TEOTIHUACAN: THE PLACE OF THE GODS

Teacher: Julie George, Morgan Park Academy, 7th grade Spanish

I. OBJECTIVES
Students will be able to: identify the main structures and three important deities of this pre-Aztec civilization, as well as describe and relate their forms and functions to monumental structures and significant figures in contemporary culture.

II. MATERIALS
- slides of archeological site of Teotihuacán
- film strip “El Museo Nacional de Antropología” Mexico, D.F.
- photocopies of black outline drawings of figures from Teotihuacán
- colored paper, drawing paper, colored pencils and/or markers
- whole ears of dried corn (elote)
- recipe and ingredients for tortilla, metate, and grinder

III. INTRODUCTION
Using slides, present the site of Teotihuacán as it appears today, giving simple facts about its history and construction. Discuss:
- the role Teotihuacán has in history and the impact of their culture on the Aztec and others
- Teotihuacán society and economy (the importance of agriculture)
- significance of Teotihuacán to Mexico today

Present the gods:
- Huitzilopochtli (hummingbird-on-the-left)
- Quetzalcoatl (the plumed serpent)
- Tlaloc (the rain god)

IV. ACTIVITIES
- Bulletin Board - Using black outline drawings from Laurette Sejourne. El lenguaje de las formas en Teotihuacán. Mexico D.F.:1966, students will create a picture history of Teotihuacán civilization, which includes descriptive captions based on information discussed in class. Representations could include the pyramids, the deities, important everyday objects and animals (metate and metlapilli, coa, quetzal, etc.) and foodstuffs (maiz, frijol, calabaza, chiles, maguey, nopal, manioc)
- “Food of the Gods” - as a follow-up activity to a discussion of the agricultural base of Teotihuacán and native foods, students will participate in preparing tortillas in the traditional Mexican manner, complete with metate and metlapilli. This activity should provide students with an opportunity to observe the important relationship the Teotihuacános have with their environment and their society.

V. MUSEUM VISIT
Students will view objects related to Teotihuacán and other middle American civilizations with special attention to the form and function of the objects. What is the significance of the decoration? Is it related to the objects’ functions?
VI. FOLLOW-UP
Students will relate the pyramids of Teotihuacán to a local contemporary structure, the Sears Tower. In a slide comparison of the Pyramid of the Sun and the Sears Tower, students will respond to the following questions:

- how are they alike?
- what was the purpose of the pyramid? What purpose does the Sears Tower serve in our society?
- what materials were used in the construction of the pyramid? The Sears Tower?
- how long do you suppose it took the Teotihuacános to build the pyramid? How long did it take modern builders to erect the Sears Tower?
- how long have the pyramids existed? How long do you imagine the Sears Tower will remain in existence?
- do you think that future civilizations will know more about our culture than we know about Teotihuacán?

VII. EVALUATION
Students will be asked to write a short essay in which they summarize what they learned as well as interpret their answers to the questions above.