***Teaching about World Religions using the AAR Pedagogical Competencies***

***“Scavenger Hunt”***

The objective of this modified “Scavenger Hunt” is to familiarize you with the World Religions identified in the OACS, understand the key issues and challenges faced with teaching about this content in public schools, and identifying appropriate resources, best practices and skills to effectively teach about World religions. We will use the Pedagogical Competencies outlined in the AAR document

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| ***Pedagogical Competencies*** | ***Explore/Research/Reflect*** | ***Application*** |
| ***Station 1 (20 points)***   * Identify the OACS that focus on World Religions * Be able to find and recognize appropriate resources about religion when needed, on the Internet or in more traditional media. | ***Identify the OACS. Then develop an annotated bibliography: Identify 3 Resources for each of the world religions(incl. young adolescent literature): Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism***  OACS:  History #2  Geography #5  Geography #7  Geography #8  ***Buddhism***  (2013). Story of the Buddha. Buddhist Studies: *Buddha Dharam Education Association and BuddhaNet.* Retrieved July 22, 2013, from  [***http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhism/storybuddha.htm***](http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/buddhism/storybuddha.htm)  (2013). The Buddhist Studies eBook Library. 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Retrieved July 22, 2013.  ***http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/religion/judaism/passover.shtml*** | ***Write a short description highlighting key points of***  ***each religion***  Buddhism: founder Mahatma Budh, do not believe in Gods,  Believe in kindness and life after death, go to temple,  Originated in India, if live a good life than will build up Karma for  Next life  Hinduism: one of the oldest religions, no single founder,  Began in Indus Valley near Rive Indus, believe in cycle of birth,  death, and rebirth incarnation, Vedas is the Hindu text, believe  in eternal soul called Brahman, holy days include Festival of Lights  and Diwali  Islam: second largest religion, followers called Muslims,  Believe in one God, Muhammad is final prophet, holy book is  Qur’an and Sunnah, five basic Pillars of Islam declaration of faith,  Praying five times a day, give money to charity, fasting, lifetime of  Pilgrimage to Mecca  Christianity: holy book is the Bible and consists of Old and New  Testaments, worship in churches, spiritual leaders are called  priests, belief in one God, Jesus giving his life on the Cross and rising  from the dead after the third day the Resurrection. One of the most  popular religions, holy days Easter and Christmas  Judaism: founded by Moses, believe in one God whom they have  A covenant, document is Torah, spiritual leaders called Rabbis,  Worship in Synagogues, Holocaust murdered 6 million Jews. |
| ***Station 2 (15 points)***   * Develop skills in leading students in discussion regarding their religious beliefs and practices, as well as the beliefs and practices of others. * Be aware of examples of best practices in teaching about religion. * Develop the ability to present multiple religious perspectives in a fair or neutral way. | ***Highlight at least 2 key points from the reading that addresses each of these competencies***  “subject is religion, students can feel that their own personal experiences give them special knowledge  and authority.” (Moore 11)  “Often students will have strongly  held ideas about the positive or negative role of religion in the world, ideas about religious and nonreligious people, and ideas about particular faiths.” (Moore 11)  Teachers having an understanding those religions are diverse, dynamic, and embedded into culture.  “Having students explore their assumptions is an essential first step in helping them look at religion  clearly.” (Moore 12)  “Talking about religion can touch the depth of someone’s identity, causing some discussions to feel like an attack, especially when based on  misinformation and stereotypes. Therefore, it is imperative to foster a climate of tolerance, respect,  and honesty by encouraging students to” (Moore 12) | ***How can incorporate this into your teaching of world religions? Provide at least 1 example for each competency***  In order for students to be able to discuss religions students need  to have their questions and misconceptions addressed. I think  students should have a chance to write down their questions and  place them anonymously in a box and the teacher can read and  address common questions that occurred in the class. This will  assist students with background knowledge needed to have  respectful discussions in the classroom.  Teachers must be able to provide context for students to have an understanding of the social and historical context of each religion.  It is not just about giving information about a religion but also  painting a picture for students to grasp the diversity and standout  features of each religion. This can be incorporated by multiple  forms of media to present a setting and relate information  about religion. Students will be able to learn about the geography, development, social, historical context are interconnected to  each religion. |
| ***Station 3 (15 points)***   * Understand the difference between the secular academic and devotional approaches to religion, and consistently use the secular academic approach. * Be able to address in a constructive way religious disagreements and conflicts that arise in the classroom. * Be aware of, and manage effectively, religious diversity in the classroom. * Create an environment of respect and tolerance—a safe environment in which students feel free to talk about religion. | ***The AAR guidelines outlines 4 Approaches to teaching religion (see pages 10-11). Which approach do you think you will follow? Why?***  I think I will use a combination of the historical approach as well as the literary approach. I think a combination of these approaches a good balance for students to understand the history and development of each religion and see the application in the use of literature. I think it is important for students to have background information on the religion before diving into text that are examples of their religions.  ***What do you understand by the competencies in Station 3?***  Teachers must set up a classroom that has an environment that is respect to every member in the classroom. This is not only to the teacher but to the students as well. An environment needs to be created in which students can talk and discuss about religion in an open atmosphere in which bias or prejudice is not occurring. The teacher needs to model and reinforce classroom expectations when discussing religion in the classroom.  In schools teachers need to focus on the information to relate to the students. I liked this quote from the article and sums up about how teachers are to teach religion. “Encouraging student awareness of religions, but not acceptance of a particular religion; studying about religion, but not practicing religion; exposing students to a diversity of religious views, but not imposing any particular view; and educating students about all religions, but not promoting or denigrating religion.” (Moore *i*) Teachers and students are not to approve or disapprove of any classroom members religious choices. Teachers are to instruct by using the secular academic approach to teach religion to teach about each religion not the actually religion in the school setting. | ***How will you implement your approach/understanding of competencies into practice? Provide at least 2-3 specific examples.***  Have students conduct a KWL chart while studying each religion.  This will allow students to be able to record their thinking of what  they know, what they want to learn and what they have learned  throughout the unit.  It is important to have multiple sources and resources for students  to figure out their own questions about religions. By providing  these resources and discussing validity and reliability of sources  is helpful technology integration for students studying about  religion.  Additionally, literature will be presented to give representation  of the time period. This will help develop background knowledge  for students and see how the time period, culture, setting all  influences the development of religion. Additional students will  compare and contrast noting any similarities and differences of  the religions and note if any changes have occurred from the  development of the religion until now.  Find trade books and picture books that relate to each religion  and have students compare and contrast the differences among  the religions.  Students write journal entries and focus on setting and point of  view integration within each religion in the picture books. Students  will describe the setting using key words and pictures to  represent their thinking. Then, students will discuss how the story  would be different if it was written from another characters point  of view.  Students will compare two different forms of media and how  religion information is presented in a piece of fiction and nonfiction  text. This can also be expanded to a video clip and piece of  nonfiction text to include technology integration and how two  different forms of media can present different forms of  information about religion. Students can focus on author’s  purpose for providing the information about religion to the  audience. |
| ***Station 4 : Final Reflection***  ***10 points*** | ***Reflect on the AAR document –what impact did these guidelines have on your professional development and pedagogy?***  This document gave me the necessary background knowledge and confidence to be able to instruct religion in the classroom. I think it is important for educators to take the emotion and opinions out of the equation and focus on the facts and history behind each religion and how it has influenced the development of people and their culture. Religions have been dominating aspects to may civilizations and regions all over the world and are important for students to have the essential background information on each religion. I think by providing these learning opportunities to students it will help students gain the foundation of knowledge and help alter judgment of others based upon their religious believes. So instead of making judgments students can have the necessary information and foundation to make executive decisions and have a true understanding and acceptance of peoples believes. I liked the support that was given about frequently asked questions in the classroom and how to respond to students in this manner. This assistance my confidence to be able to instruct religion in the classroom. | ***How will you take all of the information you have gained from AAR and your research and make it comprehensible to your 6th graders? This is your “snapshot of practice” - provide at least 1 specific example of practice.***  Students will gain the understanding that religion is changing  and identify a resource from time of creation until now and  discuss how religions are changing and reinvented as time passes. Demonstrate this by playing a game of telephone with your  students. Students will be able to hear how a story was changed  and altered by presenting it multiple people. Then do the same  activity of telephone but include a period of wait time. Maybe tell  a story in the beginning of class and see how many details students  can remember at the end of class or even the next day. This will  model for students that story are often altered and changed based  on context and through translation. This will give a real life example  to students to understand how religion is changing. Students will  then proceed to work in groups to research stories that have been  based down from generations in regards to religion. Students will  compare and contrast the example of stories that were told with  what they have learned about the study of each religion noting  any changes or alterations that were included through the religion evolution. |
| ***Total: 60 points*** |  |  |