# Salt: White Gold

Students will learn how salt has impacted human history.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Carole Ambroziak</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level</td>
<td>6-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>1-3 class periods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## National Geography Standards

**ELEMENT TWO: PLACES AND REGIONS.**

**ELEMENT FOUR: HUMAN SYSTEMS**
11. The Patterns and Networks of Economic Interdependence on Earth’s Surface.
12. The Processes, Patterns, and Functions of Human Settlement.

**ELEMENT FIVE: ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY**
16. The Changes That Occur in the Meaning, Use, Distribution, and Importance of Resources.

## Arizona Geography Standards

**Concept 1: The World in Spatial Terms**
Grades 6-8
PO 1 Construct maps, charts, and graphs to display geographic information.

**Grade 6**

**Concept 5: Environment and Society**
PO 1 Describe ways that human dependence on natural resources influences economic development, settlement, trade, and migration.

**Grade 7**

**Concept 4: Human Systems**
PO 10. Describe how changes in technology, transportation, communication, and resources affect the location of economic activities in places and world regions.

**Grade 8**

**Concept 4: Human Systems**
PO 7. Describe how changes in technology, transportation, communication, and resources affect the location of economic activities in places and world regions.

**Grades 7 and 8**

**Concept 6: Geographic Applications**
PO 1. Describe ways geographic features and conditions influence history.

## Other Arizona Standards

**ELA Common Core Reading Standards for 6-8 for Literacy in History/Social Studies Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**
6-8.RH.7 Integrate visual information (e.g. in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

**6-8 Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects Production and Distribution of Writing**
6-8.WHST.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

**Research to Build Knowledge**
6-8.WHST.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

## Overview

Throughout history people have placed great value on certain natural resources. Understanding what these resources were and their impact will enhance students' understanding of historical events.
**Purpose**

In this lesson students will gain a better understanding of the lasting impact salt has had on human history. The quest for salt has led to the establishment of trade routes, determined settlement patterns, and affected the movement of people and goods. At times it was considered as valuable as gold.

**Materials**

- Salt Activity Handouts #1-5 and answer keys
- World Map
- United States Map
- Colored pencils or markers
- Graph paper or computer lab for graphing data electronically
- Atlases
- Shallow containers (petri dishes work well)
- Salt
- Water
- Teaspoons and Measuring Cups

**Objectives**

The student will be able to:

1. apply geography to interpret the past.
2. create graphs and thematic maps to organize information.
3. produce a coherent writing after conducting research on one salt related question
4. conduct an experiment in solar evaporation and salt mining.
5. acquire new knowledge about salt and its importance.

**Procedures**

**SESSION ONE**

1. Distribute Salt Activity #4 and explain to students they are going to use the handout to conduct an experiment in solar evaporation and salt mining. Go over the handout to make sure students understand the procedures and expectations. Then, have students work in groups of 2-4 to set up the experiment and make their first observation.

2. Distribute Salt Activity #1. Explain to students they are to select one question to research as homework. If possible, take them to the library or computer lab to begin their research.

**SESSION TWO**

1. As a class, discuss the findings of their research done as homework. This will help them to begin understanding the importance of salt. Collect this handout for evaluation.
2. Distribute Salt Activity #2 and the World Map. Working in pairs, have students complete this activity using an atlas.

**SESSION THREE**

1. Distribute Salt Activity #3 and the United States Map. While reading and discussing the handout, students are to be completing the required activities on the map.
2. Next, have students record their observations on the solar evaporation mining experiment.
3. Distribute Salt Activity #5. Go over the directions to make sure students understand how to complete the activity. Students may use the rest of the class period to complete the assignment using graph paper or by going to the computer lab and using a graphing program to create the image needed.

**BEYOND SESSION THREE**

1. For the next four class periods, give students time to record their observations for the solar evaporation and salt mining experiment.

**Assessment**

Salt Activity #1 may be assessed for language arts (writing) using the Six Traits for Writing with emphasis on Ideas and Content and Organization. A score of 4 out of 6 would be considered mastery.

The World Map used in Salt Activity #2 may be assessed for geographic and reading accuracy. Labeling and coloring correctly 14 out of 18 place names would be considered mastery.

The United States Map used in Salt Activity #3 may be assessed for geographic and reading accuracy. Labeling and coloring correctly 7 out of 9 place names would be considered mastery.

The recorded observations done in Salt Activity #4 may be assessed for language arts using the Six Traits for Writing with emphasis on Ideas and Content. A score of 4 out of 6 would be considered mastery.
The graph created in Salt Activity #5 may be assessed for social studies using the scoring guide that is included on the handout. A score of 8 out of 10 would be considered mastery.

**Extensions**

Students could research and report on other resources that have been highly valued throughout history, i.e. spices, silk.

Students could make a collection of salt sayings and their meanings, i.e. not worth his salt, rub salt into the wound, with a grain of salt, salt of the earth.

**Sources**

www.saltstitute.org
www.saltinfo.com
www.salt.org

“Salt: The Essence of Life”, video, Salt Institute