Creating Context: The Printing Press as Impetus

Subject: English, World Literature

Grade level: 10

Rationale or Purpose:
Answer this question: How did Gutenberg's invention of the printing press precipitate/enable (or not) the Scientific Revolution, the Protestant Reformation, the Renaissance, Global Exploration and subsequent European Colonization, and the French and American Revolutions?

1. Students should be able to connect these historical movements to their precedents and causes; in this case, students should be able to connect them to the invention of printing press.
2. Students should use a variety of sources.
3. Students should understand the connection between their World History class and their World Literature class by applying texts from both to resolve the same problem.
4. Students should be able to parse tasks and work in groups.
5. Students should be able to analyze information in order to see larger themes emerge and identify causes given the effects.
6. Students should be able to present their area of focus to the larger group.

Materials:
1. Internet access
2. The Catholic Encyclopedia
3. Their own World History book
4. Their own World History notes

Lesson Duration: 2 class days (90-minute block period and 50 minute period)

Objectives: English II - 110.43

    (6A) expand vocabulary through reading, listening, discussing
    (6B) rely on context to determining meaning
    (6E) use reference material
    (7A) establish a purpose for reading
    (7E) analyze for cause/effect, chronological ordering
    (7F) produce summaries of text by identifying main ideas, supporting details
    (7G) draw inferences, conclusions, generalizations, and predictions
    (7H) skimming, scanning, note taking, outlining
    (8A) read for entertainment, understanding, exploration
    (12A) analyzing characteristics of text
    (12B) evaluate credibility of sources
    (13B) locate appropriate print and non-print information

(13D) adapt researched materials for presentation
(15A) listen and appropriately respond to presentations of peers
(16A - D) speak responsibly and effectively
(16C) prepare, organize and present a clear message
(16F) make relevant contribution to discussions
(21B) use a variety of media in communicating & presenting a message
 (21 E) create, present, and test a project

Activity:
Step 1: Students are broken into five groups: Renaissance, Scientific Revolution, Protestant Reformation, Global Exploration, American and French Revolution

Step 2: Students will strategize their research and assign duties to construct a brief historical overview of the subject.

Step 3: Hand out specific research instructions* and suggested source list**. Students conduct their research, creating research notes to bring back to the group.

Step 4: In small group discussion, students will put together and then analyze their information to create an answer to their question.

Step 5: Groups will create an outline of their work.

Step 6: Groups will present their findings, including an overview of their historical subject. Each member will participate in the presentation.

Student Product:
Students bring to their groups their individual research notes, on which the group will base an outline to be distributed to the class. Teacher will compile the outlines into a handout.

Modification: For extra credit, a student can format the notes in a Power Point for the rest of the class.
Take an extra day and have the group develop the Power Point for presentation.

Assessment or evaluation: Student audience.

Extension: This activity provides the backdrop for Galileo, by Bertolt Brecht, to be read by the entire class. This activity should lead into the directed activity **"Text as Object and Art"** by Vanessa Carroll.

Activity by:
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*Directions to Groups

1. Discuss the scope of the assigned subject. Create a research strategy based on how many members are in your group. One member will research Gutenberg.
2. Using the list of sources as a starting point, each researcher must use at least two sources, one print and one Internet. Cite sources in the research outline.
3. Researchers bring outline notes back to group and present to the group. Moderate a discussion to answer the question and formulate your conclusion.
4. Plan a 5-10 minute presentation to the full class that includes briefs from each group member and concludes with your answer to the question.

**Source List

The following source list is a compilation of useful sites and references. Students are not limited to these sites, but should check them first. Students are required to cite at least two sources, one print and one Internet.

http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/exhibitions/education/modules/gutenberg
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renaissance
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1x.html
http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/eurvoya (exploration)
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/science/sciencesbook.html#Scientific%20Revolution
(science)
http://www.newadvent.org (Catholic encyclopedia online)
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1y.html (The Reformation)
http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/exhibitions/permanent/gutenberg

Catholic Encyclopedia and other print encyclopedias from library reference section, World History book