Lesson Plan: Human Origins and the Agricultural Revolution

Subject: World History

Grade: 6

Next Generation Sunshine State Standards:

SS.6.W.2.1 Compare the lifestyles of hunter-gatherers with those of settlers of early agricultural communities.

SS.6.W.2.2 Describe how the developments of agriculture and metallurgy related to settlement, population growth, and the emergence of civilization.

SS.6.W.2.3 Identify the characteristics of civilization.

SS.6.E.2.1 Evaluate how civilizations through clans, leaders, and family groups make economic decisions for that civilization providing a framework for future city-state or nation development.

SS.6.G.3.1 Explain how the physical landscape has affected the development of agriculture and industry in the ancient world.

SS.6.G.4.2 Use maps to trace significant migrations, and analyze their results.

SS.6.G.4.3 Locate sites in Africa and Asia where archaeologists have found evidence of early human societies, and trace their migration patterns to other parts of the world.

Overview:

The emergence of Western Civilization has been a gradual process that ultimately grounded itself with the earliest precursors to modern humans in the Paleolithic era and the advent of the concept of civilization rising with the 1st agricultural revolution (Neolithic).

As Humans settled into permanent communities they were almost immediately inspired to infuse new technologies and cultivate specialized skills. Over time these same villages turned into cities with extensive trading networks based on items cast in bronze.

This Unit of study will therefore seek to examine and understand these issues, so students are able to understand the fundamental building blocks of society and to some extent how the notion of “civilization” emerged from Nomadic groups to the...
earliest societies in human history. Students will also acquire important information on the development of trade, a staple element in any region of the world even today.

**Essential Questions**

1. Why was agriculture a necessary precondition for more sophisticated civilizations?
2. How did the development of agriculture contribute to the growth of the earliest civilizations?
3. What cultural achievements characterized life in the Neolithic period?
4. What was the catalyst for the switch from food gathering to food production? What are the essential differences between the two?
5. How was agriculture diffused in different areas of the world?
6. What was the relationship among artistic activities, religion, and government during the rise of civilization?
7. How and why did various gender roles emerge during the Neolithic period?
8. How did life in early villages such as Jericho and Catal Huyuk differ from your life today?
9. In what ways do different creation myths support or contradict the theories of evolution developed by scientists?
10. What is pre-history? What is a civilization?
11. What are the stages of development for early man?

**Key Vocabulary**

culture, history, stone age, Paleolithic, Neolithic, foragers, hunter-gatherer, domestication, settlement, Bronze Age, Agricultural Revolution, pastoralism, megaliths, Jericho, Catal Huyuk, metallurgy, gradual, prehistory, fossils, archeology, hominids, Homo erectus, Homo sapiens, The Ice Age

**Lesson Objectives**:

Students will:

- Explain the distinguishing physical characteristics of Homo habilis, Homo erectus, and Homo sapiens.
- Define ‘culture’ and explain how the development of tools influenced the culture of early humans.
- Locate on a world map the sites where the remains of various hominid species and early humans have been found.
- Explain the factors that contributed to the invention and further development of agriculture and the domestication of animals and the effects that these developments had on society and trading systems.

**Evidence of Student Understanding (Assessment) in this Lesson:**

**Formative Assessments**
1. In-class essay: Students will write an essay in which they assume the role of an immortal human being who has progressed from a hunter-gatherer to a farmer. The student will describe how the agricultural revolution affected him or her and society. Students are encouraged to be as creative and detailed as possible and use concrete examples.

2. Students will also be formally assessed based upon classroom discussions and activities. (See Activities Below)

**Summative Assessments**
1. The primary summative assessment is the end of unit exam consisting of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

2. The in-class essay will also serve as a secondary summative assessment.

**Materials Needed:**
- Internet Resources
- Books, Magazines and other resources made available by the school site
- Internet Access
- LCD Projector
- Overhead Projector
- Attached Documents
- Attached Activities and Templates
- World Map

**Duration: 2 Class Periods or One Block (105 Minutes)**
Steps to Deliver the Lesson and Activities

1. 10 Minutes Bell Ringer: List four tools used by modern man- explain what effect each has had on humanity. Have students complete the bell ringer and ask for volunteers to share their answers. The teacher will ask students to remember the information discussed throughout the activities.

2. 15 Minutes The teacher will instruct the students on the following topics as a segue into the various lesson plan activities.

   • Explain the concept of revolution using the Agricultural Revolution as an example:
     
     • e.g., change is revolutionary when it is dramatic and requires great effort. The shift from nomadic to sedentary ways of life gave humans greater control over their environment, thus signifying a revolutionary change.

   • Discuss the role of the environment (climate, shifts in climates, human migrations) in promoting evolutionary changes in hominids and early humans:
     
     • e.g., Groups of people in search of food, began moving past their hunting grounds- very slowly (approx. 1-3 miles per generation). All humans as a result of this belong to the same sub-group of species. The ability to grow crops in fertile areas, allowed for and gave rise to more permanent settlements as climate dictated animal migrations and vegetation cycles.

   • Discuss elements of culture and social responsibilities
     
     • e.g., As men took on more and more of the responsibility, they began to play a more dominant role, a pattern that essentially has remained in our own times.

   • Information can also be gleaned from textbook
3. On an overhead Projector or SmartBoard, etc, display the cartoon of Caveman and Son’s Report Card.

![Cartoon of Cave Man and Son]

4. **10 Minutes** Pair students together and have them discuss various questions on the cartoon. This should then lead into a discussion about similarities between Neolithic periods and modern day. This will also serve as a catalyst into historical thinking as further information about this time period is gathered.

   a. Possible Questions

      i. What relationship is depicted here between father and son?

      ii. Is the relationship shown similar to familial relationships today? Why or why not?

      iii. What characteristics are displayed of early man?

5. **30 Minutes** Show students excerpts of video: Agricultural and Urban Revolutions – note that this video will also serve as a segue into the next chapter on the early river valley civilizations.

   [http://www.learner.org/courses/worldhistory/unit_main_4.html](http://www.learner.org/courses/worldhistory/unit_main_4.html)
6. Provide students with a video viewing guide. Students should extract information that you have deemed important. Focus on Cause and Effects of events or situations in the video. Have students make connections between the video and present day, especially with regards to concepts, practices and events. Later when wrapping up this unit of study, you can return to the initial bell ringer question.

7. 10 Minutes Using a world map, have students label where species of early humans were found. At this point in the year, students may need to look at additional labeled maps to assist them in deciphering the regions and locations. This map would also be useful for students to have in front of them while they are viewing the video.

8. 20 Minutes Using information from the student textbook or other resources, have students complete the charts either independently or in groups.

Activities:

1. **Classifying Pre-historic People**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Characteristics</th>
<th>Time and Location</th>
<th>Tools and Technology</th>
<th>Misc. Aspects of Culture and Daily Life</th>
<th>Name of People during the time period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paleolithic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mesolithic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolithic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Comparison of Early Villages and Your Own Community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advanced Cities</th>
<th>Specialized Workers</th>
<th>Record Keeping</th>
<th>Complex Institutions</th>
<th>Advanced Technology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Village</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **10 Minutes Summarizing Activity:** Have students create a comparison chart beside their bell ringer chart. List four tools used by prehistoric man and how it changed man’s lifestyle.

**Differentiated Instruction Strategies:**
Students who are identified with learning disabilities can be provided with information before the implementation of the lesson. If ESOL students are present in your classroom, provide students with annotated copies of the material. For those students who are more advanced allow them opportunities to assist with other students. Furthermore, activities outlined in this lesson plan, serve multiple learning styles and thus various student interests, ranging from linguistic, visual/spatial to logical.

**Technology Integration:**

Encyclopedia article about the Neolithic revolution

http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Neolithic%20Revolution

A collection of links about the Neolithic Revolution

http://educationcooperative.wikispaces.com/Neolithic+Revolution

Free Printable Worksheets, DBQ’s and Maps on the Neolithic Revolution

http://www.studenthandouts.com/World_History/worldhistory09section02.htm

Explores the discovery of the remains of Lucy, which offer insight into the biology of early humans.

http://www.mrdowling.com/602-lucy.html

This site examines technological change in early human history.

http://www.bergen.org/technology/stone.html

Artwork on the Neolithic Revolution and Early Cities

http://www.museumofthecity.org/exhibit/origin-cities-neolithic-revolution
Video on Agricultural and Urban Revolutions

http://www.learner.org/courses/worldhistory/unit_main_4.html

Detailed information on the events of the Neolithic Revolution

http://wps.pearsoncustom.com/wps/media/objects/2426/2484749/chap_assets/studyguide/ste_sq_ch01.pdf

**Lesson Closure:**

In order to engage students in summarizing their learning, students will synthesize learned information, skills and processes by writing an exit slip. An exit slip can be a one sentence summary of what students learned. Other uses may include but are not limited to answering a review question, pose a question related to topic studied, make a short list of facts learned, set a goal for the next day of class, etc. Prior to providing students with exit sip be sure to decide what its purpose will be (and whether or not this will be a type of formative assessment). During the last 5 minutes of class inform students about the purpose of the task associated with the exit slip. As students exit your classroom, collect their exit slips. This will serve a dual purpose, as they will assess your own teaching and will often indicate whether or not students understood the material presented.