

Contemporary North Africa: A Sociological Perspective

Grades: 10-12, Sociology

11-12, AP Psychology (Social Psychology unit)

Time: 1 Class period for project introduction

1½ -2 weeks for students to complete project outside of class

(teacher may also choose to have students present projects to the class)

NCSCOS Sociology Goals:

2.01 Identify and apply elements of culture.

2.03 Explain how the elements of culture form a whole culture

Objectives:

Identify and apply the sociological elements of culture.

Apply the elements of culture to a contemporary understanding of North Africa.

Utilize scholarly research sources in order to create a reliable product.

Materials: 1. Overhead or PowerPoint defining sociological elements of culture

2. Student handout of project directions and rubric

3. Student access to research materials (Internet, library resources)

Introduction and Focus (one class period):

1. Introduce sociological elements of culture: Language, Technology, Symbols, Norms and Values. (*Suggestion for understanding:* ask students to provide examples of each element according to American culture)
2. Discuss Western stereotypes of African culture and perceptions of Islam.
3. Divide students into teams of 3-4. Students can choose countries to research or teacher may assign them. (Morocco, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Mali)
4. Introduce Project

Sociological Elements of Culture definitions:

Language: the organization of written or spoken symbols into a standardized format; symbols are connected to form complex meanings

Technology: application of knowledge to create tools in order to solve practical problems

Symbols: objects, gestures, sounds, or images that represent something other than themselves.

Norms: shared cultural rules of conduct that guide people how to act in certain situations

Values: shared beliefs of what is good or bad, desirable or undesirable

Project Directions:

Adventure in North Africa

You are team of travel writers and your publisher assigned your team with writing a book about the contemporary lifestyle of a North African country. You will be expected to live in this particular country for 12 months. Before your team embarks on the journey, you must research the culture in order for your team to successfully function in this country for a year. Your research should focus on the sociological elements of culture, and avoid the pitfalls of Western stereotypes of Africa.

Your task: Submit a proposal to your publisher (your teacher) on your understandings of the country's elements of culture and a year's living plan. You will be graded on how prepared you are for your journey.

- A. Why you want to explore that particular culture?
- B. How would you integrate among members of that culture to learn about them? (Apply the five elements of culture)
- C. How will you first approach members of this culture and earn their respect?
- D. How will you integrate among cultural members without negatively impacting their own customs?
- E. How long will you spend in each region of the country?
- F. How will you travel to each region?
- G. Include a map and outline your journey.

Your work will be graded on the thoughtfulness, thoroughness, and clarity of your answers, as well as, the use of reliable research sources.

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Adventure in Africa Grading Rubric

Written Component (25 points total):

Are all questions fully addressed and reliable research incorporated? Do the answers show thoughtfulness and personal reflection? Are answers clear and understandable?

- A. Why you want to explore that particular culture?
(_____/6 points)

- B. How would you integrate among members of that culture to learn about them?
(_____/8 points)

- C. How will you first approach members of this culture and earn their respect?
(_____/8 points)

- D. How will you integrate among cultural members without negatively impacting their own customs?
(_____/8 points)

- E. How long will you spend in each region of the country?
(_____/5 points)

- F. How will you travel to each region?
(_____/5 points)

Map and Outline (15 points total):

Does the map show attention to detail? Is the map clearly labeled? Is your journey clearly marked on the map? Is year's time accounted for on the map?

- G. Include a map and outline your journey. (_____/15 points)

Final Analysis (10 points):

Based on the written component, map and outline, are the travelers prepared to spend a year in a North African Country?

Comments:

(_____/10 points)

Project total: _____/50 points