Map Your State: Regions of Arizona
Students learn about Arizona’s three regions with the use of a map and a story.

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Grade Level
4-5

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 FIVE: ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY
14. How human actions modify the physical environment.

Arizona Geography Standards
ESSENTIALS 3SS-E1 Demonstrate understanding of the physical and human features that define places and regions in Arizona, including the use of geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data, with emphasis on:

PO 3 locating and comparing the three landform regions of Arizona—the plateau, mountain, and desert regions—according to their physical features, plants, and animals.

Arizona Language Arts Standards
READING STANDARDS: ESSENTIALS
R-E3 Analyze selections of fiction, nonfiction and poetry by identifying the plot line; distinguishing the main characters from minor ones; describing the relationships between and motivations of characters; and making inferences about the events, setting, style, tone, mood, and meaning of the selection.

R-E4 Identify the author’s purpose, position, bias, and strategies in a persuasive selection.

PO 1 Identify the author’s purpose and use of details to support the purpose.

WRITING STANDARDS: ESSENTIALS
W-E2 Write a personal experience narrative or creative story that includes a plot, and shows the reader what happens through well-developed characters, setting, dialog, and themes and uses figurative language, descriptive words and phrases.

PO 2 Write a story
- develop a story line in a sequence that is clear.
- develop the characters
- describe the setting
- use dialog when appropriate
- use descriptive words and phrases

Overview
Arizona’s three regions (desert, plateau, and mountain) are home to a variety of plants and animals. In order to learn about Arizona, it is important that students become acquainted with the three regions.

Purpose
The purpose of this lesson is for students to gain an understanding of the different regions of Arizona in order to write a story that takes place in one of the regions. Students will also use map skills to identify the three regions and some of the places within them.
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Materials

- Arizona region mind map information sheet
- Landform Regions of Arizona map
- Arizona Counties Map
- Paper and pencil
- Region storyboard rubric
- G is for Grand Canyon by Barbara Gowan, Katherine Larson

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Identify the different regions of Arizona.
- Analyze information about the regions and use the information to create a story board.

Procedures

1. Begin by reading G is for Grand Canyon to introduce students to the context of the lesson. This preview-review format will help to reinforce understanding.

2. Show a large map of Arizona with its three regions.

3. Point to each region and show a picture of the three areas. Have the students write each word (plateau, desert, mountain) in a word bank which will be used throughout the year. Let them draw a picture to represent the word.

4. Show how the Sonoran desert extends into Mexico. Ask if any of the students are from that region. Is it hot? What kinds of animals live there?

5. Give the students the flow chart (mind map) explaining the regional facts. As you go through the mind map, show pictures of the flora and fauna in each region. Use pantomime or visuals to demonstrate the differences amongst the regions. Let the students add the new words to the word bank. Always refer back to the main Arizona map so that the students know where each element belongs.

6. Distribute the blank Arizona Counties map. Put the ESL students with a language buddy who will help the student divide the map into its three regions. (Students may use the map with the regions already marked if you like.)

7. Students are to draw pictures on their blank maps of different flora and fauna found in the regions. Always check for understanding by asking simple but concrete questions.

8. Tell students to imagine that they are an animal or a plant that lives in one of the regions. If the students’ writing skills are limited, let them draw a storyboard, to demonstrate the viewpoint of the animal or plant. They student may also give a short oral report. He may use his language buddy to assist him.

Assessment

The students will be assessed using the rubric that accompanies this lesson. The student must show an understanding of the region he has chosen, and should include weather, geographical features, animals and plants of that region. He should also be able to show where that region belongs on the Arizona map.

Extensions

If available, give the student a book about Arizona which is written in his own language. Let him take the book home to reinforce understanding. (This does not violate Prop.203!)

Try and organize a field trip to the Desert Botanical Gardens.

In a small group setting, use “Paraphrase Passport.” Ask a member of the group to say something about the lesson. A second member must paraphrase what the student has just said, before contributing to a new idea.

Sources

Recommendations when teaching English Language Learners.

- Understand the child’s cultural background.
- Build lessons on child’s previous knowledge.
- Be a “kid-watcher.” Carefully monitor understanding.
- Adjust lessons to the capability of the student.
- Use simplified speech.
- Use non-verbal clues such as pictures and body language.
- Relate new information to concrete experiences.
- Allow for interaction amongst the students.

- Provide a safe environment where the student is willing to take risks.
- Provide meaningful instruction.
- And last but not least… Be patient!!