



Depiction of rivers in cultural and popular images through time

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Module:

River management

Total duration: 9 hours

Field work: yes

List of materials:

PC, beamer (IWB)
Internet, CD player
Notebook
Video camera
Articles and books on the
topic

Worksheets: 5

Students' age: 15-17

Use of apps/software: Google
Earth; Siftr

Brief disciplinary introduction

This activity is described for Ilissos of Athens to the Great Stream of Rafina, but it can be adapted to other contexts.

Rivers do not exist in human life only as an object of their natural environment. Man considers the environment and its elements as a part of his personal and social life.

The best example of the above aspect is the river of Ilissos of Athens, which was buried in the 20th century. From antiquity up to now Ilissos is very important for the city of Athens and its inhabitants. This river is referred by Plato in his dialogue Phaedrus. Close to Ilissos significant monuments are erected. During the last century, Ilissos appears in names of places, in texts, in songs, in movies etc., in other words, in every part of human life. Nowadays, Ilissos has been buried, but the footprints of its existence still remain.

The traces that Ilissos has left in Art, History, Archaeology and Ethnography prevent us from repeating the same mistake with any other river, such as the Grand Stream of Rafina, which faces the danger of being buried too.



Objective of the learning unit

To learn about:

- ✓ Rivers as factors of human history that reveal how rivers deal with human life and culture.
- ✓ How human memory often surpasses the natural existence of a river.
- ✓ Underlines the consequences of the burial or the daylighting of a river.
- ✓ Discovering how the memories of people are lost or brought to light along with the rivers.

To be able to:

- ✓ Understand the ancient texts
- ✓ Interpret sources of information
- ✓ Prepare interviews
- ✓ Produce a Location Based Game



Introduction (orientation)

Time estimated: 15 minutes

Where the activity takes place: in the classroom

Method (how the students have to work): class brainstorming

Instructions for the teacher:

Show a video clip and pictures from Ilissos or the ancient God Ilissos.

Ask students the following questions:

"Which is this river?"

"Where is that?"

"Could you see it today?, If not, have you heard its name?"

"How do you know it?"

"Which sciences can be involved in a river study?"

"Is your city near a river?"

Conceptualization

Time estimated: 20 minutes

Where the activity takes place: in the classroom/lab

Method (how the students have to work): class work

Instructions for the teacher:

Students answer the question:

"What evidence we should gather to narrate the history of Ilissos?"

They collect all the answers given and classify them in *History, Art, Archaeology* and *Ethnography*.

Then, students formulate a hypothesis in three steps:

1. There is a lot of evidence of Ilissos from ancient times until nowadays.
2. These pieces of evidence are found in every form of man's individual and social life e.g. mythology, history, literature, monuments, customs, culture, newspapers, pictures, films, songs etc.
3. The multitude of evidence shows that the rivers are very important to the human life.

Investigation

Time estimated: 4 hours

Where the activity takes place: in the classroom (1 hr) and outdoor (3 hrs)

Method (how the students have to work): group-work (*historians, artists, archaeologists ethnographers*).

Instructions for the teacher:

In the classroom, the students are divided into 4 groups, depending on their interests: historians, artists, archaeologists and ethnographers.

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1) Planning

Every group plans the investigation phase, following the guide below:

Historians: The students are given some short extracts from the Plato's dialogue Phaedrus, articles and web links in order to look for specific details.

Artists: The students are shown clips from the film "O Drakos" and they are given specific songs and web links in order to look for information about Ilissos. They are also given the play about the Great Stream of Rafina written by Argyro Papazi in order to choose a scene.

Archaeologists: The students are given some articles and web links in order to look for information about Ilissos in Ancient Greece.

Ethnographers: At home students prepare a set of questions to ask people about popular beliefs associated with rivers and folk perceptions that associate fairies and other fantastic creatures with rivers.

The students are, also, given some articles and web links in order to look for specific details.

2) Performing

Historians: They distribute their material in three historical periods: ancient Greece, Byzantium and modern Greece. They do bibliographic and web research. The findings are recorded. They fill in the worksheet 1.

Parallel actions: Field visit to Ilissos

Artists: They focus their research on the following areas: Theatre, Cinema, Songs. They do bibliographic and web research. The findings are recorded. They fill in the worksheet 2.

Parallel actions: Presentation of a play devoted to the Great Stream of Rafina; Field visit to the Great Stream of Rafina

Archaeologists: They distribute their material in two historical periods: ancient Greece and modern Greece. They do bibliographic and web research. The findings are recorded. They fill in the worksheet 3.

Parallel actions: Field visit to Kerameikos

Ethnographers: They focus their research on the Greek customs and rites related to the rivers. They do bibliographic and web research. The findings are recorded. They fill in the worksheet 4.



Parallel actions: Field visit to Ilissos

3) Concluding

All the groups collect their worksheets and complete the worksheet 5. They also gather all findings in a database.

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Conclusion

Time estimated: 45 minutes

Where the activity takes place: in the classroom

Method (how the students have to work): class-work

Instructions for the teacher:

All students together discuss the results, exchange views and set new questions for a future research. They choose the ones who will work with the LBG (Location Based Game) team in order to enrich the game with the evidence of this research.

Discussion

Time estimated: 45 minutes

Where the activity takes place: in the classrooms

Method (how the students have to work): class discussion/brainstorming

Instructions for the teacher:

The students discuss the experiences and knowledge they have gained during the research: the problems they encountered, the questions they were unable to answer, etc. Eventually, they discuss what a river means to the human civilization and, in general, how important it is to protect our environment.