

Early Explorers: Race for Empire Seventh Grade Lesson Plan

Objective: The student will demonstrate an understanding of each country's desire to claim territory in the Americas.

TEKS: 4.2(A); 7.2(C)

Materials: Scissors, tape, large envelopes, blank flags handout, directions.

Overview of Activity: The students will participate in a race for empire. They will work in groups of 6-7. In this activity they will discover the urgency certain European countries had in getting to the new lands and claiming them for their own empire. After the game, they will then debrief their experience and compare it to the reality of that time.

Preview: The experiential activity serves as the preview.

Activity:

1. Break students into 3 separate groups.
2. Hand out large envelopes that contain all the necessary materials needed to complete this activity.
3. Each group will have a different set of instructions. Do not let them know that each envelope contains different instructions.
4. In the beginning, the class will think they are going to rearrange the classroom for the beginning of the new semester.
5. Their objective is to move as quickly as possible to claim as many items they would like to have control of in the classroom.
6. As they meet together as a group, they will read the directions and follow them exactly.
7. One group will already have flags made for them, another group will have flags made but will need to cut them out, and the final group will need to create their own flags and cut them out as well.
8. Each group will need to create a name for their group.
9. Give the class 5 to 10 minutes to complete this activity.

10. When the activity is completed, debrief the class on the experience of the urgency they felt to claim as many items as possible.
11. Explain to the class that this was to show the urgency felt by European countries to get to the new lands and claim land as their empire.
12. Discuss why each country had different obstacles to overcome and how that was reflected in the land claimed.

Processing:

Have the students create a flag that they have personally created that they would have used to claim territory. Include specific colors and a key that explains what each color represents.