Lights On! Lights Off! Exploring Human Settlement Patterns

Students explore settlement patterns using a map of the United States at nighttime and practice writing informational paragraphs.

Author: Judy Phillips
Grade Level: 3
Duration: 2 class periods

National Geography Standards

ELEMENT ONE: THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS
1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.
3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface.

ELEMENT FOUR: HUMAN SYSTEMS
9. The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human population on Earth's surface.

ELEMENT SIX: THE USES OF GEOGRAPHY
18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

Arizona Social Studies Standard

Grade 3
Strand 4 Geography
Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms
PO 7 Locate physical and human features using maps, illustrations, images or globes.
   a. physical - seven continents, four oceans, river, lake, mountain range, coast, sea, desert, gulf, bay, strait, peninsula
   b. human - Equator, Northern and Southern Hemispheres, North and South Poles, city, state, country, roads, railroads

Concept 2 Places and Regions
PO 1 Locate major physical and human features from content studied (e.g., Greece, Canada, Spain, United States) on maps and globes.
PO 2 Describe how physical and human characteristics of places change from past to present.

Concept 3 Physical Systems
Science Strand 3 Concept 1 Describe major factors that impact human populations and the

Arizona Language Arts Standards

READING STANDARD
Grade 3
Strand 1 Reading Process
Concept 1 Print Concepts
PO 2 Recognize the distinguishing features of a paragraph (e.g., indentation of first word, topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentences)

Concept 6 Comprehension Strategies
PO 5 Extract information from graphic organizers (e.g., webs, Venn diagrams, flow charts) to comprehend text

Strand 2 Comprehending Literary Text
Concept 1 Elements of Literature
PO 4 Make relevant connections (e.g., relationships, cause/effect, comparisons) between earlier events and later events in text

Strand 3 Comprehending Informational Text
Concept 1 Expository Text
PO 5 Interpret information from graphic features (e.g., charts, maps, diagrams, illustrations, tables, timelines) of expository text.

Concept 2 Functional Text
PO 4 Interpret information in functional documents (e.g., maps, schedules, pamphlets) for a specific purpose

WRITING STANDARD
Grade 3
Strand 1 Writing Process
Concept 1 Prewriting
PO 2 Determine the purpose (e.g., to entertain, to inform, to communicate, to persuade) of a writing piece

Concept 2 Drafting
PO 2 Organize writing into a logical sequence that is clear to the audience

Strand 2 Writing Elements
Concept 1 Ideas and Content
PO 2 Provide content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose
PO 3 Use relevant details to provide adequate support for the ideas

Concept 2 Organization
PO 3 Place details appropriately to support the main idea
PO 6 Construct a paragraph that groups sentences around a topic

Concept 6 Conventions
PO 1 Use capital letters for:
   a. proper nouns (i.e., names, days, months)
   b. titles
   c. names of places
   d. abbreviations

ARIZONA GEORGRAPHIC ALLIANCE
## Overview

Our country has an uneven population distribution. Using a nighttime map, students will examine where most of the people in the United States live. They will recognize the geographic features that affect this settlement.

## Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to expose children to the relationship between geographic features and where human beings decide to live.

## Objectives

The student will be able to create an informational paragraph interpreting the Nighttime Map of the current U.S. population.

## Materials

- Cause and Effect Worksheet Instructions for Informational Paragraph
- Classroom Atlas or class set of U.S. Desk Maps
- Nighttime Map 2000- Population Distribution of the U.S.
- Pencils
- Bright Markers
- Paper

## Procedures

### SESSION ONE

1. Distribute individual copies of the Nighttime map.

2. Use guided discussion to describe the distribution of the United States population on the map.

3. Using markers, assist the students in locating and labeling their hometown. They should also locate and label large metropolitan areas.

4. Have students circle the areas with the least density.

5. Show students a physical map of the U.S. or have them refer to the physical portion of their desk maps. Discuss and compare how the physical features correlate with areas of densely packed lights. Features: Mountain Ranges, River Valleys, Coastlines, Uninhabitable Deserts, Lakes, etc. (People tend to settle in river and lake areas, along coastlines, and in areas of good farmland. People do not usually settle in great numbers in mountains or deserts.)

### SESSION TWO

1. Guide students in folding their nighttime maps into eighths. Divide the class into 8 groups. Each group will be assigned a portion of the map. Pass out Cause and Effect Worksheets. Each student in the group will work cooperatively with the others to fill out their Cause and Effect worksheets. They may use the atlases and/or their desk maps to assist them.

2. Explain and discuss how to write an informational paragraph. It may be helpful for the teacher to model such a paragraph while following the instructions on the Informational Paragraph Worksheet.

3. Using the worksheet, have the students write a paragraph discussing the reasons for low and high-density population for their section of the map.
Assessment

Use the Six-Trait Writing Rubric to assess for Content/Ideas, Organization and Conventions to assess the paragraphs. Students should receive a 4 or higher.

Extensions

Students could compare the population maps of the last decade. Go to www.census.gov/geo/www/maps for the needed maps.

Have one spokesperson from each group read his or her paragraph aloud while his/her classmates locate the portion of the map that he/she is describing.

Sources

www.census.gov  "For Teachers"