bahamas.

1513

Ponce de Leon explored around present-day Florida.

Colonial Period

1565

The first permanent European settlement was established in present-day Florida by the Spanish.

1607

Jamestown, Virginia was founded.

1620

Plymouth Colony was founded by the Pilgrim Fathers.

1621

The first Thanksgiving was celebrated.

17th-18th century

Africans brought over and sold into slavery.

1763

Britain won control of the land to the Mississippi River from the France.

American Revolution

1774

Colonists formed the First Continental Congress because Britain closed the Boston harbor and deployed troops in Massachusetts.

1775

General George Washington led the Continental Army to fight against British rule.

1776

Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence.

1781

Colonists wrote the Articles of Confederation (a weak set of laws).

1783

Britain accepted the loss of the colonies with The Treaty of Paris.

1787

Founding fathers gathered in Philadelphia to write the Constitution.

1788

The Constitution came into effect after the states ratified it.

1789

George Washington was elected the first president.

1791

The Bill of Rights guaranteed individual freedom.

1803

France sold the Louisiana Territory to the US.

Lewis and Clark were sent out to explore the new territory.

Name _____ # _____
Attachment #2



TIMELINE OF NEPAL



Early History

8000 BC- 600 BC Nepal's first inhabitants were the eastern Kirati kings.
543 BC Buddha was born in Lumbini.

Malla and Shah Dynasties (A dynasty is a sequence of rulers from the same family or group.)

1200 The Mallas brought riches to Nepal.
1482 King Malla died and Kathmandu Valley was divided into four city-states: Patan, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, and Banepu.
1559 Druvya Shah captured the fort of Gorkha.
1768 Ruler of Gorkha conquered Kathmandu and Patan (Bhaktapur in 1767) to reunite Nepal, starting the Shah Dynasty. Nepal was then closed off to foreigners.
1811 The First Himalayan peak was measured (Dhaulagiri—8,167 m/29,765 ft).

The Rana Dynasty

1846 The queen wanted to kill Jung Bahadur Rana (a rising military leader), so he staged a massacre at the palace. 50 people died and he started the Rana dynasty, ruling Nepal. The royal family was kept almost like prisoners.
1852 Peak XV (Mount Everest) was discovered to be the highest point on earth.
1950 India and Nepal became friends. The Nepali Congress Party (NCP) was formed to campaign against the Ranas. The Ranas and the NCP shared power under the direct rule of the king. Nepalese won the right to vote but the Ranas still had most of the power.

Monarchy Restored (A Monarchy is a place whose power is with a king or queen.)

1951 King Tribhuvan came to power and dismissed the Rana prime minister. Foreigners were allowed in Nepal.
1953 Sir Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing climbed Mount Everest for the first time.
1962-1970 King Mahendra cancelled democracy and made a "panchayat" (party-less) system. He promised an election, but it never happened. The constitution was made by the king.
1972 King Birendra was crowned.

Democracy and Revolt

1990 After a revolt by the people, King Birendra lifted the ban on political parties. A new constitution said that the people have power through a parliamentary system (a group of people elected

- to make the laws) and the king was a constitutional monarch (the king's power was limited by the constitution.)
- 1991 The general election was won by the NCP and there was a prime minister.
- 1994 The prime minister stepped down and the leader of the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN) was voted to be the prime minister.
- 1995 The Supreme Court said that the election was void and the former parliament was put back into power.
- 1996 CPN (Maoists) began a "People's War" that lasted for 10 years. In this time, there was a lot of violence and turmoil in politics. The king didn't care about the Maoists because he didn't think they were powerful.
- 1999 Another election was held, the NCP won again, and a new prime minister was chosen.
- 2001 Nine members of the royal family were killed by the prince because his family would not let him choose his wife. King Birendra's brother Gyanendra became king.
- 2002 Parliament was dissolved and new elections were planned but the king cancelled them.
- 2005 The king dismissed the prime minister and his government and took direct power because he wanted to defeat the Maoists.
- 2006 April--The king agreed to reinstate parliament because of protests.
May—Parliament voted unanimously to restrict the king's power.
November—The Maoists signed a peace agreement and joined the government.
- 2007 May--Elections got postponed.
September--The Maoists said will only stay in the government if there was no monarchy.
December—Parliament voted to abolish the monarchy.
- 2008 April—Maoists won the most seats in an election for the constituent assembly (the people who will write the new constitution).
May—Nepal became a republic (a place in which the power is with the people who vote).
July—Nepal got its first president (the president has no administrative power; only alerts the government to what he sees).
- 2009 May—The prime minister resigned because he felt that the president was getting too involved.
Late May—Parliament elected a new prime minister.
RIGHT NOW-- Nepal is writing a new constitution! It is supposed to be done in June 2010.