**Geographical Landmarks: Pisa Learning Tower**

**Age group/class:** 13 – 14 years old

**Lesson title:** Geographical Landmarks: Pisa Learning Tower

**School Discipline:** Geography

**Key concepts:** geographical landmarks

**Aims:**

* Increase students’ skills in geography
* Recognize what is around us
* Enjoy the pleasure of travelling (physically and virtually)

**Skills developed**: observation, analysis and research

**Materials/Equipment needed**:

* <https://www.ted.com/talks/alex_gendler_why_doesn_t_the_leaning_tower_of_pisa_fall_over/transcript#t-288496> *(to be used in the introduction activity to provide some basic information about the Leaning Tower of Pisa)*
* <https://eloquent-ramanujan-887aa5.netlify.app/math.html>

*(to be used for the practical VR experience)*

* VR headset
* VR video / link
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KqNrz1chnE> *(to be used for the follow-up activity)*

**Lesson plan:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stages** | **Description of activity** | **Time** |
| **Preparation before the lesson** | If this is a first VR experience for students – go through the safety rules:   * Learners are to sit down whilst using the VR glasses and not hold anything in their hands, unless the experience is of such a nature that it requires you standing, in which case, ensure enough space is allowed around all students. * Learners will be told to expect a feeling of vertigo. If it gets worse, students must remove VR glasses. * Learners need to know how to adjust the viewing focus before using the headsets. * Learners must not use the headset when they are: tired, need sleep, under emotional stress or anxiety, when suffering from cold, flu, headaches, migraines as this can worsen their susceptibility to adverse reactions. * Learners should be given the choice to opt out of using VR. |  |
| **Introduction** | Share Learning Intentions with students  The aims of the current lesson plan are the following:   * Increase students’ skills in geography * Recognize what is around us * Enjoy the pleasure of travelling (physically and virtually)   Geography is a lot more than being able to point out a country on a world map or knowing the capital city of every country in the world, but this is anyway a good starting point. Recent researches underline a decrease of students’ interest towards geography.  But geography is about getting to know our world and its people better and understanding what makes societies tick. Geography helps to trigger our curiosity and – as we become more curious – our awareness grows. It opens our eyes to different cultures and perspectives, and helps us grow as well-rounded, emphatic individuals.  The Learning Tower of Pisa is a geographical landmark, meaning a building or a place that is easily recognized, especially one that you can use to judge where you are  The starting point is to provide students with basic information about the Leaning Tower of Pisa through the use of a [video](%09https:/www.ted.com/talks/alex_gendler_why_doesn_t_the_leaning_tower_of_pisa_fall_over/transcript#t-288496) | 10 min. |
| **Initial Immersive Experience** | “And now let’s go virtually to Pisa”:  <https://eloquent-ramanujan-887aa5.netlify.app/math.html>  Learners put on the VR headsets and explore the video at their own pace for about 10 minutes. | 10 min. |
| **Guided Immersive Experience** | The VR immersive experience can be guided by the teacher who can provide students with some further geographical information:   * information about Italy * information about Tuscany * information about Pisa | 10 min. |
| **Follow up** | 1) Game play  Students are divided into 2 groups and are asked to play the Guess Geographical Place Quiz (instructions are provided within the video):  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6KqNrz1chnE>  2) Flipped classroom’ exercise  Keeping the same groups which have been already created, students are asked to search for information about Pisa from a geographical point of view, with teacher’ supervision. According to the flipped classroom methodology, students are then asked to prepare a brief presentation (Power Point), summarizing up the main findings of the research activity. One representative from each group is finally asked to show the presentation in front of the classroom. | 10 min.  20 min. |
| **Formative Assessment** | Now let’s go back to the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and reply to the following questions:   * in which Italian region is Pisa located? * in which year the building of the Tower started? * which is the original meaning of the word Pisa? * which is the capital city of Tuscany region? | 5 min. |