

Unit: Motivation to Explore

Lesson #2: Leif Eriksson and How we get our information

Time Frame: (3)-45 minute lessons

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Standards Addressed:

National History Standards

- 1.E Interpret data presented in timelines and create timelines
- 3.B Consider multiple perspectives.
- 4.C Interrogate historical data.
- 5.A Identify issues and problems in the past.

Alaska State Content Standards

Geography

- E.1 Understand how resources have been developed and used

History

- A.1 Understand chronological frameworks for organizing historical thought and place significant ideas, institutions, people, and events within time sequences.
- A.2 Know that the interpretation of history may change as new evidence is discovered.
- A.4 Understand that history relies on the interpretation of evidence.
- A.5 Understand that history is a narrative told in many voices and expresses various perspectives of historical experience.
- A.6 Know that cultural elements, including language, literature, the arts, customs, and belief systems, reflect the ideas and attitudes of a specific time and know how the cultural elements influence human interactions.
- B.2 Understand the people and the political, geographic, economic, cultural, social, and environmental events that have shaped the history of the state, the United States, and the world.
- C.2 Use historical data from a variety of primary resources, including letters, diaries, oral accounts, archeological sites and artifacts, art, maps, photos, historical sites, documents, and secondary research materials, including almanacs, books, indices, and newspapers.
- C.3 Apply thinking skills, including classifying, interpreting, analyzing, summarizing, synthesizing, and evaluating, to understand the historical record.

Alaska State Performance Standards

Reading

- E.B.3 Restate and summarize information or ideas from a text and connect new information or ideas to prior knowledge and experience.

Social Studies Knowledge, Skills, Dispositions:

Thinking Skills:

- Draw inferences from factual information
- Recognize the value dimension of interpreting factual material
- Recognize instances in which more than one interpretation of factual material is valid
- Combine critical concepts into a statement of conclusions based on information
- Restate major ideas of a complex topic in concise form
- Communicate orally and in writing

Reading Skills:

- Use picture clues and picture captions to aid comprehension
- Use literature to enrich meaning
- Read for a variety of purposes: critically, analytically, ...to answer a question, ...to skim for facts
- Recognize and understand an increasing number of social studies terms

Technical Skills Unique to Electronic Devices:

- Operate a computer using prepared instructional or reference programs

Learning Objectives: At the completion of this unit, students will know:

- Who Leif Eriksson was
- Where historians get their information
- Why Leif Eriksson and the Vikings explored

Cooperative Skills Addressed:

- Communicate own beliefs, feelings, and convictions
- Contribute to the development of a supportive climate in groups

Technology Inclusion:

Use the Internet to view the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History's exhibit, Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga.

Lesson Plan

Prior Assignments or Preparation:

- This lesson assumes that students have already done lesson 1, have already begun their Explorer Source books and individual time lines, and are comfortable working with them.
- It also assumes that Internet release forms have been filled out and are on file for each student, and that students have basic knowledge of Internet and computer use; enough to allow them to proceed through a structured Internet exhibit.

Day 1: How do we get our information?

Materials Needed

Butcher paper or Post-It poster paper

Explorer Source Books

Copies of “Let’s Turn North” from A History of Us, by Joy Rakim

Procedure / Activities

1. Opening activity: Open today’s lesson by posing the following question to the class:
How is it that we know what we know about history? How do historians get their information? List the answers on a sheet of butcher paper or Post-It poster paper to refer to later.
2. Ask who first discovered America. State that although many believe it was Columbus, evidence has shown that other Europeans, the Vikings, had actually been here before Columbus. What do you already know or think you know about the Vikings? As a class, make a list of what is already “known” about the Vikings on butcher paper or Post-It poster paper.
3. Pass out “Let’s Turn North” from A History of Us, by Joy Rakim, and read it together as a class, stopping at appropriate discussion points.
4. Based on the article, what ways have historians learned about the Vikings?
Archaeology: the Norse settlement, longhouses, bones and pottery,
Literature: The Saga of the Greenlanders, map of Vinland
Zoology: the hitchhiking snail
5. Did you learn anything new or anything that changed your ideas about what you already knew about the Vikings? Revisit Viking list and make changes to poster. Today you worked off of what other historians have discovered. Tomorrow, you will be doing history and reading an actual Viking saga to discover things for yourself.

Day 2: Viking Saga – You be the historian

Materials Needed

Viking poster created during previous lesson

Explorer Source Books

Copies of the excerpt from The Vinland Saga (sagaPG1.jpg, sagaPG2.jpg)

Colored pencils for underlining

Procedure / Activities

1. Review yesterday’s discussion. What were some ways historians have learned what they know?
2. Now, it is your turn to be the historian. With a partner, you get to read an excerpt from *The Vinland Sagas*, translated by Magnus Magnusson and Hermann Palsson. As you read, I want you to see what you can learn about the Vikings just by reading it. Use your colored pencil to underline words and passages that tell you something or that gave you difficulty.
3. Gather the class together and discuss what was discovered or learned. Did everybody interpret it the same way? Does it all agree with what we learned yesterday? (Point: Historians sometimes view the same information, but reach different conclusions.) Go back and correct or add more to the Viking list from yesterday.
4. Vocabulary: add new words to Explorer Source Books

*The map of Vinland (leifmap.jpg) discussed in day one's article is attached if additional primary source documents are desired and would be great to have on hand for those who finish early to do an additional analysis of.

Summative Assessment: Now it is time for you to show me what you've learned. On the next page in your explorer source book I want you to put the title, "Where historians get their information" and then write a paragraph about where historians get their information. When you have finished, make sure to list the page on your table of contents.

Day 3: Why did Leif Eriksson explore & Wrapping it up

Materials Needed

Viking poster created during previous lessons

Explorer Source Books

Computers with Internet access or copies of rooms 1-5, 7,8 from

<http://www.mnh.si.edu/vikings/1131.html>

Procedure / Activities

1. Use the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History's exhibit, Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga to explore the question, "Why did the Vikings explore?" By following the link, <http://www.mnh.si.edu/vikings/1131.html> you can go directly to the exhibit rooms which each contain an artifacts, photographs, and or paintings and outstanding but concise information. If more computer time is available, start at the introduction <http://www.mnh.si.edu/vikings/>. The Viking voyage segment is really interesting, has great vocabulary words, fantastic pictures of artifacts, and great information building on lessons one and two.
2. Add Leif Eriksson and the Vikings to the class timeline, and then have each student add the information to the timeline in their Explorer Source Books

Summative Assessment: I would like you to use your Explorer Source Books to reflect on what you have learned. On the next page I want you to put the title, "Leif Eriksson and the Vikings" and then write a paragraph answering each of the following: who Leif Eriksson was, why he explored, and what are common misconceptions (and the correct information) about the Vikings? When you have finished, make sure to add Leif Eriksson and the Vikings page on your table of contents.

After the computer session(s) and Explorer Source Book reflections, gather as a class and do a final review of your knowledge poster on the Vikings. What else do we need to add? What has changed? Did we have any misconceptions that we now know the truth about?