Beginning to Remodel: From Teachers in the Trenches

Introduction

As teachers are developing their skills in lesson remodelling, some are sending us samples of their work. It is, of course, a pleasure for us to see teachers in the field making lesson plan remodelling a reality. We are indebted to those who have sent us remodels. We have included several of these remodels to give you the opportunity to see a variety of approaches to lesson plan remodelling and to encourage you as educators to implement your creative ideas effectively through the structure presented in the handbook. As you can see, critical thinking can and should be applied to any and all dimensions of learning, from chemistry to physical education.

The following, then, demonstrate some of the "first effort" remodels we have received. We welcome other contributions.
Soccer Tactics

by Joan M. West, Victorian Ministry of Education, Australia

Objectives of the Remodelled Plan

The students will:
- participate in a previously planned fitness program specific to the requirements of soccer
- develop attacking and defensive strategies in soccer, thus thinking independently
- assess their solutions and actions
- develop and participate in modified games which will apply the devised strategies
- devise and participate in soccer ball skills practices

Original Lesson Plan

Students analyze two specific aspects of the game of soccer — distance and player size — which affect the game outcome and hence influence strategy. In response to teacher-posed problems, small groups of students devise their own solutions within the limitations of their skill, fitness, rules of the game, and problem solving abilities.

Critique

This lesson is used to illustrate the “divergent” teaching style which is the least teacher-directed model discussed in one of the “classic” physical education instructional strategies texts. In the opening section of the lesson, pairs of students explore the implications of situations set up by the teacher. The students lose the chance to imagine their own situations, explain the problems which could occur, and devise possible strategies. By presenting the students with the two variables to be explored, this lesson misses a key step — that which provides the opportunity for students to discover the factors that they consider are important in the game outcome. From this point, small groups could design and try out strategies to either overcome or maximize these factors.

Strategies Used to Remodel

S-1 thinking independently
S-31 distinguishing relevant from irrelevant facts
S-19 generating or assessing solutions
S-20 analyzing or evaluating actions or policies
Remodelled Lesson Plan S.1

The lesson starts with a soccer-specific warm-up activity, devised in previous lessons by the students, which includes practice of dribbling, tackling, and passing in small groups. Students also pair up and then practice against other pairs. Discussion then follows in those small groups when students themselves identify and justify key factors which influence win-lose situations. S-31

Students devise and participate in practice situations for strategies which either overcome or maximize those variables. How, exactly, does this factor influence the game? Why? What problems can this cause? How? How could this problem be solved? What effect would that have? Which solution is best for which situation? S-19

This practice is followed by discussion in which the students assess the strategies' effectiveness. How did each proposed solution work? Which helped solve the problem? Did any create additional problems? Why? Which solution is best for which situations? S-20

When rule violations occur, in particular dangerous play, the teacher could direct the discussion to students' assessing the consequences of such behavior. Why did this happen? Why do players do this? What effect does this have? How can we all help prevent this from happening in the future? S-20

In closing the lesson, students and teacher could return to the original questions: Which factors influence the game outcome? What strategies can you use to maximize or minimize them? Students have the opportunity to explain the specific situations in which they identified key variables.

It should not be assumed that there is a universal standard for how fast teachers should proceed with the task of remodelling their lesson plans. A slow but steady evolutionary process is much more desirable than a rush job across the board.
Mixtures

by Sister Isabel Clark, Academy of the Visitation, St. Louis, MO

Objectives of the Remodelled Plan
The students will:
• compare and contrast mixtures, compounds, and suspensions
• recognize properties of mixtures, in order to analyze the word
• discuss properties with partners to clarify
• compare the scientific and ordinary concepts ‘mixture’

Original Lesson Plan

This lesson focuses on mixtures, emphasizing the differences between mixtures and compounds.

Before having the students read the section about mixtures, ask them to brainstorm common examples of mixtures. (Some suggestions are gravel, cereal with milk, and a tossed salad.) From the examples, help the students develop an operational definition of a mixture. Revise the definition after the students have read the section.

Critique

This lesson offers an opportunity for students to work out their own definition of a mixture, but the brainstorming technique suggests that they already know what a mixture is. We suggest that samples of real mixtures as well as two compounds that they have already studied and one suspension be used instead of the brainstorming. By working with real materials, the students are in touch with the concrete object to observe. The introduction of a third substance, namely a suspension, gives the student a substance that is similar but retains other properties that will lead the student on to the next part of the lesson.

Strategies Used to Remodel

S-29 noting significant similarities and differences
S-14 clarifying and analyzing the meanings of words or phrases
S-17 questioning deeply: raising and pursuing root or significant questions
Remodelled Lesson Plan

This lesson requires preparation of materials for students who will work in groups of four at 6 tables for four. Set out plastic or paper cups of each of the following mixtures for each table: sand and gravel, cereal with milk, tossed salad, and other mixtures. Then prepare two cups for each table with a compound in each cup, such as water and sugar, which were used in the last lesson. To this add one cup of oil and vinegar salad dressing as a suspension which will be used in the next lesson.

Ask students to work in groups of four. Tell them that one way that chemists would group the cups is by how the different substances are combined in each cup. Have them sort and compare the cups and discuss their groupings. Or tell them to examine and observe the contents of each cup and identify it as compound, mixture or other. The two compounds, sugar and water were used in the last lesson. As they compare the cups, some should discover the key property of mixtures, namely that they are combinations of substances that are not chemically combined and so can be separated. S-29 Each student in the group should be ready to state what cups contain mixtures and defend that position. Tell them to test for mixtures by separating the substances in the cups. A written statement defining 'mixture' from the group should be made to give to the entire class. Thus, each group can see how they are like the others and can help to refine the final definition. Students could then propose other potential mixtures. S-14

Spend some time on the substance that is the suspension. If some groups thought it was a mixture, ask them to defend their positions. Clarify the definitions for further distinctions for the students who might not make the distinction on their own. S-29

After reading their texts, students could compare the scientific and ordinary concepts 'mixture.' (For example, though people would usually call cake batter a mixture, chemists wouldn't.) S-29

Students could also propose reasons why chemists would find these categories important. S-17

---

Getting experience in lesson plan critique: What are the strengths and weaknesses of this lesson? What critical principles, concepts, or strategies apply to it?
Human Treatment of Whales

by Noreen Miller, School District #12, Denver, CO & Lanai Wallin, Skyview Elementary, Denver, CO

Objectives of the Remodelled Plan
The students will:
- raise and pursue significant questions regarding our relationships with animals
- evaluate actions
- examine their assumptions through Socratic discussion

Original Lesson Plan

This is a seatwork lesson on a newspaper article about four whales at Sea World who attacked their trainers — the trainers are suing. It is usually taught with emphasis on coding. That is, the students mark their copies of the article with an A for agree, D for disagree and I for interesting.

Critique

Although the usual manner of reading a newspaper article for an opinion is fast and efficient, it is a superficial approach to understanding belief systems. The lesson as stated would not establish why the students agree or disagree or the nature of the reasons for their thinking. The issues being raised need to be clarified, as do the assumptions underlying the students' beliefs. A seminar and dialogue using critical thinking would be more useful, as it would help students clarify their reasoning processes.

In the particular Socratic dialogue with fifteen students who had been trained in seminar techniques, some of the students also raised additional points such as: the people at Sea World are not well trained; these people should have studied the whales first; more research is needed; research under controlled conditions is different than field research; Sea World is run for profit.

Strategies Used to Remodel

S-17 questioning deeply: raising and pursuing root or significant questions
S-21 reading critically: clarifying or critiquing texts
S-20 analyzing or evaluating actions or policies
S-24 practicing Socratic discussion: clarifying and questioning beliefs, theories, or perspectives
S-18 analyzing or evaluating arguments, interpretations, beliefs, or theories
Remodelled Lesson Plan S-17

Have the students read a newspaper article such as the one about four homicidal whales and their trainers. Ask them to think about the conflicts that are posed, both the obvious one and the more subtle ones, if they see any. Have them share the conflicts that they found. Then ask them to state in complete sentences the conflicts they discovered. Have them give their initial responses and reasons. S-21

Raise key questions, such as: "Who was responsible for what happened? Why? What should happen now?"

Discussion could move in the direction of more general and basic questions. "How do human beings relate to animals? What different relationships are there? What responsibilities, if any, do we have toward animals?" (Have students consider pets, stray animals, animals in zoos, in the wild, and animals that we eat.) Another question might be, "Is it necessary to conduct research on animals? If so, under what conditions can we accept such research? If not, what can we do instead of using animals for research?" S-20

Probe for further issues by asking questions such as, "Is it fair to put animals into captivity?" A possible student response could be, "No, because it makes them unhappy." The teacher could probe this answer in the following manner: "Are all animals in captivity unhappy? How can we as human beings know whether an animal is happy or unhappy? Do the needs of human beings ever take precedence over the happiness of animals?" S-24

After some discussion, ask the students to state some of the important issues that they have discovered. Write them on the board.

Begin to Socratically question the class as a whole about their responses to the issues raised. Probe them for the assumptions that underlie their belief systems by asking such questions as: "Do animals have rights? What is the status of a human being in comparison to an animal? Is it acceptable to confine animals just because it has been common practice to do so? Can humans kill and control animals without any negative consequences?" S-24 By questioning students about the basis for their agreement or disagreement with a belief, they will gain practice in seeing their thought processes at work. They will better understand the reasons for their beliefs and the assumptions that underlie them. During the discussion, note related issues that are raised and come back to them later in the lesson or at another time.

When students disagree, encourage them to argue back and forth, trying to convince each other. Have students evaluate the arguments given. For example, you could ask, "Of all of the reasons given for (conclusion), which are the strongest? Weakest?" S-18
Myths

by Virginia Reilly, St. Apollinaris School, Napa, CA

Objectives of the Remodelled Plan
The students will:
• deeply question the meaning of a particular myth
• discuss the literal meaning of the myth
• apply their understanding of the myth they have studied to myths of other cultures
• explore why myths appear in the literature of so many cultures

Original Lesson Plan

Skills Unit 31 focuses on myth and legend recognition. The children are directed to read a story about why Ra-wen-jo, maker of all things on earth, gave rabbit long back legs and long ears and why he gave owl a short neck and big eyes. Upon finishing the story, children are asked to answer factual questions about the story and to consider the definition of myth and legend. They are then asked to read a Hawaiian story about Pele and how she became goddess of volcanoes. Again factual questions are asked. In addition, children are asked to identify the story as myth or legend. The unit concludes with a lesson on legend identification.

Critique

I will focus on the myth aspect of the lesson. Even though many sixth graders would be unable to recite definitions of myth and legend and identify a given story as one or the other, they have long been acquainted with myths and legends. Certainly it is important that children have the language of literature and be able to recognize different forms of literature, but that is not enough. Skills Unit 31 has for its main task myth recognition, but it fails to consider the worthier task of myth and its relationship to reality, seen and unseen.

In the section titled “Introducing the Skill Lesson,” the teacher is told the scope of the lesson and what to say and do.

Read the title. Explain that in this lesson pupils will read about two very old types of literature — the myth and the legend. The lesson will help them understand the difference between the two and will help them recognize each when they read or hear such tales.

Such is the scope of the lesson. Not only does it fail to encourage critical thinking in the student, but it likewise discourages the teacher from thinking critically. Neither teacher nor student is
called upon to become actively involved in this lesson; rather they are told to do trite, uninteresting tasks.

After reading the first myth, the children read the following in their text:

The story you have just read is an American Indian myth. A myth is a very old story handed down among people. It may be about some gods or goddesses. It often explains something about nature, such as why there is thunder and lightning.

The children have been given a definition of myth; they are not encouraged to explore for themselves the meaning of myth, an exercise more valuable because it engages their curiosity and taps their desire to know and understand. The lesson continues, and children read another story about gods and goddesses, after which they are asked to identify the story as legend or myth, a task which children complete successfully as the definition of myth in the text uses the key words, gods and goddesses. Thus the lesson of myths is completed without ever having explored myth and its meaning.

Strategies Used to Remodel

S-17 questioning deeply: raising and pursuing root or significant questions
S-35 exploring implications and consequences
S-14 clarifying and analyzing the meanings of words or phrases
S-11 comparing analogous situations: transferring insights to new contexts

Remodelled Lesson Plan S-17

The remodelled lesson, by having students discuss root questions, would explore myth and its meaning. Instead of defining myth for the children and having them apply that definition to stories they read, I would begin by telling the children that they are going to read an Indian myth. A discussion of the Indian myth in particular and of myth in general would follow. What part of the myth seems unbelievable? Does the myth deal with reality? What reality does the myth explain? What are the obvious, seen realities that the myth explains and the less obvious but unseen realities that the myth implies? S-35 Why does the myth describe a creator and creatures? How is that relationship developed through the actions of Ra-wen-lo, rabbit, and fox, and what is implied about their relationships? Do myths reveal reality as it is or as a society perceives it to be? Why do people tell myths? What do myths reveal about the tellers of myths and their beliefs? S-17

The lesson would be extended over a period of time during which myths from other cultures would be read, discussed, and compared. How do the details of myths differ? Why do they differ? Are myths alike in any way? How? Why? Why are myths an important part of the literature of many cultures? S-14

The lesson would conclude with a written essay in which the children would be asked to compare and contrast two myths, one which had been discussed in class and one which they would read for the first time. S-11
Johnny Tremain
by Michael Cecil, Nipher Middle School, Kirkwood, MO

Objectives of the Remodelled Plan
The students will:
- question perspectives on an incident in a historical novel
- make interdisciplinary connections between the dramatic and historical
- analyze the author's socio-political beliefs
- evaluate source credibility by examining claims regarding potential vested interest

Original Lesson Plan

Objective: Gain further understanding about the historical period through the study of a work of fiction. Content matter: Johnny Tremain by Esther Forbes.

Students are directed to pay attention to descriptive details, comparing pre-and revolutionary times to today. Lessons direct students to focus on food, dress, transportation, and communication. Students are directed to pick a topic and do a poster or model on it: e.g., ships of the late eighteenth and mid-twentieth centuries. The intent is to have students realize what it would have been like to be a teenager during earlier times. The skill of comparing and contrasting is the primary tool in analyzing the material.

Critique

No direction is given to discuss the author's presentation: whether the presentation limits or expands student perspective, such as examining what is not stated directly in descriptive narrative nor in character dialogue. Thus, the directed conclusions may be superficial. The only event examined further is the firing of the first shot at Lexington. Even at that, the quibble over who fired it takes on disproportionate importance and reinforces already-held assumptions about good guy/bad guy labeling. The novel provides numerous opportunities for in-depth critical examination of the socio-economic circumstances, thus providing greater depth in understanding the characters' actions and the reader's assumptions about judging those actions. However, I'll cite a specific instance and describe an approach for gaining greater understanding of the period and the author's assumptions about the period.

Strategies Used to Remodel
S-23 making interdisciplinary connections
S-27 comparing and contrasting ideals with actual practice
Remodelled Lesson Plan

Johnny Tremain burns a hand while attempting hurriedly to finish a silver piece commissioned by John Hancock. Johnny's carelessness is a direct result of the law prohibiting working on the sabbath. This would be an excellent opportunity to discuss the separation of church and state. Why was this law passed? What is the relationship here? Who officially passed laws in Boston? Who influenced the lawmakers? How did the framers of the U.S. Constitution deal with this issue? In contemporary U.S., are religious values of specific religions reflected in law? How does this happen if church and state have been directed by the Constitution to remain separate? S-27 What are the results? S-23 How does the author probe such questions? Does the presentation unfairly favor certain conclusions? On what assumptions might these be based? S-18 Such questions would be pursued though small group work and large group Socratic discussion.

There is yet another aspect of the hand-burning incident that bears scrutiny. Johnny's injury is not tended by a doctor, but rather by a midwife because the doctor is considered likely to expose their sabbath violation to the authorities; the unsanctioned midwife is not. Why? The implications and causes of the situation are never explored in the lesson directions, or by the author. In fact, Forbes is clearly supportive of the doctor, as witnessed by the negative physical description (the midwife being reduced to an ugly hag) and the prominence of the doctor's judgment (given later when the doctor discovers that Johnny's hand has been rendered nearly useless through the midwife's incorrect treatment).

The students need to be ushered through Socratic discussion to probe beyond this one-sided presentation, to grapple with questions, such as: Why would the doctor have been more likely to bring punishment on Johnny and the family for violating the sabbath law? What would the doctor and midwife have lost or gained from turning them in? Does this reveal societal attitudes about medicine, or is the doctor simply a more responsible, law-abiding citizen? Why did the midwife make such an obvious mistake in wrapping the wound? Was she incompetent? Why? Did the doctor and midwife have equal access to training and supplies? Was the midwife better equipped than the doctor to deal with some medical problems? Which ones? Why? How many women were legal doctors at that time? What does this say about the attitudes of the time? S-24

Who does the author place in the more favorable light? How? What can we infer about the author's attitudes and assumptions from the way the story was presented? How does she establish the doctor as the more credible source of medical judgment? S-16 Does the doctor's role as one of the Sons of Liberty...
affect your emotional trust of his medical pronouncements? Why? What literary effect does this presentation have? \textit{S-4}

To satisfactorily answer any of the above questions, the students would be directed to do additional reading, individually or in small groups. The students would also benefit from discussing what additional information Forbes could have provided to create a more even-handed account or a more critical assessment of the historical period. Students can then discuss how such a presentation would affect the work as literature. \textit{S-23}
Cause and Effect

by JoAnne Rains, Laurens County
District # 55, Clinton, SC

Objectives of the Remodelled Plan
The students will:
• clarify and analyze a problem
• explore the main character’s feelings
• assess solutions
• transfer insights into causes of the problem to their lives

Original Lesson Plan

This is a three-page skill lesson dealing with cause-effect and sequence relationships. I will only address the first page which teaches recognition of cause and effect. The students are to read a half-page story about Ramona, who plans to take her dog, Pedro, to obedience school. Dad calls to tell Ramona that, because he has a flat tire, she would have to call Grandmother to take her to the obedience class. When Grandmother is not home, Ramona becomes upset until Aunt Dolores walks in the front door.

Critique

This lesson was one that I seriously considered throwing out, but, since it was the only exposure to the cause/effect terminology in the student textbook, I decided to remodel it.

The reasons for recognizing cause and effect were never explored. The lesson certainly missed a good opportunity to explore and discuss Ramona’s feeling upset. The authors oversimplified both the concept and the discussion. They pointed out their ideas of cause and effect in the student textbook directly following the story without giving students a chance to discover them for themselves. The questions suggested in the teacher’s edition are either factual or can be answered by yes or no with no opportunity for critical thinking on the part of the student.

Strategies Used to Remodel

S-13 clarifying issues, conclusions, or beliefs
S-10 refining generalizations and avoiding oversimplifications
S-4 exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts
S-19 generating or assessing solutions
S-11 comparing analogous situations: transferring insights to new contexts
Remodelled Lesson Plan

Introduction
I would begin the class by having the students read the story. I would then give various students the opportunity to retell the story in their own words. As they are talking, I would write "Cause $\iff$ Effect" on the board.

The problem S-13

I would define and isolate (or clarify) the problem by asking the following questions:

- Who is involved?
- What is at issue here (what is involved)?
- What is the cause (why did it happen)?
- What is Ramona’s problem?
- How do you know this is the real problem?
- Name every factor that contributed to her problem. S-10

By helping the students to isolate the cause before the problem is defined, I find that there is less chance for the student to confuse the symptom with the problem.

The feelings S-4

After the problem has been identified and defined, I would use one or more of the affective strategies to encourage the students to examine Ramona’s feelings. This could be accomplished by asking the following questions.

- What did Ramona feel when her dad called and told her he could not take her to the dog’s obedience class?
- Why did Ramona feel this way? What did she think?
- At what point did Ramona become more upset?
- Why did this make a difference?
- Who or what was responsible for Ramona’s feelings?

Through these questions, the students have explored in-depth what Ramona’s feelings were and why she felt that way, and then they have evaluated her feelings. As a transition to “solution and transfer,” I would ask: “How does the problem, as we have defined it, relate to Ramona’s feelings?”

The cause can be restated by asking:

- What actually caused this problem?
- What was the effect (what actually resulted) because of this problem?

To assist the students in looking for multiple problems, causes, etc., I would then ask them to look for other cause and effect relationships in the story.

The solutions and transfer

To encourage the students to look for alternatives in their own problem solving, I might ask, “What could Ramona have done if Aunt Dolores hadn’t come? How would that have helped? Would it cause other problems? Which solution
is best?" After this discussion, I would use a classroom situation as an example of cause and effect, then allow the students, through questioning and discussion, to determine the cause and effect. I would encourage the students to use questions similar to the ones asked in the "Ramona Story." To wrap up the lesson, I would let the students share their own real-life examples of cause and effect. My emphasis here would be on their recognition and exploration of alternative solutions in their own lives. 

Note: My 7th and 8th grade classes usually become so involved in these real-life situations that they often need to carry this lesson over to a second day.
The Soviet Perspective

by Bethanne T. Jacobson, Upper St.
Clair High School, Washington, PA

Objectives of the Remodelled Plan

The students will:
- develop intellectual good faith and courage by exploring their perspectives on the Soviet Union
- evaluate the credibility of various sources of information
- reason from within the Soviet perspective

Original Lesson Plan

The students begin by reading the unit on the Soviet Union. Extensive map work is included, locating most of the major features of the Soviet Union. Students are given a specific topic connected with the Soviet Union and give an oral presentation to the class. Daily class time is normally a short class lecture followed by teacher-led discussion of assigned reading. Map work is in the form of worksheets. Prior to the exam, a review is done in the form of a “Geography Bee” with the students in two teams. (The winning team gets to skip one assignment in the next unit.) The unit concludes with a written subject/objective exam and map test.

Critique

This lesson offers little to the student in the way of critical thinking. It is (unfortunately) a typical lesson plan for a majority of today’s social studies teachers. The lecture aspect does not allow the students to interact, think, evaluate, or reason. They simply memorize the necessary information and then spit the information back out to the teacher on the exam. The exam does have an objective section in which, if the students had the ability (and few do unless allowed to use it), they could evaluate and argue points of view. The teacher-led discussion, again, does not allow the student to take the lead.

My remodelled lesson plan involves the students in decisions. It allows the student to critically analyze the text and other sources of information. The students are asked to take the perspectives of Soviet citizens and try to visualize life from their point of view.

Strategies Used to Remodel

S-7  developing intellectual good faith or integrity
S-4  exploring thoughts underlying feelings and feelings underlying thoughts
S-2  developing insight into egocentricity or sociocentricity
remodeled lesson plan

The class could begin with a brainstorming session. Students would be asked to explore their beliefs about the Soviet Union and Soviet life in general. Ask, "When someone mentions the country, the Soviet Union, what comes to your mind? How do you feel about it? S-4 What do you think everyday life for a student in the U.S.S.R. is like? Do you think the kids like to do any of the same things you do for fun? What do you suppose they study in school? How do you think they feel about school? What kinds of problems do you suppose they have? What have you read or heard about the Soviet Union? Where? Did it come from a Soviet? Would a Soviet say the same things? S-2 What would a Soviet critical of his country say? S-10 One who approved of his country? What else do you know about the U.S.S.R.? About the government, employment, social programs, entertainment?" S-12

Following this session, the students can read the text and one other source for comparison. The next few days could be spent evaluating the text and other sources using the ideas brought out from the brainstorming session on the first day. Students can explore their attitudes towards Soviets by considering some of the following questions: Why do you suppose that you have the opinions that you do about Russians? Where did your beliefs come from: your parents, friends, school, media, the government? Which of these is in a position to know? Do any of these have an interest in distorting evidence about the Soviet Union? Why or why not? S-2 How long have you had those beliefs? Have you talked to any Soviet people personally? How do you think Soviet people form their opinions about people in the United States? Do you suppose their opinions are accurate? How can one find the truth about any group of people? What kind of evidence would you need? What is bias? S-28 How can one determine if someone else is biased? S-16

The next several days would be a combination of brief lecturing, followed by teacher- and student-led discussions. The student-led discussions would be on a specific area of interest to the students which they have chosen.

The final few days would be spent in role playing. Different situations would be given to the students e.g., "You and your neighbor are Soviet citizens. A new American friend has come to stay in your home for one week." The three students would carry on a dialogue addressing the differences and similarities between the two cultures. For example, the American friend might ask, "What do you like to do for fun here? What kinds of stores are in your neighborhood? Do
most people own their own houses and cars? Would you rather be an American? Do you really have to wait in long food lines? "The Soviets might be interested to know the following: "What is your school like? What classes do you take? Do many young people work while going to school? Are you guaranteed a place to live and a job when you get out of school? Who pays for your education after high school?" S-3 An effective role play can do much to make real the people of a country on the other side of the world. The students may be surprised at the nature and extent of their biases against a people about whom they have actually known so little. S-5

For further follow-up discussions, the teacher could raise questions like the following: Are you now aware of some biases that you have been holding? What are they? What other biases do Americans have towards the Soviet Union? S-6 What types of biases do you suppose the Soviet people would have toward us? What are the possible consequences of holding biased beliefs? S-7

If your school is multi-ethnic, an interesting follow-up would be to invite some Soviet students to speak with the class about their reality in the U.S.S.R. and some of their perceptions of the American people. If having Soviets come in to speak is unfeasible, you may want to research taped interviews of Russian people and have students view them and compare their original beliefs with what they have learned.
Human Migration

by Chris Langley, Lone Pine USD, Lone Pine, CA

Objectives of the Remodelled Plan
The students will:
• come to understand in detail Baluchi nomadic life, comparing it to their own
• develop empathy with Iranian nomadic life styles, exercising fairmindedness
• identify complex factors of modern migratory patterns in the U.S.
• relate human migration to their personal lives and the future

Original Lesson Plan

The lesson discusses the reasons people have for migrating, including the search to find food, resources and better opportunities or because they are forced to migrate. The lesson introduces the concept and vocabulary of nomads. It also discusses historical famines and the effect they had on forcing people to move. The text discusses migration for better opportunities and briefly examines colonization. Forced migrations and the concept of refugees are briefly mentioned, and then the text considers present-day migrations. Movement to cities and warmer climates are mentioned. The teacher’s edition suggests discussing modern forced migrations and recalling from the reading some of the facts concerning the reasons for migration given in the text.

Critique

The “Human” part of migration
This lesson deals with the reasons for migration. Several theories that are complex in nature are given to the teacher. One concept deals with the idea of “intervening opportunity.” It suggests that the ways people look at distant opportunities are effected by the intervening opportunities. A second passage briefly looks at the “push” and “pull” factors. Little effort is made to relate these theories in the text. Rather simple examples in factual form are listed. Migration is generally pictured in this as negative, only undertaken under duress. An underlying assumption is that migration is either a primitive socio-economic phenomenon or evidence of poorly-run governments or natural disaster. No effort is made to relate the factors to human lives, to see the multi-faceted pluses and minuses in lives, or to ever place the nomadic life in a positive light. The Baluchis of southeast Iran had a semi-annual nomadic cycle where in the winter and spring they tended their herds in the mountains and in summer went to the south to harvest dates. The Shah, and before him his father, saw nomads as an embarrassment to a modern
industrial country and they followed a forced plan of resettlement. This resulted in depriving these people of their traditional food sources, and they starved. When they resisted, the government flew in aircraft and machine-gunned them during their traditional migrations.

The traditional pattern of life for the Baluchi was one of pride, grace and cultural integrity. Living simply and close to nature gave them a way of life without the stress and materialism often associated with modern industrial city life.

The Multiple Perspectives of Colonization

The text makes it sound as if the only motivation for colonization was seeking a better place to live. Little detail about this motivation is given. Nor is any consideration given to the push and pull factors in colonization. Many motivations for countries to support and pursue colonization are ignored. The exploitation of the local peoples, the destruction of traditional life patterns and the power struggles that resulted between the nations of Europe are overlooked. Instead this migratory pattern is seen simply as people looking for personal opportunities, freedom and a new way of life.

The Conflicts of Modern Migrations

The text again makes it sound as if the factors in modern migration, the move to cities and warm climates, are simple. People move to cities for jobs, but no mention is made of the negatives in the cities, both historically and today, including high unemployment in cities, lack of training of new workers, and typical urban problems such as crime, overcrowding and smog. The effect that this migration has on farms and rural areas is not even explored.

Children in my area need to come to terms with these factors. I live in a very rural area which presents excellent living conditions but limited job opportunities. Often the students I work with think simply going to L.A. after graduation will solve all their problems. They often lack the social skills, and educational training or perspectives to migrate successfully to the urban areas.

Suggestions for Improvement

Generally the factors discussed in motivating migration are oversimplified, and traditional migration patterns, particularly in the U.S., are seen as simply going from bad economic situations to positive ones. The complexity of the issue is ignored completely.

The remodelled plan is focused on the people of traditional migratory patterns and the nomads. It helps the children to see the qualities of their own lives. In considering modern migration from rural to urban settings, their thinking needs to be extended to see the many issues both motivating and limiting these movements.

Strategies Used to Remodel

S-29 noting significant similarities and differences
S-3 exercising fairmindedness
S-21 reading critically: clarifying or critiquing texts
S-10 refining generalizations and avoiding oversimplifications
S-24 practicing Socratic discussion: clarifying and questioning beliefs, theories, or perspectives
Remodelled Lesson Plan

My remodelled lesson plan basically follows the organization and sequence of the original lesson, but it has two major focuses. The first focus is on the migratory patterns of nomads in traditional society first, and then upon modern migratory patterns that the children would be more familiar with.

The traditional migratory pattern of the Baluchi in Iran

As a Peace Corps volunteer in Iran, I spent much time with the nomadic Baluchi tribes of southeastern Iran and Pakistan. I would begin by showing movies and bringing in various artifacts of the Baluchis, including a wedding coat, a camel saddle bag and articles of clothing. Through discussion and demonstration, I would clarify exactly what a migratory pattern was, in this case being a seasonal migration between high pastures and low date palm orchards. I think it is important for the students by their own examination and discussion to understand how the life style limits their belongings and how it places certain controls on social patterns including marriage and the education of the children. Once the students had a clear understanding of the meaning of nomads and migration, they would need to examine in detail how the Baluchi life was similar to and different from their own. We would examine some important values in our own culture and compare them to how the Baluchis dealt with similar issues. Of particular interest to these students would be arranged marriages and the youthfulness of the brides, the separation of the sexes and materialism or possessions. I would stress that models of living and reality itself are complex and self-sufficient, showing how their ways and ours are different but one way is not good and another bad. S-29 Because the social structure of the Middle East (and particularly Iran) is often viewed negatively here, this aspect will be quite challenging.

Once the students understand this aspect of the lesson, I would take them on to actually act out or plan a nomadic life style. Considering the plight of the homeless might be helpful here if it does not confuse the issue, but I think if the children have any awareness of this social issue, it needs to be addressed. The children would figure out what it would feel like to be nomadic, what belongings they would choose, and what modes of transportation they could adopt. Other social issues could also be experienced, including arranged marriages and separation of the girls from the boys. The goal here would be to have the students understand the lifestyle from the nomadic point of view. Then I would discuss with them the forced settlement plan adopted by the government and have the children see the thinking from the Baluchi's point of view and the government's. S-3

By now, hopefully, I would have pointed out some of the positive aspects of the nomadic life style and the children would be ready to critique the text and identify some of the assumptions the text makes. S-21 This seems very important to me because the students I generally teach seldom consider that a text could be wrong, incomplete or misleading.
The process of identifying migratory patterns

The process of identifying assumptions would continue on to the second part of this lesson plan considering modern migratory patterns. Particularly we would explore the movement from rural living to urban living. We would need to discover the complexity of this issue, the various factors leading people to move to the city and what happens to them there. The assumption in my classroom generally, and also, though less so, in the text, is that life is better in the city. Through question and answer and research, the students would come to avoid the oversimplification found in the text. S-10

Finally, I would conclude this lesson with a Socratic discussion of why people leave Lone Pine (my town) to move to various urban settings (primarily Los Angeles). Important issues to be brought out would be motivation, preparation for a successful move, goals, quality of life, and impact on the city, more so on the local rural areas of the young moving away. Polling the students on their short-range and long-range goals would provide an interesting and enlightening closure activity for the class. S-24