

Antarctic Tourism

Integration: Social Studies, Art

Grade Levels: 4-6

Time: 1 class period

Materials:

- Map of Antarctica
- Paper and drawing materials
- Computer and publishing software (optional)

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Explore the growing tourism in Antarctica.
2. Consider the influence that such tourism has on the continent.
3. Synthesize what they have learned about Antarctica to create a brochure for tourism.

Lesson:

Full group

1. Ask students where they have spent some of their recent vacations. Allow everyone who wants a chance to speak to give his or her example.
2. Ask students “Who would ever consider spending their vacation traveling to Antarctica?” “Why or why not?” Allow for some responses.
3. Explain that since the 1950’s people have traveled to Antarctica for tourism. Since 1993, there has been a large increase in the number of people who travel to Antarctica.
 - a. 37,000 people from 1957-1993
 - b. 7322 people in 1996-1997
 - c. approximately 10,000 in 1997-98

EXTENSION: Have students investigate the number of tourists that visit their city or state annually and graph the number along with the number of tourists visiting Antarctica.

4. Ask students “During which months do you think the tourists go to Antarctica?” Students should remember that the conditions in Antarctica are only hospitable during the summer, which is October through March.

5. Ask students how they believe the tourists get to the continent. Allow for responses Explain that tourists take cruises from South America, Australia, New Zealand, or South Africa. It is not possible to take commercial airline flights to Antarctica because of the ice and wind.
 - a. Inform students that the cruise ships are not the type that sail to the Caribbean.
 - b. They are strengthened boats and icebreakers that can withstand the ice and temperatures.
6. Tell students that tourists do go ashore on the Antarctica Peninsula or may take helicopters to the Dry Valleys or the Ross Ice Shelf. Ask students to point out these places on a map of Antarctica.
7. Inform students that tourists are allowed to explore these places. However, they are not allowed to interfere with the wildlife.
8. Tell students that right now tourists are not allowed to bring food ashore, no garbage is to be left behind, all of the waste, including human waste, from the ship is taken back to where the ship originated. The only things left behind by tourists are their footprints.
9. Ask students if they think that tourism has an impact on Antarctica. Is the impact negative? What if hotels are built on the continent? Have students debate the impact of tourism on Antarctica.

Small group

10. Divide the class into groups. Tell the students that they will now become travel agents. They must think about what they have learned about Antarctica and create an illustrated brochure for travel to the continent. The brochure can be hand made or created with computer software.
 - a. The brochure should include information about the continent, its location, weather, etc.
 - b. The brochure should tell the reader what they would see there including wildlife, landforms, etc.
 - c. The brochure should also tell the prospective tourist what they should take with them on the trip (appropriate clothing, equipment, etc.)
11. Each group can present what they have created and the brochures can be displayed in the class.

EXTENSION: Visit these sights devoted to Antarctic tourism

International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators

www.iaato.org

Antarctica Sightseeing Flights
www.antarcticaflights.com.au

Assessment:

Teachers will assess:

1. Student's evaluation of the impact of humans on Antarctica.
2. Student's synthesis of information into a brochure.
3. Student's ability to work cooperatively.