

Web Unit Plan

Title: ¡Vamonos!

Description

¡Vamonos to a foreign country! High school students team up to plan a trip to a foreign city or country of their choice. They develop promotional materials to market their trip to their peers. At a travel fair, students share their guides and “sell” their trips.

At a Glance

Grade Level: 9–12

Subject sort (for Web site index): Foreign Language

Subject: Foreign Language

Topics: Cultural Geography, Economics

Higher-Order Thinking Skills: Decision Making, Synthesis

Key Learnings: Vocabulary Enrichment, Historical and Cultural Understanding

Time Needed: 3 weeks, 5 days a week, 50-minute lessons

Background: [From the Classroom](#) in Texas, United States

Unit Summary

In this foreign language project, high school students select a city in a foreign country where the language they are studying is spoken. They plan a trip to the country and develop a travel guide, which includes an itinerary, a budget, day trips, menus, and conversation cards. The promotional materials are presented at a travel fair for peers to entice them to sign up for a trip.

Curriculum-Framing Questions

- **Essential Question**
How are we different yet also similar?
- **Unit Questions**
How do you plan a trip to a foreign country?
How do you convince others to visit a place?
- **Content Questions**
Which historical and cultural tourist attractions lead to a better understanding of the way of life in a city or country?
How much does visiting a foreign city cost?

Assessment Processes

View how a variety of student-centered [assessments](#) are used in the ¡Vamonos! Unit Plan. These assessments help students and teachers set goals; monitor student

progress; provide feedback; assess thinking, processes, performances, and products; and reflect on learning throughout the learning cycle.

Instructional Procedures

Getting Started

Begin the unit by asking students, *Have you traveled to a foreign country?* Have students share their travel experiences in a whole-class discussion. Ask students to describe the aspects of their trip that they enjoyed or found challenging, why they (or their parents) chose the destination, and so forth. Then ask students to examine the differences and similarities between their culture and the one they visited. Pose the Essential Question, *How are we different yet also similar?* Encourage students to go beyond the superficial differences such as the food, language, and climate. For example, encourage students to look at local customs, family living arrangements, education, consumerism, gender roles, and so forth. If students have limited international travel experience, discuss differences among cultural groups within their own country.

Foreign City Visit Simulation

Choose a city or country in which the people speak the language your students are learning. Set up a simulation of a visit to the country in your classroom. For a few days, have students experience that place. This should all be done in the target language. Have students document their learning in learning logs. The entries can be used as examples when students work through their own projects. Suggestions include:

- **Restaurant:** Bring in menus. Have students practice ordering and being in a restaurant. Help them become familiar with the cuisine.
- **Walking Tour:** Develop a slideshow that takes students on a virtual walking tour of the city. Explain the history and main features of the attractions.
- **Getting Around:** Distribute city maps, subway maps, bus routes, and train schedules. Have students plan a sightseeing route of the city using public transportation.
- **Budget:** Provide each student with a daily or weekly budget and have them plan their trip with that budget in mind. Students should consider expenses such as accommodations, meals, travel expenses, and so forth.
- **Family Visit:** If possible, invite people from the selected place into the classroom. Have them share information about their culture and provide an opportunity for students to ask questions, all in the target language, of course.

Have students write a small persuasive piece persuading others to visit the country based on the information learned. Conduct a short mini-lesson on the use of persuasive language and techniques used to persuade others. Make sure students use the examples as they work on their own products.

Assigning Tour Groups

Divide the class into "tour groups" consisting of four students each. Hand out the [collaboration rubric](#) as a guide for students to use while they work through the project as a team. Explain that students are going to take on the role of travel agents. Each group will be "traveling" to a different country in which the language they are studying is spoken. Provide a list for students to use to select a travel

destination. Have each group assume the role of a travel agent. Each group is responsible for planning a one- or two-week trip to a foreign city or town. As travel agents, have the students develop marketing materials for their trips. Then at a travel fair, have students persuade other students in the school to join their trips. Have students assign the following roles within their groups:

- Tour Guide—Oversees the entire tour and all the logistics around the tour
- Marketing Manager—Oversees the selling of the tour
- Financial Analyst—Oversees the tour budget
- Graphic Designer—Oversees the creation of the promotional materials

Using the [project rubric](#), explain the materials that should be included. Decide if you would like students to create the documents in the target language, English, or both languages. Hand out the [checklist](#) for students to use as they go through the process of creating their presentations.

Budget

Assign each group a budget of \$2,000 per tourist for the trip. Have students plan a trip for that amount or less, including travel to and from the destination. Encourage students to consider the type of trip they are going to plan. To help them decide, consider posing some of the following questions:

- *Will the trip be a budget trip where the travelers stay in youth hostels, budget hotels, or home-stays, and travel by public transportation?*
- *Will the trip be luxurious where travelers stay in fancy hotels, eat at nice restaurants, and travel by chartered bus?*
- *Will the trip have a special focus, such as a bike trip, an art tour, or a cultural exchange?*
- *What forms of local entertainment—such as theater, cultural performances, music, and dance—will the guests be able to enjoy?*

Have students find the exchange rate for their country using [The Universal Currency Converter](#)^{*}. Model how to create a [spreadsheet](#) for a budget and create a pie graph, to show the breakdown of the budget. Sources of information include a newspaper from the city, such as Paris's [Le Monde](#)^{*}. Newspapers from around the world can be found at [Foreign Language News and Newspapers](#)^{*}.

Itinerary

Have students create a tour of selected sites that would give tourists a better understanding of a particular culture. The [tour](#) should focus on at least five major sites. To identify sites, have students contact real travel agencies and the Chamber of Commerce for their destination; search the Internet using sites such as the [World Site Atlas](#)^{*}, [The Lonely Planet Online](#)^{*}, or [Fodor's Travel Online](#)^{*}; refer to travel guides; or contact students who live in the selected location (through an ePALS exchange). When planning the itinerary, students should consider travel times between destinations, transportation, and how much time should be spent at each site. In the promotional materials, information about the selected sites should include the significance of the site to the people of the country, the history of the site, and why the site should be visited. Students should think about how they can convince others to visit a place.

Dining

Each group should plan a special meal for their guests that gives the travelers a taste of the delicacies of the local cuisine. After researching the special food, have students create a [menu](#) for the meal with descriptions of the dishes.

Conversation Cards

Explain to students that many people who visit a foreign country cannot speak the language and must rely heavily on phrasebooks. Have students create conversation cards with basic phrases for someone who does not speak the language. As students create their cards, they can act out scenarios to anticipate which phrases might be useful. Scenarios might include ordering in a restaurant, shopping for food, asking directions, seeking medical attention, paying for lodging or transportation, or buying stamps. Each group should create at least 10 cards.

Day Trips, Cultural Experiences

Provide examples of extra experiences that students may want to consider including in their tours. For example, they might want to include a day trip to a historic site, the chance to participate in a ceremony, a trip to an artisan community, and so forth.

Local Customs

Encourage students to learn about local customs. By understanding local customs, visitors can often avoid embarrassing situations and be more culturally sensitive. This makes visitors more approachable by the locals.

Putting It All Together

After students create the pieces of their trip, have students put the pieces all together so that they can be presented and distributed to others. Students can create a brochure, travel portfolio, or travel video. Have students [peer conference](#) with at least one other group to receive feedback and suggestions on their products. Allow students time to make necessary revisions based on feedback before having final products ready to showcase. Remind students that their task is to persuade their peers to sign up for their trip.

Travel Fair

Invite students from other classes and hold the travel fair in a large space, such as an auditorium or gymnasium. Make sure students have their materials ready for display, and, if time allows, have them make "souvenirs" (small handmade flags, representative foods, and so forth) for their visitors. Set up display tables or booths around a gymnasium or auditorium, and invite guests to visit each display to learn about life in a foreign city. Explain that each guest should "sign up" for one of the tours. Provide sign-up sheets at each table.

Reflection

Now that students know quite a bit about another culture, ask them to reconsider and respond in writing to the Essential Question that they answered on the first day, *How are we different yet also similar?*

Have students fill out the [collaboration rubric](#). Use the rubrics in your final assessment of the project.

Prerequisite Skills

- Basic Internet research skills
- Foreign language

- File management
- Word processing
- Desktop publishing
- Presentation software

Differentiated Instruction

Resource Student

- Reduce the quantity of work for the student
- Make checklists with due dates that the student can use to stay on track

Gifted Student

- Have the student create a promotional video or additional materials, which might include a Web site
- Have the student compare countries and evaluate which would be best for the budget traveler or the luxury traveler for viewing a certain type of artwork

English Language Learner

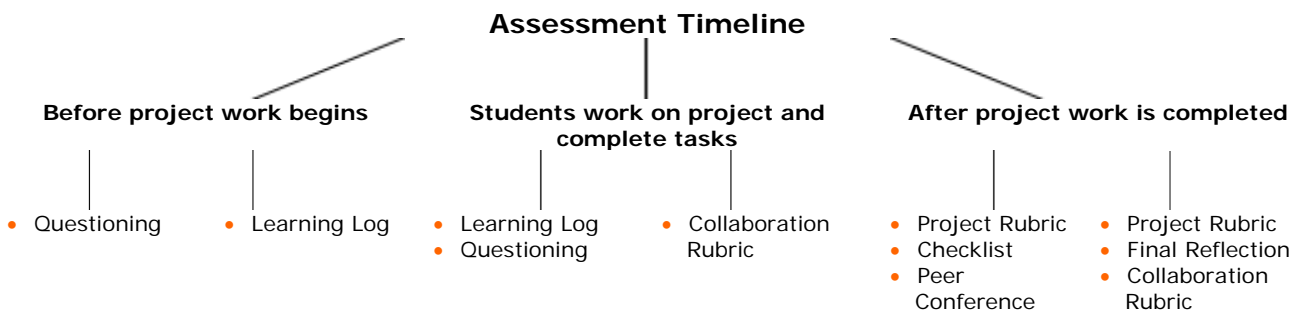
- If the foreign language is the student's first language, have the student act as a resource for other students in the class
- If the student is from a country where the language being studied is spoken, ask the student to share information about the country
- Call upon the student to share experiences of cultural differences

Credits

Mary Esther Provencio and Karla Ramos participated in the Intel® Teach Program, which resulted in this idea for a classroom project. A team of teachers expanded the plan into the example you see here.

THINGS YOU NEED (highlight box)

Assessment Plan



Formal and informal questioning is used to tap students' prior knowledge and spark whole-group and small-group discussions. The use of a learning log allows students to document learning and use these documented examples while creating their own presentations. A [collaboration rubric](#) is used by the students as they work in teams

to research and create presentations. This rubric can be part of the students' final grade. The [project rubric](#) is distributed to students before the work begins and used throughout the process to guide their work. A [checklist](#) is given to students to use as a guide in the creation of their presentations. Students hold [peer conferences](#) and document feedback to use in the revision of their presentations. A final reflection on the Essential Question is used to assess students' thinking over time.

Targeted Content Standards and Benchmarks

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Languages Other Than English

- The student communicates in a language other than English using the skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- The student gains knowledge and understanding of other cultures.
- The student develops insight into the nature of language and culture by comparing the student's own language and culture to another.
- The student participates in communities at home and around the world by using languages other than English.

Student Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe what it would be like to visit a foreign country
- Evaluate which historical or cultural tourist attractions lead to a better understanding of the way of life in a city or country
- Create a collection of conversation cards that tourists could use to survive in a foreign country
- Present information orally (possibly in the foreign language)
- Use persuasive language and techniques to convince audience members

Materials and Resources

Internet Resources

- Currency Converter
www.xe.com/ucc*
An online universal currency converter
- Foreign Language News and Newspapers
<http://libraries.mit.edu/guides/types/flnews>*
Links to publications in different languages
- World Site Atlas
www.sitesatlas.com*
Includes a map collection for the world as well as other travel information
- The Lonely Planet
www.lonelyplanet.com*
A travel site geared for budget-minded travelers
- Fodor's Travel Guide
www.fodors.com*
Travel information for worldwide destinations
- ePALS
www.epals.com*

Collaborate on projects with other students around the world

Technology—Hardware

- Computers for researching travel destinations and preparing travel guide materials
- Internet connection for conducting online travel research

Technology—Software

- Spreadsheet for creating travel budgets
- Desktop publishing for developing travel guide materials
- Presentation software for developing travel guide materials
- Video editing software (optional) for developing travel guide materials