Let the Dirt Fly!

The Creation of the Panama Canal

Kyra Franklin
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Grade Level	11th Grade	**Time Frame**	60 minutes
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	1-2 Periods
Course	U.S. History		

Essential Question

How did the United States expand its role in Panama?

Summary

In this lesson, students consider what they already know about the Panama Canal, role play people who contributed to the Panama Canal's construction, and view a video using the Window Notes strategy to take notes. Next, students discuss with a partner whether or not they think the United States was justifiable in its role in the Panama Canal's construction. As an evaluation, students summarize their new knowledge about the Panama Canal.

Snapshot

Engage

Students' prior knowledge of the Panama Canal and canals in general is generated through a Preflections activity.

Explore

Students take on the role of a historical person who helped create the Panama Canal and participate in a discussion of its construction.

Explain

Students summarize a video about the creation of the Panama Canal.

Extend

In partners, students reflect on the ways in which the United States participated in the creation of the Panama Canal.

Evaluate

Students return to their Preflections, adding in their new knowledge about the Panama Canal and the role the United States played in its creation.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: United States History (9th through 12th grade))

USH.3.1D: Compare the foreign policies of Presidents Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson including Big Stick Diplomacy, Dollar Diplomacy, Missionary Diplomacy, the Roosevelt Corollary, military interventionism,and the territorial acquisition and construction of the Panama Canal.

Attachments

- Canal Characters—Let the Dirt Fly!.docx
- Canal Characters—Let the Dirt Fly!.pdf
- Lesson Slides—Let the Dirt Fly!.pptx
- Window Notes—Let the Dirt Fly!.docx
- Window Notes—Let the Dirt Fly!.pdf

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- Canal Characters cards (attached; one per student)
- Window Notes handout (attached; one per student)
- Notebook paper
- Pen/pencil

10 minutes

Engage

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Begin with **slide 3**, and introduce the Preflections strategy to students. Have students take out a piece of notebook paper and respond to the prompt on the slide which asks students to consider what they already know about canals, the Panama Canal, or Panama. Provide a few minutes for students to think and write down their thoughts, then ask for several volunteers to share what they have written down. Move through **slides 4** and **5** to review the essential question and lesson objectives.

15 minutes

Explore

Teacher's Note: Lesson Preparation

Prior to teaching the lesson, print as many copies as needed based on your class size, and cut out the attached **Canal Characters** cards. There are thirteen cards; the cards can be repeated for multiple students as needed. If possible, consider laminating the cards for future use.

Move to **slide 6**. Introduce students to the Historical Mingle strategy by reviewing the directions on the slide. Explain that students are going to take on the role of a historical person. Provide each student with a Canal Characters card.

Display **slide 7**, and tell students to use the information on their card to answer the question, *what role did you play in the development of the Panama Canal?* They will use the information on their card to tell other students the way their character helped the development of the Panama Canal. Tell students they will have ten minutes to mingle with one another and talk about the question. Begin the timer on the slide, and provide time for students to mingle. After the time has expired, have students return to their seats. Display **slide 8**, and facilitate a class discussion about the roles people played in the construction of the canal as well as some of the struggles in getting the canal built.

15 minutes

Explain

Pass out the attached **Window Notes** handout to each student. Tell students to think about the categories on the handout as they view the video "U.S. History of the Panama Canal." Explain that students will add what they have learned to their handout after viewing the video. Play the video for students on **slide 9**.

Embedded video

https://youtube.com/watch?v=Tw5NMo_u-oA

After the video, allow time for students to write down their thoughts on their handout. Have students pair up with another student and compare what they have written down. Ask for a volunteer to share something they have written in each box. Have a discussion about the way the United States obtained the land to build the Panama Canal.

Teacher's Note: Sample Student Responses

- The United States supported a revolution so Panama could be independent from Colombia.
- After Panama was independent from Colombia, the United States paid Panama money to take control of the Panama Canal land.
- The United States controlled the Panama Canal until 1999.

15 minutes

Extend

Display **slide 10**, and ask students to think about whether or not the United States was justified in how the canal was obtained. A summary is provided on the slide for students to consider. Review the summary in as much detail as necessary. Move to **slide 11**. Using the Partner Speaks strategy, place students into partners and have each student share their thoughts. After one student shares what they think, the other student re-states what they have heard. Then, the roles are reversed. Provide about ten minutes for students to discuss with partners. If time allows, have several students share with the class what they discussed with their partners.

5 minutes

Evaluate

Have students return to their seats and get out the notebook paper with their Preflections notes used at the beginning of the lesson. Move to **slide 12**, and tell students to write down what they have learned about the Panama Canal. Collect the students' responses to review and assess understanding of the lesson content.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Historical Mingle. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/184
- K20 Center. (2021, September 21). K20 Center 10 minute timer. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gy-1Z2Sa-c
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Partner Speaks. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/62
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Preflections. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/184
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Window Notes. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/189
- *Let the Dirt Fly.* (n.d.). Wikimedia Commons. (n.d.-b). https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Panam2.JPG
- *Seal of the Panama Canal Zone*. Wikimedia Commons. (n.d.-b). https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seal_of_the_Panama_Canal_Zone.svg
- Smalling, Robert. (2012). U.S. History of the Panama Canal. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tw5NMo_u-oA.