

TEACHING NOTES

Theresa Cummins: Taking the Wallaby Express

Appropriate Grade Levels: 6 – 12 (This lesson can be used as the start of a larger research project and career exploration for students in grades 9 – 12)

Implementation Time:

One class period (45 minutes to one hour) required for basic exercise.

An additional class period or more may be required if the teacher wishes to have students spend class time on the optional research project.

Materials Needed:

Teaching notes for “Theresa Cummins” case study

1. Student copies of “Theresa Cummins”
2. Notepaper for small groups to use when brainstorming answers
3. An atlas, world map, or globe and, if possible, blank world maps on which students can record the ports mentioned in the case study
4. Access to the Internet

Career Pathway: Business & Management

Subject Area: Geography

What will happen for learners as a result of this lesson?

Students will explore a career opportunity in international trade. They will explore the use of geography and map-reading skills in a career situation. Students will use maps and information from the Internet to locate ports on a map and to track routes between those ports. They will review the five themes of geography, and will demonstrate understanding of the themes “Location: Position on the Earth’s Surface” and “Movement: Humans Interacting on the Earth.” Through the in-class writing assignment suggested with this lesson, students will demonstrate their ability to communicate to explain.

How will students learn?

- Geography: Students will use maps, globes, and other geographic tools to interpret information from a spatial perspective; they will locate physical and human features on maps and globes; they will examine how technology can affect people’s interaction with the environment; and they will identify trading routes between Pacific Rim countries.
- 1. Communication: Students will demonstrate listening and observation skills to gain understanding; will practice communicating ideas clearly and effectively; will demonstrate communication strategies and skills to work effectively with others; will use available technology as a communications tool; and will analyze how communication is used in career settings.
- Writing: Students will practice writing clearly and effectively to explain technical information. Students will practice writing for career applications, producing technical and non-technical documents using resources from career settings.

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How will this lesson plan prepare students to be assessed? *This lesson plan will help prepare students for assessment exams in reading and writing. The in-class writing exercise will permit students to demonstrate their ability to organize and explain complicated information. The optional research exercise will allow students to explore geographic themes in more depth.*

Procedure:

This lesson is designed to be taught in one session, though additional classroom sessions may be desired if the teacher wishes to have students work on the optional research assignment during class time.

1. *Distribute the students' version of the "Theresa Cummins" case study to your class. Divide the students into groups of two or three.*
2. *Read aloud to them or let them read one section of the case study at a time. Don't let them read ahead. After each section, use the discussion questions included with the teaching notes as well as your atlas, map, globe, and/or Internet access to get students to identify and use the geographic information Theresa must use to solve her challenge.*
3. *Finish by asking students to prepare the in-class writing exercise, an expository writing prompt in which they will have to organize the information they have been given in the case study. If you wish, continue your study of Australia and its geography by having students complete the research assignment.*

Closure/Assessment:

Review students' writing assignments for basic writing and presentation skills, as well as for their ability to clearly explain the steps Theresa has taken to solve her customer's problem. You may also want to assess students on their ability to use a map or atlas and on their ability to use different tools (such as an atlas, a globe, or the Internet) to locate an unfamiliar destination.

Theresa Cummins: Taking the Wallaby Express

Part One - *Read to the bottom of this page then stop.*

Theresa Cummins answered the phone. “I’m so glad I reached you,” her customer said. “We’ve got a big problem here in Adelaide, and I was hoping you could help.” Well, Theresa thought, her busy day was going to be even busier.

Theresa Cummins worked for shipping company APL Limited at its Fremantle, Australia office. Her title was Documentation/Customer Support Supervisor. What that meant was that Theresa was responsible for helping customers who were shipping goods to any of the Australian ports APL served: Fremantle, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, or Adelaide.

Not that long ago, someone with Theresa’s job would have been able to work with customers at only one port. But, with the help of computers, Theresa had an eagle-eye view of shipping activity all over Australia.

Every container load that arrived at a port needed to have a whole sheaf of paperwork. That paperwork or documentation told about what was in the container, where it had come from, where it was going, and who was responsible for it. The documentation had to be delivered to the different organizations that were in charge of trade in Australia: the Australian Customs Authorities, the Australian Quarantine Authorities, and, of course, the individual ports where the containers were shipped. Getting this paperwork around used to be done by hand but was now done by computer. And it was Theresa’s job to make sure it got to all the right people – for every APL shipment into Australia. As you can imagine, she spent a lot of time at her computer!

Because Theresa worked with all APL’s Australian offices, she was not surprised to get a call from a customer in Adelaide. Her customer was a brewing company that shipped bottled drinks to Japan. But the company had run out of bottles and had no way to make its next shipment!

The customer explained that a container load of bottles had just left Jeddah the day before, on its way to Singapore and then Adelaide. But, the customer asked, was there any way Theresa could get those bottles to Adelaide quicker?

STOP

Theresa Cummins: Teaching Notes for Part One

First, make sure students understand what Theresa does. Make sure they understand that Theresa is tracking shipments into five Australian ports for APL's customers.

Then ask students what they need to know to help Theresa solve her challenge.

*One of the first things they need to know is **WHERE** all the ports that Theresa is working with are.*

Use an atlas, map, or globe (or, if you prefer you can use the Internet – National Geographic's Map Maker service at www.nationalgeographic.com is always helpful) to locate the following port cities.

1. Jeddah
2. Singapore
3. Fremantle
4. Brisbane
5. Sydney
6. Melbourne
7. Adelaide

What countries are these ports in? Where are they located relative to each other? What bodies of water are they located on? If possible, have students fill these ports in on a blank world map.

*Once students have located the key ports, they need to understand **HOW** goods are transported between them. Using the Internet, log on to APL's web site (www.apl.com) and click on "Schedules." Then, check APL's shipping services between Asia and Australia, focusing in on services between Jeddah and Adelaide. You will first see a list of scheduled ship departures. Each one will show which shipping "service" it is on. If you click on the listed service (for instance "AAX") you will be taken to an information page about that service, which includes a map and timetables.*

The Five Themes of Geography

The Five Themes were developed by the National Council for Geographic Education to provide an organizing framework for the presentation of geographic materials.

The Five Themes are as follows:

1. **Location: Position on the Earth's Surface (Absolute/Relative).** Geographic study begins with the location of places on the earth. Places have absolute locations that pinpoint them on the earth, and relative locations that place each location in respect to other locations. For example, North Dakota has an absolute location that can be pointed to on any basic map. It also has a relative location in that it has a location within the economic system based on its characteristics and location within the world market. North Dakota has its absolute location's characteristics for soil and climate, yet the success of wheat growing is also related to its location to the edge of more expensive arable land to the east.
2. **Place: Physical and Human Characteristics.** Places have physical and human characteristics that make them what they are. Geography emphasizes the understanding of both of these factors and their integration together.
3. **Human/Environment Interactions: Shaping the Landscape.** The landscape of the earth is no longer a purely physical feature. Humans have impacted every area of the earth, but in varying ways. The geography of places is influenced by the degree to which humans have impacted their local environment.
4. **Movement: Humans Interacting on the Earth.** The postmodern world is one of great interaction between places. This movement is inherently geographic, whether it is by telecommunications or ship.
5. **Regions: How They Form and Change.** The essential geographic feature is the region. A region is any unit of space that is unified by the presence of some characteristic. The Corn Belt, stretching from Indiana to eastern Nebraska, is an area in which corn is a dominating product. The Corn Belt is a region within the United States.

Part Two - Read to the bottom of this page then stop.

Theresa immediately checked the map above her desk and APL's schedules on her computer to see how quickly her customer's bottles would arrive in Adelaide. She learned that the customer had shipped the bottles on APL's AAX service.

That service would ship the bottles from Jeddah, Saudi Arabia to Singapore. The container full of bottles would then be transferred to a new ship, which would travel down the east coast of Australia making stops at Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide. The bottles would arrive in Adelaide in just over three weeks.

The AAX service usually worked just fine for the Adelaide brewing company. But the company hadn't counted on a sudden order from Japan, and now had run out of bottles before the order was filled. Even a few days ago, the AAX service had seemed to be the perfect schedule; but now, the brewing company needed a faster way to get its bottles to Adelaide.

Theresa knew there wasn't a direct route to Adelaide from Singapore. Adelaide was on Australia's southern coast, probably the farthest port away from Singapore. But APL did offer a number of different shipping services to Australia, and she began to study them all, looking for the fastest way to Adelaide.

As she worked, Theresa had a great idea. What if the bottles weren't shipped to Adelaide at all, she wondered? And what if, instead of going east they went west? Even a few months ago, this might not have gotten the bottles to Adelaide any faster. But APL had just started a new shipping service between Asia and Australia that traveled down Australia's west coast to Fremantle. This service, called WBX and nicknamed the "Wallaby Express," offered direct service between Singapore and Fremantle.

By transferring the container load of bottles onto the Wallaby Express in Singapore, Theresa could get the bottles to Fremantle very quickly. She'd then send the bottles by train the rest of the way to Adelaide. Even though the train journey would take three days, she would still be able to get the bottles to her customer four days sooner than they had originally been expected.

STOP

Theresa Cummins: Teaching Notes for Part Two

Make sure students understand what Theresa has decided to do. Trace the container's new and old routes on your map or globe. If possible, have students draw the two routes in different colors on their individual maps.

Then ask them how Theresa knew what to do. Certainly, she needed a lot of information about the different kinds of services APL offered. But even more important, she needed a good understanding of geography – and, in particular, where different ports were relative to each other – to solve the problem. If she didn't know where Adelaide was in relationship to Fremantle or Sydney, she wouldn't be able to think creatively about the shipping challenge.

Next, ask students what they think Theresa needs to do next. Students may answer that Theresa needs to make her idea for the new route for the container really happen. Ask them how she will do this. Students may answer that Theresa needs to talk with:

- 1. Staff at APL offices at each of the ports the container was in, will be in, or was scheduled to stop in. APL staff in Adelaide need to know exactly what is going on, because they will be the closest link with the customer. Theresa needs to make all the arrangements for the container's new route.*
- 2. Staff at the Port of Fremantle (and at the port of Adelaide). Port staff need to know exactly when the container is arriving, on what ship, and where to take it (to the stack-train) when it arrives.*
- 3. Staff at the Customs and Quarantine Authorities. They might wonder about the sudden change in schedule if Theresa doesn't give them good, up-to-date information.*

Part Three - Read to the bottom of the next page.

Theresa's customer was delighted. The extra four days would mean the brewing company would be able to fill its order to Japan in time. "Thanks, Theresa," her customer said. "Now I can relax a little."

Theresa couldn't relax yet. Now that she had found a way to get the bottles to Adelaide more quickly, she had to do all the work needed to make it happen. She had to let a lot of people know about the change in plans, since the bottles were already on a ship and had a schedule posted on APL's computers.

Theresa quickly listed the four organizations she'd have to work with:

1. **APL.** Theresa quickly notified her colleagues at APL's Jeddah, Singapore, and Adelaide offices about the change in plans. She reserved space for the container of bottles on a ship that would be leaving Singapore to take the Wallaby Express to Fremantle. And she arranged for "stack-train" service for the container between Fremantle and Adelaide.
2. **The Ports of Fremantle and Adelaide.** The ports needed to know about every container that arrived or left. Theresa alerted staff at the ports to expect the bottles (by ship to Fremantle and by train to Adelaide) and gave them information about the stack-train connection.
3. **The Australian Customs Authorities.** Customs makes sure that illegal drugs or smuggled items are not brought into Australia. Theresa gave Customs staff the information they needed about the bottles and explained the sudden change in shipping plans.
4. **The Australian Quarantine Authorities.** Because Australia is an island, the government is very careful about "invader species." Invader species are non-native soil, plants, animals, or bugs that could come to Australia from other countries and hurt the environment. The Quarantine Authorities check things coming into Australia for soil, bugs, or plants and make sure that nothing harmful is allowed in. Theresa alerted Quarantine staff about the bottles and their shipping arrangements.

STOP

THERESA CUMMINS: Teaching Notes for Assignment

In-class writing exercise. This writing exercise has been designed to give students experience responding to an expository writing prompt. Read the following paragraph to your students:

Theresa has now made all the arrangements to have the container full of bottles transferred to the Wallaby Express. Now she wants to alert APL staff in Jeddah, Singapore, and all the other Australia offices to this change in plans. Please compose a short e-mail message from Theresa to her APL colleagues that explains the problem as well as her solution. The e-mail message should be short (1/2 page or less) but should contain all the information her colleagues need to adjust their own paperwork.

Ask students to work alone or in groups of two to three. Give them approximately 15 minutes to complete the assignment. A sample answer key follows on the next page.

Optional Research Assignment. Theresa knows that the Australian Quarantine Authorities exist to protect Australia from “invader species” that might come to the country on ships or in containers. The Quarantine Authorities are particularly vigilant because Australia is an island and has therefore been historically isolated from many animals and plants that are common in other places but not in Australia. But of course, not everyone knows that. Use the library or Internet to research Australia’s most famous “invader species” – the rabbit! Write a 2- to 3-page paper summarizing what you learn.

SAMPLE ANSWER KEY FOR IN-CLASS WRITING ASSIGNMENT

TO: APL staff in Jeddah, Singapore, Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide
FROM: Theresa Cummins
DATE: September, 2000
RE: New Route for Container #____

Please note that Container #____, currently en route between Jeddah and Singapore on ____ (vessel) and scheduled to travel AAX service from Singapore to Adelaide on ____ (date) in ____ (vessel) will be changing services mid-route.

The container will move to the WBX service in Singapore on ____ (date). It will be shipped WBX service on ____ (vessel) to Fremantle, arriving on ____ (date) and then will be sent via stack-train ____ (route #) to Adelaide. Adelaide should expect delivery on ____ (date). Please alert customer immediately upon arrival in Adelaide for pickup.

This change has been made to accommodate a change in the customer's schedule. I have made all changes to the container's itinerary. Please update your own records accordingly.