Expeditionary Learning
Learning Expedition Documentation Project

The First Americans

Kennewick Man and the Settlement of North America

Grade 6

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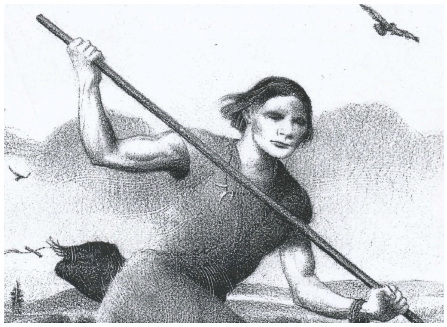
Summary

This expedition combined history, science, archeology and geography, and involved students in deep consideration of how history is created. Centered on the historically controversial case of Kennewick Man, the expedition engaged students in powerful critical thinking through debate and persuasive writing connected to the philosophical and ethical issues of the case. It involved students in geographic and scientific research about how the Americas were populated, as well as research about the clash of cultural beliefs between Native American cultures and the scientific beliefs that undergird much of modern U.S. culture.

Kennewick Man and the fate of his remains has been a source of dispute between local Native American tribes and the scientific community since the discovery of his remains in 1996. The discovery has challenged scientific theories of the waves of migration that populated North America. The discovery of an almost-complete skeleton, assumed now to be about 8,000 years old, has raised questions for scientists about previous theories and timelines of settlement patterns. It has also raised ethical and legal questions of ownership and use of the remains. Native American tribes argued that the skeletal remains were legally theirs to bury properly; archeologists sued the government for rights to use the remains for scientific study. Since Kennewick Man was discovered 110 miles from Health and Science School, this issue was a great local opportunity to examine scientific exploration, ethics and cultural beliefs.

The 12-week expedition was comprised of two parts that provide information regarding the "First Americans." The first part of the expedition, entitled "Those Who Came Before Us," takes a look at multiple theories regarding the migration of the first native people of America, where they may have originated, and how they arrived here. Additionally, the first investigation explored other ancient findings such as Neanderthals, Pre-Clovis and Clovis points, a frozen baby Mammoth, "Lucy," the Monte Verde site, and the Paisley Cave coprolites. In conjunction with these archeological discoveries, students learned about the scientific method of Carbon Dating and how these findings can help us learn about our past.

The second part of the expedition was the case study of "Kennewick Man." Students researched information about Kennewick Man – his assumed origin, age, and life – and delved into the cultural beliefs of the Native Americans that live where he was found. Students were asked to defend a specific point of view regarding what should be done with the remains of Kennewick Man after considering Native American traditions, the scientific community's beliefs, and government regulations of Native Americans.



Student learning occurred through a variety of learning experiences that included fieldwork, archeological texts, scientific articles, interactive maps, educational video, and discussion. Assessed work included a map that labels countries that span the eastern and western coasts of the Pacific

Ocean and plots both theories of how people came to America, a timeline that included important archeological discoveries, a mock trial regarding the fate of Kennewick Man's bones, a paper that defended a specific viewpoint regarding where Kennewick Man's final resting place should be, and a culminating product that included a character sketch and a creative writing piece.

Guiding Questions

- How were the Americas populated?
- How does land ownership determine the use of that land?
- What laws and ethical principles should guide the use of archeological finds?
- How do traditional beliefs of a people and politically structured beliefs clash?

Part One: Those Who Came Before Us

Immersion Experience and Following Work

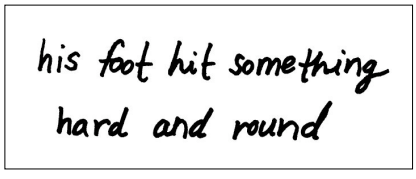
The initial immersion into Part One was a gallery walk, during which students observed, reflected on, and responded to various texts and visuals. This helped access students' prior knowledge of concepts that were studied during the case study.

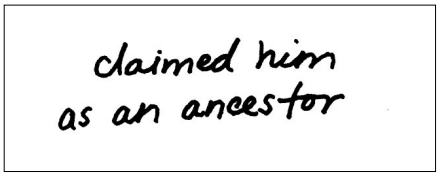
Students then had the opportunity to learn about the two theories of arrival through various mediums including articles, video, pictures and map work. Students were actively engaged with articles as they completed the *Determining Importance*. Teachers introduced geography concepts using atlases and related maps. After building knowledge of the two theories, students participated in group work to demonstrate their understanding of the theories.

Part Two: A Case Study of Kennewick Man

Immersion Experience and Following Work

Teachers introduced Kennewick Man to students through a "tea party." Students received a "role card" with a statement from the article "A Surprising Discovery" that offered a clue to a larger picture. This article was then used as a common text from which students analyzed an expert text to delve deeper into the significance of Kennewick Man.





Students examined expert texts to build their knowledge of Kennewick Man, explored the perspective of Native American tribes and their cultural beliefs around death and the afterlife, and held a mock trial to determine how they would resolve the debate over Kennewick Man's remains.

Major Project

The project for "The First Americans" expedition required each student to create a series of academic products to present to a panel of experts. These products were created over the course of the expedition as they fit with the nature of the research, not completed at the conclusion of the study. The products were:

1. A map detailing the two theories of possible arrival to North America. The map was drawn to scale, clearly labeled with a key and with all major bodies of land and water identified. A short written description of each theory accompanied the map.
2. A chronologically accurate timeline. The timeline included major events and eras discussed (including significant locations).
3. A persuasive essay in which students were required to take and defend a stance on where they believe Kennewick Man's bones belong. Whether students believed the government or Native American tribes have rights to Kennewick Man, they had to address the traditions and beliefs of death and burial according to Native Americans. They also had to address the reasons for and effects of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA).
4. A historically accurate, fictional character file that addressed these issues from the viewpoint of a Native American. The character file contained these product components:
    a. A character sketch constrained by these two choices: (a) A personal "I" story, 4-7 pages in length, that addressed how their character came to North America (detailing the Boat or Land Bridge Theory), what their character's life is like (where they live, their job, what they eat, how they travel, etc.), and their traditions; (b) A personal "I" paper, 4-7 pages in length, that took the viewpoint of a Native American and explained their traditions regarding death, burial, and the after-world. The paper needed to reflect what they felt was the right thing to do with ancient remains and artifacts found on their land.
    b. An illustration that reflected their character
    c. Other artifacts could include an autobiography, a detailed map of their village, and a bibliography.

The entire final product was presented to peers and/or presented to a panel of experts and professionals. The panel included Dr. Dennis Jenkins, who made the discovery of the coprolites in Paisley Caves, as well as a team of Archeology students from University of Oregon and Portland State University.

Content and Skill Standards Assessed in the Learning Expedition

Reading
- I can determine and note ideas of importance in a variety of scientific and historical texts.
- I can create questions to further my understanding of complex texts.

Writing
- I can write "gist" statements that reflect my understanding of the main ideas of an article.
- I can write a persuasive essay defending a specific viewpoint regarding the Kennewick man's final resting place.
- I can write a historically accurate character sketch using details from my research on early man.

Math
- I can use a number line to create an historical timeline.

Character (performance and relational)
- I can use my understanding of history, culture, and policy to argue a viewpoint in a mock trial.
- I can present my works before a panel of peers and adults, including experts.

Science and Technology
- I can accurately label countries and landforms on a map.
- I can use maps to plot theories of how humans came to North America.
- I can explain how erosion by water and ice can produce distinctive landforms.

Social Studies
- I can explain why the discovery of the Kennewick Man created a dispute over the ownership of his bones.
- I can explain Native American cultural beliefs regarding death and the afterlife and consider those beliefs when determining a course of action regarding the Kennewick Man's remains.
- I can examine how the NAGPRA Policy (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) affects Native American cultural belief systems.

Visual and Performing Arts
- I can create illustrations to accompany a historically accurate character sketch.

Connections to State and District Standards

Literacy

- Identify and/or summarize sequence of events, main ideas, and supporting details in literary selections.
- Infer the main idea when it is not explicitly stated and provide support with evidence from the text.
- Listen to and read text to make connections and respond to historically or culturally significant works of literature that enhance the study of other subjects.
- Draw Connections.
- Identify Perspective.
- Reach Conclusions.

Social Studies

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of and accurately identify the content knowledge of the social sciences.
- Develop guiding questions and/or thesis statements.
- Access information from multiple and varied sources and multiple viewpoints.
- Evaluate and interpret sources and information.
- Distinguish fact from opinion.
- Responsibly and accurately cite sources.

Geography Standards (National Geographic Society, 2001)

- Identify the locations of certain physical and human features and events on maps and globes and answer related geographic questions.
- Evaluate the relative merits of maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies in terms of their value in solving geographic problems.
- Explain how regions change over space and time.
- Use physical processes to explain patterns in the physical environment.
- Describe ways in which human migration influences the character of a place.
- Explain why people cooperate but also engage in conflict to control Earth's surface.
- Integrate multiple points of view to analyze and evaluate contemporary geographic issues.

Connections to the Community and Larger World

Fieldwork

- Visiting the Archaeology Department and Museum of Natural History at the University of Oregon to examine evidence and relics of the past.
- Visiting the Columbia River to observe the terrain in which Kennewick Man was discovered.

Experts

- Dennis Jenkins, Archaeologist, University of Oregon

Exhibitions

- Final oral presentation of products to peers, teachers, community members, Dennis Jenkins and archaeology graduate students.

Calendar

September	October	November	December
▪ Geography skills ▪ Archaeology and anthropology concepts ▪ Carbon dating ▪ Pre-Clovis and Clovis Time ▪ Arrowheads ▪ Land Bridge Theory Boat Theory	▪ Paisley Caves ▪ Ice Baby Mammoth ▪ Lucy ▪ Neanderthals ▪ Beringia ▪ Map of two theories and timeline	▪ Kennewick Man (is he American?) ▪ Native American death and beliefs about the afterlife ▪ NAGPRA ▪ Scientific view of relics	▪ Mock Trial ▪ Defense Paper ▪ Character Sketch