

Teaching Notes: Humboldt 250

Site: Teach About U.S.

Course: _Virtual Town Hall 2022/23

Book: Teaching Notes: Humboldt 250

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Tips, Resources, and Tools

This year, people around the globe are commemorating Alexander von Humboldt's 250th birthday! Two centuries ago, this historic figure set an example of what it means to be a global citizen, one who traverses cultures and scientific disciplines like few other people of his time - and one who became known for his efforts to promote the transatlantic partnership.

We are happy to announce that our new project module on "Humboldt 250" is ready for classroom use now. Take a look at the tasks and materials tracing the legacy of this curious global citizen. You can easily connect this with your work on Going Green. A final student competition focusing on "Humboldt and YOU" will remain open until the summer holidays (June 30, 2019) with awards recognizing creative student projects.



This book is only visible to teachers. Use these teaching tips for planning the implementation of Going Green in your course. Activity links are connected to the Humboldt 250 Demo Course.



To navigate this resource, click on the arrows at the page bottom to go forward or backward, or use the table of contents in the side block in the right margin (or at the page bottom when using mobile devices) to access the desired section directly.

Get to know your course's personal e-classroom. It is password protected and everything uploaded or posted in this course is only visible to enrolled participants (except for some blog posts, see below). The following subchapters specifically introduce you to your course's

- Sections
- Activity types
- Blocks

These are the individual sections of your e-classroom:

Title section

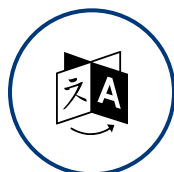
Humboldt Course Title

In the title section, you will find general resources and announcements that could be useful for the entire duration of the project.



➔ Course Forum

The COURSE FORUM is a regular discussion forum that can be edited by all participants. It can be used for any questions arising out of the project that are not related to a particular task, resource, or tool, or for discussions focusing on one of the tasks.



➔ Energy Lingo

The GLOSSARY serves as your course's central glossary for vocabulary definitions. Students can add entries to this glossary consisting of text, but also web-links, images, and videos. Students should also provide sources of the cited information and example sentences and they can comment on each other's entries, thereby adding or correcting information.



➔ Learner texts

The database LEARNER TEXTS serves as a repository for learner texts and files worth sharing that arise out of the different tasks in this course. To upload a file or insert a text, learner need to open the database, click on 'Add entry' and fill out the form. Uploaded learner texts can be browsed and accessed by all course participants. They can also add comments and provide peer feedback.



📖 Project journal

The PROJECT JOURNAL is a notebook that can be used to document the project work in a systematic or rather informal way. All students can edit this journal and add contents. For example, you could nominate students to document the findings from the several tasks in this course and thus document their way.

You can either use this module in Moodle or take advantage of the conveniences of Google Docs (at least one person has to have a Google account for this). Here are short tutorials for both options:

- SWAY: Using the Project Journal
- SWAY: Setting up your Project Journal with Google Docs

(Please note, this example link to Google docs refers to the U.S. Embassy School Election Project. Setting up a project journal for Humboldt 250 works the same way.)

1. What makes a global citizen?



This introductory module serves to get acquainted with the concept of global citizenship. Students are asked to find their own definitions of a global citizen and to compare them to more official and theoretical statements about this term. Additionally, their prior-knowledge of Humboldt as a possible global citizen is activated by analyzing photos of different animals, plants, landscapes, and natural phenomena called after him.

To learn more about this section and its activities, read the section about module 1.

2. Alexander von who?



Within the second module, the students watch one or multiple of the provided videos (4, 15, or 46 minutes long) and take notes on who Alexander von Humboldt was in regard to his general life, his expeditions, his scientific work and discoveries, as well as besides the world of science.

To learn more about this section and its activities, read the section about module 2.

3. Humboldt's many hats



Module 3 concentrates on Humboldt's different roles in society. Students study different texts and work on pre-, while-, and post-listening tasks.

To learn more about this section and its activities, read the section about module 3.

4. A true global citizen?



The last module consist of two tasks. First, the students are asked to discuss whether Humboldt can be called a global citizen. Therefore, students consult their original definition of a global citizen and analyse a variety of provided excerpts and quotes by other researchers and journalists. Second, each class is encouraged to create their own project on "Humboldt and YOU" and to participate in the Humboldt 250 school competition.


(To participate, please submit your projects in the Virtual Town Hall or via email to Joannis Kaliampos

(joannis.kaliampou@leuphana.de). The deadline for participation is: June 30, 2019. Representatives of the winning submissions will receive awards.)


To learn more about this section and its activities, read the section about module 4.

These are the activity types of this course (in alphabetical order):


Assignment/Task

 All links starting with "TASK:..." belong to this category. An assignment or task usually provides task instructions for students. In this course, we have also added most relevant materials and resources as links below the task instructions. In the settings to this activity type, a submission type (online text, a file etc.) can be selected and, then, individually graded by the teacher. However, in this course we have mostly disabled this feature as in most cases students are asked to contribute to a forum or database, or produce an offline outcome (e.g., a classroom presentation) in order to complete the assignment. [Click here for more documentation on this activity type.](#)


Choice

 A choice activity is very simple – the teacher asks a question and specifies a choice of multiple responses. It can be useful as a quick poll to stimulate thinking about a topic; to allow the class to vote on a direction for the course; or to gather research consent. [Click here for more documentation on this activity type.](#)

Database

 The database activity module allows the teacher and/or students to build, display and search a bank of record entries about any conceivable topic. The format and structure of these entries can be almost unlimited, including images, files, URLs, numbers and text amongst other things. [Click here for more documentation on this activity type.](#)

Feedback


 The feedback activity module enables a teacher to create a custom survey for collecting feedback from participants using a variety of question types including multiple choice, yes/no or text input. Feedback responses may be anonymous if desired, and results may be shown to all participants or restricted to teachers only. Any feedback activities on the site front page may also be completed by non-logged-in users. [Click here for more documentation on this resource type.](#)

File


 The file module enables a teacher to provide a file as a course resource. Where possible, the file will be

displayed within the course interface; otherwise students will be prompted to download it. The file may include supporting files, for example an HTML page may have embedded images or Flash objects. Note that students need to have the appropriate software on their computers in order to open the file. [Click here for more documentation on this resource type.](#)


Folder

 The folder module enables a teacher to display a number of related files inside a single folder, reducing scrolling on the course page. A zipped folder may be uploaded and unzipped for display, or an empty folder created and files uploaded into it. [Click here for more documentation on this resource type.](#)


Forum

 The forum module is an activity where students and teachers can exchange ideas by posting comments. These comments can include text, images, videos, links, and files. Forums can be used for course administration, social exchange, topic discussion, brainstorming, etc. [Click here for more documentation on this activity type.](#)


Glossary

 The glossary activity module allows participants to create and maintain a list of definitions, like a dictionary, or to collect and organize resources or information collaboratively. The entries can be searched or browsed. The auto-linking feature will highlight any word in the course which is annotated in the glossary. [Click here for more documentation on this activity type.](#)

Lightbox Gallery


 The Lightbox Gallery resource module enables participants to view a gallery of images. This resource allows you to create 'Lightbox' enabled image galleries within your Moodle course. Clicking on any of the thumbnails brings that image into focus, and allows you to scroll through the gallery at your leisure. If enabled, users are able to leave comments on your gallery. [Click here for more documentation on this resource type.](#)

Questionnaire


 The questionnaire module allows you to construct and administer surveys using a variety of open and closed question types, for the purpose of gathering data from learners. Answers can be collected

anonymously or with respondent names visible for all participants.


Quiz

 The Quiz activity module allows the design of quizzes consisting of a large variety of Question types, including multiple choice, true-false, and short answer questions. [Click here for more documentation on this activity type.](#)

Resource/page

 Web-page resources are simple pages with text and other media for the display of information. The teaching notes are examples of this feature. [Click here for more documentation on this resource type.](#)

URL/Link

 These are simple links on the internet to a website or online file. Usually, they lead to additional information for further research or to additional web-tools that are useful or necessary for an activity. [Click here for more documentation on this resource type.](#)

Blocks

At the right side of your course overview, you can access a selection of mostly orange boxes. If you or your students find them distracting, you can collapse them or have a minimized version of them docked to the left edge of your screen. Simply click the respective button in the top right corner of the orange box.

Navigation

Use this block to navigate through the different site pages (*Site pages*), your user profile (*My profile*), different course sections and activities (*Current courses*), and other courses in which you are enrolled as a user (*My courses*).

[🔗 Click here for more documentation on this side block.](#)

Administration

Use this block to administer your course. In fact, all the basic settings for your course have already been prepared and set – so only use this block if you need to make any further changes to your course page (for advanced users). Two useful settings in this block are:

- *Course administration* → *Turn editing on*: Lets you access this editing mode, e.g. to make certain assignments, resources, and links invisible.
- *Switch role to...* → *Student*: Lets you switch your user role to that of a student, i.e. you only see links and settings that your students can see. Thus, in this mode you do not see e.g. any invisible links such as the teaching notes.

[🔗 Click here for more documentation on this side block.](#)

Activities

In this block, all available activity types for your course are displayed. Clicking on these activity types leads you to an overview list with all activities of this type in your course. This list also includes a basic summary of participation in these activities.

[🔗 Click here for more documentation on this side block.](#)

Your feedback

We kindly ask you and your students to take some time to fill out this survey in order to help us to improve the course. You can choose when this suits best for you - either throughout the course or at the very end.

Online users

A list of users currently online. Clicking on a user's name leads you to their profile page.

[↗](#) Click here for more documentation on this side block.

Moodle docs: Blocks

<https://youtu.be/G9BRrKlomDU>

[↗](#) Moodle documentation: Blocks

Jedes Modul ist konzipiert für ungefähr eine Doppelstunde.

Modul 1: What makes a global citizen?

Ziel: Die SuS finden eine Definition für den Begriff ‚global citizen‘.

Zu Beginn beantworten sie drei offen gestellte Fragen zu ihrem persönlichen Verständnis von ‚global citizen‘. Anschließend werden die Antworten der Mitschüler_innen anonym wiedergegeben und verglichen. Vorwissen wird aktiviert und kann mit dem Wissen der Klassenkameraden abgeglichen werden. Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede werden besprochen und eine gemeinsame Definition formuliert. Abschließend werden veröffentlichte Definitionen mit der eigenen verglichen. An dieser Stelle kann die eigene Definition angepasst werden. Zusätzlich wird ein erster Einblick in die globalen Auswirkungen von Alexander von Humboldts Leben und Arbeit gewährt, indem die SuS eine Fotozusammenstellung von nach Humboldt benannten Tieren, Pflanzen, Landschaften und Naturphänomenen angucken.

Modul 2: Alexander von who...?

Ziel: Die SuS gucken verschiedene Videos und entnehmen ihnen Informationen über Alexander von Humboldt.

Vor dem Gucken der Videos brainstormen die SuS, was sie bereits über Alexander von Humboldt wissen. Beim Anschauen der Videos werden Stichpunkte zu seiner Person, seinen Expeditionen sowie zu seinen (wissenschaftlichen) Erfindungen und Entdeckungen notiert. Diese werden anschließend zusammengetragen, um daraus Humboldt als Wissenschaftler, Entdecker etc. zu beschreiben.

Modul 3: Humboldt's many hats

Ziel: Die SuS lesen Ausschnitte aus A. Wulfs Humboldt-Biographie und präsentieren ihn in seinen verschiedenen Rollen als Naturforscher, Aktivist, Berater von U.S. Präsident Jefferson, Autor und Wissenschaftler.

In Kleingruppen entscheiden sich die SuS für eine der fünf Rolle und tragen diesbezüglich ihr Vorwissen zusammen. Beim Lesen der Biographie und weiterer externer Ressourcen werden zusätzliche Informationen gesammelt, aus denen dann gemeinsam eine kurze Präsentation entwickelt wird.

Modul 4: A true global citizen?

Ziel: Die SuS erörtern, ob Alexander von Humboldt ein ‚global citizen‘ war und was sein Handeln uns über ‚global citizenship‘ lehrt. Abschließend kreieren sie ihr eigenes Projekt, in dem sie die Bedeutung seines Lebens als einer der ersten ‚global citizen‘ für die heutige Generation präsentieren.

Im Verlauf der ersten Aufgabe diskutieren die SuS, inwiefern Humboldt ein ‚global citizen‘ war. Hierfür ziehen sie ihre ursprüngliche Definition sowie ihr bisher erarbeitetes Wissen über Humboldt heran und analysieren

zusätzliche Zitate und externe Ressourcen wie Titelblätter bekannter Zeitschriften.

Das abschließende Projekt wird von jeder Klasse individuell gestaltet. Bis zum 30.06.2019 können die finalen Produkte zum nationalen Wettbewerb in der Virtual Town Hall oder per E-Mail eingereicht werden.

The first module lays the conceptual foundation for the subsequent steps of the project by defining what a 'global citizen' is and related concepts.

TASK: What makes a global citizen?

Objective

Students understand the concept of 'global citizenship' and formulate a common definition for the term 'global citizen'.

Procedures

First, students will take a self-reflection survey on how they define 'global citizenship'. Second, all answers will be displayed anonymously upon completion of the survey, allowing students to compare them in order to negotiate a common definition. Third, students will study published definitions of the concept and compare them to their own. They can also update their initial definition.

Notes

- The survey can be given as a preparatory homework.
- The external videos are authentic (i.e., not primarily designed for this course) videos, but English closed captions are usually available on YouTube (Click '...', 'open transcript', choose 'English'.)
- You can have your students watch the video(s) together in class or individually (remind them to bring headphones if necessary).
- Answers can be discussed orally in class or by writing in the forum.

TASK: What do these things have in common?

Objective

Students find out that the 12 displayed plants, animals, landscapes, and natural phenomena are named after Alexander von Humboldt.

Procedures

Students will look at photos of different animals, plants, and other natural phenomena. They will post questions or guesses on what these photos may have in common as comments.

Notes

- Alternatively, as a quick lesson starter, you can show the photos in class and have students guess orally what the photos depict and what they have in common.

In the second module, students learn more about Alexander von Humboldt – who he was, what he did, and why we remember him today.

TASK: Alexander von Who...?

Objective

Students analyze Humboldt's life and achievements as a scientist and explorer through a short (documentary) video and interpret and present their findings to their peers.

Procedures

The students will watch one or two videos on Alexander von Humboldt (several materials suggestions are given and can be adjusted to your learner group). As a pre-viewing task, they will brainstorm what they already know about him. In Addition, you can collect your students' questions about him in advance. While watching the videos, students answer viewing comprehension questions, which guide their attention. Afterwards, the findings will be collected online in the forum or in class.

Notes

- Either let your students choose which video they want to watch or instruct them which one to use.
- The videos differ considerably in length (4, 15, and 46 minutes).
- You can have your students watch the video together in class.
- If they are to watch it individually, ask them to bring headphones.
- Answers can be discussed orally in class or by writing in the forum.

The third module approaches Humboldt's different hats, that is, his various fields of action. The students split into expert groups and research about Humboldt as a traveler, as an activist, as a writer etc.

TASK: Humboldt's many hats

Objective

Students analyze and synthesize information from the different information sources provided about Alexander von Humboldt's different roles and present one of them to the class.

Procedures

Five expert groups read five different excerpts of A. Wulf's Humboldt biography. Guided by pre-, while-, and post-viewing questions, the students prepare a short oral presentation. They analyze and synthesize information from the different information sources provided about Humboldt and collaboratively give a presentation about their expert topic.

Notes

- This task has a primary focus on reading comprehension.
- The oral presentation can be changed into a gallery walk for which the students prepare a poster for each expert topic.
- The excerpts from A. Wulf provide the main information.
- Annotations of basic terms are provided in the vocabulary list.
- The excerpts and the additional materials reflect a certain redundancy of information, i.e. learners must systematically filter the key details.
- The 'optional resources' section contains further materials for analyzing the role of Humboldt as a global citizen and his historical context. The text "The Humboldt Code" illuminates various aspects of Humboldt's relevance for today's society and current developments. It could be used to shed more light on the concept of global citizenship and tie together the various expert group topics in a critical discussion. The teaching guide "The Enlightenment" provides a concise overview and teaching resources on this movement that influenced Humboldt during his youth. There are plenty more resources on this topic available online. Alternatively, you may check your school's history textbook(s) or confer with your history colleagues concerning this historic contextualization.

In the fourth module, students create their own projects about why and how Humboldt is still important to them today and whether and how he can serve as a role model for future global citizens.

TASK: Alexander von Humboldt - a true global citizen?

Objective

Students critically reflect on and evaluate the question whether Alexander von Humboldt can be called a 'global citizen'.

Procedures

Based on their initial definitions of 'global citizenship' and their findings from the preceding modules and tasks as well as additional external resources, students will debate whether he can be called a 'global citizen'. In addition, students will analyze quotes and illustrations about what we can learn from Humboldt and how he is remembered today.

Notes

- This task focuses on reading and writing skills, but also speaking skills (oral discussion).
- The results can be discussed orally in class and/or in written form using the forum for this task.

TASK: Humboldt and YOU (class project)

Objective


Students develop a creative digital outcome ("Humboldt and YOU") on the legacy of Alexander von Humboldt and his role as an early global citizen.

Procedures

Students will design their own projects, for instance in the form of a photo collage, advertisement, poster, video, music clip, text, or performance. Guiding questions are provided to help to find an idea. Students can enter the competition with their projects by submitting them online (in the Virtual Town Hall or via email to taieb.oussaifi@leuphana.de).

Notes

- The competition is a great opportunity to open the project to a wider audience and implement explicit practice of media skills (writing a script/blog entry/newspaper article, recording and producing a video, using different camera angles, using background music and visual and sound effects, creating an advertisement etc.).

 *This is only visible to teachers. Take a look at this introduction before introducing these materials to your students.*

This section does not contain any tasks or activities, but is used as a repository for interesting online tools or additional materials, e.g. the learning tips referred to throughout the study modules.

TIPS

In the sub-section "TIPS" you and your students can find the learning tips referred to in many of the above tasks, e.g. the TIP: Analyzing cartoons or TIP: Conducting research. These documents provide a general introduction to the respective task types with many valuable explanations for your students. They conclude with a self-assessment grid in which learners can assess their knowledge or performance.

RESOURCES

In the sub-section "RESOURCES" you will find an additional small selection of useful resources connected to specific tasks in this course or the sustainability action plan. We have also included a teaching tip on researching and using political cartoons in the EFL classroom.

TOOLS

Finally, the section "TOOLS" provides links to web-tools that were referred to in the course assignments.