

Minnesota Writing Project

--- Demonstration Lesson Template ---

Title of lesson: Confluence: Using Metaphor to Deepen Understanding
Suggested grade/age: Middle to High School

Approximate time needed to complete lesson: 2-3 class periods, 50-60 minutes each.

Rest of Unit: Lesson time varies for different parts of the proposed unit, and can be tailored to fit the length of a class period. Some lessons could be done in content classrooms (Science, Geography, History, etc.); others can be incorporated into Readers' or Writers' Workshop or ELA classes, depending on grade level.

Learning objective(s) and significance of lesson:

Rationale: Marzano's "high yield" strategy list ranks the ability to see and articulate similarities and differences as #1. This lesson/unit offers several opportunities to compare/contrast, including using and creating metaphors.

Standards: see attached list.

Best Practices: This unit fosters literacy motivation, involves reading for authentic reasons*, use of multiple texts, vocabulary and concept expansion, collaborative learning, discussions, use of technologies. Also taps into multiple intelligences.

*2012-2013 declared Year of The Dakota: Remembering, Honoring and Truth-Telling; current state of Minnesota River (fifth most endangered in country due to pollution); local and easily accessible sites can be visited in a half or full day field trip; additional resources are readily available within the Twin Cities community.

Lesson Objective: Students should be able to

- a. visually and orally describe a geographic confluence, including causes/effects on surrounding environment;
- b. use 'confluence' as a metaphor for other joining or unions between people, events, things;
- c. use writing process to describe a personal confluence from their own lives (prose or poetry).

Brief summary/outline of lesson:

School Year: Ideally, this unit would be covered early in the year (September or October) in order to introduce the use of key concepts that could be woven throughout the rest of the year. Also, these months would be conducive to outdoor field trips to pertinent sites.

This lesson (Confluence) is scaffolded by earlier lessons covering river systems. These may occur within the regular ed. classroom via reading of non-fiction texts, or may be taught or co-taught with a science specialist. Instruction on some topics may also be done in Social Studies classes. Students will have had previous exposure to, and understanding of, metaphors and their use in a wide variety of texts. This lesson is part of a larger unit building to a culminating assessment through writing (both critical and/or creative).

Related Resources:

Books

Mni Sota Makoce: The Land of the Dakota by Gwen Westerman & Bruce White

North Country: The Making of Minnesota by Mary Lethert Wingerd

What Does Justice Look Like? The Struggle for Liberation in Dakota Homeland

by Waziyatawin, Ph.D

Websites

Bdote Memory Map - <http://bdotememorymap.org/>

Minnesota River Virtual Tour - **Confluence** | **Minnesota River** Basin: mrbdc.mnsu.edu

U.S. Geological Survey at: <http://education.usgs.gov/index.html> -

information about river systems and related topics.

When Rivers Collide: 10 Confluences Around the World at:

<http://twistedrifter.com/2012/04/confluences-around-the-world/>

Confluence Project -connections to art, other tribes: <http://www.confluenceproject.org/>

“With distinctive artworks and restored native habitat, the four currently completed sites create new points of contact - confluence - between nature and art; past, present and future; and the enduring communities of the Pacific Northwest-its Native People and more recent visitors and residents.”

Possible extensions or adaptations for different purposes/student needs:

Create analogies – Example: The Mississippi River is to the Minnesota, as the Dakota were to the early newcomers (theme: ? welcoming, hospitable, wary?). OR The Minnesota River is to the Mississippi as the settlers were to the Dakota (invading, polluting the area; limiting the flow of one culture).

Video stories, interviews, artwork, etc. – See **Confluence Project** under **Websites**.

Complete a **research paper** on a topic related to confluences and American Indians (sovereignty issues, treaties, fur trade, intermarriages, pollution of Minnesota or Mississippi rivers, etc.).

For additional information, contact:

merry.davin@spps.org