

ANTH 241 Term Project F2012
Northwest Coast Prehistory Resource Module for Grade 7 Social Studies Curriculum

The purpose of this term project is to produce some meaningful, useful material to contribute to the delivery of curriculum for Grade 7 Social Studies. This curriculum has been carefully drafted by the Ministry of Education; the rationale behind this project is to provide interesting and creative learning materials to include the deep heritage of the Northwest Coast in the consideration of “ancient civilizations”, the expressed focus of the Grade 7 Social Studies curriculum. Being able to consider local complex society and compare these cultures with other complex societies of the world will help students meet many of the Ministry’s expressed learning outcomes and gain an appreciation of the innovation and complexity of ancient indigenous cultures in the province.

Introduction and Background

British Columbia’s Ministry of Education has carefully laid out the expectations for social studies curriculum in elementary education (see Ministry of Education 2006). Curriculum is built upon learning outcomes, which set the standards for what students are expected to know and “define the required attitudes, skills, and knowledge for each subject” (Ministry of Education 2006:7). The curriculum is organized under five pillars: skills and processes of social studies; identity, society and culture; governance; economy and technology; and human and physical environment. Within each category there are specific learning outcomes that will be relevant to this ANTH 241 term project. They are summarized below (from Ministry of Education 2006)

By the end of the grade students should be able to:	
Identity, Society, and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyse the concept of <i>civilization</i> as it applies to selected ancient cultures
Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe the evolution and purpose of rules, laws, and government in ancient civilizations
Economy and Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> describe various ways ancient peoples exchanged goods and services assess ways technological innovations enabled ancient peoples to adapt to and modify their environments, satisfy their needs, increase exploration and trade develop their cultures
Human and Physical Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> assess how physical environments affected ancient civilizations identify the impact of human activity on physical environments in ancient civilizations

The focus of Social Studies in Grade 7 is “Ancient Civilizations”; the curriculum explicitly includes cultures up to “approximately 500 CE (e.g., Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, China in the Hsia-Shang-Chou dynasties, Celts, Nubia, City-State Japan), although it may also include a study of more recent civilizations such as the Mayans, the Aztecs, the Incas, North American Aboriginal societies, or the Norse.” (xxxx 2006: 38). What is immediately obvious is that the focus is on large “state level” societies with a distinct bias towards European societies. While more recent “civilizations” of the Americas are mentioned as options, the entire continent of Africa is excluded, despite the great societies such as the kingdom of Zimbabwe (1220-1450). Anthropologists are uncomfortable with the term “civilization”; in the earliest years of the discipline, in the social context of colonialism and racial prejudice, cultural evolution was considered as unidirectional betterment from simple societies (considered less advanced, technologically, socially, and sometimes even intellectually) to complex, civilized ones. We now understand social complexity very differently, but the term ‘civilization’ remains a loaded term that is tainted with colonial superiority and racial undertones. Why are cultures of the pre-contact Northwest Coast not explicitly listed in the curriculum? They offer exceptional and locally relevant case studies to consider many of the learning outcomes identified by the Ministry of Education.

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The ultimate goal will be to produce resources for teachers to use in the classroom that will help them integrate local archaeological and ethnographic content into the Grade 7 Social Studies curriculum. As a group the class will brainstorm interesting and key concepts and topics that meet the learning outcomes of the Ministry. Small groups of

3-4 students will then research these topics to generate reference material and content. On **October 30** a class will be devoted to work shopping this material to gather peer feedback about the content as it relates to the Ministry's stated curriculum outcomes and brainstorming about how best to deliver the materials in the classroom. This feedback will then fuel the second part of the term project, whereby student groups will craft an activity that will form part of the learning resource package for the module. Additional discussion time in class will be provided as needed, and these deliverables will be briefly presented in class on **November 29** for final editing and peer feedback before being handed in on **December 6**.

Resources that will be useful for students include the following:

Ministry of Education

2006 Social Studies Grade 7 Integrated Resource Package 2006.

This document includes the "Curriculum Organizers", learning outcomes, and assessment models (these will be helpful for group brainstorming to come up with ideas for meeting learning outcomes and content delivery). Students should also consider the "Student Achievement" section of this document when starting to think about how to deliver the content in a format that will engage Grade 7 students (12-13 year olds!)

Catalogue of Learning Resources Social Studies K to 7

This lengthy document lists the resources available for purchase for use in Social Studies instruction in elementary education. Starting on p. 115 of the Catalogue of Learning Resources, students can browse the materials available through the Ministry for Grade 7 curriculum delivery. This should give groups an idea of resources already available for other culture areas and how the NWC module may be delivered.