



Mapping Roxaboxen

Imagination, creativity, and an engaging book combine to teach children lessons on mapmaking while reinforcing reading and writing skills.

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Grade Level	4
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.

ELEMENT FOUR:
HUMAN SYSTEMS
12. The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement.

Arizona Social Studies Standard

Grade 4

Strand 4 Geography Concept 1 The World in Spatial Terms

PO 3 Construct maps using symbols to represent human and physical features.

PO 7 Locate physical and human features in Arizona using maps, illustrations, or images

- a. Physical (e.g., Grand Canyon, Mogollon Rim, Colorado River, Gila River, Salt River)
- b. Human (e.g., Phoenix, Yuma, Flagstaff, Tucson, Prescott, Hoover Dam, Roosevelt Dam)

Arizona Language Arts Standards

READING STANDARD

Grade 4

Strand 1: Reading Process

Concept 6: Comprehension Strategies

PO 1 Predict text content using prior knowledge and text features (e.g. illustrations, titles, topic sentences, key words).

PO 4 Use graphic organizers in order to clarify the meaning of the text.

PO 6 Use reading strategies (e.g. drawing conclusions, determining cause and effect, making inferences, sequencing) to comprehend text.

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 7 Identify all aspects of the setting (e.g. time of day or year, historical period, place, situation).

Grade 5

Strand 2: Comprehending Literary Text

Concept 1: Elements of Literature

PO 6 Determine of all the aspects of the setting (e.g., time of day or year, historical period, place, situation) in a literary selection.

WRITING STANDARD

Grade 4

Strand 2 Writing Elements

Concept 1 Ideas and Content

PO 1 Use clear, focused ideas and details to support the topic.

PO 2 Provide content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose.

PO 3 Develop a sufficient explanation or exploration of the topic.

PO 4 Include ideas and details that show original perspective.

Concept 3 Voice

PO 1 Show awareness of the audience through word choice and style.

PO 2 Convey a sense of originality, sincerity, liveliness, or humor appropriate to topic and type of writing

Concept 4 Word Choice

PO 2 Use descriptive words and phrases that energize the writing.

PO 3 Apply vocabulary and/or terminology appropriate to the type of writing.

Strand 3: Writing Applications

Concept 1: Expressive

PO 1 Write a narrative based on imagined or real events, observations, or memories that includes:

- a. characters
- b. setting
- c. plot

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- d. sensory details
- e. clear language
- f. logical sequence of events

PO 2 Write in a variety of expressive forms (e.g. poetry, skit) that may employ:

- a. figurative language
- b. rhythm
- c. dialogue
- d. characterization
- e. plot
- f. appropriate format

Overview

Roxaboxen is an imaginary town built by children in early 20th century Yuma, Arizona. After reading about Roxaboxen, students can recall information by drawing a map of the imaginary town and writing about make-believe play of their own.

Purpose

The lesson gives students the opportunity to recall story events while practicing mapping skills. Students will also identify human features of Yuma, Arizona, and compare the play of children in the past with theirs today.

Materials

- *Roxaboxen* by Alice McLerran, Puffin Books-Penguin Group, New York, 1991. ISBN 0-14-054475-5
- 12 x 18 white construction paper
- Rulers
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Map of Arizona Cities
- City map of Yuma, Arizona or an Arizona road map (A city map of Yuma can be found on the Internet.)
- Scoring guide for Roxaboxen map
- Writing paper

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Make a map based on the events of the story as they occurred.
- Locate Yuma on a map of Arizona.
- Identify human features on a city map of Yuma, or any Arizona city if Yuma map is not available.

- Compare the imaginary play of the children in the story with children today.

Procedures

1. Read the book *Roxaboxen* to the students.
2. Have students orally recount the events in the story as they happened, explaining how Roxaboxen began to grow as buildings were added.
3. Tell students they will draw a map of Roxaboxen as you reread parts of the story.
4. Hand out paper and rulers. Have students lay their paper lengthwise and measure 3 inches from the top edge and both side edges. They will fold these 3 edges back. As these edges are unfolded, it will give students space to add features to their map as Roxaboxen grows.
5. Students should unfold the space on the left in which to make their map legend and compass rose. The map title should be written above the legend.
6. As a group, list all the human features from Roxaboxen that will be included in their map.
7. Students list these features in their legends, choosing the symbols they wish to use for each item.
8. Have students draw their maps as you reread portions of the story, starting in the unfolded area of the paper. Remind them that Roxaboxen grows, so their map will also grow as they add places.

Use the following information:

Page 2 – River Rhode across the bottom

Page 7 – Main Street and houses for the first 8 children

Page 9 – Town Hall

Page 11 – other streets, house of jewels (unfold top edge as needed)

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Page 14 – a bakery and 2 ice cream shops

Page 15 – a jail

Pages 19 - 20 – 2 forts at opposite ends of Roxaboxen (unfold the 2 sides for the forts)

Page 21 – a cemetery

Page 24 – 3 new houses and 2 new shops on Main Street

9. Read the author's note on the last page, which explains that Roxaboxen was located on a hill on the southeast corner of Second Avenue and Eighth Street in Yuma, Arizona.

10. Locate the southeast corner of Second Avenue and Eighth Street on a map of Yuma, Arizona. An Arizona road map will include a city map of Yuma. Maps of Yuma are also available on the Internet. See Sources section at the end of this lesson for sites.

11. Have them identify other human features found on the map of Yuma. A map of any city can be used for this activity. If a map cannot be located, have the children list human features that they know about in towns and cities. Compare this list with the human features the children in the story had in their town. What common features did the children leave out of their town?

12. Discuss how the children in the story played in their make-believe town, and ask students to write a 1 to 2 paragraph personal narrative. The narrative will explain to a friend a make-believe game they have played or a special place where they have played with their friends.

Assessment

Geography can be evaluated by using the Map of Roxaboxen Scoring Guide. Mastery will be

considered 9 points or higher out of the 12 points possible.

The map can be used to evaluate reading by using items in the legend to determine whether students correctly recalled events in the story.

Evaluate the personal narrative by using the 6-trait rubric for Voice, Word Choice and Ideas. Mastery will be considered 4 or higher in each category.

Extensions

Predict what might be on the corner of Second Avenue and Eighth Street in Yuma today. (*There is a small city park called Roxaboxen Park!*)

Locate the intersection where Roxaboxen was built on a historical map of Yuma.

Discuss and compare other ways life today is different from life in the past. For a good example, see *School Today and Long Ago* and *Now and Then*, in the National Geographic "Windows on Literacy" Series.

Visit the author's website, alicemclerran.com, for more information about and photos of Roxaboxen.

Sources

McLerran, A. (1991). *Roxaboxen*. New York: Puffin Books, Penguin Group. ISBN 0-14-054475-5

National Geographic "Windows on Literacy" - *School Today and Long Ago* and *Now and Then*.

Yuma city and county websites-
<http://www.ci.yuma.az.us/> and
<http://www.doyuma.com/>