Extension Activity for *By the Waters of Babylon* – Travel Poster and Documents

What are we doing? This assignment is an assessment and extension activity for the reading and analysis of the Stephen Vincent Benet short story “By the Waters of Babylon.” This assignment requires the student to make “real world” connections to the New York City landmarks alluded to in the story. It is an assessment of comprehension and application. The assignment requires the student to identify and research the landmark, then create a tourist travel document that includes the following information:

1. A 2-paragraph history of the landmark researched
2. A 2-paragraph persuasive essay designed to create interest in visiting New York, especially the landmark
3. A travel poster
4. A presentation and portfolio reflection

Standards:

Reading informational texts:
RI.9-10.1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Writing:
W.9-10.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
W.9-10.3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
W.9-10.4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Research:
W.9-10.7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
W.9-10.8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
W.9-10.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Why are we doing this? This assignment satisfies CCS for critical analysis, comprehension, writing, and functional documents. Most importantly, the project makes a real-world connection to our classroom study.

How will we know when we succeed? An overall grade of B or higher, or a Digital Portfolio score of 4.0, indicates proficiency or mastery.

Grading: Worksheet = 100 points  Poster and Presentation = 140 points
Due Date:

Directions:
1. Choose a New York City landmark from the list we generate in class
2. Print or draw a picture or pictures of the landmark
3. Research the history of the landmark USING CREDIBLE SOURCES
   a. Fill out the Research Worksheet
4. Write a 2-paragraph history that turns your research into a narrative.
5. Write a 2-paragraph essay designed to persuade people to visit the landmark and to visit New York City. You must use at least two metaphors and two similes.
6. Design a travel poster with the following details:
   a. An interesting title that would encourage someone to visit New York City = A – 10 points
   b. The picture (or pictures) of the landmark, including its name = B – 10 points
   c. On the left inside section, paste your typed history of the landmark = C – 50 points
   d. On the right inside section, paste your persuasive writing piece = D – 50 points
   e. At least 90% of the poster-board filled
7. Present your project to the class – 20 points
Your Name: ____________________________________________

Travel Poster Research Worksheet

1. What is the name of your landmark? (5 points) __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

2. What dates did construction begin and end or when was it discovered? (5 points) 
   __________________________________________

3. What is the landmark's specific purpose? (10 points) ______________________________________
   __________________________________________

4. List five unique characteristics or details. These details can include interesting facts about its physical
   structure or appearance, or perhaps something interesting that happened during its construction or history of
   use. (5 points each = 25 points total)
   a. __________________________________________
   b. __________________________________________
   c. __________________________________________
   d. __________________________________________
   e. __________________________________________

5. Describe any changes made to the landmark over the years, such as physical changes or changes in usage. 
   (10 points)
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

6. Write a quote with the page number that mentions the landmark in the story "By the Waters of Babylon." (30
   points) __________________________________________

   Explain in specific detail how this quote is a reference to the landmark. (15 points)
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________