

Journey to Tibet

Purpose:

Students will become more familiar with Tibet.

Essential Question:

Can we learn about a society and culture through planning to travel?

Rationale:

Students can be exposed to the benefits of traveling without even leaving the school building.

Materials:

Various websites and travel guides, such as: Victor Chan's *Tibet Handbook* (1994); Stephen Batchelor's *Tibet Guide* (1998); and others, such as ones published by Houghton Mifflin, Passport Books, Footprint Handbooks, and Kotan Publishing, for example.

Activities:

Your rich and interesting uncle has come through for you. As a reward for your successful completion of this school year, he has agreed to provide you an all-expenses-paid trip to the Tibetan Autonomous Region in western China. Uncle Michael converted to Buddhism and moved to the Tibetan monastery (Karma Triyana Dharmachakra www.kagyu.org) in Woodstock, New York, where, despite his millions which he continues to generously donate, he lives a simple life of volunteering and meditation. (His living quarters are a four meter by four meter room, for example). He has traveled extensively, especially throughout Asia, and wants you to have a similar opportunity this summer.

However, your uncle has certain requirements for you. Uncle Michael wants you to use PowerPoint on the computer to show why he should spend some of his millions of dollars on your trip. You will:

- Have a minimum of 20 PowerPoint slides, each containing pictures or maps as well as text.
- Follow the 3 x 5 rule: 3 bullets per slide and 5 words maximum per bullet. This means phrases are acceptable instead of complete sentences.
- Show your exact plan and itinerary, including cost estimates, timelines, locations, and why you choose to visit each place. How will you travel?

When will you arrive? Where will you stay? Where will you eat? What places will you experience? How long will you stay?

- Use “Culturegrams” from the library and travel guides provided during class.
- Use the library and PC lab during study hall to work on your PowerPoint presentation.
- Show the PowerPoint to the class to describe your trip. Be able to answer questions about your plan.
- Bring a sample of food you expect to experience on your trip to share with the class to celebrate.

Assessment:

Grade the PowerPoint presentation based upon quality and completeness.

Grade Adaptation:

The target grade for this activity is middle or high school social studies students. It can be scaled down for elementary students by introducing the activity with a picture book about a Tibetan folktale or fable. *The Stone Lion* by Alan Schroeder (1994) or *The Donkey and the Rock* by Demi (1999) are possibilities. Then reduce the number of places to one, such as the Potala Palace. Perhaps younger students can draw and color a picture of it.