

Grade 8 Performance Task

Urban Settings in America: Travel Blog

Task Overview

Classroom Discussion

Students will be introduced to the expected task and will review the pieces of the task. As a class, discuss what items need to be budgeted for when traveling to an unfamiliar city. Teacher should chart student responses.

Part One (70 minutes; approximately two class periods)

Students explore links to complete trip planner graphic organizer. They can work collaboratively or independently on this portion. Links include: videos of things to do in the city, maps, general information & travel sites, hotel/motel booking sites, reviews for food, entertainment, & hotels, and pricing information for a variety of locations and events.

Part Two (45 minutes; approximately one class period)

Students write a Day-to-Day plan of their week-long trip to the city they chose. They will also write a reflective response on planning for contingencies/problems that could arise.

Part Three (one week of instruction)

Students will write a travel blog or trip diary of their experiences on their Virtual Vacation.

Scorable Products

For classroom grades, the trip planner graphic organizer & Day-to-Day planner can be scored and recorded. Using scoring rubrics, both the reflective response in Part Two and the Travel Blog (Part Three) can be scored.

Part One

- Teacher leads a brief discussion on what items students should consider when budgeting for their Virtual Vacation. Teacher should chart student responses.
- Teacher distributes travel vouchers & trip planners and explains the parameters of the trip. Students receive a \$300 virtual plane voucher and \$3000 virtual cash to use on the trip. While on the trip, they are required to visit at least 4 locations of historical significance and 3 additional activities/events/locations. They MUST have shelter and appropriate transportation, but cannot drive themselves. They may collaborate and share expenses. If they chose to stay with family, they MUST spend money taking their hosts to dinner.
- Students chose a city to visit (suggested: New York City or San Francisco). They will then visit links located on the city tour websites to complete their trip planners.

Sample City Tour websites:

<http://waitevisitny.weebly.com> & <http://waitevisitsf.weebly.com>

Recommended: Students are given time to complete the trip planner during two class periods. Part Two should take an additional class period.

Part Two

- Teacher distributes the Day-to-Day planner and instructs students on how it should be completed.
- Students plan their Day-to-Day activities using their trip planner and the links provided on the city tour websites.
- Students respond to the reflective question: what are some ideas you have on how to respond to problems while you travel (such as: closed landmarks or bad weather)?

Part Three

- Each day of the Virtual Vacation, students will complete a trip diary/travel blog of their experiences. The following pieces should be in the bog:
 - Title – Date
 - Description of the setting/location visited including times, weather, and crowds
 - The “story” of their travels that day
- As students travel, the teacher will inject each day with a series of “challenges” or “benefits” that can help or cause problems for the students depending upon their city of choice and how they have budgeted to spend their money.
- Each day, students will also read closely short texts to help them better understand their urban setting, deal with challenges, and make good choices in their travel experience.
- TEACHER NOTE: to direct students in telling the story, they should prewrite their ideas on what they saw, what they heard, what their feet were doing, and what they were thinking. This prewriting can then be used in composing their blog entry.
- At the conclusion of their journey, students can reread and revise blog entries for grammar, spelling, and content.

Recommendations: Students need to complete a blog entry for EACH day of their Virtual Vacation. They can (and should) complete part of this at home, but should have the entire seven travel days to complete their blog. Revision should occur at the conclusion of their Virtual Vacation.

Scoring

Reflective responses will be scored on the Waite Middle School 8th grade writing rubric developed from Smarter Balanced constructed response rubrics.

Travel Blog will be scored according to the Smarter Balanced Narrative Writing Rubric for grades 6-11.

Common Core Standards Addressed

RI.8.1: Cite textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text

This will be addressed through student participation in Close Reading followed by a requirement to incorporate new learning into their travel blogs (ex. Incorporating understanding on dealing with bed bugs when they are forced to leave their hotels due to infestation)

RI.8.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text...

This will be addressed through analysis of author's writing style in a Close Reading of a travel blog and of songs about the cities students have chosen.

W.8.3: Write narrative to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

This will be addressed through the writing, editing, and revising of the students' travel blogs/trip diaries.

SL.8.1(a): Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly

This will be addressed both in collaborative development of travel plans and in class discussions during Close Reading.

SL.8.1(b): Follow rules for collegial discussions and decision making, track progress toward specific goals and deadlines, and define individual roles as needed.

This will be addressed both in collaborative development of travel plans and in class discussions during Close Reading.

Cross-Curricular Integration

Math – Students will be using several mathematical operations to plan and budget for spending on their trip. They must plan a budget and keep an expense report while on their Virtual Vacation

Science – Students will be using weather sites to help plan their packing list as well as responding to weather difficulties during their travel. They will also be exposed to health related problems (i.e. bed bugs) and will participate in a Close Reading on the topic and include their response to this problem in their travel blogs.

Social Studies – Students will use map skills to plot routes of travel and plan for transportation in the city of their choice. They also must write about the historical significance of four sites they visit in their travel blogs.

Suggested Texts for Close Reading

“Empire State of Mind” (Jay Z & Alicia Keys) & “Save Me, San Francisco” (Train)

“Visiting the 9/11 Memorial” (Travel Blog; Caroline in the City)

“Stop Bed Bugs in Hotels Safely” (Health Alert, NYC Dept. of Health & Mental Hygiene)

“Homeless Problem Becomes Homeless Crisis” (News Article)

"Homeless People of San Francisco Speak Out" (News Article)

Extended Reading:

"The Building of Manhattan" (Donald Mackay; informational text)

"The Great Fire" (Jim Murphy; informational text)

"The Great Chicago Fire" (Article, history.com)

"The Great Chicago Fire" (Film)

"Chicago" (Carl Sandburg, poem)

Artwork:

Edward Hopper, Nighthawks (1942)

Piet Mondrian, Broadway Boogie Woogie (1942-1943)

A Variety of Online Research Tools will also be used in planning and blogging about the Virtual Vacation.