

Uncovering the Secrets of the Lost Colony

WebQuest Description: In this WebQuest, students will take on the role of detectives who have been assigned to solve the mystery of what happened to the famous "Lost Colony" of Roanoke Island.

Grade Level: 3-5

Curriculum: Social Studies

Keywords: Lost Colony, Roanoke, Native Americans, theory, assimilate, relocate

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Introduction

An entire colony disappears, leaving only one vague clue behind. It is the greatest mystery in the history of North Carolina. Thousands of historians have studied this case. Now YOU get to try to solve it! The North Carolina Department of Historical Mysteries (NCDHM) has chosen your class to form a special team of detectives. Your mission is to solve the mystery behind the disappearance of the Lost Colony. WHERE DID THEY GO??? Were they wiped out by the Native Americans? Did they simply move to another area in search of better living conditions? Could they have chosen to join with the Native Americans and begin mixing with their culture? Historians have decided that any of these options could be possible, but it's time for someone to decide an answer once and for all. In this webquest, you will carefully study the evidence and decide which scenario you think is the most likely explanation for the disappearance of the Roanoke Island colony.

Tasks

Let's get started! Here's what you'll need to do to complete this assignment:
FORM A GROUP OF THREE DETECTIVES This project will require team effort. Each detective on your team will gather information on a different theory.
CHOOSE A THEORY When you have researched all three ideas, you will work as a team to decide which one is the best explanation for the disappearance of the Lost Colony.
WRITE A LETTER Each group will write a letter to the NCDHM explaining which theory they have chosen and why.
PRESENT YOUR WORK Each group will share their decision with the rest of the teams through an oral presentation.

Process

Here are the steps you will need to take to complete your mission:
Step One: Select two partners to work with. Make sure that you choose a group that you can work well with! This is an important job!
Step Two: Decide which partner will study which theory. Once you have chosen, your responsibility to your group is to become an expert on that theory so you can help your group choose the best one! Here are your options:
INDIAN ATTACK EXPERT: You will collect evidence for the theory that Indians attacked and wiped out the colony.
ASSIMILATION EXPERT: You will collect evidence for the theory that the colonists assimilated into (or joined with) a local Native American tribe.
RELOCATION EXPERT: You will collect evidence for the theory that the colonists chose to move to another area.
Use the following websites to find evidence to support your theory. Remember to focus on your theory so you can report back to your group!
<http://www.outer-banks.com/lost.cfm>
<http://theshadowlands.net/roanoke.htm>
<http://library.thinkquest.org/J002559/page46.html>
<http://history.howstuffworks.com/american-history/roanoke-colony.htm/printable>
Step Three: As a group, you must examine the evidence and decide which theory is the mostly likely. Your group must agree on ONE answer, so study the evidence and discuss it together!
Step Four: Write a letter to the North Carolina Department of Historical Mysteries. You must include which theory you have chosen, as well as what evidence you have to support that claim. This website will help you write the letter properly. Include the names of each person in your group on the letter.
http://readwritethink.org/materials/letter_generator/
The Sample Letter attached to this page will give you any addresses you need, as well as what to include in each paragraph. Each group may print one copy of this letter to use as a reference.
Step Five: Prepare a short presentation (2-3 minutes) in which you will explain to the rest of the class which theory your group has chosen and why. Be sure to assign a speaking role to each member in your group!

Evaluation

| Category and Score | Beginning 1 | Developing 2 | Very Good 3 | Exemplary 4 | Score |
|--|--|---|---|--|-------|
| Student groups will use research time and resources appropriately and efficiently. | The group spent little of their research time on task and did not use the given resources appropriately. | The group spent some of their research time on task and used some of the given resources appropriately. | The group spent most of their research time on task and used most of the given resources appropriately. | The group spent all of their research time on task and used all of the given resources appropriately. | %25 |
| Student groups will compose a persuasive letter stating the theory they have chosen with evidence to support it. | The letter does not convey the choice of one theory or does not contain sufficient evidence to support the theory. | The letter conveys one chosen theory and includes some evidence, but could be better supported. | The letter conveys one chosen theory and includes a sufficient amount of evidence, but shows very basic, concrete-level thinking. | The letter conveys one chosen theory, includes sufficient evidence, and shows higher-level inferential thinking. | %25 |
| Student groups will create a 2-3 minute verbal presentation explaining which theory they chose and why. | The group did not present sufficient persuasive evidence, | The group presented some persuasive evidence. | The group presented sufficient persuasive evidence. | The group presented sufficient persuasive evidence and engaged the audience. | %25 |
| Individual students will engage in each of the various project stages. | The student did not contribute sufficiently to the project and was consistently off-task. | The student made some minor contributions to the project. The student spent a noticeable amount of time off-task. | The student made sufficient contributions to the project and remained mostly on-task. | The student made consistent contributions to the project and remained on-task throughout. | %25 |
| | | | | Total Score | %100 |

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have used your best researching skills to discover the possibilities of what happened to the Lost Colony, and you have used your logical reasoning skills to decide which one is the most likely theory. Through your letter and your verbal presentation, you also demonstrated your creative and persuasive skills. On top of all that, you had to work as a team to reach a common goal. You have completed this WebQuest and done a lot of great detective work! But don't let your research stop here! History is full of exciting mysteries for us to investigate! What happened to Amelia Earheart? How did the ancient Egyptians build those huge pyramids? Did Atlantis really exist? You have the power to research and decide for yourself, so keep up the great detective work, historians!

Teacher Page

This WebQuest is created specifically for fourth graders studying North Carolina history. It meets the following standards from the North Carolina Standard Course of Study: Social Studies 3.02 Identify people, symbols, events, and documents associated with North Carolina's history. 3.03 Examine the Lost Colony and explain its importance in the settlement of North Carolina. Computer/Technology Skills 2.12 Plan, discuss, and use search strategies with two or more criteria to find information online about North Carolina as a class/group. 3.07 Locate, select, organize, and present content area information from the Internet for a specific purpose and audience Informational Skills 1.08 Select and use a variety of resources and formats independently. 4.07 Organize and use information. 5.01 Respond to reading, listening, viewing experiences orally, artistically, dramatically and through other projects.

Standards

Credits

Other