Landmark Challenge

Landmark Challenge is based on MysteryQuest projects coordinated by Janine Lim, Berrien Springs Intermediate School District, Berrien Springs, Michigan. The original Landmark Game was created by Linda McDonald in Katy ISD, Katy, Texas.

Description: This project is designed for **2nd grade students** studying U.S. landmarks. Through video conference technology, students are able to meet other students while learning about the major landmarks in the United States. Prior to the video conference each classroom will create a presentation with clues about their chosen landmark. The other classrooms, using maps, textbooks, library books, and other resources, will try to discover the mystery landmark presented by each of the participating classrooms.

Select your landmark.

Here is the list of ten United States landmarks that will be used during this challenge. Teachers will send their top three choices when registering for the project. Confirmation emails will be sent to teachers after the final registration deadline with the landmark that their class will present. There will only be one class with each landmark per session.

Teachers, please remember the object of this "challenge". Your students should become mini-experts on **YOUR** assigned landmark. Students should be familiar with all 10 landmarks and have access to resource materials to look up information during the challenge.

Golden Gate Bridge	Grand Canyon
Mount Rushmore	Liberty Bell
Niagara Falls	Lincoln Memorial
U.S. Capitol	Statue of Liberty
White House	Washington Monument

In a nutshell: Each class will present six clues about their assigned mystery landmark. Teachers will receive a confirmation email indicating which of their top three choices they have been assigned. This ensures that each session has three DIFFERENT landmarks presented in it.

This project is based on the MysteryQuest USA project for 5th grade students. If it is your first times participating, visit http://dl.remc11.k12.mi.us/QuickTime/projects/MQ.mov and watch the movie. It will help you understand the process that we will use. It is a simpler format for 2nd grade.

Prepare Your Classroom Presentation

Your classroom presentation should give six clues about your mystery landmark. The clues should be given in the same order they are listed on the note-taking guide so that the students can easily follow along. Each clue should be about 1 minute in length.

> **Order of clues:**
> 1. Natural or man-made
> 2. Location
> 3. Size
> 4. Other
> 5. Other
> 6. Other

When creating your presentation, please recognize the need to clearly communicate the clues. If you are making a creative presentation, make sure to clearly indicate which clue is being given. The clues MUST be presented in order.

Leave the visual clues on the screen long enough to allow students to copy them onto the note-taking guide. When showing something, leave it up for about 30 seconds. It is also a good idea to have a student be timekeeper while showing the clues to ensure the clues are on the screen for enough time.

Ideas for Presenting Clues

Each classroom should plan a five to seven minute presentation about their landmark. The presentation may include photos, graphics, video clips, etc. The media used for your presentation will often depend on the equipment available for your video conference. Talk to your distance learning coordinator or technology coordinator to find the best options for presentations at your location.

- You may use **printouts on a document camera** that includes photographs.

- Or if there is a computer connected to your video conferencing system you may choose to design a PowerPoint presentation or even a web page! Remember that long PowerPoint presentations can be boring. The students want to see each other too. Use balance and judgment in your decision.

- No matter what you decide to do be sure to use **a large text size** so the words can be seen by other participants.

- **Please avoid taped presentations.** One of the curriculum goals for this project is to give students practice in oral speaking in a live connection. In addition, taped presentations are difficult to understand and hear when sent over compressed video. It also is easier for students to answer questions about their presentation if their research is fresh in their mind.

- **Revealing the "mystery landmark"** Be sure to think of how your class will reveal the landmark that you provided clues about. It should also include a visual component. Classes can get very creative with the reveal.

Additional ideas and references are available online.

- http://www.remc11.k12.mi.us/dl/MysteryQuest/examples.html
- http://bcisdvcs.wordpress.com/tag/mysteryquests/

Examples of visual clues

Visual clues can really make a difference in note taking if we have audio problems. Often students read clues too fast and quiet for other students to write them down. So the best solution is to include visual clues to accompany your presentation. This is HIGHLY recommended.

Posters

Posters are the easiest way to share a visual clue. Make sure the font is large and easy to read. Try reading your poster from across the room. IF you can read the important information, you've done a great job!

Poster by Mrs. Jordan's class, Dowagiac, MI

(Text is 72 pt font.)

Poster by Ms. Montgomery's class, Hillsboro, TX

(Notice the visual is placed on the table so that it is stable for the camera.)

Document Camera

Many videoconference systems include a document camera. You can put 8 1/2 by 11 pages (landscape) on the document camera to share clues. Ask your distance learning or technology coordinator if you have access to a document camera.

You may want to consider some plan so that we can see the students, then the document camera, then the students again.

Even 3-D objects can go on a document camera!

Pictures and clues

PowerPoint

If you are interested in using PowerPoint in a video conference, check with your building coordinator to make sure that you can do this with your system. Make sure you use large letters. Avoid red. Dark backgrounds with contrasting light text work best. Test the PowerPoint ahead of time to make sure it can be read. No animation or **weird,** creative fonts!

Clue and picture

by Ms. Blamer's class, Fremont, MI
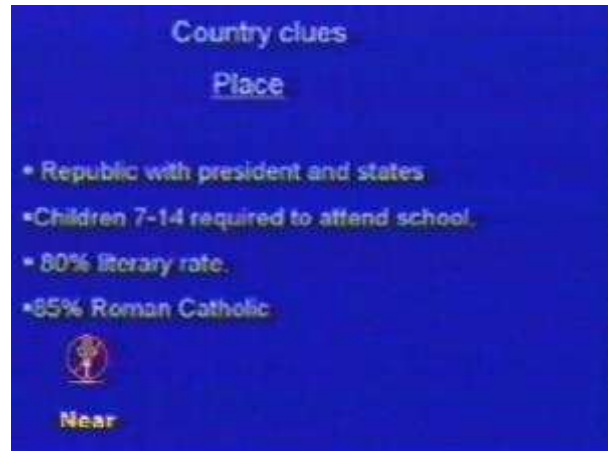
Blue background & white text

by Mr. Lenz's class, Britton, MI

Revealing The Answer

Prepare a visual to reveal the answer to your presentation. If possible write down the name of the landmark to show on the document camera or make a big poster so that other schools can easily tell whether or not they got it correct. Be creative here if you want!

Poster

by Ms. Blamer's class, Fremont, MI

Flag, names, and an extra visual

by Ms. Knoll's class, New Buffalo, MI

Classroom Tips for a Successful Landmark Challenge

1. Research and learn about all the landmarks. Students can add the information to a class chart or make a book to reference during the event.

2. Students can make a list of facts about their landmark, decide who will read them, write them on card stock paper and practice.

3. Teach the process of completing the note-taking guide with the class. The first three clues will be given in order: natural or man-made, location, then size. The last three should be recorded in order.

4. Divide your students into groups of 3-5 students. Each group will be responsible for taking notes on all mystery landmarks presented by the other classrooms. The students will have time to ask questions or other classes, use resources to make their guesses, and then will guess the other mystery landmarks.

5. Review the **agenda** with students so that they understand the process for the day. If possible, take along a poster of the agenda to post in your distance learning room to help students keep on track during the day.

6. **Practice, Practice, Practice!** Make sure the presentation is 7 minutes or less. (This should be about one minute per clue.) Emphasize speaking slowly, loudly and clearly. The biggest issue with this project is audio. Remind students that everyone else is listening carefully to their presentation to take notes. The goal is to have the other students clearly hear the clues and be able to record the information. If students are reading clues, have them read from note cards instead of paper. Rustling paper during a video conference can make it impossible to hear the clue.

7. Make sure students understand the process for asking one question of each classroom. Each class will be allowed to ask each classroom one question. Each school should come up with a question for all the other classrooms. The questions should be 'eliminating' questions. In other words if the students believe the landmark is this or that, they pose a question that eliminates one. The questions should be "yes or no" questions only! Do not ask "Is your landmark The Alamo?" as this question will give it away for the rest of the schools.

8. Your role should be a facilitator. Please provide assistance by asking leading questions. As hard as it may be, do not give answers. The focus is on the learning process!

Materials to Bring to the Videoconference

- Bring all materials needed for your presentation.
- Copy the note taking guide for each student in the class. Suggestion: Have each student takes notes on each presentation.
- Bring any print materials for students to use in their research such as: library books, globes, atlases, textbooks, almanacs, or encyclopedias

The Day of the Challenge

VIDEOCONFERENCE AGENDA (60 MINUTES)	
5 min	Each class will introduce themselves including district, campus, and teacher's name.
10 min	First round clues (natural or man-made, location, size) ~ Present clues in order.
5 min	Moderator will model note-taking for classes
10 min	Second round of clues (other, other, other)
15 min	THINK TIME
5 min	Questions (One yes/no question per class.)
5 min	THINK TIME
5 min	Guesses and Landmarks Revealed

Curriculum Connections

TEKS:
Identify and explain the significance of various national landmarks including our nation's capitol and the Statue of Liberty.
Represent text information in different ways, including story maps, graphs, and charts.
Make and explain inferences from texts including determining important ideas and making predictions.

Objectives:

1. Identify and explain the significance of various national landmarks including our nation's capitol and the Statue of Liberty.
2. Compare information from different sources about places and regions.
3. Obtain information about a topic using a variety of oral sources such as conversations, interviews, and music.
4. Obtain information about a topic using a variety of visual sources such as pictures, graphics, televisions, maps, computer software, literature, reference sources, and artifacts.
5. Use various parts of a source to locate information such as the table of contents, glossary, index, and computer search.
6. Sequence and categorize information using Landmark Content Frame.
7. Express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences.
8. Create written and visual materials such as stories, poems, maps, and graphic organizers to express ideas.
9. Use communication tools to participate in group activities such as distance learning and email projects with appropriate supervision.