

*Drawn by the Brush* Oil Sketches by PETER PAUL RUBENS

Lesson Plans | On the Road with Rubens | Social Studies | Grades 6–8



## CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

Seventeenth Century, Geography, Baroque Art, European Studies, Map Skills, World History, Arts and Humanities

## CLASS PERIODS

45 minutes to 1 hour for introduction  
1 week for collaborative team activities

## CONCEPT

Throughout his life, Rubens traveled extensively as an artist and a diplomat. On his travels, Rubens came in contact with various cultures and witnessed several historical events. In this lesson, students will explore each of the cities in which Rubens either lived or visited. In doing so, students will discover the history and cultural environment that Rubens experienced while in each city. Collaborative student teams will create travel brochures for each of the cities.

## OBJECTIVES

Students will use a map of Europe to record Rubens's travels.

Students will work in collaborative teams.

Collaborative teams will research each city in which Rubens either lived or visited; each team will research a different city.

Collaborative teams will create a travel brochure on one of the cities in which Rubens either lived or visited.

Travel brochures will include a map; information on the location's cultural, commercial, and religious centers; geographic features; weather conditions; and transportation routes as these existed in the year in which Rubens visited or lived in each place.

## LESSON ACTIVITY

## MATERIALS

Blank map of Europe  
Transparency of map of Europe  
Travel Brochure Information Sheet  
Paper  
Pencils  
Internet access  
Library resources for research  
Sample travel brochures

## TEACHER PREPARATION

1. Review background information on Rubens.
2. Print black line master of European map for students (p. 5).
3. Download and/or print transparency of European map for class use.
4. Print Travel Brochure Information Sheet for students (p. 4).
5. Obtain sample travel brochures from your local travel agent.

**CLASS PROCEDURE**

1. Explain to students that they are going to learn about seventeenth-century European history and geography by mapping the travels of the artist Peter Paul Rubens.
2. Review with class the life of Rubens, highlighting the various locations in which he either lived or visited.
3. On the board, list these locations. (List provided at right.)
4. Pass out blank European map to class.
5. Using the map on an overhead projector or downloaded to PowerPoint presentation, work with class to locate all the cities in which Rubens either lived or visited. Ask students to find and mark these locations on their map.
6. With class, draw the path of Rubens's travels on your map. Discuss with class that it was very unusual that a person during the seventeenth century would have traveled as much as Rubens did.
7. Discuss with students about what Rubens may have witnessed in each of the places he either lived or visited.
8. Break class up into seven collaborative teams.
9. Inform collaborative teams that they are now going to each research a city in which Rubens either lived or visited.
10. Explain to students that in order to explore further what Rubens experienced on his travels, we need to research each of the places he either lived or visited.
11. Using the Internet and library resources, each team will complete the Travel Brochure Information Sheet for the city they chose. Stress to students that their answers must reflect the year in which Rubens traveled to each city and not the modern day.
12. Once each team has completed their Travel Brochure Information Sheet—this may take a few class periods—explain to students that as a collaborative team they are going to create a travel brochure for the city they researched using the answers from their worksheet.
13. Using sample travel brochures as examples, encourage collaborative teams to use their imagination in the creation of their brochures. Students should be given at least three to four class periods for the creation of their brochure.
14. Instruct teams that all travel brochures must include a map, information on the location's cultural, commercial, and religious centers, geographic features, weather conditions, and transportation routes as these existed in the year in which Rubens visited or lived in each place.
15. Upon completion of their travel brochures, each collaborative team will present their findings to the class.

**RUBENS'S TRAVELS**

1578	Cologne, Germany
1589	Antwerp, Southern Netherlands (now Belgium)
1600	Mantua, Italy
1602	Rome, Italy
1603	Madrid, Spain
1606	Genoa, Italy
1608	Antwerp, Southern Netherlands (now Belgium)
1621	Paris, France
1627	Amsterdam, Northern Netherlands
1627	Madrid, Spain
1629	London, England
1630	Antwerp, Southern Netherlands (now Belgium)

Team researching Antwerp and Madrid should decide for which time period they would like to create their travel brochure. If you have a large class, more than one team may want to research these cities.

## NATIONAL STANDARDS: GEOGRAPHY

### THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS

Standard 2—Knows the location of places, geographic features, and patterns of the environment

- Knows the relative location of, size of, and distances between places

- Knows the location of physical and human features on maps and globes

### PLACES AND REGIONS

Standard 4—Understands the physical and human characteristics of place

- Knows the human characteristics of places

- Knows the causes and effects of changes in a place over time

Standard 6—Understands that culture and experience influence people’s perceptions of places and regions

- Knows how places and regions serve as cultural symbols

- Knows the ways in which culture influences the perception of places and regions

### ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

Standard 17—Understands how geography is used to interpret the past

- Knows historic and current conflicts and competition regarding the use and allocation of resources.

- Knows the ways in which the spatial organization of society changes over time

## NATIONAL STANDARDS: HISTORY

### ERA 6: GLOBAL EXPANSION AND ENCOUNTER, 1450–1770

Standard 27—Understands how European society experienced political, economic, and cultural transformations in an age of global intercommunication between 1450 and 1750

- Understands the social characteristics of European society from 1450 to 1750

- Understands significant contributions of the Renaissance and Reformation to European society

- Understands changes in urban and rural Europe between the 15th and 18th centuries

- Understands origins of the Reformation and Catholic Reformation

Standard 31—Understands major global trends from 1450 to 1770

- Understands major shifts in world demography and urbanization between 1450 and 1770 and reasons for these changes

- Understands the major changes in world political boundaries that took place between 1450 and 1770, and how far European nations had extended political and military influence in Africa, Asia, and the Americas as of the mid-18th century

## TRAVEL BROCHURE INFORMATION SHEET

City:

Country:

Date Rubens Lived in or Visited City:

Famous Sites:

Commercial Centers (sources of revenue):

Religious Centers (churches of interest):

Geographic Features (rivers, lakes, mountains, etc.):

Weather Conditions:

Transportation Routes:

Famous Residents (artists, musicians, actors):

Local Government:

## EUROPE

