



Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center
1725 State Street
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601
Phone: 608-785-6473
Web site: <http://www.uwlax.edu/mvac/>

The following lessons were created by **Christopher Kemp**, a teacher participating in a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute for Teachers entitled Touch the Past: Archaeology of the Upper Mississippi River Region.

Introduction to Anthropology, Human Evolution and Archaeology: Southeastern Wisconsin Case Study, Aztalan and the People of the Sun

Grade Level: 9-12

Subjects: Social Studies, Earth Science

Objectives: This is a *UNIT PLAN* for an introductory unit for a European History Survey Course. The objectives of the unit will be to introduce students to working understandings of the core concepts of anthropology, including an understanding of the anthropological definition of “human culture,” the basics of human evolution and migration in and from Africa, and the basic techniques and goals of archaeology. The unit will conclude with a case study, including field visit to the site, of a local pre-historic Mississippian Culture settlement at Aztalan, Wisconsin, located approximately 10 miles from our school. This field trip will also include a more generalized exposure to anthropological and archaeological sciences at the Milwaukee Public Museum.

Standards: The following Wisconsin Model Academic Standards will be addressed in this Unit
A.12.3 Construct mental maps of the world and the world's regions and draw maps from memory showing major physical and human features.

A.12.4 Analyze the short-term and long-term effects that major changes in population in various parts of the world have had or might have on the environment.

B.12.1 Explain different points of view on the same historical event, using data gathered from various sources, such as letters, journals, diaries, newspapers, government documents, and speeches

B.12.2 Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion

B.12.3 Recall, select, and analyze significant historical periods and the relationships among them

B.12.4 Assess the validity of different interpretations of significant historical events

B.12.5 Gather various types of historical evidence, including visual and quantitative data, to analyze issues of freedom and equality, liberty and order, region and nation, individual and community, law and conscience, diversity and civic duty; form a reasoned conclusion in the light of other possible conclusions; and develop a coherent argument in the light of other possible arguments.

B.12.9 Select significant changes caused by technology, industrialization, urbanization, and population growth, and analyze the effects of these changes in the United States and the world

B.12.10 Select instances of scientific, intellectual, and religious change in various regions of the world at different times in history and discuss the impact those changes had on beliefs and values

B.12.12 Analyze the history, culture, tribal sovereignty, and current status of the American Indian tribes and bands in Wisconsin

B.12.13 Analyze examples of ongoing change within and across cultures, such as the development of ancient civilizations; the rise of nation-states; and social, economic, and political revolutions

E.12.3 Compare and describe similarities and differences in the ways various cultures define individual rights and responsibilities, including the use of rules, folkways, mores, and taboos

E.12.4 Analyze the role of economic, political, educational, familial, and religious institutions as agents of both continuity and change, citing current and past examples

E.12.5 Describe the ways cultural and social groups are defined and how they have changed over time

E.12.6 Analyze the means by which and extent to which groups and institutions can influence people, events, and cultures in both historical and contemporary settings

E.12.8 Analyze issues of cultural assimilation and cultural preservation among ethnic and racial groups in Wisconsin, the United States, and the world

E.12.10 Describe a particular culture as an integrated whole and use that understanding to explain its language, literature, arts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors

E.12.17 Examine and describe various belief systems that exist in the world, such as democracy, socialism, and capitalism

Duration: 10 School Days including 1 field day

Materials: Classroom sets of all reading handouts as listed in the *Procedures* section of this unit plan, field trip permission forms, bus transportation, local guides at Aztalan and the Milwaukee Public Museum. Videos as listed in *Procedures* section of this unit plan.

Vocabulary: (Listed by sub-topic as used in individual lesson plans)

Anthropology

Biological Anthropology
Cultural Anthropology
Archaeology
Linguistics
Extrasomatic
Trade languages
 Mobilian Jargon
 Chinook Jargon
Human Culture
Taxonomies of Human Societies
 Unstratified
 Stratified
 Band
 Microband
 Mating networks
 Sororal Polygyny
 Tribal
 Chiefdom
 State
 Empire

Human Evolution

evolution
hominoid
hominid
hominin
dimorphism
locomotion
 bipedalism / habitual & facultative
 the Lovejoy Hypothesis / male provisioning
concealed ovulation
pair-bonding
long-term child development
human brain size / pre-frontal cortex
australopithecines
homo habilis
homo rectus
Neolithic
Ice Man
Neanderthals
Maeve & Richard Leakey
era
epoch
M.Y.A.

Archaeology

Prehistory
Proto-history
History
Site
Artifacts
 Portable
 Non-portable
 Features
Eco-facts

Aztalan

Zea Mays – Teosinte
Cahokia
American Bottom
Red Horn Myths
Mississippian Culture
 social/political
 beliefs/cosmology
Dualism
Chunkey

“Barroom archaeology”
Pedestrian survey
“Accidental discovery”
Excavation
 Problem/Question Oriented
 Salvage
Context
 Temporal
 Spatial
 Association
 Stratigraphy
 “Geologic Law of Superposition”
Radio Carbon (C14) Dating
Willard Libby
Relative dating
Absolute dating
Middens
Burials
 Primary
 Secondary
 Bundling
Percussion flaking
Flake
Core
Hammerstone
Debitage
Flint
Lithic
Handedness
Tool
Faunal remains
Floral remains
William Rathje
Garbology
5 Principle Tasks of Archaeology
Analogy

Charnel houses
late woodlands people
effigy mound builders
Aztalan Diet
chert vs. exotic materials
 silicified sandstone
arrowheads
 notched vs. un-notched
Earspools
copper long-nosed god-maskettes
Green corn ceremony
cannibalism
wattle and daub construction

Miscellaneous Vocabulary

In Situ
Pleistocene
Holocene
isostatic rebound
Beringia Walk Model
Occam’s razor

Background: Teachers should be familiar and conversant with all of the terminology listed in the ***Vocabulary*** Section of this unit plan and with all of the readings in the ***Readings*** Section of this unit plan. Teachers should also have previewed all of the video materials listed in the Procedures section of this unit plan. If possible teachers should also visit Aztalan State Park and the Milwaukee Public Museum prior to teaching this unit.

This unit is designed based upon the presumption that students will have very little if any exposure to this material.

Setting the Stage (*Anticipatory Set*)

Students will be prepared (“ginned up”) for this unit by spending one class period discussing the question, “What makes us human?” students will be placed in small groups to discuss their response to the question and then one all encompassing list of responses will be made for each class.

Procedures / Daily Lesson Plans

Day 1 – Introduction 50 minutes “Fallen Angels or Risen Apes?”

Students will be prompted with the essential question, “*What makes us human?*” and asked to construct lists of characteristics that’s separate us from other mammals. The class will then construct a “master list” of those traits that the students felt separated us from other mammals. Each classes’ list will be hung on the wall for continued reference throughout the unit.

Assignment:

- Handout vocabulary list and assign first reading from *Images of the Past* pp. 1-7 and 35-43. Answer the following questions from the reading:
 - 1) What are the differences between cultural development and biological development?
 - 2) Does evolution happen slowly or quickly? Explain.
 - 3) Are humans really so different from other animals? Explain.
 - 4) What advantages could bipedalism have provided for our ape ancestors?

Day 2 – Lecture over Biological Evolution, Time and the Dawn of Humanity

Assignment:

- Reading “Out of Africa” pp. 71-74 from *Images of the Past*. Answer the following question from the reading:
 - 1) Why did some of our early human ancestors leave the cradle of Africa?

Day 3 – “Journey of Man” PBS Video Presentation

- Students will be asked to create their own set of video questions from the video. Each student will write 10 questions for each of the two days of video presentation.
- Questions will have to be typed in a standardized format.
- Student questions will then be randomly distributed to the entire class to be answered in the form of a *video content quiz*.

Assignment:

- Reading “The Valley of the Neanderthals” pp. 117-122 from *Images of the Past*. Answer the following questions from the reading:
 - 1) The fact that Neanderthals buried their dead is surprising to many people. What do you think this practice may have meant? What does it tell us about the Neanderthal’s culture?

- 2) Of the various possibilities presented as to the fate of the Neanderthals, which do you believe is the most viable? Why?

Day 4 – “Journey of Man” PBS Video Presentation

Complete video presentation

Assignment:

- Students will need to complete their video question writing assignment for use in class tomorrow.
- Reading “The Iceman” pp.508-510 from *Images of the Past*. Answer the following question from the reading
 - 1) From where do archaeologists believe Ice came? How do they believe he died? What evidence do they invoke to support their conclusions?

Day 5 – Introduction to Anthropology and Culture “What creates differences in human societies?”

- Students will first take the student-written quiz over the “Journey of Man” PBS video presentation (20 questions)

Students will be placed into small groups to discuss the question, “*What is human culture?*” They will be asked to construct lists of what they believe human culture is. A comprehensive list for each class will be posted in the classroom for reference while we discuss anthropology and culture.

Assignment:

- Reading “Introduction to Archaeology” pp. 1-17 from *Twelve Millennia: Archaeology of the Upper Mississippi River Valley*. Students should complete all terms from the vocabulary list that are found in the Theler reading.
- Due Tuesday

Day 6 – Definitions of Culture and Taxonomy of Human Societies

Introductory lecture on the *definition of culture* and introduction to *band level societies*.

- Students will pay particular attention to terminology discussed during the lecture that is included in the vocabulary list for the unit.

Assignment:

- No new assignment for tonight. Students are reminded that their vocabulary lists will be checked tomorrow (Tuesday)

Day 7 – Continue with the Taxonomy of Human Societies and view film “The Journals of Knud Rasmussen”

- Student vocabulary lists will be checked for adequate progress

After completion of our discussion on Taxonomy, we will briefly discuss the 5th Thule Expedition and Knud Rasmussen’s experience with the Netsilik Inuit during the winter of 1922-23.

- View film “*The Journals of Knud Rasmussen*”

Assignment:

- Students will have a set of comprehensive video questions (yet to be written) to answer while and after viewing the video. These questions will be based upon our earlier discussions of culture and the taxonomy of human societies and will focus student thinking towards connection between the film and our class work.
- Reading “The First Tools” pp.63-64 from *Images of the Past* and complete vocabulary in the section on Archaeology that is discussed in the reading.

Day 8 – WEB QUEST – Introduction to Archaeology via internet research

Students will spend the period in the computer lab constructing a WEB-Based Resource Guide on introductory terminology and topics of general interest in archaeology. They will need to use this time to complete the sections on their vocabulary lists that deal with archaeology and anthropology and they will need to construct a survey of 10 web-sites devoted to archaeology and write a review of these sites that includes a brief analysis of the sites based upon the following categories

- Graphics
- Ease of navigation
- Usefulness in finding definitions of key terminology
- Effectiveness in grabbing your interest in one or more of the sites topic.
- Each analysis must include reference to a topic, issue or specific archaeological site that the student knew nothing about prior to visiting the web-site.

Assignment:

- Reading “Life at Aztalan” pp. 85-102 from *Aztalan: Mysteries of an Ancient Town* and completing vocabulary from “Aztalan” section of vocabulary list.

Day 9 – Aztalan – Introduction to the Mississippians and Life at Aztalan Lecture

A power point lecture (*see project 2*) introducing Mississippian culture and life at Aztalan will prepare students for their visit to Aztalan the next day (Friday)

- A brief (8min) video produced by Wisconsin Public Television and the Aztalan Historical Society will be viewed

Assignment

- Reading “People of the Sun” pp. 20-36 from *Aztalan: Mysteries of an Ancient Town*. Students should use the section of their vocabulary lists entitled “Aztalan” as a guide for this reading while also completing the terms from the list that are addressed by the reading.

Day10 – FIELD TRIP WOOO HOOO!!!!

- Aztalan site visit including guided tour focusing on the archaeology of the site.
- Milwaukee Public Museum visit

Assignment

- Students will be given an outline template to guide them through the basic investigation of a topic from human prehistory, proto-history or history at the MPM. They will then be

responsible for sharing their findings with the class, through an informal presentation of their topic and the basic information that they recorded on it.

Day 11 – Unit Examination

Students will be given a formal assessment over the academic content of the unit. The examination will be divided equally between base content questions and higher order thinking questions that will involve essay style written responses.

Closure

Closure for this unit will come in the form of short student presentations (hopefully enlisting the terminology and background information received during the unit) over a topic of their choosing from our field-day experiences.

Links/Extensions

This unit can easily be linked to earth sciences, geography, sociology and American History

This unit will link naturally to my subsequent units on Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome and the importance of archaeology in the study of those civilizations

References (In order of their usage)

- 1) Price, Douglas T., and Feinman, Gary M., *“Images of the Past,”* Fifth Edition, McGraw-Hill, New York, 2008.
- 2) Theler, James L., and Boszhardt, Robert F., *Twelve Millennia: Archaeology of the Upper Mississippi River Valley*, University of Iowa Press, 2003.
- 3) Birmingham, Robert A., and Goldstein, Lynne G., *Aztalan: Mysteries of an Ancient Indian Town*, Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2005.

Note: The content of the *National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute, “Exploring the Past: Archaeology in the Upper Mississippi River Valley* was drawn on significantly in the development of this unit plan. The institute was held July 11-29, 2011 at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse. Presenters at the institute included; **James Theler**, Professor Emeritus of Archaeology, UW-L, **Katherine Stevenson** Projects Director, MVAC; Adjunct Faculty UW-L, **Bonnie Jancik**, Director of Public Outreach, MVAC; Adjunct Faculty and Associate Graduate Faculty, UW-L.

All filmography is listed in the daily procedures section of this outline