Mount Vesuvius - Eruption of 79AD

WebQuest Description: This WebQuest analyzes the eruption of Mount Vesuvius of 79 AD. The reader will become an aspiring historian assigned to look into the events of August 24 in 79 AD, when Mount Vesuvius erupted and learn about the destruction caused on nearby cities, such as Pompeii and Herculaneum. The goal is for the reader to understand the importance of history as it retells the story of people and the places they are from. In this case, the story to be told is that of the victims of the eruption in 79 AD.

Grade Level: 6-8
Curriculum: Social Studies
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Introduction

Congratulations! The Historical Society of Vesuvius has recruited you from the hundreds of aspiring historians who applied for this position. Your assignment is to rediscover the events that took place on August 24 of 79 A.D., when Mount Vesuvius erupted, wreaking havoc and destruction on its neighboring cities. Researching, documenting, and sharing your knowledge, explain the importance of history and discovery, and retell the story of the day that Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 A.D. This is your chance to make your presence known in the historical field!

Tasks

Our discoveries of the past have allowed for us to learn about historical events, cities, people, customs, etc. Herculaneum and Pompeii were both destroyed and buried under ash and pumice when Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 AD. The historical site of Herculaneum was not discovered until 1599 and then later in 1748. Herculaneum was rediscovered in 1738. The assignment is to rediscover the events of 79 A.D. when Mount Vesuvius erupted. You will create a PowerPoint Presentation with your research to present to the Historical Society. Your presentation must include:

- what exactly happened
- information about the people of that time
- items preserved
- importance of discovery and history

Process

On your assignment, you must investigate the events of August 24, 79 AD, when Mount Vesuvius erupted. Travel throughout the websites listed below, as they will aid you in your research for your presentation. Listen to a Web Documentary from the Discovery Channel - Letter written by Pliny the Younger to his friend describing the day that Mount Vesuvius erupted. Discover information on the Lost City of Pompeii and get view Pompeii through Satellite. Note: If you zoom out, you may be able to see Pompeii in relation to Mount Vesuvius. Learn about the eruption at: http://www.harcourtschool.com/activity/pompeii/pmpVesu.html. Explore the Ancient City of Pompeii from the Discovery Channel – Take a Virtual Journey describing the day that Pompeii and Herculaneum were buried. Volcanoes on Videos – Explore footages of volcanoes. Can You Survive? – Take a test and see if you could have escaped Mount Vesuvius. In the News – Latest information on recent excavations and findings at the Mt. Vesuvius Site.
create a PowerPoint presentation to present to the Historical Society. Be sure to incorporate the following points:

- What exactly happened?
- Information about the people
- Items preserved
- Importance of discovery and history

You will present your research at the annual meeting held at the headquarters of the Historical Society of Vesuvius, the crater of Mount Vesuvius. The annual meeting is being held on August 24, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. As the volcano is still active, you will only be allotted a time slot of 10 minutes. Just in case it should decide to erupt, make your presentation quick and to the point! Good Luck!

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**Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category and Score</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Eruption of 79 AD</td>
<td>Does not contain and information or details regarding the Eruption Event.</td>
<td>Addresses the Eruption with very few and murky details.</td>
<td>Eruption is addressed with average details. Shows some knowledge of the event.</td>
<td>Eruption is addressed with many details. Indicates complete knowledge of the event.</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The People of 79 AD</td>
<td>Does not refer to any people or victims from the event.</td>
<td>Discusses the population as a whole with few details or specifics.</td>
<td>Refers to the population with average details. Discusses one important person from the event.</td>
<td>Refers to the population with many details. Discusses two or more important people from the event.</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifacts and Items Preserved and Discovered from 79 AD</td>
<td>Does not discuss any of the artifacts or items discovered. Had no knowledge of the discoveries.</td>
<td>Offered vague details about the discoveries in the excavation process. Had an idea but not a real understanding.</td>
<td>Discusses the artifacts, frescoes, corpses, etc. discovered in some detail.</td>
<td>Discusses the artifacts, frescoes, corpses, etc. discovered in full details. Discusses the preservation process of the casts of the victims.</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of History and Discovery</td>
<td>No opinion given as to the importance of History and discovery.</td>
<td>Discusses the need for History and discovery very briefly. Not much of an opinion.</td>
<td>Details the importance of History in many aspects. Gives a slight opinion as to the benefits of discovery.</td>
<td>Details the importance of History in a complete and thoughtful opinion. Addresses the fact that history tells the story of people and places.</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Conclusion**

Congratulations! Your presentation at the Historical Society was outstanding. You have completed your task to rediscover the eruption of 79 AD from Mount Vesuvius. As an aspiring historian, you have learned how to conduct research, and the importance of discovery for history. History is never dull when you incorporate yourself into the heart of the matter. Thanks to History, we can learn the stories of the past, the lives of people, and the events that took place many years ago....SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT...Now that you know more in depth about what happened during this eruption, how would you feel if you were stuck there? Also, since Mount Vesuvius is still an active volcano, what preventative measures would you take in the event that another eruption was to occur?

**Teacher Page**

FOCUS This WebQuest concentrates on the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD when it buried some of its neighboring
cities, such as Pompeii and Herculaneum. The main focus is to understand the importance of discovery and exploration as it has given us insights on historical cities, people, and events.

GOALS:

- Students will come to the understanding that history tells the story of events and people of the past.
- Students will understand the importance of research for retaining facts and developing own opinions.
- Students will learn about the historical event of when Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79 AD.
- Students will learn about the people from that time, and the outcome of the eruption.
- Students will use the research to discuss the event and present historical facts and opinions.

DURATION

This Webquest will take approximately 3 days to complete. Allow one day for the PowerPoint presentations.

RESOURCES:

- Computers with Access to:
  - Internet
  - Speakers
  - PowerPoint
  - Paper and pencil for research.

CREDITS:

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