

Silk Road Lesson Plan

Grade Level: 9th Grade

Content Knowledge:

Skills: Students will be able to *examine* differences between travelers of the Silk Road.

Students will be able to *compare* routes of travel between the travelers and *determine* any commonalities.

Students will *utilize* maps provided on the website.

Content: Through the skills stated above, students will use this knowledge in order to grasp why travelers moved along points of the Silk Road, determine trade commodities and learn how to properly utilize maps.

Rationale: The purpose of this lesson is to provide an interactive guide in which teachers utilizing this map project may be able to use and expand upon for an interactive lesson on the Silk Road, its travelers, routes, and trade.

Pennsylvania Education Department State Standards

The following Pennsylvania Department of Education standards are present within this lesson: 7.1.9.A: Explain and illustrate how geographic tools are used to organize and interpret information about people, places, and environments.

7.1.9.B: Explain and locate regions and their shared connections as defined by physical and human features. 7.3.9.A: Explain the human characteristics of places and regions using the following criteria: population, culture, settlement, economic activities, and political activities. 8.1.9.A: Compare patterns of continuity and change over time, applying context of events. 8.1.9.B: Compare the interpretation of historical events and sources, considering the use of fact versus opinion, multiple perspectives, and cause and effect relationships. 8.4.9.A: Compare the role groups and individuals played in the social, political, cultural, and economic development throughout world history. 8.4.9.B: Contrast the importance of historical documents, artifacts, and sites which are critical to world history.

8.4.9.C: Analyze how continuity and change have impacted world history; belief

systems and religions, commerce and industry, technology, politics and government, physical and human geography, social organization.

*Derived from the PDESAS website: pdesas.org

Goal: With the combination of this mapping project and this lesson plan, students will be able to explain the significance of the Silk Road as an interacting network (rather than a route) of trading systems of not only goods, but of culture.

Essential Questions: What goods / beliefs / military tactics, etc. were passed along the Silk Road?

What effect did the Silk Road hold on local towns / differing religions / conflicts between peoples?

How is the use of maps helpful within the study of history?

Objectives:

1. In small groups (based upon the size of the teacher's class), students will *determine* similarities and differences between two travelers on the Silk Road.
2. Students will *discuss* as a whole with the class in order to look at all of the travelers.
3. Students will *analyze* the use of mapping software.

Formative Assessment: Students will present their findings to the class as groups within the full discussion to determine what they have learned.

Procedures / Events of Instruction:

Attention and Motivation (~5 minutes)

Begin your class by welcoming your students as usual while they settle in for instruction.

Procedures and Content (~35 to 40 minutes)

The teacher will begin the class by introducing the Silk Road website. A run through on how to navigate the website will allow the students an understanding of how to explore the site overall. The teacher will then explain that the class will be split into small groups (depending on the class size) and will be assigned two travelers on the Silk Road. Each group will be tasked with analyzing the mapped route itself along with the traveler information given on the corresponding page. It is heavily encouraged that students read further onto the Human Geography, Natural Geography, Peoples, Trade Goods, and Ideas tabs as they come across these factors within the traveler bibliographies. Students should be given the remaining 30 to 40 minutes (depending on the teacher's specific school district's class schedule) to analyze the site. Splitting students into groups at random (or in groups in which the teacher believes would work the most productively but are presented as random), is encouraged.

Feedback (~10 to 15 minutes)

Students will now be tasked with presenting their findings with the rest of their class in a discussion. The teacher should probe students by asking about differences in ideas, trade goods, routes, etc. defined the travelers. Commonalities between travelers are also to be discussed. Students are to lead the conversation. The teacher may even create a chart on the board to allow a visual aid of these findings. Ultimately, by discussing with the class as a whole, the students will be able to make definitive conclusions about the Silk Road.

Homework / Review / Closure (~5 minutes)

Any last commentary in regard to the findings will be proposed in the class. The students will end the period with a greater understanding of the Silk Road as a network in which not only goods were exchanged, but ideas as well.