



New Mexico and the World

Curriculum Resources for New Mexico Teachers



Abacus

Briefly introduce abacus to students to help them develop an appreciation for a culture difference. If students are interested in learning how to do some simple arithmetic operations using the abacus, the teacher can develop more lessons to teach.

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Grade Level: 5-8

Area: Mathematics

Strand(s): Numbers and Operations

NM Benchmark(s): Compute fluently and make reasonable estimates. Add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers.

Length: 1 day (45 minutes)

of Students: 10-25

Learning Objectives: Students will develop an appreciation for a culture
Students will understand the main concept of the abacus, a counting tool for arithmetic.
Students will be able to tell the numbers demonstrate on the abacus.

Introduction: Chinese invented the abacus as we know it today. Before calculator was invented, abacus was the main computing tool in banks and business facilities in several Asian countries. Some people can compute faster with an abacus than with a calculator.

Materials: abacus, transparency, worksheets

Procedures:

1. Show the abacus and ask if any student knows its name, and where it was invented.
2. Introduce the history of the abacus.
3. Explain the use of the abacus, e.g., the value of each bead at the top is 5 and that at the bottom is 1.
4. Teach how to read the numbers on the abacus.
5. Demonstrate addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division on abacus

through overhead projector.

6. Distribute worksheets and ask students to write down the numbers shown on the abacus on the worksheets.

Background Info:

**References-
Resources:**

Student Activities: Have students practice problems.

Assessment: Grades on Worksheets

**Technology
Integration:**

Accommodations:

Review Questions:

Related Careers:

Career Education:

Hints and Tips:

Lesson Evaluation: Survey whether the students are interested in this lesson and whether they would like to learn more about the abacus or math in other cultures.