

# Charming Charleston: A Deep Dive into the Holy City

## Lesson Overview

In this lesson, Olivia will step into the shoes of a Travel Consultant to explore the rich history, unique geography, and vibrant culture of Charleston, South Carolina. By the end of the lesson, she will have designed a personalized one-day "Dream Trip" itinerary.

## Materials Needed

- Large sheet of poster paper or a digital slide template
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons
- Access to a map (physical atlas or Google Maps)
- Internet access for brief research or library books on South Carolina
- A small basket or container (for the "Souvenir" activity)
- Optional: Ingredients for a Charleston-style snack (like Benne Wafers or crackers and pimento cheese)

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the learner will be able to:

- Locate Charleston on a map and identify its "Lowcountry" geographical features.
- Explain the significance of at least three landmarks (e.g., Fort Sumter, Rainbow Row, The Angel Oak).
- Identify one unique cultural tradition of the region (e.g., Gullah-Geechee sweetgrass baskets).
- Create a logical, time-based travel itinerary for a one-day visit.

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## 1. Introduction: The Travel Agent Challenge (The Hook)

**The Scenario:** "Olivia, you've just been hired as the Lead Travel Guide for 'Palmetto Tours.' A family wants to visit Charleston, but they only have 24 hours! They've heard it's called the 'Holy City' and that the streets are made of giant stones. Your mission is to discover what makes this city so special and create the perfect plan for their visit."

**Discussion Questions:** What do you already know about South Carolina? If you were going to a city near the ocean, what are three things you would hope to see?

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## 2. Body: Discovering the Lowcountry

### Part A: I Do (The "Big Picture" Geography)

The instructor explains the concept of the **Lowcountry**. Charleston isn't just "by the sea"; it is surrounded by salt marshes, rivers, and the Atlantic Ocean. It is very flat and sits at sea level.

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- **Vocabulary:** Point out the "Holy City" nickname (due to the many church steeples on the skyline) and "Cobblestones" (stones used as ballast in old ships, now used for streets).
- **Visual Check:** Look at a map together. Notice how Charleston sits on a peninsula between the Ashley and Cooper Rivers.

## Part B: We Do (Landmark Scavenger Hunt)

Together, we will research four "Must-See" spots. As we find them, Olivia will jot down one "Fun Fact" for each on a sticky note or scrap paper:

1. **Rainbow Row:** Why are the houses painted pastel colors? (Legend says it helped drunk sailors find their way home, or merchants used colors to show what they sold!)
2. **The Angel Oak:** A tree on nearby Johns Island that is estimated to be 400–500 years old. Its branches are so heavy they rest on the ground.
3. **Fort Sumter:** A sea fort where the very first shots of the American Civil War were fired.
4. **The City Market:** One of the oldest public markets in the U.S., famous for Gullah-Geechee artisans weaving **Sweetgrass Baskets**—a tradition brought from West Africa over 300 years ago.

## Part C: You Do (The Dream Itinerary)

Now, Olivia takes the lead to design her "**Charming Charleston Day Trip.**" She must fill out a schedule for her clients (or herself!):

- **8:00 AM - Breakfast:** What local food will they eat? (Example: Shrimp and Grits or Benne Wafers).
- **10:00 AM - Morning Adventure:** Will they take a ferry to a fort or walk the Battery to see the mansions?
- **12:30 PM - Lunch:** A picnic under the Angel Oak?
- **2:00 PM - Afternoon Culture:** Shopping for a sweetgrass basket or a carriage tour through the cobblestone streets?
- **5:00 PM - The Grand Finale:** Watching the sunset at Waterfront Park (home of the famous Pineapple Fountain).

*Olivia will draw or write this itinerary on her poster paper, adding colorful illustrations of the landmarks she chose.*

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## 3. Conclusion: Tour Guide Presentation

**Recap:** Olivia "pitches" her itinerary to the family (or instructor). She must explain *why* she chose those specific spots and what makes them historically or geographically important.

### Success Criteria:

- Does the itinerary include at least three specific landmarks?
- Does it include a mention of the Lowcountry geography?
- Is it organized by time of day?

**Reflection:** "Olivia, out of everything you researched today, which spot would you want to visit first in real life? Why?"

## Differentiation & Adaptability

- **For a more kinesthetic learner:** Use playdough to model the "Pineapple Fountain" or try weaving a simple "basket" out of construction paper strips.
- **For an advanced learner:** Have Olivia research the architectural style of a "Charleston Single House" and explain why they were built sideways (to catch the ocean breeze!).
- **Digital Option:** Instead of a poster, create a "Travel Vlog" script where Olivia records herself describing the trip.

## Assessment Methods

- **Formative:** Checking the "Fun Fact" sticky notes during the research phase to ensure comprehension of landmarks.
- **Summative:** The completed "Dream Itinerary" poster and the verbal presentation, evaluated against the success criteria.