

The Charleston Expedition: Planning the Perfect 5-Day Getaway

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, Wyatt will transition from a tourist to a Travel Consultant. He will research the history, geography, and economy of Charleston, South Carolina, to design a comprehensive 5-day itinerary that balances adventure, history, and local culture while staying within a realistic budget.

Learning Objectives

- **Research & Synthesis:** Identify at least five major historical or cultural sites in Charleston and explain their significance.
- **Logistical Planning:** Create a geographically logical 5-day schedule that accounts for travel time and opening hours.
- **Financial Literacy:** Calculate a total trip budget including transportation, lodging, food, and activities.
- **Cultural Awareness:** Describe the unique influence of Gullah-Geechee culture on the Charleston region.

Materials Needed

- Laptop/Tablet with internet access
- Google Maps or a physical map of the Charleston peninsula and surrounding islands
- Digital spreadsheet (Google Sheets/Excel) or a "Trip Budget" worksheet
- Access to travel research sites (TripAdvisor, SCLWay, National Park Service site for Fort Sumter)
- Presentation tool (PowerPoint, Canva, or a physical poster board)

1. Introduction (The Hook)

Scenario: "Wyatt, you've just been hired by 'Lowcountry Explorations.' Your client is... YOU! You have five days to experience the best of the 'Holy City.' Charleston is world-famous for its food, its haunted alleys, and the fact that the first shots of the Civil War were fired right in its harbor. But there's a catch: you can't just wing it. If you don't plan your route, you'll spend your whole vacation stuck in traffic on the Ravenel Bridge or missing the ferry to the fort."

Discussion Question: If you could only see one thing—a haunted jail, a massive aircraft carrier, or a beach where the trees grow in the ocean—which would you choose and why?

2. Body: Content & Practice

I DO: Modeling the Research Process (15 Minutes)

I will demonstrate how to "cluster" activities to save time.

Talking Point: "Look at the map of Charleston. It's a peninsula. If we want to see the Rainbow Row houses and The Battery, it makes sense to do those on the same morning because they are walking distance apart. We wouldn't want to drive to Folly Beach in the middle of that."

- **Demonstration:** Show how to use a "Base Camp" (hotel/rental) location to calculate travel times.
- **Budgeting Tip:** Show how to find the price of a "hidden cost"—parking in downtown Charleston can be \$20-\$30 a day!

WE DO: The "Day 1" Draft (20 Minutes)

Together, we will plan Day 1: The Arrival and Orientation.

- **Activity:** Select a starting point (e.g., Charleston International Airport or a specific hotel).
- **Collaboration:** We will find a local spot for a "First Meal" (Search: "Best BBQ or Seafood in Charleston").
- **Mapping:** We will plot a walk through the City Market.
- **Check for Understanding:** Ask Wyatt: "If the City Market closes at 6:00 PM and our flight lands at 4:30 PM, is this a realistic Day 1 activity?"

YOU DO: The Independent Expedition Design (45-60 Minutes)

Wyatt will now build Days 2 through 5. His itinerary must include the following "Required Stops":

1. **The History Stop:** A visit to Fort Sumter or a historic home (like the Aiken-Rhett House).
2. **The Nature/Beach Stop:** A trip to Sullivan's Island, Folly Beach, or the Angel Oak Tree.
3. **The "Patriots Point" Stop:** Exploring the USS Yorktown aircraft carrier.
4. **The Cultural Deep-Dive:** Find an activity related to Gullah-Geechee heritage (e.g., sweetgrass basket weaving at the Market or a specific tour).
5. **The Foodie Challenge:** Identify three local foods he must try (e.g., She-crab soup, Pimento cheese, or boiled peanuts).

Wyatt must record the cost of each activity and the estimated travel time in his spreadsheet.

3. Conclusion (Closure & Recap)

Summary: Wyatt will present his 5-day "Master Plan" to the "Agency Board" (the teacher/parent).

- **Recap:** Have Wyatt explain why he ordered the days the way he did.
- **Reflective Question:** "What was the most surprising cost you found while budgeting?" or "Which day are you most excited about and why?"
- **Takeaway:** Great trips aren't just about the destination; they are about the preparation that allows you to actually have fun once you get there.

Success Criteria

| Criteria | Excellent (Gold Star) | Developing |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Itinerary Logic | 5 full days planned with logical geographic flow. | Days are planned but involve excessive backtracking. |

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|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Budget Accuracy | Includes gas/transport, food, and entry fees. | Includes only major ticket prices. |
| Historical Context | Can explain the significance of all 5 chosen sites. | Can list sites but not their history. |

Differentiation Options

- **For Advanced Learners (The "Efficiency" Challenge):** Ask Wyatt to find a "City Pass" or discount bundle and calculate if it actually saves money compared to individual tickets.
- **For Scaffolding (The "Simplified" Version):** Provide a list of 10 pre-selected attractions with prices and addresses, and have Wyatt focus solely on the calendar and map placement.

Assessment Methods

- **Formative:** Quick checks during the "You Do" phase to ensure he isn't grouping a beach day on one side of the Cooper River with a plantation tour on the opposite side.
- **Summative:** The final 5-day itinerary (Digital or Paper) and the completed Budget Sheet.