

Unit Guide

The Rise of Civilization: A Simulated Experience

April M. Higgins

This week long unit immerses students in content as they play the role of humans in their quest to meet their subsistent needs. The students will learn how groups of human societies developed into civilizations through a cooperative learning simulation. The simulation is based on the variables described in Jared Diamond's book, *Guns, Germs, and Steel*. The variables include crops, animals, germs, technology, and geography. In particular, the unit focuses on the shift from hunting and gathering to farming and animal domestication to fulfill a society's dietary needs. The simulation is broken into three main sections, beginning with the Paleolithic Age, followed by the Neolithic Age, and ending with the rise of civilization. Each section of the simulation includes an anticipatory set, mindset narrative, simulation questions, and a closure activity. The students will be challenged to increase the population of their simulated community by answering questions and participating in activities. By the conclusion of the simulation, the students will understand the impact of the agricultural revolution on human populations. As a culminating activity, the students will be required to research and compare three civilizations, focusing on the "variables" found in each civilization.