Tourism vs Ecotourism: Which is More Sustainable in Developing Economies?

1. Introduction
   - What Happened To The Maya? Are the Maya an extinct people or people living in present day communities?
   - 6 (Six) Classes - Two Weeks
   - 2 (Two) lessons
   - This lesson plan begins with an examination of ancient Maya artifacts on display at the San Antonio Museum of Art. Among the artifacts the students will examine are two sculpted heads from Guatemala and one ceremonial chocolate jar. After viewing these artifacts, the students will see photographs from two Maya communities whose members live in the Lacandon jungle. Students will consider how the Maya survive and keep their culture intact.
   - When the students complete the unit they should be able to:
     1. Locate on a map the areas where the ancient Maya lived.
     2. Locate on a map the area where the present-day Maya live.
     3. Appreciate the highly skilled craftsmen who created the sculpted the heads and created the ceremonial jars.
     4. Understand some ways that present-day Maya survive and keep their culture intact.
   - How were Maya societies able to produce skilled craftsmen who created timeless works of art and architecture?
   - Why did Maya societies collapse?
   - Why do some Maya communities support ecotourism?
   - Explain some of the cultural hazards of tourism.
   - Explain the difference between traditional tourism and ecotourism

1. List of Key Terms
   1. Mesoamerica
   2. Olmec
   3. Maya
   4. Sculpted heads
5. Ceremonial jars
6. Lacandón Jungle
7. Lacandón Maya
8. Tourism
9. Ecotourism
10. Hospitality business

Lesson 1: “Locating the Maya”.

Activity 1: Map Study and Completion.

1. How did physical landscapes shape the ancient Maya communities?
2. Why did the Maya locate themselves in particular environments?
3. Why do these places continue to be occupied?

Instructions

1. Distribute a blank map of present-day Mexico and Central America.
2. Have the students locate and mark the following places on the maps:
   a. Mesoamerica.
   b. Maya archeological sites
   c. Political boundaries of Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras and El Salvador
   d. Usumacinta River
   e. Lacandón Jungle
   f. Yucatan Peninsula

Activity 2: Examining Maya Art and Architecture

a. Shows slides/pictures of select Maya archeological sites.
b. Show details of Maya art and architecture.
c. Have students record their observations on a slide/picture handout.

Activity 3: Field Study at the San Antonio Museum of Art.

a. Distribute handouts adapted from the Yale Art Gallery and Yale Center for British Art.
b. Instruct the students to complete the handouts after examining the two sculpted heads and the ceremonial vessels at the San Antonio Museum of Art.
c. If time permits, students may examine other artifacts on display and describe their impressions for extra credit.
Activity 4: Class discussion following Museum Visit.
   a. Ask students to share their observations recorded during their visit to SAMA.
   b. What are their conclusions about Maya culture?
   c. Have students submit their typed “Guided Observation Worksheets”.

Lesson 2: Maya Communities Today
   a. Do Maya communities continue to exist?
   b. Are some Maya communities located in close proximity to ancient Maya sites?
   c. Why have some Maya communities embraced tourism and ecotourism to preserve their culture?
   d. What are some cultural hazards of tourism and ecotourism?

Activity 1. Map Study.
   a. Distribute a blank outline map of Mexico, and Central America.
   b. Have the students locate and label the countries of Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, and El Salvador.
   c. Using information provided in the textbook and from the internet, have students located and label the Maya communities of Lacanja Chansayab.

Activity 2. Textbook Reading.
   b. Have the students read and discuss in small groups the Regional Issue: The Role of the Tourist Industry in Middle American Economies.
   c. Ask groups to select a secretary to record the viewpoints and comments.
   d. Ask groups to select a spokesperson to report to the class.
   e. After discussing the pros and cons of tourism have groups to vote their opinions at www.wiley.com/college/deblIJ

   b. Have students define tourism and ecotourism.
   c. Have students detail the differences between tourism and ecotourism.

Activity 4: Maya Communities engaged in ecotourism.
a. Show slides/photographs of Maya people engaged in ecotourism.
b. Show slides on the evolution of Maya camp facilities.
c. Has ecotourism contributed to preservation of Maya culture? Has ecotourism contributed to the demise of Maya culture?
d. In small groups, discuss how communities or local people can survive without a source of income. Consider the role of ecotourism and of tourism in providing that income.
e. Write a one-page response on what dilemmas such as these may mean for the future of the Maya culture.

Resources


www.turismochiapas.gob.mx

“Communities Reject Ecotourism Plans in the Lacandon.”
www.indymedia.org.uk/en/2012

Lacanja Chansayab Ecotourism Center

The San Antonio Museum of Art.
