DOGS' TAILS: An Introduction to Map Reading
Students learn 9 essential elements of a map.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
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<tr>
<td>Grade Level</td>
<td>6-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>1 class period</td>
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### National Geography Standards

**Element One:**

The World in Spatial Terms

1. How to Use Maps and Other Geographic Representations

### Arizona Social Studies Standard

**Strand 4 Geography**

Concept 1 World in Spatial Terms

*Grades 6, 7, and 8*

- **PO1** Construct maps, charts, and graphs to display geographic information
- **PO3** Interpret maps, charts, and geographic databases using geographic information.

### Arizona Language Arts Standards

**READING STANDARD**

*Strand 3 Comprehending Informational Text*

*Concept 1 Expository Text*

*Grade 6*

- **PO7** Interpret graphic features (e.g., charts, maps, diagrams, illustrations, tables, timelines, graphs) of expository text.

*Grade 7 and 8*

- **PO8** Interpret graphic features (e.g., charts, maps, diagrams, illustrations, tables, timelines, graphs) of expository text.

**WRITING STANDARD**

*Grade 6, 7, and 8*

*Strand 3 Writing Application*

- **PO 1** Record information (e.g., observations, notes, lists, charts, map labels, and legends) related to the topic.

### Overview

Map skills are basic to geographic understanding. Students need a system by which to analyze and evaluate maps. Dogs’ Tails provides a standard for such assessment and can be applied to commercial maps used in the classroom as well as to maps generated by students.

### Purpose

This lesson will provide guided practice in using DOGSTAILS as a format for reading and creating maps.

### Materials

- Overhead explaining each word in the acronym DOGSTAILS
- Dogstails worksheet
- Enough different maps for students to work in pairs
- DOGSTAILS labels

### Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Name, locate, and use the essential parts of a map.
- Demonstrate the correct way to analyze and interpret a new map.
- Construct maps using these elements.
DOGSTAILS

Procedures

1. Introduce the term acronym to the students and explain that Dogs' Tails is an example of an acronym.
2. Explain that this is a process that should be used whenever a person deals with a new map.
3. Use the first overhead and explain the parts to a map. Students should be recording this information on the first side of their worksheet.
4. Divide the students into groups of two. Give each group a different map. Place the second overhead on the projector and tell each group to find these elements on their map. Students record their findings on the back side of their worksheet.
5. When students are finished, have students share their answers.

Assessment

The worksheet can be graded for accuracy. Mastery would be considered 80% or higher.

Extensions

Reinforce the procedure whenever new maps are used. (This works especially well when introducing how to read a road map.)

Whenever students create their own maps, have them include the elements of DOGS' TAILS.

Sources

Labels courtesy of Jeannine Kuropatkin, Rhodes Jr. High, Mesa, AZ