

Past Exploration of Antarctica

Integration: Health (Mental/Emotional Health, Growth & Development); History;
Social Studies

Grade Levels: 1-3

Time: 1-2 class periods

Materials:

- Timeline of Antarctic Exploration (teacher-made)
- Paper
- Drawing materials

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Explain the purpose of a timeline.
2. Describe early exploration of Antarctica.
3. Create a timeline of their lives.

Lesson:

1. Tell students that there were no people living in Antarctica when people starting sailing there from other countries.
 - a. For hundreds of thousands of years, maybe longer, no one was on Antarctica.
2. Tell students that in the 1800s many people started sailing to Antarctica and began exploring.
 - a. Ask students what it means to *explore*. Explore means to look around and discover new things.
3. Tell students that once one person started exploring, people from everywhere wanted to do the same thing.
 - a. Compare this to a game or a toy that everyone has to have because their friends do.
 - b. Tell students that it became a contest among different countries whose people were exploring.
4. Tell students that the exploration was even harder than it is today because the people did not have the equipment or the experience that explorers have today. Many people got sick, injured, or died while exploring Antarctica.

5. Display a teacher-made Timeline of Antarctic Exploration that includes some or all of the following events. Discuss some of the major events with students. You may want to research one or more of the events to discuss in depth.
- a. 1773: Captain James Cook and his crew become the first men to cross the Arctic Circle and sail around Antarctica.
 - b. 1820: Thaddeus von Bellingshausen becomes the first person to actually see Antarctica.
 - c. 1898: Adreïn de Gerlache and his crew are the first people to survive an Antarctic winter.
 - d. 1902: Robert F. Scott, Edward Wilson and Ernest Shackleton head for the South Pole but are forced to turn back because of injuries and illness.
 - e. 1908: Ernest Shackleton, Frank Wild, Eric Marshall and Jameson Adams try to reach the South Pole. They are forced to turn back within 97 (nautical) miles of the Pole because of illness and a lack of food.
 - Shackleton's team has walked 1700 miles and has reached the southernmost point to date.
 - f. 1911: Roald Amundsen of Norway and four team members are the first to reach the South Pole (by dogsled and skis) on December 14th. The 1860-mile trip takes 99 days.
 - g. 1912: Robert F. Scott and four teammates reach the South Pole shortly after Amundsen's team on January 17th. They die of starvation on their way back, 11 miles from their food supply.
 - Amundsen and Scott were in a race to see who could make it to the South Pole first.
 - h. 1915: Ernest Shackleton and his crew are stranded for 2 years after their ship, *Endurance*, is crushed by ice in the Weddell Sea.
 - i. 1929: Richard Byrd and three others become the first people to fly across Antarctica.
 - j. 1958: The Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition led by British explorer Sir Vivian Fuchs makes the first ever crossing of Antarctica. Using a snow tractor, they cross in 99 days.
 - k. 1981: The Transglobe Expedition, led by Sir Randolph Fiennes, crosses Antarctica and arrives at Scott Base.
 - l. 1990: The International Trans-Antarctic Expedition led by Will Steger (US) and Jean-Louise Etienne crosses Antarctica by skis and dogsled.
 - m. 1993: The American Women's Expedition (AWE), led by Ann Bancroft, ski to the South Pole.
 - n. 1994: Liv Arnesen travels on skis solo to the South Pole.
 - o. 1996: Norwegian Borge Ousland becomes the first person to cross Antarctica alone.

ALTERNATIVE: Create a blank timeline. Give pairs of students index cards with the information and the date. Have students place their cards on the timeline in the correct order.

6. Tell students that the timeline helps organize the information. It shows the order in which events occurred and it also shows how much time came in between the events.
 - a. Point out the difference between the space between 1911 and 1912 and the space between 1958 and 1981.
7. Tell students that timelines can be used to describe any topic.
8. Have students create a timeline of their life complete with illustrations or pictures.
 - a. Assign students to talk with their families about five important events and dates in their lives that they want to include.
 - Give examples such as their birth, their first day of school, etc.
 - b. In class, create personal timelines by having students draw the blank timeline, insert the important dates in the appropriate places, and label and illustrate the events.
 - c. Have students talk about their timelines and display them in class.

EXTENSION: Integrate this lesson with a lesson on past tense verbs.

Assessment:

Teachers will assess:

1. Student's comprehension of exploration.
2. Student's explanation of a few major events of exploration.
3. Student's ability to create a timeline to describe their life.