1/8/14

Grade Nine World History

Unit: The Byzantine Empire

Lesson: “Byzantine Education”

Enduring Understandings:

* Societies develop education systems in order to prepare children to become functioning and productive adult members of society – a task complicated by competing visions of society and pedagogical beliefs.

Essential Questions:

* What do I learn in school and why?
* What did the Byzantines learn in school and why?
* Is my education relevant and valuable to my life and future?

Standards:

* CC.8.5.9-10.A: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
* CC.8.5.9-10.B: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

Set-up:

* Connect my computer to SMART Board
* Make copies of the Byzantine education primary source documents
* Upload the *New York Times* article about the 2011 Vancouver riots to Edline

Activities:

1. **Do-Now (10 minutes):** When students enter the classroom they will sit in their assigned seats and answer the question, “What do you learn in school and why?” on separate piece of paper. They will answer the question in the following 2 steps: 1) List the subjects you study in school and why you think each one is taught, and 2) In our society, why is it important to reach adulthood understanding \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_? Students will have five minutes to compose their responses, then we will discuss student answers as a class. This will build into a larger discussion about the purpose of an education system.
2. **Brief Lecture (5 minutes):** I will explain that the reason I wanted students to reflect on the relevance and applicability of their education to their anticipated adult life, is because today we will learn about the Byzantine education system. I will explain that just as the Byzantine’s looked to the Romans to model their code of law, they looked to the ancient Greeks to model their education system – and that over the course of today’s lesson we will determine if and how the Byzantines made the Greek education system relevant and applicable to their lives. I will then present one slide about the basics of education in the Byzantine Empire. I will explain that the Byzantines had a merit-based bureaucratic government and military, and I will ask students why they think such a system promoted a strong educational ethic. As a system modeled after the Greeks, the Byzantines studied the “Classics” – I will ask students what the term “Classics” refer to, as they are already familiar with this term from our previous unit about Ancient Greece. Finally, I will delineate the structure of the Byzantine education system, and the subjects taught in elementary, secondary, and higher education classes.
3. **Primary Source Analysis (20 minutes):** Students will work in their “letter groups” to learn about one of the following classical Greek subjects taught in the Byzantine Empire: mathematics (Euclidean geometry), literature (Homer), philosophy (Aristotle), history (Herodotus), or rhetoric and logic – and then teach a 2-minute lesson on that subject to your respective “number groups.” I will distribute the primary source documents and activity instructions to each “letter group” and we will review the instructions as a class. Students will be asked to complete the following 4 steps in their “letter groups”:
4. Read the passage about your “letter group’s” assigned subject.
5. Discuss the meaning of the text with your “letter group.”
6. Identify key points to emphasize to help you teach this subject to your “number group.”
7. Underneath your “Do-Now,” write why you think the Byzantines studied this text or this subject (2-3 complete sentences)

I will also remind students that underneath each primary source document I have added a few guiding questions to help “letter groups” identify the key points they would like to emphasize in their mini-lessons to their “number groups.” As students work in their “letter groups” to complete these 4 steps, I will circulate the room to facilitate students’ understanding of the texts and suggest ways they might teach the material to their peers.

1. **Mini-Lessons (10 minutes):** Students will break into their “number groups” to teach their 2-minute lesson about their “letter group’s” classical Greek subject taught in the Byzantine Empire. After everyone in the “number group” has taught their lesson, students will be asked to respond to the following question underneath their Do-Now in 2-3 sentences:

“Do you think the type of classical Greek education taught in the Byzantine Empire should be taught in schools today? Why or why not? What are its benefits? What are its drawbacks?”

1. **Wrap-up (5 minutes):** We will come together as a class to discuss student responses to the final question

Homework:

* Read the *New York Times* article about the 2011 Vancouver riots