

SOUTH ST. LOUIS

"Platforms"

ARTIFACT INVESTIGATION: UNCOVERING THE FOUNDATION FROM WHICH ST. LOUIS WAS BUILT

I. PLANNING

Lesson Summary:

Students will engage in the 5Es Inquiry-Based Learning process to uncover the foundation of St. Louis. Students will analyze artifacts related to the development of South St. Louis in order to unveil early culture and identity of St. Louis (Mound City). Students will analyze and draw conclusions about the artifacts in order to determine how they represent and impact the development of culture and identity of South St. Louis.

This learning experience is designed to be used at any level (elementary, middle, and high). Teachers will want to choose the sources appropriate for their grade level and pose questions that are level appropriate as well.

Essential Understandings:

EU: Communities shape culture and identity over time and identity and culture shape communities over time

Essential Questions:

EQ: How do I connect with St. Louis?

Anticipation of Common Misconceptions/Challenges:

- Artifacts can be misinterpreted. Taking time to investigate through multiple looks/lenses will assist in unveiling the story they tell,
- Discussing elements of Culture and Identity will be useful throughout this lesson.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Analyze** (*to break down into parts and look at the relationships between the parts and the whole*)
- **Synthesize** (*join together parts in order to create meaning linked to a bigger picture*)
- **Mississippian** (*Tribes that historians believe settled in Cahokia, IL and across the river in St. Louis (Mound City)*)
- **Cahokia Mounds** (*Cultural complex of Mississippians*)
- **Artifacts** (*art, tools, clothing, architectural elements used by a particular group of people/community to meet their wants and needs*)
- **Culture** (*customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group*)

Differentiation:

- Scaffold number and complexity of artifacts used with students in need of accommodations
- Cooperative learning groups used to collaboratively think critically about the information
- Use of a graphic organizer/analysis sheet to provide prompts
- Artifact Boxes/kits need to be selected for appropriate readiness, level, and rigor

- **Identity** (*sense of self, characteristics, affiliations to a community/ethnicity/region/religion, and social roles*)
- **Community needs** (*safety, economic health, education/enrichment, natural environment, image/reputation, overall appearance, sense of community, health and wellness opportunities, mobility, built environment*)

Probing Questions:

- **Meet the Artifact** - What do you think it is?
- **Observe Its Parts** - What do you think it is made out of? How do you think it feels? What color is it? What shape is it? What size is it?
- **Describe the Artifact** - What three words describe the object?
- **Try to Make Sense of the Artifact** - What do you think it is used for? What does the object tell us about the early inhabitants of the St. Louis area? Do we still use objects like this today? (How is it the same and how is it different?)
- **Use the Artifact as Evidence** - How does the artifact reveal community beliefs, practices, culture/identity?

Materials:

- Slide Deck of Artifacts
- [Artifact Analysis Sheet](#) (elementary); [Artifact Analysis Sheet](#) (secondary)
- Video - [“Cahokia: City of the Sun”](#)
- Elaborate Artifact Activity - [People, Groups, Culture](#)
- [Educational \(Artifact\) Kits](#)
- Teacher resource - STL Today Article, November 2022 - “A Look Back • Big Mound in St. Louis, legacy of a lost culture, leveled in 1869”, Osage Nation Narrative on [Sugarloaf Mound](#), and [The St. Louis Mound Group](#) narrative, Online Video [“Uncovering Ancient St. Louis”](#)
- [Formative Assessment #2](#) (linked)

INSTRUCTION & ASSESSMENT

The 5Es

ENGAGE - INQUIRY BASED LEARNING - Artifact Analysis

Teacher opens the lesson by activating prior knowledge, linking previous learning, and/or building knowledge regarding the foundation from which St. Louis was built through inquiry for learning.

- Teacher displays/shares artifacts that represent her/his/their culture (such as but not limited to hobby, family heirloom, favorite object, etc).
- Using the [artifact analysis sheet \(elementary\)](#) or [artifact analysis sheet \(secondary\)](#) the teacher asks students to investigate the artifacts along with him/her/they and discuss how they reveal his/her/their culture/identity Use engagement protocols (turn and talk, discuss as table groups, find a sole partner, etc.) to collaboratively meet the artifact, observe it’s parts, try to make sense of it, and develop questions regarding the object (s).
- Collaboratively discuss how these objects might be used as evidence regarding the teacher’s culture/identity. Teacher clarifies any misconceptions that might exist regarding the artifacts.

EXPLORE - Artifact Investigation/Analysis (forms linked above)

Teacher transitions to using the artifact inquiry learning process to investigate the “building of St. Louis” through the use of artifacts shared in the video, [“Cahokia - City of the Sun.”](#) Students should be in small collaborative learning groups for this activity. The teacher will pause the video as artifacts are shared in order for students to have time to analyze them. The teacher may want to select a few key artifacts and jig-saw which group is responsible for each. Students will collaborate to problem-solve how the artifacts reveal the culture/identity of the Mississippians of the St. Louis/Illinois region. The teacher will ask probing questions to elicit critical thinking as students work to move towards mastery of the objective.

EXPLAIN - Discussion/Direct Instruction

Students explain/share findings from EXPLORE activity and the teacher facilitates class discussion. Teacher models and asks questions using student input to help connect student responses with the big idea of the lesson.

Discussion:

Teachers provide structured opportunities for students to share and explain their findings as a result of the Explore activity (Small group and whole class discussions).

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- **Describe the Artifact** - What three words describe the object?
- **Try to Make Sense of the Artifact** - What do you think it is used for? What does the object tell us about the early inhabitants of the St. Louis area? Do we still use objects like this today? (How is it the same and how is it different?)
- **Use the Artifact as Evidence** - How does the artifact reveal community beliefs, practices, culture/identity?

Direct Instruction:

Students are introduced more formally to the lesson’s concepts. Through class discussions, teacher questioning, student modeling, and teacher modeling, students gain understanding of the major concepts and can verify answers to questions or problems posed earlier. In addition, more abstract concepts not easily explored in earlier activities are introduced and explained. As students formulate new ideas, appropriate vocabulary can be introduced, if not already done so. The teacher helps students clarify the big idea of the lesson.

- **Teacher clarifies information as students are unveiling their findings.**

ELABORATE - People, Groups, Culture

Teacher asks students to share what they have noticed about artifacts. Students will then deepen their understanding by working in small groups to discuss the cause and effect relationship the artifacts have with their use in the community and culture. Using the graphic organizer provided, ask students to think about each of the artifacts and how they meet the wants and needs of the individuals, groups, and institutions of the community. Discuss a bit further by asking students to describe how the artifacts reveal a cultural perspective/identity.

Note: Educational (Artifact) Kits are available at Cahokia Mounds for short-term check out. Using these kits will provide a more in-depth, realistic investigation of artifacts and the story they tell.

EVALUATE - Formative Assessment #2 (linked)

Students will engage in a formative assessment activity aligned to the focus of the lesson. The teacher will ask each student to curate 5 objects or pictures of objects that they believe represent them as a St. Louisan as well as revealing their beliefs, practices, and/or culture/identity. Students will bring into class the next day, trade with a table partner, analyze their partner's artifacts, and determine how they represent the culture/identity of their partner as a St. Louisan.

Missouri Learning Standards

STEAM Priority Standards:

- **SCIENCE: Constructing Explanations and Designing Solutions**
 - Construct an explanation based on valid and reliable evidence obtained from a variety of sources (including students' own investigations, models, theories, simulations, peer review) and the assumption that theories and laws that describe how the natural world operates today as it did in the past and will continue to do so in the future.
- **TECHNOLOGY/ENGINEERING: Engaging in an Argument from Evidence**
 - Constructing a convincing argument that supports or refutes claims for either explanations or solutions about the natural and designed world.

Social Studies Priority Standards:

- **HISTORY: Continuity and Change**
 - Explain connections among historical context and peoples' perspectives at a given time in history.
- **GEOGRAPHY: Geographical Study**
 - Describe the impact of human settlement activities on the environmental and cultural characteristics.
 - Analyze how the physical and human characteristics of world regions connect to changing identity and culture.
- **PEOPLE, GROUPS, AND CULTURE: Culture and Identity**
 - Describe how perspectives shaped the sources/artifacts created.
- **ART: Historical and Cultural Context**
 - Visually literate citizens understand the role and functions of art in history and culture. Artists influence and are influenced by the cultures and time periods in which they live.
 - Compare/contrast artworks from different historical time periods and/or cultures.