

Compare and Contrast Activity

LESSON SUMMARY

This flexible lesson plan is designed to accompany the student-friendly documentary, *Building Hope: The Story of Mahiga Hope High School*. Shot in both east Kenya and Texas, the film tells the engaging story of how a determined community in rural Kenya, Africa and the Central Texas-based Nobility Project come together, overcome obstacles, and build the first high school in the region.

1. The lesson is designed to “hook” students through their own personal experiences with school and American culture.
2. Next, students compare their own school experience with that of students in Kenya, Africa.
3. Lastly, students are provided with a variety of opportunities to make real world connections, think critically, and express opinions about global issues such as education and citizenship.

CORE CURRICULUM STATE STANDARDS (2014-2015)

Key Ideas and Details:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.3
Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

Craft and Structure:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4
Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5
Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6
Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7
Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

Compare and Contrast Activity

TEXAS ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS (TEKS)

(6) Geography. The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data. The student is expected to:

(A) apply geographic tools, including grid systems, legends, symbols, scales, and compass roses, to construct and interpret maps;

(18) Citizenship. The student understands the importance of individual participation in the democratic process at the local, state, and national levels. The student is expected to:

(A) explain the duty individuals have to participate in civic affairs at the local, state, and national levels; and

(B) explain how to contact elected and appointed leaders in local, state, and national governments.

(19) Citizenship. The student understands the importance of effective leadership in a constitutional republic.

(22) Culture. The student understands the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to the United States. The student is expected to:

(C) summarize the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups to our national identity

(26) Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings. The student is expected to:

(A) use a problem-solving process to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution; and

(B) use a decision-making process to identify a situation that requires a decision, gather information, identify options, predict consequences, and take action to implement a decision.

EXAMPLES OF RELATED CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

- physical and human geography of Africa
- character, leadership, citizenship
- global studies
- philanthropy / advocacy / community
- science, technology and society
- culture (e.g., government, economics)
- contemporary issues / current events
- sustainable human development

Compare and Contrast Activity

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. What are the geographic features (physical and human) of rural Kenya, Africa?
2. What is the culture / school life of rural Kenya like?
3. How is culture/school life in rural Kenya, Africa similar or different to school life in Texas, United States?
4. Why is having a good education (e.g., high school, college) important to parents and children all around the world (Or is it?)
5. Whose responsibility is it to help those in need in our communities (local and global)?
6. Why should we help those in need - even those who may live thousands of miles away from us? (Or should we?)
7. Why do some people choose to help those in need, while others don't?
8. What rights and responsibilities do we have as global citizens?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to...

- Identify and document (write) various aspects of culture in rural Kenya, with a focus on school life.
- Identify and document (write) various aspects of their own school life in Texas, United States.
- Evaluate similarities and differences between school life in rural Kenya and Texas (the United States).
- Formulate and express (verbally and in writing) their opinions regarding school, education, community, and citizenship.

TEACHER PREPARATION

- Closely review this lesson plan document with your students in mind.
- View the Building Hope documentary yourself.
- Review the student note-taking guide. Make copies of the student note-taking guide (one per student).
- Gather / prepare supplemental resources of your choice (e.g., maps of Africa).

Compare and Contrast Activity

DIFFERENTIATION

Teachers are encouraged to modify this lesson plan as needed to meet the specific needs of their classroom and students (e.g., Special Education, English Language Learners, grade Level versus Pre-AP, Gifted and Talented). Sample Modifications (student note-taking):

- Use a different type of graphic organizer - instead of / in addition to the table format (e.g., Venn diagram, T-Chart).
- Type in (or have students manually fill in) all or some of the Mahiga Hope sections on the student note-taking guide prior to viewing the film.
- Complete “My School” note-taking independently, with partners or small collaborative groups, or as a whole class.
- Vary the amount of teacher modeling of note-taking while using the “I do. We do. You do” teacher modeling strategy.
- Reduce or vary the number of categories on the student note-taking guide (e.g., drop “finances”).
- Alter the type of note-taking (e.g., bullet points versus sentences); require a minimum # of notes per category; vary the amount of detail required.
- Periodically stop the film and have a brief whole class discussion in order to ensure proper note-taking, to “fill in gaps” in comprehension, and to assess comprehension.

Compare and Contrast Activity

BEFORE VIEWING (introducing the lesson)

1. Engage students through their personal connections and prior knowledge by using “hooks” in the form of 3-5 minute Warm-Ups (Do Nows) at the start of class (or just prior to introducing the lesson).
 - List 3 specific aspects of your local physical geography (i.e., landforms, land cover, water, climate, wildlife).
 - Write a 3 sentence paragraph describing your own personal attitude about learning/school/education.
 - Make a list of the materials/equipment/technology/facilities available in your classroom / on your campus (e.g., textbooks, PC lab, gymnasium).
 - Describe your style of dress and what you typically wear to school. Describe your school’s dress code.
 - Name the title and author of your favorite book. Briefly describe the plot. Explain why you like it. Where did you get it (e.g., public library)?
 - Write the statement that most closely reflects your personal opinion.

Next, explain your point of view.

- All kids (everywhere in the world) should finish 8th grade.
 - All kids (everywhere in the world) should finish high school.
 - All kids (everywhere in the world) should finish college.
2. Use available campus and online resources to provide students with very basic background information about rural Kenya, Africa (e.g., location, geography, Kikuyu ethnic group/language) and the non-profit, The Nobility Project.
 3. Generate interest and create anticipation by showing the Building Hope trailer.
 4. Introduce the student note-taking guide. Explain the meaning of each category, and viewing / note-taking expectations. Model note-taking to ensure that students know exactly what you expect.
 5. Review the Essential Questions (above) with students, without requiring upfront answers or discussion.

Compare and Contrast Activity

DURING VIEWING

Instruct students to look, listen and think while closely watching the film. Remind them that there is as much information available in the visuals as there is in the words spoken. Encourage them to do their best with note-taking, knowing that they will have an opportunity to “fill in the gaps” later. Monitor note-taking and redirect students as needed.

AFTER VIEWING

A wide variety of post-viewing, wrap-up activities can be used to provide students with an opportunity to finish and discuss notes, process information, think critically, and allow for teachers to check for understanding. Sample activities:

Think, Pair, Share: Provide students with an opportunity to wrap up note-taking. Most of the “Think” portion of this activity would have already been done during the film. Next, students share and discuss (not copy) their notes with a partner or small group. Lastly, the teacher leads a whole class discussion, highlighting significant similarities and differences in schooling.

Whole Class Discussion: Revisit the Essential Questions. Now, have students attempt to answer them as part of a whole class, teacher-led discussion.

Venn diagram: Students transfer select notes from their note-taking table into a Venn diagram. To add a critical thinking component, have students select, organize and rank/prioritize only the most significant similarities and differences to add to the Venn diagram (i.e., a subset of all their notes).

Exit Ticket: End class by requiring students to complete a 3-5 minute activity related to the film (similar to a warm-up at the start of class). Example: List three interesting facts you didn't know prior to watching the film. Write in complete sentences.

Summary Essay: Students write a story summary, focusing on main ideas, and citing specific supporting details (e.g., scenes, quotes) from the film.

Compare and Contrast Essay: Students write an essay focusing on the similarities and differences between Mahiga Hope and their school, citing specific supporting details from the film.

Journal Entry: Students write a personal reflection based on their reaction (i.e., thoughts, ideas, opinions, feelings, critique) to the film.

***For writing assignments, teachers should establish their own specific criteria based on the needs of their students (e.g., minimum length, minimum number of similarities, differences, supporting details to cite).*

Compare and Contrast Activity

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Consider offering an additional post-viewing activity to Pre-AP or Gifted and Talented students, or offer them a choice. Decide if students will complete them as classwork, homework or extra credit. Assign them as independent, partner, or small group work. A variety of final student products are possible (e.g., PowerPoint slideshow, research paper, oral presentation). Criteria for each extension should be based on the specific needs of individual classes and students.

Sample extension activities:

- Students will research a third country (or urban Kenya) and add that school system to the compare and contrast analysis (i.e., do a side-by-side comparison of all 3 school systems).
- Students will do further investigation of rural schools in Kenya.
- Students will investigate what has occurred at Mahiga Hope since the film was released.
- Students will watch the full-length version (71 minutes) of Building Hope and document differences in the two versions.