

Social Studies Theme: Geography

Lesson: Location – Local

Grade Level: 1-4

Overview: Students learn about the science of geography and use of maps through studying their local area.

Approximate Duration: one class period

National Social Studies Standards: NSS-G.K-12.1 The World in Spatial Terms.
http://www.educationworld.com/standards/national/soc_sci/geography/k_12.shtml

Objective: Students will be able to use geography skills to create neighborhood maps, and identify connections between geography, culture, and the economy in their local area.

Procedure:

- Begin by discussing the science of geography, the types of things geographers study, and the reasons they study them. Briefly discuss connections between a place's cultures and industries and its geography. (a good example might be to say that flour mills are located near where grain is grown)
- Share maps of your local area or other city maps, and major buildings and roads, parks, natural geographic features, town centers and other kinds of things found on such maps.
- **Technology integration:** Look at a Google satellite map to view the terrain of your state, pointing out rivers, mountains, forests, etc. Then look at a satellite map of your city, and see how it compares to the rest of the state. Write down student observations and use these to guide the discussion of geography/environment and its role in local culture.
- Have students talk about their own neighborhoods.
 - Possible Discussion Questions: How big are they? Are there parks or businesses? What kinds of buildings are in their neighborhood? Has your neighborhood changed since you've lived there? If so, how?

Assessment:

- Tell students that they will be making neighborhood maps to discuss local geography, economy, and culture. Tell them that each map should have a key to explain their map's symbols and include natural terrain, buildings, and streets.
- When students have completed their maps, have them write a descriptive paragraph about their neighborhood using the information that they discussed earlier.



- Have students share their maps and paragraphs with the class. Then discuss the similarities between the maps, the overall similarities in your area, and how these similarities help define the local culture. Share with the class the information you have gathered about the economy and industry of your area and talk about how geography and environment has influenced the local economy.