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5E lesson plan

Biomes

Engage:

Ken and I assigned the students a project in which they design their own island. They could design the island however they wanted as long as the details made sense. For instance, they could make the island have a volcano, but the flora and fauna around that volcano had to be characteristic of a volcanic island.

Explore:

The students were able to design an island anywhere on the earth. While they were designing their island they had to write down the following: location of the island (latitude/longitude), how large the island was, topography, climate, how all of these features affect biodiversity and a few examples of some animals/plants they would find living on their island. In order to assign all of these characteristics to their island, the students had to do some research on various islands found throughout the world.

Explain:

I spent a few weeks teaching a lesson plan on trends in biodiversity and biomes. I first talked about some basic terminology and then I went into the overall trends you would see around the world. An example would be how biodiversity increases towards the equator (where the rainforests are). I then went into more detailed trends that one would find in special areas around the world. For instance, those animals found in hotter areas such as a desert will have special adaptations for their environment, such as a rabbit having long ears to release more heat.

Elaborate:

The students elaborated on the topic of biomes and animal/plant adaptations by using the information discussed in class to help build their island. Each group of students designed a unique island, therefore each island had its own set of unique characteristics that included: climate, animals, plants, topography, etc.

Evaluate:

The students were evaluated on this topic by having to do an oral presentation in which they described their island and all of its characteristics. They also had to describe why their island had those characteristics. Overall the students really

seemed to like this project, they enjoyed being able to use their creativity in a new way. I think they also found it very interesting how animals adapt to various environments.

Reflection:

The overall outcome of the project was good, but not great. A few students got really into the project and did very well. They had nice drawings of the island and were very detailed in their presentation. Other students could have put a little more effort into the project. Their pictures of the island were half put together; it looked like they had drawn it up that morning. However, these students seemed liked they absorbed the information because they were mentioning little pieces of biodiversity trends here and there while they were presenting.

I believe that the "creating an island" project was a good idea, but I think I could have been more sensitive to those students who are not artistically inclined. I think that may have been the reason for why some of the students did not put their all into the project, because they were insecure about drawing the island with all of the details. Other than that, the rest of my students really enjoyed designing their own island and they showed their excitement by giving a very well demonstrated and detailed presentation.