KWHL Strategy:

Heart of Darkness

Purpose of the Strategy:

This strategy will be used to help students assess (1) how much they know about Imperialism, (2) what they want to find out about imperialism, (3) how they will find out the answers to these questions, and (4) evaluate what they have learned and what they still want to learn. Using this as a class activity can help students share with each other what they know. They can help each other brainstorm what they know, what they want to know, and how they can find it out. This can be very helpful in teaching students how to brainstorm and research. It could be a pre-research paper assignment.

Directions:

Step 1: Introduce the Strategy.

Put on an overhead a transparency with the following page on it. Explain to the students that before they read a book, it is important that they learn how much they know about a topic before they read a book. Imperialism is a very central topic in Heart of Darkness, so to start, they are going to brainstorm what they know about Imperialism. After that, they are going to make a list of what they want to learn about imperialism, this will help focus our reading, and the students can add to this list as they read the book. (Give them a handout of the graph you will put on the overhead.)

Step 2: List what the students know:

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Ask the students what they know about imperialism. They may not know much, so give them hints of things they probably do know. Some movies portray aspects of imperialism. You can tell them the name of a movie like Tarzan, it does not talk much about people, but you can point out that it was mostly European people coming to Africa, and other countries, like India, and taking over. There is also a Jungle Book with British Colonizers in India you could bring up. There is also the movie Out of Africa that shows how the people reacted with the tribes in Africa. Flame Trees of Thika also demonstrates this. You could talk about WWII, and how there were battles fought in Africa, because of Imperialism, etc. Basically, see what they know.

Step 3: List what they want to learn.

Look at the list of what they want to know, what do they want to find out? Ask them “What more do you want to learn about Imperialism?” “What aspect of Imperialism sounds interesting to you?” “What questions can you think of about Imperialism?” Maybe they would like to see which countries controlled which parts of Africa, etc. Maybe they want to find out how the people were treated when these Europeans controlled them. Maybe they would like to find out why imperialism took place.

Step 4: Have students come up with their own questions, or prioritize questions.

Let students work individually or in small groups, and come up with questions, or choose which questions, they want to find out themselves, on their own.

Step 5: How do we find out?

As a class, discuss where the students can go to find answers to these questions. Help them come up with other ideas besides an encyclopedia, or their history textbook. Perhaps have them come up with search engines on the internet they could use, and key words that would help them get the answers they need.

Step 6: Research

Allow students to read the section of Heart of Darkness, or to go home and find answers to their questions. Remind them that some of their questions may not have easy answers. Some questions, people just do not have an answer for, and some questions can be debated for thousands of years. Encourage them to come up with new questions as they research, and write them in that column.

Step 7: Share

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Ask students to share what they have learned through their research. Record these findings on the chart. Ask them to share new questions they have and statements about what they want to learn. Tell them that learning is an ongoing process, one they are participating in right now.

**Step 8: Follow-up Activities**

You can use this activity as a stepping stool to other activities, like graphic organizers, maps, outlines, learning logs, reports, and written summaries.

**Assessment**

This activity helps the teacher pre-assess what the student already knows about imperialism. This will give you an idea of what you need to focus on in following lessons. This chart should be posted somewhere in the classroom so that it can be added to as the unit progresses. They need to see that learning is ongoing; they need to keep asking questions as they read their book.
Heart of Darkness:

For Teachers: What we should know about imperialism:

-(began around 1800) By the end of 1800s, almost all of Asia and Africa were under direct or indirect colonial rule.

-The Industrial Revolution caused the European nations to begin to view these societies as sources of raw materials and as markets for manufactured goods.

-They believed that economic wealth, national status, and political power came when they possessed a colonial empire. Thus possessing colonies gave your country an advantage over other European countries. So, they ended up competing with their neighbors to gain control over as many colonies as possible. RIVALRY.

-began a “global land grab.”

-Gaining colonies increased the power of the mother country, and was a great gesture displaying your nationalism.

Africa:

-believed in introducing the three “Cs” to Africa: Christianity, commerce and civilization. (you can see the civilization in the way that Conrad phrases things. Calling the Africans savages, and talking about going back in time to the nomadic times. Talking about them as people from a long time before.)

-King Leopold of Belgium used the excuse of Christianity (missionary work) to gain control of the Congo area.

-1884 Otto von Bismarck set up conference in Berlin. Called for free commerce along the rivers, and renewed efforts to end the slave trade. They agreed that future annexations would be acknowledged only when it was demonstrated that the country had effectively occupied it.

Policy:

-most likely countries to resist were those who had long standing nationalism, like China and Nigeria and Morocco.

-the Europeans had a policy of exterminating the source of rebellion, and basically destroying their traditional culture.

-“Might makes right.”—Social Darwinism.

-two terms:

- assimilation: effort to transform their culture into European culture

- association: collaborate with local elites while leaving the local traditions alone.

-often they switched between these two theories.

Movies:

-Out of Africa

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- Tarzan (Disney)
- Flame Trees of Thika (Television series)

- You could also bring up that whenever they talk about being in India in British novels or movies, it was likely because the British colonized India. (Sense and Sensibility, Persuasion, etc.)

There are many other things that would be helpful for you to know. Look up imperialism in practically any standard European or world history book to get a general overview of the concept.

Questions they might ask:

- How were these people treated?
- Did they resent these European powers taking over their land?
- Did the Africans, etc see any benefits in the Europeans coming and taking over their lands?
- How were individual people affected by this?
- What did famous people say about it?

Etc. Have them come up with their own examples.

Make a copy of the following Graph for an overhead, and print off enough on paper for each student.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do I know?</th>
<th>What do I want to learn?</th>
<th>How can I find out?</th>
<th>What did I learn?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Ideas for Research:**

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