

Boundaries “R” Us (Are U.S.): Looking at the Boundaries of States and Locations of State Capitals

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| Grade Level | 5 |
| Duration | 2 class periods |

National Standards

Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

Element 2: Places and Regions

4. The physical and human characteristics of places

Element 4: Human Systems

9. The characteristics, distribution and migration of human populations on Earth’s surface

12. The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement

Arizona Geography Strand

ELA

Reading

Key Ideas and Details

5.RI.3 Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

Writing

Production and Distribution of Writing

5.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Other Arizona Standards

The use of geographic representations and tools help individuals understand their world.

5.G1.1 Use and construct maps and graphs to represent changes in the United States.

Examining human population and movement helps individuals understand past, present, and future conditions on Earth’s surface.

5.G3.1 Use key historical events with geographic tools to analyze the causes and effects of environmental and technological events on human settlements and migration. Key concepts include but are not limited to consequences of territorial expansion on American Indians, the institution of slavery, the positive and negative impact of new technologies on the environment and the growth of cities, and the impact of transportation and infrastructure on settlement and migration

Overview

The United States has 50 stories as to how and why the state boundaries are what they are. And each state has a story about why the capital is located in a certain part of the state.

Purpose

In this lesson, students will learn that human and physical features account for locations of state

boundaries as well as the location of state capitals. Students will also practice locating the states of the United States.

Materials

- Boundaries “R” Us (Are U.S.) map
- Boundaries “R” Us (Are U.S.) worksheet and Answer Key
- Computers or hand held devices
- Internet access

- Atlases (optional)

Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. analyze a map to determine the significance of human and physical features.
2. identify patterns in human settlement.

Procedures

SESSION ONE

1. Ask students to recall how Arizona (or your state) got its boundaries and describe the location of the capital.
2. Remind students that geography is looking at the spatial organization of human and physical features. "So today, we are going to analyze human and physical features and learn more about the United States."
3. Divide students into small groups or partners. Distribute the Boundaries "R" US (Are U.S.) map and Boundaries "R" US (Are U.S.) worksheet.
4. Have students label the states with or without assistance from computers or atlases.
5. As a whole group activity, complete sections 1 and 2 on the worksheet.
6. Explain the map work in section 3. While the map is fairly clear in marking rivers and mountains, allow students to use the internet or atlases to determine the boundaries.
7. As students finish section 3, instruct them to move on and complete section 4. This may become homework.

SESSION TWO

1. Begin class with a discussion of section 4 from last session's worksheet. Reinforce that state capitals are often hubs for transportation and industry and as such it is geographically important to have them be centrally located. And since many people will be dealing with the state government, having the capital be centrally located makes travel more convenient for others in the state.
2. Have students (or groups of students) "draw out of a hat" a state capital to research. Have students

use hand held devices or computers to research why this city was selected as a state capital.

3. After about 25 minutes, have students (or student groups) share their research. Create categories on the whiteboard to tally reasons for location sites (near a river, earliest settlement, center of state, center of economy, on a major trail, has a port of entry, etc.). Some capitals may have more than one reason for the capital to be situated in this location.
4. Explain the writing prompt. Have students complete it as homework or in the time remaining.

Assessment

Geography

Students will complete Boundaries "R" Us (Are U.S.) map work and worksheet with an accuracy of 90% or higher accuracy to be considered mastery.

Reading

Students will complete the Boundaries "R" Us (Are U.S.) Part 4 of the worksheet with an accuracy of 100% or higher to be considered mastery.

Writing

Students will score 16 points or higher on the writing assignment to be considered mastery.

Extensions

A similar assignment could be made for national capitals.

Have students look for other patterns such as major cities on rivers or railroad lines.

Add oceans and large lakes as another natural feature. Have students recount the number of states with 1, 2, or 3 colors. Compare this information to the first count using only rivers and mountains.

Sources

Boundaries "R" Us (Are U.S.) map
<http://geoalliance.asu.edu/azga/>