The role of James K. Polk in westward expansion.

SC Standards and Indicators

USHC-2.2 Explain how the Monroe Doctrine and the concept of Manifest Destiny affected the United States’ relationships with foreign powers, including the role of the United States in the Texan Revolution and the Mexican War.

Academic Vocabulary

Manifest Destiny, criteria, thesis, primary source, secondary source, gross domestic product

Lesson Materials

SMART Notebook software, SMART Board Copies for students of all included documents.

Lesson Set

Content Objective(s)

Students will be able to analyze sources regarding the methods and results of James K. Polk’s expansion of the United States in order to create and support a thesis arguing for or against his inclusion on Mt. Rushmore.

Literacy Objective(s)

Assess the relative importance of multiple causes on outcomes.

Analyze, interpret, and synthesize social studies information to make inferences and draw conclusions.

Create a thesis supported by research to convince an audience of its validity.
### Lesson Importance

Analysis of Polk’s actions not only addresses subject standards but his controversial moves allow for higher order thinking regarding “the ends vs. the means” and the long lasting consequences of our foreign relations.

### Connections to prior and future learning

Primary sources used tie the current lesson to previous topics including the Washington administration, Jefferson administration and the War of 1812, as well as providing preview the importance of the presidencies of Lincoln and Roosevelt. This lesson should immediately follow an overview of the Mexican-American war in a previous lesson. The “BrainPop ([www.brainpop.com](http://www.brainpop.com))” on the topic is recommended.

### Anticipatory Set/ Hook (Engage)

Photo analysis: Students given a photo of Mt. Rushmore with a description of the selection of faces to be enshrined and thought questions on the topic.

1. What did Washington and Jefferson do that made them good choices for Mt. Rushmore, given the commission’s criteria? A: Pivotal to founding, Louisiana purchase.

2. What other Presidents (prior to construction in 1927) do you think belong (given the commission’s criteria)? A: May very, coming immediately following a Mexican-American War overview Polk should be mentioned.

### Skill Development

Initial “explain” portion of the lesson. Introduce vocabulary, explain/demonstrate/model the skill required for the literacy objective, introduce content components.

The content portion is only a brief introduction; the bulk of the student learning will take place during the guided practice activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduce content components</th>
<th>Teacher will introduce the big question for the lesson, “Does James K. Polk belong on Mt. Rushmore?”</th>
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anticipatory document (“foundation, expansion and preservation” of the United States).

Teacher reviews their previous thesis statement writing and introduces two stems for their potential thesis.

1) James K. Polk belongs on Mt. Rushmore because...

2. James K. Polk does not belong on Mt. Rushmore because...

Students will be called to the SMART board to identify examples and characteristics of primary and secondary sources.

“I do”
Skill from literacy objective
introduce/explain/model

Using the Document Analysis Graphic Organizer the teacher will model its completion using the first document, a map of the United States from 1848, on the SMART Board.

Guided Practice

This is the inquiry portion of the lesson, student-centered & often cooperative learning strategies used, teacher acting as facilitator, also known as Explore.

“We do”
Activity Description
Paired Reading: Students, partnered, will complete a Document Analysis Graphic Organizer together, the selections from James K. Polk’s final State of the Union address.

Pairs will be selected to come to the SMART board and fill out the various portions of the graphic organizer.

Checking for Understanding—“Informal” Assessment
Teacher informally checks the organizers of each pair while they are working.

Teacher calls on students randomly to add information or quotes to what the selected pair has placed on the SMART board.

Closure

Teacher will re-visit content and answer students’ questions developed during the Guided Practice component. Summarize the lesson, clarify content, and revisit content and literacy objectives.

Content
Teacher will review the lesson objective (Students will be able to analyze
Solidified

sources regarding the methods and results of James K. Polk’s expansion of the United States in order to create and support a thesis arguing for or against his inclusion on Mt. Rushmore), thesis stems, and answer any questions regarding the “I do” or “We do” documents.

Independent Practice

“You Do”

Individually (or paired if needed) students will complete analysis of the remaining sources using both the questions on the documents and the Document Analysis Graphic Organizers.

Students will then choose and complete a thesis stem and begin writing a persuasive essay arguing whether or not James K. Polk should have been included on Mt. Rushmore.

Summative/ “Formal” Assessment

Assessment

Analysis questions with several of the documents
Document analysis graphic organizers for all documents
Persuasive essays

Differentiation

During Lesson

All documents are provided in their most “difficult” form. Sections should be omitted from the longer documents as needed. Areas most relevant to the objective in the two longest texts (Lincoln and Polk) have been highlighted, the rest may be omitted. Vocabulary priming and/or alternate vocabulary usage in some documents will be used. Pairs may be used through the independent practice rather than restricted to the guided practice segment.

Assessment

Extended time on the analysis and essay. For CP classes a second day devoted entirely to the essay itself may be needed.