

8th Grade History-Social Science/Spanish Language Arts Unit 1
Observation Tool – Day 1 Initial Oracy and Unit Launch

Instructional Activity	Observations and Notes
Part 1: Concept Attainment – In partnerships, using provide sentence prompts, students will discuss their observations of images divided into two columns to distinguish between and construct a working definition for environmental characteristics (orange column) and cultural characteristics (purple column) using their own words.	
Part 2: Adapted Reader’s Theater – Following the teacher as a model, the students will describe (using the teacher’s words) how the environmental characteristics of a specific geographic location and the cultural characteristics of a group of people (society) influence the society’s economics, politics, and regional dynamics.	
Part 3: Fishbowl and Sort – Using images and sentence prompts, students will work together to illustrate and describe (in their own words) the relationship between the environmental characteristics of a specific geographic location, the cultural characteristics of a group of people (society), and the society’s economics, politics, and regional dynamics.	
Part 4: Language Experience Approach (LEA) – using the images from the sort, students (as a class) generate a comprehensible text that describes what they learned about cultural and environmental characteristics and their impact on a society’s economics, politics, and regional dynamics.	

Translation of Adapted Reader’s Theater

Environmental characteristics are the natural features of a particular geographic location. These features include climate, landforms, natural resources, and the flora and fauna that live there.

Cultural characteristics are the ways of life shared by a group of people. These include the language they speak, their traditions and customs, religion, social rules, and the values they believe in.

Environmental and cultural characteristics influence what people produce, buy, and sell. The relationship between the environmental and cultural characteristics and how it influences what the people in a particular geographic location produce, buy, and sell is called **economics**.

Politics refers to the decisions people make about how to use the resources in the environment, what laws to create and follow, how to live together, and who has the power to make decisions for the group.

The economy and politics of a group of people affect how they share or compete for available resources, and how they interact with other groups and people, and is called **regional dynamics**.

Big Idea:	Observations and Notes:
I want my students to understand that the environmental and cultural characteristics of a region influence its economy, politics, and relationships with others. (8.4.1; 8.4.4; 8.5.3; 8.9.6; Chronological and Spatial Thinking 1 & 3; Historical Interpretation 1, 2, 4, 6) For example: • In England, limited land, a growing population, and commercial interests contributed to economic pressures and political motivations for colonization, including the search for new resources and markets. • In the American colonies, varied geography and cultural traditions led to regional economies—such as plantations in the South and shipping/commerce in the North—which shaped different political and social priorities and fueled growing tensions with Britain. • In the early United States, geographic expansion and regional specialization (e.g., slavery-based agriculture in the South vs. small farming and industry in the North) drove debates over federal power, economic policy, and expansion.	

Standards:	Observations and Notes:
8.4 Students analyze the aspirations and ideals of the people of the new nation. 1. Describe the country's physical landscapes, political divisions, and territorial expansion during the terms of the first four presidents. 4. Discuss daily life, including traditions in art, music, and literature, of early national America (e.g., through writings by Washington Irving, James Fenimore Cooper).	
8.5 Students analyze U.S. foreign policy in the early Republic. 3. Outline the major treaties with American Indian nations during the administrations of the first four presidents and the varying outcomes of those treaties.	
8.9 - Students analyze the early and steady attempts to abolish slavery and to realize the ideals of the Declaration of Independence. 6. Describe the lives of free blacks and the laws that limited their freedom and economic opportunities.	