

**a) Basic Information:**

- Grade Level: Fifth Grade
- Number of Students: 22 (Groups of Five and Six)
- Time Allotted: 60 Minutes
- Lesson Topic/Title: French, Dutch, and English Voyages

**b) Goals/Rationale:**

- Student Learning Goals:
  - Students will gain basic knowledge of these explorers and be able to see their impact and experiences. The explorations of these explorers would pave the path for colonization and the creation of America. These explorers can be seen as role models for some students, as they can learn from some of their mistakes.
- Rationale:
  - By gaining this knowledge, students will begin to understand how one person or group's actions can impact another person/group and their resources.

**c) Teacher Objectives/Standards and Benchmarks:**

- Student Learning Objectives:
  - Students will examine the experiences of explorers and how they impacted trade and culture.
  - Students will communicate openly in groups, sharing research findings.
  - Students will work on their information processing skills by focusing their research into a well-written letter.
- Standards:
  - 5 – U1.2.2 Use case studies of individual explorers and stories of life in Europe to compare the goals, obstacles, motivations, and consequences for European exploration and colonization of the Americas (e.g., economic, political, cultural, and religious).  
(*National Geography Standard 13, p. 169, C, E*)
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9 Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- Key Facts, Concepts, and Generalizations:
  - Explorers (Jacques Cartier, Henry Hudson, John Cabot and Francis Drake)
    - Definition: A person sponsored by a country to travel and experience another culture or land.
    - Examples: Christopher Columbus, Marco Polo, Magellan, etc.

- Non-Examples: Pilgrims (sought religious freedom), Voyagers
- Explorers were very important to a country to establish relations and trade.
- Students will need to understand facts about the primary explorers, in order to set a solid foundation, to build the rest of American history.

**d) Teacher Preparation:**

- **Teacher Knowledge Needed:** The teacher will need to know information on all the explorers covered in the lesson. They are: Jacques Cartier, Henry Hudson, John Cabot and Francis Drake.
- **Materials and Resources Needed:** Teachers will need to offer a variety of resources to students on the explorers. These can include personal narratives, textbooks, and Internet through technology (if available). They also must provide pens and paper for the letters. Lastly, teachers may choose to provide a table to guide students' research and a rubric for the letter.
- **Teacher Preparation Needed:** Teachers must have resources readily available. They also may have slips for students to choose their explorer. Teachers can also provide a rubric for the letter and a note-taking guide, if they wish.

**e) Assessment Plan:**

- **Prior Knowledge:** Students already understand most of the core vocabulary and the expeditions of the well-known explorers. I will use this vocabulary in my lesson, as well as use the well-known explorer as an example.
- **Formative/Summative Assessment:** Students' letters will be graded based on the rubric, involving content, creativity, and organization.

**f) Instructional Procedures:**

- **Opening Activity:** To open the lesson, I will ask the class about the explorers they already know and what they think their impact was. For example, where did Marco Polo go? What country was he from? What do you think the other countries started doing? (Sending out explorers)! Then, I will explain the beginning of the project. *(5 minutes)*
- **Procedure and Lesson Description:**
  - Each student will receive a piece of paper with an explorer's name on it (Jacques Cartier, Henry Hudson, John Cabot and Francis Drake).
  - They will then group up based on whom they received. Together, they will research, using the websites (provided by me via Google Document or written on board), textbook and individual guide provided, to find out as much information as they can. Students will be expected to not only participate, but also then collaborate and communicate their findings. *(15 minutes)*
  - Students will then take their notes and findings and create individual letters, written as the explorer, about what they saw and experienced. These letters can be written to any recipient, but they must at least follow the rubric for the letters. I will also explain that the letter must be written in pen, because I will be staining the letters (show example) to look like old, worn letters. *(30 minutes)*

- Closure: To wrap up the lesson, I will ask each member of each group to share one interesting fact or piece of information about their explorer. If students do not finish their letter, they can finish it during homework time at the end of the day. If students are struggling, they can turn to their group members for help or me if they need clarification. At the end of the lesson (or day if some students are not finished) I will collect the letters. After they are stained, if they are well made, they might be able to go on display in the classroom or in the hallway. The sharing of the interesting fact will be the formative assessment, with the summative assessment being the letter. *(10 minutes)*

**g) Reflection and Evaluation:**

- **Teaching:** Overall, I felt my lesson went pretty well. My placement teacher summed it up best by saying “organized chaos with learning.” The students said they really enjoyed working in groups and getting away from their desks. However, due to the random picking of groups, some groups really struggled, and others were done quickly. I also received plenty of questions on why the research was a group project and the letters were an individual project. However, even with that confusion, I still would not change the way I did the project. Personally, I feel it is important that students have time to interact with their peers and stray away from the traditional ‘sit in the desk and learn’ teaching strategy.

Also, with this class, it was a great way to incorporate technology. The students were able to use their personal technology (they are a one-to-one technology district) to research independently and communicate their findings to the group. When looking at the Powerful and Authentic Social Studies standards, this lesson covers Higher Order Thinking, Deep Knowledge, Substantive Conversation, and Integration. It involves the students in synthesizing information into one single letter, as well as forces them to address the central ideas of exploration. The students engaged in substantive conversation about their explorer. If the conversation got off topic, I would be walking around listening to get them back on track. Lastly, the assessment also incorporated what they were learning in writing, about narrative perspectives. This lesson is missing Connections to the World Beyond the Classroom and Ethical Valuing, but those can be taught later after this background lesson. Looking at their formative assessment for this lesson, it is clear that most of the students put in a lot of effort. I was truly surprised with the content of the letters. The students did a wonderful

job researching and displaying information on their explorers. The one thing I would hopefully do is spread this out into two social studies periods. That way, the transition from group work to individual work would be separated and easier.

- **Learning:** By observing the students in groups during their research time, I was able to witness the acquisition of the knowledge of explorers. Since they already had done some background lessons on Marco Polo and Christopher Columbus, they already understood the concept of explorers, but this lesson reaffirmed it. They also quickly found out that some explorers had interactions with the American Indians, who they had just spent the last unit learning about. They were very interested to find out what the explorers learned from the Indians, as well as what resulted from their interactions. This curiosity is most certainly a reflection of my placement teacher's content, as she has decided to avoid the controversial issue of the explorer's actions toward the Indians. Using this curiosity as a catalyst, students were able to learn and practice research skills, critical thinking skills, and communication skills. The students, using what they had learned in reading/writing about the different perspectives, had to create sentences using research about their explorer, while being their explorers. While this sounds like a daunting task, almost all of the students achieved this. I received very creative letters to wives, kings, queens, and sons. I was truly impressed by their comprehension, expression, and creativity.

Text

<b>1) Name of Explorer with Dates of Exploration</b>	<b>2) Country They Are From/ Sponsored By</b>	<b>3) Experiences</b>	<b>4) Interesting Facts</b>	<b>5) Important People In the Explorer's Life</b>

# Letter from an Explorer

You are writing as the explorer! (USE "I")

- **Your Letter Must Include:**

- Date from Time Period (in the upper right corner)
- A Recipient ("Dear \_\_\_\_\_")
- Where the Explorer Travelled
- What Country They Were From
- What Country They Were Sponsored By (if different)
- What The Explorer Saw/Experienced
  - Guiding Questions:
    - What did your explorer find?
    - Did your explorer meet any Indians?
    - What did your explorer learn?
    - Did they enjoy their trip?
    - Did they write about their explorations?
- 2 Interesting Fact(s) about your Explorer
- Signature (name of explorer)

- **Be Creative!**

- **Think about the organization of your letter!**

- What are you going to say and when?

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Content Accuracy</b>	The letter meets all of the requirements as far as content goes.	The letter includes most, but not all of the requirements.	The letter includes roughly half of the requirements.	The letter includes less than half of the requirements.
<b>Ideas</b>	Ideas were expressed in a clear and organized fashion. It was easy to figure out what the letter was about.	Ideas were expressed in a pretty clear manner, but the organization could have been better.	Ideas were somewhat organized, but were not very clear. It took more than one reading to figure out what the letter was about.	The letter seemed to be a collection of unrelated sentences. It was very difficult to figure out what the letter was about.
<b>Sentences &amp; Paragraphs</b>	Sentences and paragraphs are complete, well-constructed and of varied structure.	All sentences are complete and well-constructed (no fragments, no run-ons). Paragraphing is generally done well.	Most sentences are complete and well-constructed. Paragraphing needs some work.	Many sentence fragments or run-on sentences OR paragraphing needs lots of work.
<b>Grammar &amp; spelling (conventions)</b>	Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling.	Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar and/or spelling.	Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar and/or spelling	Writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar and/or spelling.

Letter Total Out of 16 Points: