Intro to the British Isles and Scandinavia
Erica E Lewis
TE Lesson Plan 1

Goal: To teach students about geography and economic facts regarding the British Isles and Scandinavia areas.

Objective: Students will be able to identify countries within the British Isles and Scandinavia. They will also be able to get an idea of how the geography of the region affects economy and culture.

Rational: In light of common misconceptions, it is important to teach students about this area because many students can not distinguish that the British Isles go by many different names even though they are all the same place. Students need to connect the similarities and differences between their geography and other area geography.

Context:
10 minutes materials: blank map (same map from power point. Includes both areas)
Start out lesson by passing out a blank map of the British Isles and Scandinavia. The map has a word bank that can help students label the areas based on where they think the countries are. This will help the students see what they might know and what they didn’t know. Give students five to seven minutes to fill in countries.

20 minutes lecture materials: power point (attached), fill in the blank notes, and LCD projector
Pass out basic notes for the lesson but leave blank spaces for the students to fill in the key information.

Use power point to bring up each country in British Isles one at a time and discuss each area physically and economically.
First described what countries the British Isles consist of while going over the blank map they filled out. Also where the B.I and Scandinavian areas were located in regards to Europe as a whole.

United Kingdom consists of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

- Physical Characteristics: Highlands with rolling hills, midlands with minerals, lowlands hills with fertile soils.
- Emphasize that the economy of each area is affected by the landscape. EXAMPLE: mineral resources means heavy industry, fertile soils equals farming
- Show students pictures that I took when on vacation in England. There was a picture of the rolling hilly farmland, Big Ben, the Queen, and Greenwich. With each picture I discussed the importance of the image to
the UK. Asked the students what was in Greenwich and why it was so important?

Scotland and Wales: have different physical and cultural characteristics from rest of island.
- High plateaus with lakes called lochs. Moors and bogs also present in Highlands region. This causes most Scottish people to live in the lowlands.
- What attracts tourists to this region? Have mini discussion on Loch Ness Monster.

Ireland: Is split into two political regions because of religious differences
- Northern Ireland is Protestant, Republic of Ireland Catholic. NI religion consistent with rest of UK.
- Fastest growing economy in Europe
- Physical characteristics: hills along most of coast, marine west coast climate
  - Ask students if they remember where in United States there is also a marine west coast climate. Then explain that even though Ireland is higher in latitude it still gets same climate as California because of the maritime winds. Show winds on map.

To the North there are the Scandinavian nations
Refer back to blank map students filled out and give answers to Scandinavia portion.

Scandinavia consists of Norway, Sweden, Finland, Iceland, and Denmark. Like the B.I this area is united culturally but are also independent nations. Origin of the name is Norden from northern people which means the Northlands.

Physical Characteristics:
- Flatlands in Denmark, Mountains in northern areas of Norway and Sweden.
- Beautiful fjords. Gave definition of fjords and showed a picture slideshow of the majestic fjords. Discussed with students how river areas differ physically from river areas in the United States.
- Natural resources of Iceland how it isn’t icy and has many hot springs.

Climate:
- Milder climate.
- Has daylight hours similar to Alaska with days ranging from almost total sun to almost total darkness.

Economy:
- The economy is affected by the climate and the natural resources. Fishing, forestry, and manufacturing are very popular.
Similar to the UK, the Scandinavian countries have social welfare governments. Describe what this means and how it alters the amount of taxes paid. Ask students which they would prefer: higher taxes for full benefits or more money saved on lower taxes but spent on benefits? Had small discussion on which they thought was better and why.

Finish lesson by asking students to make correction on their maps based on where the countries really are located.
Reflections on my First Lesson

Overall I think my first lesson went pretty well. I don’t mind getting up in front of people so I wasn’t super nervous but there was a little bit of anxiety leading up the experience. I tried hard to keep an engaging tone and to involve the students so that they weren’t listening to me jabber away the whole time I was in front of the class. I had practiced the lesson a lot beforehand and felt that the lesson was a little too rehearsed and I don’t think that the transitions went as well as they could have went between slides. I think that is because I wasn’t used to standing in front of a class while someone else was running my presentation back at the computer. I was a little concerned because my teacher gave me notes and asked me to use them to devise a lesson plan so I think next time I would like to make my own notes. But none the less the way the lesson was taught was my own way.

There are other things I would like to touch on that I think I could have improved on. The fill in the blank notes didn’t go as well as I thought they would. Some of the information I didn’t have written on the power point and it was just verbally relayed to the students and they had trouble figuring out what exactly would go in the blanks. If I decide to do a fill in the blank notes again I would incorporate it into my power point more by like making the blank words bold or use animation to emphasize that these words were to be filled in on the notes. Another thing I would do would be to give more space for the blanks so students can write in. At the end of the hour during the feedback time a few students told me this would have been helpful for them to have more room to write. It was also hard for me to tell the students specifically what to fill in where because I am so used to college and just knowing what to write that I forgot that younger
students might not know how to do this as well. Since I hadn’t practiced telling the kids, “Ok you’ll have to fill in the United Kingdom here,” it threw me a little off to try to tell kids what to fill in where without losing my own place in the notes.

I see where I could adjust things and how I’m going to make things better in the future. I think there is always room for improvement but I had fun and I felt happy about the way the lesson turned out. I feel like the students are becoming more and more responsive to me each time I am there and I can see that they respect me.