Learn About the Great Lakes for Goodness Sakes

By Pamela J. Skokan, Clintonville Middle School

Grade Level: 4 – 8

Subject: Social Studies and/or English Language Arts

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

1. Name 3 facts about each Great Lake.

Lesson Overview:

Students will work together in small groups to research, organize and present information about the Great Lakes in a variety of formats. Students will provide their class with the information found on the “Individual Data Collection Form.”

References/Resources

Great Lakes Maritime Transportation Teaching Chest
http://wupcenter.mtu.edu/education/great_lakes_maritime/index.htm


Great Lakes Information Network (GLIN) http://www.great-lakes.net/

EPA Great Lakes National Program Office www.epa.gov/glnpo

Wisconsin Content Standards Addressed

Geography

G1  The World in Spatial Terms

• 4G1.0.1 Identify questions geographers ask in examining the United States.
• 4G1.0.2 Use cardinal and intermediate directions to describe the relative location of significant places in the United States

G1.2 Geographical Inquiry and Analysis

• G1.2.3. Use observations from air photos, photographs, films as the basis for answering geographic questions about the human and physical characteristics of places and regions.
G1.3 Geographical Understanding

- 6 & 7 - G1.3.1 Use the fundamental themes of geography to describe regions of places on earth

Language Arts

- W.GN.04.04 Use the writing process to produce and present a research project using a teacher-approved topic; find and narrow research questions; use a variety of resources; take notes; and organize relevant information to draw conclusions.
- L.RP.04.05 Respond to and summarize the major ideas and evidence presented in spoken messages and formal presentations.

Materials:

Per Group: Presentation form

Per Student: Assessment for presentation
Individual data collection form

Per Class: Access to Great Lakes Maritime Transportation Teaching Chest and computer lab for online research (see References/Resources website list)

Focus Questions:
1. What do the Great Lakes provide for us?
2. What do the five Great Lakes have in common and how do they differ?

Procedure:

1. Review geographic information about the Great Lakes (relative size, major cities, common products shipped. Show the Great Lakes on a large wall map. Compare the size of the Great Lakes to local lakes that can’t even be seen on the map.

2. Brainstorm a list of things the Great Lakes provide for us (transportation, fish, vacation, etc.) and the dangerous aspects of the lakes including the severe weather that has caused many shipwrecks, loss of life, and cost money.
Explain that on November 10, 1975 a large freighter ship named the Edmund Fitzgerald began a voyage from Superior, WI to Detroit, MI. When the Edmund Fitzgerald started out the weather had been calm, but it didn’t stay that way. A violent storm roared across Lake Superior with sixty mile per hour winds and thirty foot waves. All 29 members aboard lost their lives that night when the ship went down. There is an annual memorial service held near the wreck sight at Whitefish Point near Paradise, MI. There is a Great Lakes Shipwreck Museum at Whitefish Point that houses the original bell from the SS Edmund Fitzgerald.

1. Explain to students that they will be presenting information about one of the five Great Lakes in small groups.
2. Divide classroom into 5 groups (Random, teacher choice, student choice, etc.) The 5 groups: Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario
3. Give each student the attached rubric and go over the expectations with the students.
4. Groups are to select their method of delivery (play, song, poem, poster, commercial, power point, pamphlet/booklet, etc.) and be given 3 – 5 days to work on their presentation. Groups to complete a “Great Lakes Presentation Form.”
5. Each of the 5 groups is to present to the class so that the entire class learns information on all of the 5 Great Lakes.
Great Lake Presentation Form

Circle the Great Lake that your group is presenting:

Lake Superior       Lake Michigan       Lake Huron       Lake Erie        Lake Ontario

Name the members of your group:  

_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________

Circle Presentation Type:  

Play / Skit with Props
Power Point Presentation
Song with Props
Poster with Props
Poetry with Props
Pamphlet
Commercial
Booklet / Paper
Commercial
Other:  _________________________________________
(“Other” must have teacher approval.)
Great Lake Individual Data Collection Form

Student Name:______________________________________________________________

Date Started Collecting Data:_____________  Presentation Due Date:_____________

Circle the Great Lake that your group is presenting:

Lake Superior       Lake Michigan       Lake Huron       Lake Erie        Lake Ontario

1. Define the location and surface area of this Great Lake. Include a labeled map of this
Great Lake in your presentation that includes bordering states and countries.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Source:____________________________________________________________

2. Which Great Lake empties into this Great Lake?  Which Great Lake does this one empty
in to?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Source:____________________________________________________________

3. Describe a shipwreck that occurred on this Great Lake.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Source:____________________________________________________________
4. Describe and invasive species that can be found in this Great Lake.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Source:____________________________________________________________

5. Which cargoes are shipped on the Great Lake? Name one shipping port and one receiving port.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Source:____________________________________________________________

6. State an interesting fact about this Great Lake. (One not already listed.)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Source:____________________________________________________________
**Student Assessment for Great Lake Presentation** (50 Points possible)

Circle the Great Lake that is being presented:
Lake Superior       Lake Michigan       Lake Huron       Lake Erie        Lake Ontario

Points earned through the following categories:
- Presentation form completed   (2 pts.)  _____
- Map of Great Lake    (7 pts.)  _____
- Individual Data Collection Forms  (14 pts.)  _____
- Presentation:
  - Creative               (5 pts.)  _____
  - Informative           (15 pts.)  _____
  - Overall Quality   (7 pts.)  _____

**Total Points Earned** (out of 50 possible):  _____

45 – 50 points = (Proficient)
35 – 39 points = C (Basic)
25 – 34 points = D (Deficient)
24 points = F  (Failing)

Comments:

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Comments