**“Iconic Intersections” Lesson**

**Unit/Topic:** Ancient Civilizations- Origins  **Lesson** River Valley Civilizations

**Strand(s):**  Social Studies  **Level:** 6th Grade

**Standard(s):** **Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures of the early civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush.**

1. Locate and describe the major river systems and discuss the physical settings that supported permanent settlement and early civilizations.

**Why it matters?** *Students identify patterns between different ancient civilizations*

**Lesson Objectives:**

*The student will be able to identify the patterns of the origins of some of the major civilizations of the world. From this, students will create their own iconic intersections and answer other questions relating to the text.*

**Lesson Creator:**

*I created this lesson from strategies received in GATE training from Sharon Maeda.*

##### Lesson Structure (Part 1)

**Anticipatory Set:** Students review with the teacher the icons (check for understanding).

**Communicate the Objective:** Students will be able to identify patterns found within ancient civilizations, especially relating to their origin.

**Instructional Input (Day 1):**

1. Introduction to Iconic Intersections: Discussion with the class follows about how the icons can be combined to create a higher-level question or way of thinking. I model a few examples and they come up with their own. These are recorded on a classroom chart.
2. We work as a class to brainstorm questions that could match with each new icon, i.e. what are the parallel rules, what perspectives impacted…, etc.
3. Next, we read a short article in the textbook titled, “River Valley Civilizations”. Students then look back to the icons to find the appropriate iconic intersection found in the text.
4. They come up with the idea of the pattern of origins.
5. Students then work together to create a statement about this, i.e. “The pattern of the origin of river valley civilizations is that they all started around a river and in a valley. Mesopotamia began around the Fertile Crescent formed by the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, Egypt flourished on the Nile, and India began near the Indus River.”

**Independent Practice:**

1. I created more iconic intersection questions about the civilizations that the students worked on in groups to complete.
2. In jigsaw fashion, students shared their findings as the rest of the class completed their questions page.

##### Resources

1. Article from Textbook
2. Smart Notebook Software
3. Chart paper for Iconic Intersections
4. Questions Handout

**Assessment**

I assessed student learning by their participation in the discussion and by their answers to the iconic intersection questions.

**Reflection**

Overall the lesson went well. The beginning was a little off because students began just combining any two icons without thinking out what that iconic intersection would mean. I modified instruction at that point by having students verbally express what the statement might apply to. The jigsaw activity went well, as students benefited from thinking aloud about the questions with their peers. I next time would have two groups overlap questions, so we could compare the different perspectives that ensued from their group discussions.

I would like to use iconic intersections more next year, as this year I was just playing around with all the new lesson ideas from G.A.T.E. training, OCC G.A.T.E. conference, and C.A.G. It was a lot to try, so I don’t feel as if I mastered the use of Iconic Intersections as of yet. For next year though, I plan to introduce them earlier in the year so students are more comfortable creating them on their own. We did keep a running log of the icons up in the classroom, but I did not refer to it as often as I wanted to.

Another lesson I did, not quite iconic intersections, was to look at an article on Asoka, one of the great figures in Indian history. Students read a high-level nonfiction article about his life, as the author proceeded to compare Asoka’s role in India to the role of Lincoln in the abolition of slavery. I created a set of six questions using depth and complexity, the keys, and content imperatives for students to answer in groups. The article, albeit, was very difficult, even for me to read, but I was amazed at how they were able to identify parallels, contributions, and significance.