

Problem-Based Projects

The following projects take the learner above and beyond knowledge and comprehension. These lessons are based on the application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation levels of Bloom's taxonomy. Learners will use information from their experience with the Mesa Verde & the Anasazi learning node software to respond to a problem-based learning scenario. This requires a higher level of thinking, and should be implemented after completion of the study guide questions. It is up to the instructor to decide how many of these problem-based learning scenarios students will complete. An evaluation checklist is provided with each project, which can be used in a variety of ways. It can be used as a check sheet for the student in its original form, or the instructor can add point values into the table. The following pages outline the learning objectives and details of each project.

Project # 1: Anasazi Autobiography

The learner will develop an autobiographical report of what life would have been like for an Anasazi man, woman or child.

One way for a learner to show understanding at the application level is by taking on the role of someone they have learned about. In this scenario, students pretend to be writers for a museum that has a wealth of factual information, but wants writing from the point of view of an Anasazi person for a wall display. The instructor can make decisions about the length of the report, point system and whether outside resources are required. Prewriting can be completed using a concept-mapping software program such as Inspiration. A planning sheet and evaluation checklist are included in the copying masters section.

Project #2: Children's Book: Mesa Verde Topography

The learner will explain how the present topography of the Mesa Verde region was formed over time.

In this project, the learner takes on the role of a famous geologist who has been asked to author and illustrate a children's book explaining the geology of the Mesa Verde region. Because the book is intended for children, the student must explain complex concepts using simple language. One way to do this is to provide definitions in their own words for the vocabulary words. They will also include a glossary at the end of the book. The illustrations for the book can be hand-drawn, created in a drawing software program or downloaded from the Internet. A planning sheet and evaluation checklist are included in the copying masters section.

Project #3: Evolution of Technology

The learner will explain the evolution of technology spanning the time of the Anasazi.

The Anasazi made many technological developments during their time at Mesa Verde. In this project, the learner takes on the role of an archeologist to make a presentation about the evolution of technology evidenced by the Anasazi. To make the report as factual as possible, students will use primary source materials from the Internet to support the information.

gathered from the Mesa Verde & the Anasazi learning node. Photographs of real Anasazi artifacts, in addition to explanations of technological advances, will be used in the creation of a presentation using PowerPoint or any available presentation software. Instructions for a searchable online repository of primary source materials for student use, a planning sheet and an evaluation checklist are included in the copying masters section. Students may also independently research the topic using the library or the Internet.

Project #4: What Would They Learn From Us?

The learner will compose a written formulation of what future archeologists would learn from remnants of present day society.

The artifacts from the Anasazi provide a great deal of information about how these ancient people lived. In this project, students will imagine that future archeologists find remnants of our society to explain our culture and daily life. Using a digital camera if available, students will photograph objects in our society and provide an explanation for what could be learned from them. If a digital camera is not available, photographs or even magazine clippings could be used. Students may insert digital images into a PowerPoint presentation, or paste pictures or magazine clippings onto typed documents or a poster. A planning sheet and evaluation checklist for the presentation are included in the copying masters section.

Project #5: Anasazi Museum Exhibit

The learner will develop a design proposal for submission of an Anasazi exhibit into a museum.

In this project, the student takes on the role of a historian, developing a proposal for a museum. They will select relevant artifacts and develop an overview and an actual floor plan for an exhibit wing of a museum. The floor plan can be drawn on large paper or designed with computer drawing tools in a word processing program or in a CAD/CAM program. Students will include an explanation for each artifact that a person unfamiliar with the history of the Anasazi could understand. A planning sheet and evaluation checklist are included in the copying masters section.

Project #6: Overpopulation & Resource Depletion

The learner will evaluate the consequences of and make recommendations for issues of overpopulation and resource depletion.

There are many hypotheses about the disappearance of the Anasazi. One possible cause was overuse of natural resources, which has a lasting message for our society. What can be learned from the decisions made by the Anasazi so long ago, so history does not repeat itself? This project enables the students to take on the role of an energy resource specialist and research possible solutions for overpopulation and resource depletion to develop a solution proposal. The instructor can decide what types of resources are required to support the proposal. A planning sheet, listing several websites, and an evaluation checklist are included in the copying masters section.