Kid Maps: Reading and Creating Maps with Human Characteristics

Students learn about features of maps while creating maps of their own.

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Grade Level
1-3

Duration
1 class period

National Geography Standards
ELEMENT TWO PLACES AND REGIONS
4. The physical and human characteristics of places.

Arizona Social Studies Standard
Grade 1
Strand 4 Geography
Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms
PO 5. Locate physical and human features using maps, illustrations, images or globes:
  a. physical (i.e., continent, ocean, river, lake, mountains, islands)
  b. human (i.e., equator, North and South poles)

Concept 2 Places and Regions
PO 1. Discuss human features (e.g., cities, parks, railroad tracks, hospital, shops, schools) in the world.
PO 2. Discuss physical features (e.g., mountains, rivers, deserts) in the world.

Grade 2
Strand 4 Geography
Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms
PO 5 Recognize characteristics of human and physical features:
  a. physical (i.e., ocean, continent, river, lake, mountain range, coast, sea, desert)
  b. human (i.e., Equator, Northern and Southern Hemispheres, North and South Poles).
PO 6 Locate physical and human features using maps, illustrations, images or globes:

Arizona Language Arts Standards
READING STANDARDS
Grade 1
Strand 1 Reading Process
Concept 6 Comprehension Strategies
PO 2. Relate information and events in a reading selection to life experiences and life experiences to the text.

Strand 2 Comprehending Literary Text
Concept 1 Elements of Literature
PO 4. Determine whether a literary selection, heard or read, is realistic or fantasy.

Concept 2 Historical and Cultural Aspects of Literature
PO 1. Compare events, characters and conflicts in literary selections from a variety of cultures to their experiences.

Strand 3 Comprehending Informational Text
Concept 2 Functional Text
PO 3. State the meaning of specific signs (e.g., traffic, safety, warning signs).

Grade 2
Strand 1 Reading Process
Concept 6 Comprehension Strategies
PO 4. Relate information and events in a reading selection to life experiences and life experiences to the text.

Concept 2 Historical and Cultural Aspects of Literature
PO 1. Compare events, characters and conflicts in literary selections from a variety of cultures to their experiences.

Grade 3
Strand 1 Reading Process
Concept 6 Comprehension Strategies
PO 6. Connect information and events in text to experiences and to related text and sources.

Concept 2 Historical and Cultural Aspects of Literature
PO 1. Compare events, characters and conflicts in literary selections from a variety of cultures to their experiences.

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

Places have human characteristics as well as physical ones. Children will learn to recognize human characteristics on child created maps.

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to teach children that both natural and human characteristics exist. Some of these characteristics can be included on a map. By examining maps made by a child of...
their own age living in England, children can see ways in which these human characteristics are similar to and different from the human characteristics of their own homes.

Materials

- My Map Book by Sara Fanelli
- Paper and writing supplies for creating personal maps

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Name human characteristics of a place.
- Distinguish between human and natural characteristics on a child-made map from another country.
- Compare these characteristics to characteristics found in the student’s own culture.
- Create a map, which includes human characteristics.

Procedures

Prior to the lesson, prepare large paper (12in. by 18in.) on which the children will make maps. Read and become familiar with My Map Book by Sara Fanelli.

1. Explain that places can have human characteristics and natural characteristics, and give examples of each. (For instance, buildings are examples of human characteristics while rivers are natural characteristics.)

2. Read My Map Book to the class: Prior to reading the book, show the children the “About the Author” page and explain that this book was written by a child of their age who lives in a big city—London, England.

3. As the book is read, have the children listen and look for human and natural characteristics in the maps. Since a six-year-old made the maps in the book, students should look for the human elements of the places that are important to children. For instance in the neighborhood map, there is a playground, a bridge over a river near a school, and there are children walking on the streets. The sea map includes an ice cream cart and a sandcastle.

4. Explain that some of the maps are maps of places the author had been, some of the maps are of imaginary places, and some of the maps have factual information but presented in an imaginary way.

5. After reading the book, focus on one of the real maps. Discuss how this place (the neighborhood or the seaside) is like or unlike a place with which the students are familiar. Discuss activities that humans do in this place and how that is shown on the map. Include such things as the buildings, the toys, and the vehicles.

6. Explain to students that they are to create their own maps of a place, much as the young author of the book has done. Their maps should fill the space on the paper as the author’s maps do, and they should include human elements and natural elements. Be sure to explain how students are to write at least 5 labels for their human and natural elements.

Assessment

Reading: The teacher will ask each child to read five labels on his or her map.

Geography: The student will indicate if these items are human or natural elements.

Writing: The labels should be checked for spelling and capitalization errors.

The child should be at least 80% accurate.

While listening to the child read his or her labels aloud, the teacher can assess his or her ability to read, as well as the strategies the child uses.

Extensions

Have the children use their maps as the basis for another story. They can also create paper characters, which they can use to walk through the story as they are creating it.

Use a map or globe to locate Sara’s (the author’s) home in London and the nearby seaside where
she is likely to vacation. They could then compare the distance from London to the sea with the distance from their homes to the sea.

Study more about the culture of London as compared to their hometowns.

Read stories that include maps.

**Sources**
