The Hobbit

Lesson 1: Designing Our Own Middle-earth

Subject Areas: Geography, Art, English/Creative Writing, IT/Digital

Skills: Digital Learning, Communication, Creativity

Learning Objectives

• Students will design their own version of Middle-earth, incorporating geography, landmarks, civilisations, and digital technology.
• Students will apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills to create a visually appealing and cohesive map of Middle-earth.
• Students will develop descriptive writing skills by imagining and describing the features and inhabitants of Middle-earth.

Materials

• Large blank sheets of paper or poster boards
• Coloured pencils, markers, or crayons
• Reference materials or images of Middle-earth
• Digital devices (computers, tablets, or smartphones) with mapping software or graphic design tools
• Sticky notes or index cards

Lesson Activities

1. Project Launch:

• Begin the lesson by introducing the concept of Middle-earth and its significance in J.R.R. Tolkien's works.
• Explain that students will design their own version of Middle-earth.
• Introduce the importance of collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and the integration of digital tools throughout the project.

2. Brainstorming and Research:

• Divide the class into small groups and provide each group with sticky notes/index cards.
• Instruct the students to brainstorm different geographical features, landmarks, and civilisations (with specific focus on The Hobbit).
• Encourage them to conduct individual and group research to gather inspiration and knowledge about different types of landscapes, cultural elements, and fictional creatures.

3. Mapping and Artistic Design:

• Offer students the choice to create their map either on paper or digitally.

• For paper-based maps: Distribute the large blank sheets of paper or poster boards to each group. Instruct them to collaboratively create a visually appealing and cohesive map of Middle-earth, incorporating what was discussed during the brainstorming session.

• For digital maps: Provide access to digital devices with mapping software or graphic design tools. Instruct students to use these tools to create their maps. Remind them to consider the scale, proportions, and overall aesthetics of their digital map.

4. Descriptive Writing and Storytelling:

• Instruct the students to choose a specific area, landmark, or civilisation from their map and individually write a descriptive paragraph that brings it to life.

• Encourage them to use vivid language, sensory details, and imaginative descriptions to engage the reader's senses and capture the essence of Middle-earth.

5. Presentation and Reflection:

• Provide time for each group to present their map and share their descriptive paragraphs with the class.

• Encourage active listening, constructive feedback, and questions from their peers.

• Facilitate a reflective discussion on the project experience, asking students to share their challenges, successes, and insights gained from the project-based learning process.

Assessment:

• Map design: Evaluate the creativity, level of detail, coherence, and incorporation of geographical elements in the students' maps.

• Descriptive writing: Assess the use of descriptive language, creativity, and ability to evoke imagery and atmosphere in the students' paragraphs.

• Collaboration and participation: Observe students' engagement, teamwork, and contribution to group discussions and activities.

• Technological proficiency: Assess the students' ability to effectively use digital mapping software or graphic design tools (if applicable).

Extension:

• Encourage students to further develop their Middle-earth by expanding their maps.