
Becoming a Geographer

Grade 6

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Learning takes place only when there is a base of prior knowledge from which to build. It will be necessary for students to have certain foundational skills in order to attain success with this unit. A general knowledge of map reading and construction is assumed. Students should understand cardinal directions, scale, and the purpose of a map key. Knowledge of simple geography ideas, such as continents, countries, and lines of latitude and longitude, will also aid in student learning. The idea that maps can serve multiple purposes, such as displaying population, climate, and elevation, is a helpful concept for students to comprehend, yet is not necessary to ensure success while completing the unit.

When teaching this unit, it will be necessary for students to have access to an atlas appropriate to Grade 6 students. In addition to being grade-level appropriate, the atlas should include climate, population, economic, and natural resource maps as they are all dealt with during the unit. Computers with Internet access would be helpful because the students will conduct several independent research activities. If the students have not had much experience conducting research on the Internet, it may be necessary to conduct several brief mini-lessons about responsible use and how to evaluate Internet Web sites for quality and validity. The teacher should provide students with other tools and materials (e.g., clay, paints, poster paper) that will allow students to be highly creative and productive during classroom sessions.

A learning journal will also be an effective tool for the students to have while implementing this unit. The journal, as an organizational tool, will provide students

with a place to record ideas, respond to guiding or prompting questions, reflect on their learning, and complete classroom assignments. The learning journal also affords the teacher the opportunity to measure student growth during the course of the unit and throughout the school year, and it also gives the teacher the occasion to correspond with her students on a one-on-one basis through writing. Learning journals, also called *learning logs*, achieve these goals across subject areas.

CONTENT FRAMEWORK

Organizing Concepts

<i>Macroconcept(s)</i>	<i>Discipline-Specific Concepts</i>	<i>Principles</i>
M1: Relationships	C1: Geography	P1: Geography is the study of the Earth’s surface, climate, continents, countries, people, industries, and projects.
	C2: Economics	P2: The study of geography extends into the fields of science, economics, and cultures.
	C3: Cultures	P3: The Earth’s climate depends upon its movement in space.
	C4: Climate	P4: The Earth’s climate varies.
	C5: Rotation	P5: Climate affects the culture and economy of a place.
	C6: Revolution	P6: The geography of a place affects the population.
	C7: Axis	P7: The population of a place affects the economy and culture.
	C8: Population	P8: Wants and needs can be fulfilled in a variety of ways.
	C9: Demography	P9: The resources available in a particular area determine the types of goods produced.
	C10: Increase and decrease	P10: Geography has an impact on culture.
	C11: Natural resources	P11: Cultures vary around the world.
	C12: Wants	P12: Examining geography and culture helps us to understand a place.
	C13: Needs	
	C14: Goods	
	C15: Culture	
	C16: Language	
	C17: Religion	
	C18: Traditions	

Skills

S1: Make connections	S6: Compare and contrast
S2: Reason deductively	S7: Read
S3: Determine cause and effect	S8: Infer
S4: Develop hypotheses	S9: Summarize
S5: Analyze and interpret information/data	

National Standards

SD1: Understands the characteristics and uses of maps, globes, and other geographic tools and technologies

Benchmark: Understands concepts such as axis, seasons, rotation, and revolution (Earth-Sun relations)

SD2: Understands the nature, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

Benchmark: Understands demographic concepts and how they are used to describe population characteristics of a country or region (e.g., rates of natural increase, crude birth and death rates, infant mortality, population growth rates, doubling time, life expectancy, average family size)

SD3: Understands the physical and human characteristics of place

Benchmark: Knows the human characteristics of places (e.g., cultural characteristics such as religion, language, politics, technology, family structure, gender; population characteristics; land uses; levels of development)

UNIT ASSESSMENTS

Formative Assessments

A variety of formative assessments are included in the four lessons contained in this chapter. Student performances during classroom discussions and lesson activities provide the teacher with rich information that can be used to determine mastery of lesson and unit concepts, principles, and skills. References to formal and informal formative assessments are made throughout the lessons. Equally important, suggestions are provided about how to differentiate instruction based upon the data that has been collected.

In addition, multilevel rubrics that address several of the unit objectives accompany student assignments. The rubrics not only ensure that students are aware of the expectations of the assignments, but also serve as a tool to help the classroom teacher pinpoint the following: (1) where students already possess the required declarative and procedural knowledge and (2) gaps in the prerequisite declarative and procedural knowledge.

OVERVIEW OF THE UNIT

The four lessons highlighted in this collection come from a larger unit designed to be completed in approximately 14 hours. The entire unit focuses on all aspects of

geography, beginning with an in-depth investigation of the “five principles of geography.” Concepts such as the theory of plate tectonics, renewable and nonrenewable resources, using latitude and longitude to determine location, landforms, and layers of the earth are investigated. Lessons focusing on the relationships between geography and other disciplines are detailed in greater depth across all the learning activities.

This collection of four lessons focuses on climate, demographics, resources, and culture. Lesson 1, “Climate and Seasons,” provides students with interactive learning opportunities to investigate Earth’s movement (i.e., rotation and revolution) and how it influences world climates. Lesson 2, “Investigating World Populations,” focuses on demographics and the principle that climate and physical terrain affect where people live. “Shop Around the Globe,” Lesson 3, invites students to explore the connection between natural resources and peoples’ wants and needs. Finally, Lesson 4, “The Culture of Geography,” offers students the opportunity to investigate the connection between geography and culture.

This collection of four lessons not only focuses on the Core Curriculum, but also the Connections and Practice parallels. They allow the teacher to make decisions based on the needs of the students. The lessons provide the opportunity for the teacher to challenge all students by using interest-based projects, flexible grouping, and peer coaching.

LESSON 1: CLIMATE AND SEASONS (2 HOURS)

Concepts

C4: Climate
C5: Rotation
C6: Revolution
C7: Axis

Principles

P3: The Earth’s climate depends upon its movement in space.
P4: The Earth’s climate varies.
P5: Climate affects the culture and economy of a place.

Skills

S4: Develop hypotheses
S5: Analyze and interpret information

Standards

SD1: Understands the characteristics and uses of maps, globes, and other geographic tools and technologies
Benchmark: Understands concepts such as axis, seasons, rotation, and revolution (Earth-Sun relations)

Guiding Questions

- How does Earth’s movement affect our climate?
- Why does Earth experience seasonal change?
- How are day and night determined?

Unit Sequence	Teacher Reflections
Introduction	
<p>Explain to students that the subjects they study are not separate. They overlap each other, and during these next several lessons, they will be exploring some of these relationships. Explain that during this lesson they will be investigating the connection between geography and science.</p> <p>Distribute several Post-it notes to each student, and write the term <i>climate</i> for students to view on a piece of chart paper or poster board. Ask the students to write words or ideas on their Post-it notes that come to mind when they think about the word <i>climate</i>. Ask students to write one idea or word on each note. Allow students several minutes to complete this activity and then ask students to place their Post-it notes around the term <i>climate</i> that has been written on the chart paper or poster board. The teacher should then walk the students through the grouping of the ideas the students contributed into a type of concept map. Add subcategories as you find related terms and ideas.</p>	<p><i>Students may have difficulty with the idea of relationships between the areas they study. In an effort to clarify this idea for students, I asked students to brainstorm some instances where the subjects overlapped. Offer some suggestions, such as reading a book during math, science, or a social studies class.</i></p> <p><i>This introductory activity is meant to elicit students' prior knowledge concerning the concept of climate. This activity will achieve its desired purpose if students are encouraged to discuss their ideas with a partner. I discovered several students discussing their ideas as I was moving around the classroom. My first reaction was to stress that this was an independent assignment. Yet as I listened to their brief conversations, I found that they were meaningful, focused, and added to student interest in the topic. I found it helpful to provide students with some prompting questions to stimulate the thought process.</i></p> <p><i>Students may have misconceptions about climate, yet this will provide an opportunity to modify the concept web at the conclusion of the lesson. In the interest of student motivation, I allowed these misconceptions to remain on the concept map and used them as an opportunity to check for student understanding at the conclusion of the lesson.</i></p>
Teaching Strategies and Learning Experiences	
<p>Seasons</p> <p>Ask students what their lives would be like if we did not experience the seasons. For example, ask how would they feel if the temperatures were cold or warm all of the time. Allow them several minutes to discuss this with a small group or a partner. Share the students' responses as a whole class. Next, ask students why we experience seasons and allow them to discuss this with peers. Follow with a whole-class discussion and record student ideas on chart paper.</p>	<p>Connections Parallel</p> <p><i>These questions allow students to connect their lives with the concepts in the lesson and teachers to gauge student knowledge in the area.</i></p> <p><i>Student discussions were very animated; most concluded that they enjoyed the seasons because they provided them with variety and kept them from getting bored of the warm or cold weather.</i></p> <p><i>After the whole-class discussion about the reason for the seasons, I made a mental note that a group of six students had a much deeper understanding of the concepts. These students were advanced learners and prime candidates for differentiation. Based upon my new knowledge of their advanced learning needs, I built differentiation into the remaining lessons.</i></p>

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<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
<p>Display two pictures of the Earth, one with the Earth on its axis and the other showing the Earth without the tilt. Ask students which picture is accurate. Engage students in a discussion of Earth's axis.</p> <p>Darken the room and have students work in small groups. Direct the students to shine a flashlight directly on a white piece of paper and then trace the circle formed by the light with a marker. Without moving the flashlight, ask students to slightly tilt the white paper away from the flashlight and trace this area with a different color marker. Ask the groups to engage in a discussion about the differences or similarities between the two shapes and their relationship to the sun's light shining on the earth.</p> <p>Ask students to answer the following questions in their small groups:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Which shape made by the flashlight demonstrates the way sun shines on the earth in the summer? How do you know? 2. Which shape made by the flashlight shows the way the sun shines on the earth in the winter? How do you know? <p>Place a model of the sun in the center of an oval created by the seated students. Explain to the students that the oval represents Earth's elliptical orbit around the sun. Ask one student to sit in the center of the oval with a flashlight. Explain to the students that they will be passing a globe around the oval to represent Earth's journey around the sun. As students are passing the globe around the oval, draw students' attention to the parts of the globe that are getting the most direct sunlight and the least direct sunlight.</p> <p>Following this simulation, ask students to draw a diagram showing the sun and the Earth during the different seasons.</p>	<p><i>Prior to conducting this experiment, I asked students why they believed the places on earth experienced seasons. I asked them to record this information in a learning journal. I engaged students in a discussion of the scientific process and stated that they had just formed a hypothesis, further stressing the connection with science. The students made several comments referring to how they formed hypotheses on a regular basis and did not make the connection.</i></p> <p><i>This simulation directly addresses the national standard dealing with understanding axis, seasons, rotation, and revolution. In designing the simulation, I wanted the students to be part of the demonstration and not just bystanders. With each movement of the globe, students are able to see which portions of the Earth receive the most direct rays of light and why the Earth experiences seasons. It also provides students with the opportunity to ask questions, make comments, and engage in discussions.</i></p>

Unit Sequence	Teacher Reflections
<p><i>Differentiation:</i> Invite students demonstrating understanding in this area to explore another activity while these simulations are taking place.</p> <p>Ask students to develop a 12-page calendar detailing the seasons in various places on the Earth. Provide atlases, the Internet, and various other resources to the students.</p> <p>Climate</p> <p>Distribute a climate map of the world to small groups of students. Ask groups to develop a definition of climate from looking at the map. Allow groups to share their definition and develop a working definition that combines elements of all groups' ideas.</p> <p>Ensure that students are able to read the climate map by moving from group to group or student to student while they are working on the preceding task and asking map reading questions such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What area of the world experiences a tropical wet climate? • What is the climate of Australia? • What is the climate type where you live? • What area of the world experiences subarctic climate? <p><i>Differentiation:</i> Place students who display inadequate map-reading skills in a small group. Provide a mini-lesson in which map-reading skills are covered.</p> <p>Once the students are familiar with the term <i>climate</i> and the reading of a map, ask students if they understand the terms present on the climate map: <i>semiarid, Mediterranean, humid subtropical</i>. Most students will not have much background knowledge of these terms.</p> <p>Divide students into small groups, assign them a climate type to research, and then teach the class. Students can choose the ways in which to display the information they have learned.</p>	<p><i>I wanted the students with more advanced levels of prior knowledge to learn more about the seasons than why the seasons exist. The assignment gave students the occasion to conduct independent research and to compare and contrast different places in the world by looking at the season they experience. The students may not have the amount of time necessary to complete this activity, yet if they have time available throughout their day, it can be used constructively, or this activity can be used as a school/home connection assignment.</i></p> <p><i>I have found that simply giving the students the definition of a term has much less impact than asking them to draw conclusions and develop their own ideas about concepts. Even though students may develop misconceptions during the initial phase of the activity, sharing the groups' ideas as a whole class and writing a whole class shared definition will aid in eliminating those misconceptions.</i></p> <p><i>The small group interactions provided me with a great deal of information. Identifying students who required additional instruction made the learning experiences that followed more meaningful because students had the prior knowledge necessary to build new knowledge.</i></p>

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<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
<p>Using the jigsaw approach, have students form new groups with one climate type in each group in order to present their findings and teach their classmates.</p> <p>Introduce the climate project that students will engage in over the next several lessons. (Please see the following three attachments that are included with this lesson and support this assignment: “Climate Map Project,” “Become a Climate Expert,” and “Become a Climate Expert Rubric.”) Explain that they will be looking in more depth at different parts of the world, compiling information about these places, and determining the best way to convey the information learned. The project asks students to choose four different locations in the world to complete the requirement. Explain that they will be designing several different maps and gathering data to draw conclusions. For this section of the assignment, they will only be researching the climate. The students will be required to design a climate map that details the climate for each place that is researched. The students should include not only the place they researched, but also major surrounding cities and countries.</p>	<p><i>This jigsaw activity is very motivating for students because it allows them to do the teaching. I have also found that limiting the number of requirements actually promotes student creativity and interest. The activity lends itself to differentiation because the teacher can control student grouping. I find it useful and interesting to group advanced learners with students who would benefit from a bit of guidance in order to promote growth and intellectual development. I refer here to Vygotsky’s idea of a “knowledgeable other” to guide students as they work within their zone of proximal development. The teacher also has the opportunity to group students who might benefit from small group instruction together in order to complete the assignment with the assistance of the teacher or other adults, while enhancing their confidence by having the chance to teach the other students in the class.</i></p> <p><i>I designed this multiple lesson project to address several standards, principles, concepts, and skills throughout the unit. This portion of the project addresses the principle concerning the various climates present on earth.</i></p> <p><i>I found it important to be forceful when I suggested that students choose four different climate types. This ensured that the learning they did in this and future lessons had the greatest impact.</i></p> <p><i>These questions serve the purpose of connecting the learning students have already done with the future direction of the lessons while preparing students for the learning they will be doing.</i></p>

Unit Sequence	Teacher Reflections
<p>As students complete their maps, display the following questions and ask students to respond in their learning journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How might the climate of a place influence the number of people who live there? • Given the climate of a place, what might people do to earn money? • How might the climate of a place affect the things that grow there? 	
Closure	
<p>Revisit the Post-it note concept map made during the introduction. Ask students to sit close to the concept map and to examine it to see if they would like to make any changes. Encourage students to regroup, make new subcategories, modify or eliminate any inaccurate information, and add to the web.</p> <p>Engage students in a discussion based on the premise that geography and science are connected. Ask students guiding questions such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did we discover about the relationship between geography and science? • Why is this relationship important for us to understand? • How does this relationship help us develop a deeper understanding of the subjects? • How does what we learned apply to our lives? 	<p><i>This closure activity allowed students to engage in their learning and truly see what they had learned throughout the lesson.</i></p> <p><i>At first, the students were a bit hesitant because they did not want to refute an idea a classmate contributed earlier in the lesson. I sensed this, and we had a brief discussion concerning the purpose of developing a concept map prior to learning about something and how revisiting it after the lesson helps us to examine the learning that has been done. Following this discussion, several students were brave and made some changes and additions to the concept web. The rest of the class followed their lead, and the concept map was revised with great success and amazing discussions amongst classmates.</i></p> <p><i>This discussion is a necessary element to bridge the purpose of the unit design, the lesson introduction, and the lesson closure. The purpose of designing the unit was so students could see these relationships.</i></p> <p><i>The students were quickly able to see the connection between the subject areas. Following the discussion, I asked students to respond to some of these questions in their learning journals. This element enhanced the students' responses and demonstrated student motivation and understanding.</i></p>

CLIMATE MAP PROJECT

- Choose four locations in the world that you would like to research.
- Research these locations using an atlas and/or the Internet.
- Design a climate map for each location.
- The map for each location must include surrounding cities and countries.
- Each map must include the following:
 - title
 - labels
 - key with symbols
 - scale
- Upon completing your maps, answer the following questions in your learning journal:
 - How may the climate of a place influence the number of people who live there?
 - Given the climate of a place, what may people do to earn money?
 - How may the climate of a place affect the things that grow there?



BECOME A CLIMATE EXPERT

Your group will research a climate type. Learn all you can about this climate, including the following:

- the characteristics of this climate (precipitation, average temperature, etc.)
- which plants grow in this climate
- what animals inhabit areas with this climate
- countries or areas of the world with this climate

You will teach your fellow classmates about your assigned climate; therefore, it is important that each group member becomes an expert. Follow the directions below to help prepare yourself for your expert presentation.

1. Research the climate type assigned to your group using some of the following resources:

- <http://www.blueplanetbiomes.org/climate.htm>
- <http://www.physicalgeography.net/fundamentals/7v.html>
- http://www.uwsp.edu/geo/faculty/ritter/geog101/uwsp_lectures/climates_toc.html
- <http://www.mapsofworld.com/world-maps/world-climate-map.html>

These sites will not provide you with all of the information necessary to complete this assignment. You will need to do additional research using nonfiction texts and other Web sites.

2. Each group member is responsible for designing a presentation to share the knowledge gained through your research with your classmates. You may choose to present your information in any way you see appropriate. Be creative! Suggestions include the following:

- a poster
- PowerPoint presentation
- overhead transparencies

3. Present the information you learned about the climate you researched and learn about the other climate types from your classmates in your assigned jigsaw group. The information you learn from them will be important for future activities, so be an active listener!

BECOME A CLIMATE EXPERT RUBRIC



Become a Climate Expert Rubric

Criteria	4	3	2	1
Content	Accurately identifies the characteristics of the assigned climate type, including average temperature, precipitation, plants, and animal life.	Adequately identifies the characteristics of the assigned climate type, including three of the four components described in the column to the left.	Incompletely identifies the characteristics of the assigned climate type, including two of the four components described in the column to the left.	Inaccurately identifies the characteristics of the assigned climate type, including one or fewer of the four components described in the column to the left.
Group work	Each group member has a clear understanding of their responsibilities and actively participates in group discussions and research activities.	Each group member has a general understanding of their responsibilities and participates in group discussions and research activities.	Some members of the group have a general understanding of their responsibilities and participate in group discussions and research activities occasionally.	Group members are not aware of their responsibilities and frequently hesitate to participate in group discussions or research activities.
Presentation	Each group member designs a creative presentation that includes all the necessary content to teach classmates about the assigned climate type.	Each group member designs a clear presentation that includes most of the necessary content to teach classmates about the assigned climate type.	Group members design a basic presentation that includes some of the necessary content to teach classmates about the assigned climate type.	The group presentation needs additional work to ensure clarity and comprehensive content.

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LESSON 2: INVESTIGATING WORLD POPULATIONS (4–5 HOURS)

Concepts

- C8: Population
- C9: Demography
- C10: Increase and decrease

Principles

- P6: The geography of a place affects the population.
- P7: The population of a place affects the economy and culture.

Skills

- S5: Analyze and interpret information/data
- S1: Make connections
- S2: Reason deductively
- S3: Determine cause and effect

Standards

SD2: Understands the nature, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface

Benchmark: Understands demographic concepts and how they are used to describe population characteristics of a country or region (e.g., rates of natural increase, crude birth and death rates, infant mortality, population growth rates, doubling time, life expectancy, average family size)

Guiding Questions

- What factors cause large populations in some parts of the world?
- How does climate and physical terrain affect where people live?
- How does the geography of a place satisfy the needs of the people who inhabit it?

<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
Introduction	
<p>Explain to the students that during the previous lesson they examined the relationship between geography and science, and during this lesson, they will be exploring the connection between geography and math. Ask students to predict ways in which geography and math may go hand in hand.</p> <p>Conduct a class discussion to determine if any students have ever moved residences. Ask those students who have moved to volunteer the reasons for their moves, and</p>	<p><i>The idea of relationships is central to this unit. I found it necessary to highlight this relationship prior to beginning the lesson to keep the students focused on the main purpose of the unit. By asking the students to predict the relationship between math and geography, I was hoping they would begin to understand ways to make these types of connections.</i></p> <p><i>The aim of this discussion is to allow students to make a personal connection with the lesson concepts and to begin to introduce the idea that people populate certain areas for specific reasons.</i></p>

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<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
<p>record this information on a piece of chart paper. Ask all students to brainstorm additional reasons that people move from place to place. Record the responses as well.</p>	
Teaching Strategies and Learning Experiences	
<p>Explain to the students that they will be working in small groups, and write the term <i>population</i> for all to see. Provide each group with a sentence strip or long piece of paper. Ask each group to write a rational sentence that includes the word <i>population</i> on the sentence strip. Provide several minutes for the groups to devise the sentence. Post each group's contribution for all to see. As a whole class, read each sentence and lead students in a discussion to develop a preliminary understanding of population. Explain that the following learning activities will focus on expanding their knowledge of population and its importance in the world.</p> <p>Population Distribution</p> <p><i>Differentiation:</i> Differentiate the following learning activity by dividing the students into smaller groups based on prior knowledge. Provide one group of students who are at or above grade-level expectations with world population maps. Provide another group of students who are at or below grade-level expectation with United States population maps. Prior to the lesson, decide which students will be receiving the world or U.S. maps and distribute them accordingly. The students can complete this activity independently or with a partner. Explain to the students that the maps that they have in front of them are population maps and show where people live. Review the map key and features of the maps. Write the following questions on a piece of chart paper. Students should record their answers in their learning journals.</p>	<p><i>This learning activity is a variation of the “possible sentences” vocabulary strategy. It asks the students to devise a sentence around a term with which they have little or no familiarity in the hope that they will be able to make meaning through the context and teacher guidance. Unless students have previous background knowledge surrounding the concept, they are not expected to make meaning of the word through this activity. The sentences will be revisited and revised at the end of the lesson. Examining the sentences at the lesson’s conclusion will aid in demonstrating student learning and growth through the following learning activities.</i></p> <p><i>I intended that the learning activity would address the portion of the national standard on distribution of human populations and encourage students to engage in higher-level thinking skills. By differentiating the maps, the teacher can challenge students who excel in this area and nurture those who are not adept at thinking on this level.</i></p> <p><i>I found that the world map did provide a challenge for the students. Some students were overwhelmed by the challenge. I asked these students to first draw some conclusions using the United States map and some teacher assistance. To build on the learning they achieved, I then asked them to go back to the world map and make another attempt. Many of the students that I originally assigned the United States map still had a great deal of difficulty. I used this as an opportunity to conduct a small group and directly guide the students in answering the questions and drawing the conclusions.</i></p>

Unit Sequence	Teacher Reflections
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some areas with the highest population? • What do these places have in common? • What are some areas with low populations? • What do these places have in common? • What landforms are present near places with a high or low population? • Refer to a climate map. Do you notice a connection between climate and population? What do you think this means? <p>Upon completion, divide students into groups based on the maps they investigated. Ask students to share the conclusions they drew from this investigation.</p> <p>Demographics</p> <p>Prior to teaching this lesson, it is necessary to compile demographic information on your town/city and state and surrounding towns/cities and states. The census Web site (www.census.gov) is a useful site that provides this information.</p> <p>Display and explain population-growth data for your town or city. Using Microsoft Excel, make a bar and line graph that shows the population increases. Ask students to explain why graphing this information is helpful. Display the data of the surrounding towns or cities, and ask students to compare this to the data from their town. Graph this information using Microsoft Excel. Ask students why the populations in some towns/cities are larger or smaller than their town. Display a political map of your state. Ask students to examine the comparison graphs and try to make a connection between the information on the political map and the population data. Repeat this process comparing the state in which you reside with states in other parts of the country. Stress that a majority of</p>	<p><i>I wanted the students to share their findings simply because there was so much they could have learned from these maps. I wanted them to achieve higher levels of understanding by interacting with their peers.</i></p> <p><i>I designed this learning activity to address the Grades 6 through 8 benchmark corresponding to the national standard. I chose to use a more direct approach to teaching the concepts and skills coinciding with the standard since students had never previously examined or analyzed demographic information. I highlighted the connections between the population of a place and the area, the proximity to a large city, or the presence of a particular landform that promotes or deters people from settling there. I also wanted to take the opportunity to model how to design a graph using Microsoft Excel. The students will be asked to use this program to make similar graphs to display data with reference to the four places they examined earlier in this lesson.</i></p>

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<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
<p>the U.S. population resides in the east (with the exception of California), even though Midwest and western states are larger. Ask students to make a connection between landforms and population.</p> <p>Provide small groups of students with demographic data regarding several states in the United States, such as life expectancy rates, birth rates, and family size. Ask the students to graph this information using an appropriate graph type.</p> <p>Upon completion, students should independently respond to the following questions in their learning journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why is demographic information collected? What purpose does it serve? • Why is a graph a good way to display this information? • Who might use demographic information as a part of their job? <p>Theme Park Development Project</p> <p>Segue into the upcoming Theme Park Development Project (Lesson 3) by reminding students about the purpose of the Climate Map Project completed in Lesson 1. The Theme Park Development Project will build upon students' understanding of climate and will be completed in Lesson 3.</p> <p>In the Theme Park Development Project, students take on the role of a researcher for a development company. This company is looking for a location somewhere in the world to begin production on their newest theme park. The students' job is to provide the development company with all of the necessary information to aid in the decision making process. In order to submit their</p>	<p><i>Differentiation: In designing this activity, I saw it as steps toward independence. The previous section of this lesson was teacher directed; in this portion, the students had a support system in the form of a small group. In the final activity, they will independently apply what they have learned. Yet the ability to differentiate is present. I was available to assist and reteach with a small group of students who were having a great deal of difficulty. I also compiled some demographic data that was more difficult to interpret for students who displayed important learner differences. I did not encounter a need for differentiation during this lesson.</i></p> <p><i>These learning-journal entries provided me with important assessment information and presented an opportunity to dialogue with the students in writing. I was able to determine whether they had any misconceptions concerning the lesson standards, concepts, or skills. I also observed their ability to assimilate and apply their learning.</i></p> <p><i>I chose to explain the specific information for this project after the students had already completed the first set of requirements in the previous lesson. I wanted to determine whether adding a real-life scenario to the project would increase student motivation. I went a step further and informed them that they must work to find a location for the next Disney Theme Park (or Olympics). This motivated the students. They said they found it exciting to be doing something that a grown-up would do. The discussion evolved into what types of careers people who are interested in geography might have. We explored the Web site www.aag.com to further explore these ideas.</i></p> <p><i>Share with students that their only job is to think about the location for their Theme Park. Remind them that they will have plenty of time to work on the project in the upcoming lesson, "Shop Around the Globe."</i></p>

Unit Sequence	Teacher Reflections
<p>findings to the development group, they must design a mode of presentation, such as PowerPoint. Distribute and discuss the rubric detailing the criteria for success on this project. Key elements of this rubric include accurate and detailed maps, quality of presentation, and knowledge gained.</p> <p>Ask students to gather their project information from the previous lesson. Explain to the students that for this portion of the lesson they will be responsible for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designing a population map for each of the four places they choose for this project. • Finding demographic data for each place. • Graphing the demographic data for each place using Microsoft Excel. <p>The CIA World Fact Book Web site is a good source for the students to find the demographic information necessary to complete this assignment.</p>	<p>Differentiation: I asked students who exhibited a high level of interest in this area to further explore a career they found appealing. I also asked them to inform the class about their learning in an effort to pique their classmates' interest in the area.</p> <p>I found that the discussion about the purpose of demographic information was very helpful. The students had difficulty understanding why death rates were recorded and why it was important to know if a population increased or decreased. They wanted to know how this demographic information was going to help them with their project. The students missed the connection between death rates and population growth/decline. Following a discussion where I guided the students in making these connections, the purpose seemed much clearer to them.</p> <p>This portion of the lesson completed the gradual release of the support framework used throughout the lesson. The students applied the knowledge they gained from the previous two sections of the lesson independently. Not all students were ready to complete this assignment without teacher guidance. I formed a small group to work closely with, and I provided the necessary guidance. Most of them achieved the desired level of independence by the end of the lesson.</p>
Closure	
<p>Display the sentences the students composed at the beginning of this lesson during the "possible sentences" activity. Ask small groups of students to revise their sentence to make it more accurate and/or descriptive.</p> <p>Engage students in a conversation about the relationship between geography and math. Ask students to think about the following ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What math skills did you use while you were experimenting with population and demographics? • Why were these math skills important to the study of geography? • Do you think you will use the information you learned from this lesson again? 	<p>Asking the students to revisit the sentences they wrote at the beginning of the lesson provided them with the opportunity to examine the learning they had accomplished. It also provided necessary assessment information, along with the student project and learning journal entries, to measure whether the lessons' concepts and principles had been successfully reached.</p> <p>The discussion brought focus back to the central theme of the unit. It provided the students with the opportunity to establish another relationship and further develop their understanding of geography.</p> <p>The students found the exploration of geography careers especially informative and useful to their lives. It seemed to take geography from a subject in school to the real world and gave it new meaning for the students.</p>

LESSON 3: SHOP AROUND THE GLOBE (3 HOURS)

Concepts

C11: Natural resources
 C12: Wants
 C13: Needs
 C14: Goods

Principles

P8: Wants and needs can be fulfilled in a variety of ways.
 P9: The resources available in a particular area determine the types of goods produced.

Skills

S6: Compare and contrast
 S3: Determine cause and effect
 S2: Reason deductively

Standards

SD3: Understands the physical and human characteristics of place
Benchmark: Knows the human characteristics of places (e.g., cultural characteristics such as religion, language, politics, technology, family structure, gender; population characteristics; land uses; levels of development)

Guiding Questions

- How do people in the United States get the things they want and need?
- How do people in other parts of the world meet their wants and needs?
- How do the types of natural resources available in a place affect the types of goods produced?

<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
Introduction	
<p>Explain to the students that this lesson, like the previous two, focuses on relationships and will focus on the relationship between geography and economics. Ask students if they are familiar with economics or economy. Allow students to write in their learning journals for several minutes regarding their expectations for this lesson.</p> <p>Ask students to identify some of the things they need to survive. Make a list of the students' responses on chart paper. Engage students in a discussion regarding the places they go to get the things they need. Explain to the students that during this lesson they will be exploring the ways people in different parts of the world meet their needs.</p>	<p><i>In asking students to write in their learning journals about the lesson expectations, I hoped to see students beginning to make connections and see relationships. I also wanted to identify the students' prior knowledge of economics. A majority of the students were unable to make any viable predictions based on the fact that they didn't have any background knowledge in economics.</i></p> <p><i>I designed this introductory activity to bring the students' prior knowledge to the forefront and provide a base for the new learning of the lesson.</i></p> <p><i>The students understood the differences between wants and needs. I prepared to review the differences, but the information gained during this activity provided me with enough evidence to allow me to move on with the new learning.</i></p>

Unit Sequence	Teacher Reflections
Teaching Strategies and Learning Experiences	
<p>Display pictures of malls, marketplaces, and supermarkets in the United States. Ask students to pretend they had never been to these places before and to describe what they notice. Record the observations on chart paper. Draw students' attention to the number of choices Americans have when trying to meet their needs and wants.</p> <p>Display a picture that illustrates how people in another area of the world meet their needs. Ask students what information they can obtain concerning how people in this place meet their needs. Record student observations on a piece of chart paper.</p> <p>Display a large Venn diagram, the two pictures, and the student generated lists from the previous learning activities. Using the think aloud strategy, model the thought process behind comparing and contrasting the information gained from the two pictures analyzed above. Ask questions such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which had the most diversity? • Which could charge more for the same goods? Why? <p>Present the students with political, economic, and agricultural maps. Together with the students, analyze these maps to determine the cause for the differences in the means by which the people in the United States and the other chosen country meet their needs. Examine the impact of location, technological advancements, wealth, natural resources, and agriculture on these two countries or places.</p>	<p><i>Because students showed so much excitement when learning about the various careers centered on geography, I took this opportunity to point out that they participated in an activity that an anthropologist might carry out. I felt that analyzing the world they lived in challenged them. I carefully guided students to help them change their perspective. It was as if they didn't notice the world they lived in. I found it necessary to take the time to allow the students to draw these conclusions in order for them to benefit from the activities that follow.</i></p> <p><i>For the purpose of this learning activity, I found it helpful to choose a country that is very different from the United States. My goal for this portion of the lesson was to guide the students in their effort to learn about the economies in different parts of the world. Because I wanted them to be able to draw these types of conclusions in small groups during the subsequent learning activities, I chose to highlight a culture quite different from our own. I found the students drew conclusions more easily because they were more apparent.</i></p> <p><i>Student-generated Venn diagrams often focus on very superficial comparisons. With this learning activity, my intention was to model for the students a thought process that focused on the important ideas instead of the easy. I did not expect that the students would abandon the practice of only looking for obvious similarities and differences, yet I hoped to provide an example of a different thought process. I hoped that students would apply what they learned from the think aloud to their subsequent learning.</i></p> <p><i>This learning activity requires students to assimilate information from a variety of sources and expects students to think at a very high level. Because the nature of the activity is teacher facilitated, I found that all students would benefit, on some level, from the type of thinking being explored during the activity.</i></p>

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<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
<p>Ask students to respond to the following questions independently in their learning journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some factors that contribute to the ways people meet their needs? • How does geography affect the way people meet their needs? <p>Present small groups of students with pictures of marketplaces, malls, and grocery stores from around the world. Each group should receive four pictures and a recording sheet designed to provide students with a place to organize their thoughts and ideas. Prior to allowing the students to work in their small groups, present the directions and criteria for success to the students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine one picture at a time. • Record your group’s observations concerning how needs are met in this picture. • Use your atlas to research the location of this picture. Be sure to investigate the geography, climate, population, agriculture, land use, and any other maps you find useful. • Record this research on the recording sheet. • Use the observations and research to draw conclusions about the economy of this place. • Repeat with the remaining pictures. • Choose two pictures to compare and contrast using a Venn diagram. <p>Supply each student with a Venn diagram. Ask each student to independently compare and contrast the two locations he or she did not compare as a group. Allow students to use their recording sheets to aid them in completing this assignment.</p>	<p><i>Although the lesson is not complete, I wanted to gauge the students’ understanding of the concepts and generalizations that we had focused on to this point. Due to the level of difficulty, I wanted to ensure that the students were given the proper amount of scaffolding before they were asked to attempt to draw these types of conclusions on their own.</i></p> <p><i>Differentiation:</i> <i>Based on the previous classroom discussions and the learning journal entries, I chose to differentiate this lesson in a variety of ways. I grouped together students who required more assistance and provided this group with pictures of areas that were familiar to them to allow obvious conclusions to be drawn. I also spent a considerable amount of time with these students to assist them in further achieving independence with this type of thinking. I also limited the number of places these students examined. This group observed only two locations and additional pictures from each location in order to make it easier for them to make observations. Although I did see an improvement with these students, they still required further attention during later stages of the lesson.</i></p> <p><i>To challenge those students who displayed the ability to engage in this higher level thinking activity, I chose more obscure pictures from various areas of the world. I also provided these students with access to the Internet in order to conduct research that was more thorough. I encouraged them not only to investigate maps, but other sources of information as well in order to learn more about the area they were examining. During this research, students found their own pictures to aid them in completing this assignment.</i></p> <p><i>The students who benefited from small group instruction during the previous activity again completed this assignment in the small group setting, with a great deal of teacher assistance. My intention was to limit the amount of frustration these students encountered while still allowing them to do the same learning as the remainder of the class. I did not expect mastery. I aimed for meaningful exposure.</i></p>

Unit Sequence	Teacher Reflections
<p>Ask students to respond to the following questions in their learning journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you learn by examining the pictures from the various locations and several different types of maps? • What did you enjoy about this activity? • What did you dislike? • What would you have changed? • What did you find most challenging? <p>Theme Park Development Project</p> <p>(See the Project Description and Rubric that accompany this lesson. Share the rubric with students so that they have a clear understanding of the expectations.)</p> <p>Explain to the students that they will be applying their new knowledge of economics to their theme park development project. List the following directions on a piece of chart paper and review with the students to ensure they are aware of the expectations for the assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine political, economic, agricultural, and land use maps for each of your locations. • Design one map for each location that includes important information about the economy of this location. <p><i>Optional:</i> Conduct Internet research to find pictures showing the economy of this area to include in your proposal.</p> <p>Extension</p> <p>Engage students in a conversation about where the things they use in their everyday lives come from. Discuss the connection we have to many different parts of the world through the things we use every day. Ask students to check the labels on their clothing, shoes, video games, electronics, and food in their refrigerator or pantry, and design a map showing how they are connected to the world.</p>	<p>Identity Parallel</p> <p><i>I used this learning-journal entry to assess the students' understanding of the lessons concepts, principles, and generalizations. I also wanted to gain feedback concerning their feelings about the learning they had achieved. A majority of the students felt challenged during the lesson. The consensus was that they enjoyed the small group aspects of the lesson and felt they learned from their classmates' thoughts and observations. Many stated that they felt overwhelmed when trying to organize all the information they gained from the maps and then trying to learn from them.</i></p> <p>Practice Parallel</p> <p><i>Differentiation: I intended this project to be a tool for students to apply their new learning independently. A majority of the students achieved a great deal of success with the project and found it very motivating. A small group of students seemed to be overwhelmed with the requirements for the project. I asked these students to choose one or two locations they felt most interested in and focus only on those. I did not feel I was compromising in making this adjustment. These students fulfilled the same requirements on a smaller scale and displayed an understanding of the lesson's major concepts, principles, and generalizations.</i></p> <p><i>The optional portion of the assignment provided an opportunity for above-average students to take their learning to a higher level. In addition, I felt it would give students with a high level of motivation and interest in this project an opportunity to achieve beyond my expectations.</i></p> <p>Identity Parallel</p> <p><i>One of my goals in writing this unit was to make it relevant to the students' lives. I used this learning activity to demonstrate to the students their participation in the world economy. I suspected that they felt somewhat disconnected from the lesson content. I wanted them to see how they fit into the big picture and how the learning they did during the lesson pertained to their lives.</i></p>

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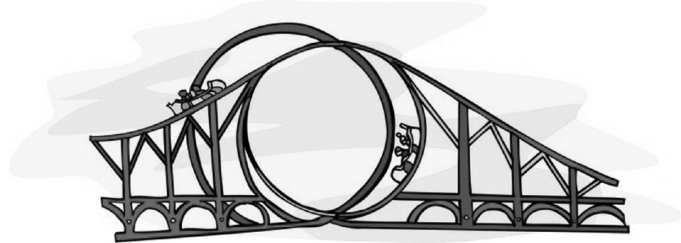
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<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
<p><i>Differentiation:</i> Ask these students to try to find a connection between the types of goods produced in particular locations and the economy of these places.</p>	
Closure	
<p>Engage the class in a discussion about the different economies they have learned about during this lesson. Prompt students using some of the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why are economies in various places different? • What effect does location have on an economy? • What effect does climate have on an economy? • What effect does population have on an economy? • What did you learn about the economy of the United States? • How does this new learning affect your life? • How will you use this new learning? <p>Ask students to respond to the following prompt in their learning journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is an economy? <p>Divide students into small groups and present the following question to the group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the relationship between geography and economics? <p>Ask each small group to develop between one and three ideas and then write them on a piece of chart paper. When the students have completed this assignment, engage the whole class in a discussion around the posted ideas.</p>	<p><i>The purpose of this classroom discussion was to measure the learning the students achieved during this lesson and to identify any misconceptions present. The misconceptions I did uncover, I addressed while the students worked independently on their “Theme Park Development Project.” These conferences allowed me to gain insight into the student’s thought processes and to address the misconception in context.</i></p> <p><i>I included this learning-log entry in the conclusion to assess whether the students developed an understanding of the main concept in this lesson. I felt it was important that they be able to articulate their understanding of this idea in order to move on to the next lesson. In addition, I felt that this would prepare them for the final discussion concerning the relationship between economics and geography.</i></p> <p>Connections Parallel</p> <p><i>The purpose of this closure activity was to address the central theme of the unit and to bring the students’ focus back to the relationships. It was my intention to allow the students more responsibility in establishing the connections in their small groups. I was available for support. I joined in on each small group conversation and provided the groups with the necessary guiding questions to steer their thinking in the right direction.</i></p>

THEME PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Task

You have just been hired as a researcher for a development company. They are looking for the perfect location for their newest theme park. Your first task as a researcher is to provide your superiors with the necessary information to aid them in the decision making process. You will be conducting additional research on the four



locations you began researching for the Climate Map Project. You will compile your information for this assignment into a proposal. The proposal will include the maps and graphs designed during the project, a persuasive essay, and a presentation. Listed below are the additional requirements for the Theme Park Development Project:

Population

- Design a population map for each location.
- The map for each location must include surrounding cities and countries.
- Each map must include the following:
 - title
 - labels
 - key with symbols
 - scale

Demographics

- Research the demographic data for each location (life expectancy, birth rates, family size, etc.).
- No more than three areas should be explored for each location.
- The CIA World Fact Book Web site is a source that will aid you in your research.
- Graph the information you have obtained using Microsoft Excel.

Economics

- Examine political, economic, agricultural, and land use maps for each of your locations.
- Design one map for each location that includes important information about the economy of this location.
- Each map must include the following:
 - title
 - labels
 - key with symbols
 - scale
- *Optional:* Conduct Internet research to find pictures showing the economy of this area to include in your proposal.

Culture

The development company would like to highlight the culture of the location chosen for the theme park. You will be responsible for researching the cultures of each of your locations and suggesting ways in which the elements of culture can be incorporated into the theme park. Possible areas to research include the following:

- religion
- language
- customs
- family structure
- music
- diet

You must also present the development company with language and religion maps for each location and the surrounding cities and countries. Each map must include the following:

- title
- labels
- key with symbols
- scale

Final Requirements

In order to submit your findings to the development company, you must fulfill the following requirements:

- Rank the locations researched from the best location for the theme park to the worst location.
- Write an essay persuading the development company to choose your recommended location.
- Organize all of the material produced (climate, population, economic, and culture maps and demographic graphs) throughout the project and determine the best method for presenting the information to the development company.

THEME PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT RUBRIC



Theme Park Development Project Rubric

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>
Information, analysis, and application	The researcher is successfully able to draw conclusions from the conducted research and make a decision based on the research.	The researcher is able to draw partial conclusions from the conducted research and make decisions based on the research.	The researcher draws inaccurate conclusions from the conducted research.	The researcher is unable to draw conclusions from the research conducted.
Finding relationships	Accurately links climate, population, economic, and cultural resources to the goods, services, and livelihoods of a region.	Adequately links climate, population, economic, and cultural resources to the goods, services, and livelihoods of a region.	Inaccurately links climate, population, economic, and cultural resources to the goods, services, and livelihoods of a region.	No attempt is made to find relationships between climate, population, economic, and cultural resources and the goods, services, and livelihoods of a region.

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<i>Criteria</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>
Maps and Graphs	All maps include required elements (title, labels, key with symbols, scale), are accurate, and are neatly presented. Graphs include title and labels and accurately portray research.	Most maps include required elements (title, labels, key with symbols, scale), are accurate, and are neatly presented. Graphs include title and labels and accurately portray research.	Some maps include required elements (title, labels, key with symbols, scale), are accurate, and are neatly presented. Most graphs include title and labels and accurately portray research.	Maps do not include the required elements and are not accurate or neatly presented. Graphs do not include title and labels and do not reflect the research.
Presentation	Presentation materials are visually appealing and appropriately display information.	Most presentation materials are visually appealing and appropriately display information.	Some of the presentation materials are visually appealing and may or may not appropriately display information.	Presentation materials are not relevant to the conducted research or visually appealing to the audience.
Organization	Organizes information and materials logically.	Organizes information and materials in an acceptable order.	Little organization of information or materials.	No organization of information or materials.

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LESSON 4: THE CULTURE OF GEOGRAPHY (3–4 HOURS)

Concepts

C15: Culture
C16: Language

C17: Religion
C18: Traditions

Principles

P10: Geography has an impact on culture.
P11: Cultures vary around the world.
P12: Examining geography and culture helps us to understand a place.

Skills

S7: Read
S8: Infer
S5: Analyze and interpret information/data

S9: Summarize
S1: Make connections
S3: Determine cause and effect

Standards

SD3: Understands the physical and human characteristics of place
Benchmark: Knows the human characteristics of places (e.g., cultural characteristics such as religion, language, politics, technology, family structure, gender; population characteristics; land uses; levels of development)

Guiding Questions

- What is culture?
- Why is it important to learn about other cultures?
- How does the geography affect culture?

<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
Introduction	
<p>Explain to the students that the relationship they will be exploring during this lesson is the relationship between geography and culture. Engage students in a conversation as to how these two concepts may be connected. Prompt the students with the following guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would the culture of a place be affected if it were located on top of a mountain? On an island? • What effect might a very low population have on a culture? 	<p>Connections Parallel</p> <p><i>Once again, I felt it was necessary to highlight the central concept of relationships to begin the lesson. This discussion focuses on all of the areas we have focused on thus far in this unit. My goal was for students to see that the relationships were not isolated but, rather, all connected in some way. I attempted to initiate this connection in the introduction so the students would have it in mind throughout the course of the lesson. I planned to revisit these same questions in the conclusion.</i></p>

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<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>								
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What effect might climate have on a culture? Might a country with a warm climate have a different culture from one with a cold climate? Why? • How is the culture of a place affected by having a poor economy? 									
Teaching Strategies and Learning Experiences									
<p>Introduce the following scenario to the students:</p> <p>A student from another part of the world is coming to visit our classroom for a few days. This student will also be traveling to other parts of the United States. The United States is very different from her home country. What things about the U.S. would you teach this student in order for him or her to have a successful experience in this country?</p> <p>Record the students' responses on chart paper.</p> <p>Divide students into small groups to role-play their interaction with this student. One student should play the role of the student from another country.</p> <p>Following the role-playing, bring the class together and pose the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did you discover about the culture of the United States from this activity? • How is the culture in the United States different from other cultures around the world? <p>Introduce a fiction or nonfiction book from a country of your choosing. Choose a country that you display an interest in and share your interest with the students prior to the reading. List the following on a piece of chart paper:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>• religion</td> <td>• food</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• language</td> <td>• family</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• government</td> <td>• population</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• technology</td> <td>• land use</td> </tr> </table> <p>Review the terms to ensure the students are familiar with them. Ask the students to keep these concepts in mind as you read the book aloud.</p>	• religion	• food	• language	• family	• government	• population	• technology	• land use	<p><i>The purpose of this introductory activity was to motivate the students and spark interest in the upcoming learning activities. The activity also elicits students' understanding of their own culture and prepares them to think about other cultures.</i></p> <p><i>I wanted the students to realize that the United States is very diverse and a blend of many different cultures.</i></p> <p><i>Differentiation:</i> <i>Students who display interest in this area may want to explore some of the causes for the diversity in the United States.</i></p> <p>Connections Parallel</p> <p><i>When designing this activity, my intention was to provide students with modeling and support with the lesson's concepts, principles, and generalizations.</i></p>
• religion	• food								
• language	• family								
• government	• population								
• technology	• land use								

Unit Sequence	Teacher Reflections
<p>Read the book aloud to the students, pausing to ask guiding questions that lead the students to draw conclusions regarding how these concepts apply to the country in question. Record the information learned about the country on the chart paper corresponding to the appropriate term. In most cases, the chosen book will not address all of these areas. Ask the students to recommend additional sources to examine to help learn the desired information. Research this country according to the students' suggestions. Display a physical or landform map of the country and ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a connection between the physical characteristics of this country and the culture? • What impact might the population have on the culture? • How is this culture similar to the culture of the United States? How is it different? • What impact does religion have on a culture? Multiple religions? <p>Provide students with magazines and access to the Internet. Ask students to design a collage that represents the culture they learned about in the previous learning activity. Encourage the students to be as creative as possible.</p> <p>Remind students of the activity at the beginning of the lesson, where they aided a student from another country. Explain that you are going to turn the tables on them. Instead of teaching a student from another country about the United States, they are going to be the student from the United States visiting another country. Assign a country to pairs of students. Explain to the students that they will be researching this country to identify specific aspects of their culture, such as language, religion, family structure, customs, literature, technology, economy, population, and land use. Provide students such resources as the Culture Shock series of books. The following Web sites will also be very useful to the students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • http://www.oxfam.org.uk/coolplanet/online • http://www.peacecorps.gov/kids 	<p>Connections Parallel</p> <p><i>Reading the book aloud to the students provided me with an opportunity to review basic research and note-taking skills that I found a majority of the students lacked. After completing the research, I asked the students to apply the new knowledge and draw fact-based conclusions about this culture. It was my intention for the students to make connections with the learning done during the previous lessons in this unit.</i></p> <p>Differentiation: <i>This question provided me with an opportunity to explore current events with the students. Students who displayed an interest in this area examined newspapers and appropriate Internet news sites to learn about the impact of religion on cultures. Students who completed this investigation chose to share their learning by role-playing and through the writing of their own newspaper articles. I encouraged them to be creative and share their learning in any form they felt appropriate.</i></p>

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<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
<p>Following the research, assign the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have learned many new things about this culture. Now imagine that you have spent several weeks in this country and write a personal narrative about your experiences in this place. • Compare and contrast the culture you explored with the United States using a Venn diagram. • <i>Differentiation:</i> Answer the following questions in your learning journal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Did the population of this country have an effect on the culture? If so, how? ○ How did the climate affect the culture? ○ How did some of the customs or traditions of this culture originate? ○ Does the economy affect the culture in any way? ○ Are there any defining physical features that contribute to the culture in this country? <p>Engage students in a conversation about the feelings they would have if they actually had to go to a country they knew nothing about. How would they handle these feelings? What would they do to prepare themselves for their trip? Where would they want to go? Why?</p> <p>Extension</p> <p>Share the book <i>Material World</i>, by Peter Menzel, with the students. Explain that the author of this book asked average families from various countries to move all of their belongings outside of their home. The author(s) then photographed the family and their belongings and provided cultural and demographic information regarding the country. Choose picture(s) to display and discuss what these pictures tell the reader about the culture of that country. The pictures and cultures are compared and contrasted.</p>	<p><i>This learning activity directly addresses the standard that requires students to understand the human and physical characteristics of places. The activity was authentic and meaningful to the students. The availability of multiple sources of information provides the students with the opportunity to evaluate the material and determine what is relevant and important for their learning.</i></p> <p><i>These learning-journal entries provided me with necessary information in assessing the students' ability to evaluate and apply the learning they have achieved during the unit. I wanted the students to not only master the content of this unit but to also engage in higher level thinking activities that would affect any area they were trying to make sense of and understand.</i></p> <p><i>I compiled the student-written personal narratives into the class's own "Culture Shock" book. It was bound and placed in the classroom library for all students to enjoy and learn from.</i></p>

Unit Sequence	Teacher Reflections
<p>Theme Park Development Project</p> <p>Explain to the students that for the final piece of their Theme Park Development Project, they will be investigating the cultures of their locations. Provide the students with the following criteria to aid them in completing this portion of the project. Explain that the development company wants to highlight the culture of the location they choose in the theme park. The students will be responsible for researching the location’s culture (religion, language, customs, family structure, music, diet, etc.) and suggesting ways in which these elements of culture can be used in the theme park. To support these suggestions, the development company must be presented with maps depicting the various languages spoken in this location and various religions present in this area.</p> <p>In order for the students to submit their findings to the development company, they must fulfill the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rank the locations researched from the best location for the theme park to the worst location. • Write an essay persuading the development company to choose your recommended location. • Organize all of the material produced throughout the project and determine the best method for presenting the information to the development company. <p>Gather a group of other teachers, the principal, guidance counselors, or other students to play the role of the developers. Allow the students to present their findings.</p>	<p>Identity Parallel</p> <p><i>The departure from the core curriculum detailed here is an effort to allow the students to explore their feelings and ideas about the lesson content. I wanted them to analyze how they would handle this situation if it actually were to happen to them. I hoped that this would lead to an internalization of the lesson’s main concepts.</i></p> <p>Connections Parallel</p> <p><i>The Material World book is a fascinating vehicle from which to examine cultures from around the world. The book could support an entire unit exploring cultures. I found that providing the students with any amount of exposure to this book was beneficial. The students gained so much insight by comparing their home and belongings with those of a country in Africa.</i></p> <p>Practice Parallel</p> <p><i>Once again, this project allows the students to apply the skills and concepts addressed during the previous portions of the lesson independently.</i></p> <p>Differentiation: <i>The requirements for the students to complete this project are very lofty. I did not hesitate to eliminate the persuasive essay from the requirements for those students who seemed overwhelmed by the assignment.</i></p> <p><i>The students responded positively to having people other than their classmates as an audience for their presentations. It made the experience more authentic for the students and they were highly motivated to produce high-quality presentations.</i></p>
Closure	
<p>Engage students in a conversation concerning their feelings about the Theme Park Development Project. What did they like? Dislike? Did they find the requirements overwhelming? What would they change? Would they ever seek a career in this line of work?</p>	

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<i>Unit Sequence</i>	<i>Teacher Reflections</i>
<p>Remind the students of the questions regarding the relationship between geography and culture that they were asked at the beginning of this lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the culture of a place be affected by being located on top of a mountain? On an island? • What effect might a very low population have on a culture? • What effect might climate have on a culture? How might a country with a warm-climate culture differ from a cold-climate country? • How can the culture of a place be affected by having a poor economy? <p>Conduct a whole-class discussion using these questions as a guide. Ask students how their thoughts regarding these questions have changed since the beginning of the lesson.</p>	<p><i>I utilized this conversation to gauge the degree to which the students achieved the goals I set for this lesson.</i></p>