It’s Where??? A Look at the Location of Our First Arizona Territorial Capital and Why It Was Located There

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Grade Level: 4
Duration: 1-2 class periods

National Geography Standards

ELEMENT ONE: THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS
1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.

Arizona Geography Strand

Strand 4: Geography
Concept 1: The World in Spatial Terms
PO 1. Use different types of maps to solve problems (i.e., road maps—distance, resource maps—products, historical maps—boundaries, thematic maps—climates).
PO 7. Locate physical and human features in Arizona using maps, illustrations, images, or images:
   a. physical (e.g., Grand Canyon, Mogollon Rim, Colorado River, Gila River, Salt River)
   b. human (e.g., Phoenix, Yuma, Flagstaff, Tucson, Prescott, Hoover Dam, Roosevelt Dam)

Concept 4: Human Systems
PO 3. Describe how the building of transportation routes (e.g., trails, stage routes, railroad) resulted in human settlement and economic development in Arizona.

Other Arizona Standards

Strand 1: American History
Concept 6: Civil War and Reconstruction
PO 1. Describe events in Arizona during the Civil War:
   a. Battle of Picacho Peak
   b. Battle of Apache Pass
   c. Arizona becomes a territory

Strand 3: Civics and Government
Concept 1: Foundations of Government
PO 3. Describe Arizona’s transition from territory to statehood:
   a. locations of capital
   b. founding people
   c. Arizona’s constitution

Overview

When Arizona became a separate territory in the mid-1800s, a decision had to be made as to where to locate its new territorial capital. Many factors influenced the location, including physical geography, politics, economics, and transportation. In this lesson, students learn about different issues facing Arizona at that time, including the Civil War, and how such issues affected the choice of the capital’s location.

Purpose

This lesson identifies the different factors that influenced the location of our first territorial capital. By examining maps, students will understand the importance of having enough facts to make an
informed decision—in this case, where to locate our new territorial capital.

**Materials**

- The United States and Capitals map (current) (Teacher can show a large USA Map to whole group)
- Arizona Territorial Capital – Map 1
- Arizona Territorial Capital – Map 2
- Landform Regions of Arizona (Labeled)
- Reading Handout 1
- Reading Handout 2
- Map 1 Worksheet
- Map 2 Worksheet
- Transparency of Arizona’s First Capital
- Multiple Choice Assessment
- Multiple Choice Assessment KEY

**Objectives**

The student will be able to:

1. Name 2 territorial towns/forts that had an economic base of mining during the territorial days.

2. Tell at least 2 issues that affected people moving to the Arizona Territory.

3. Identify the impact of the Confederate influence in the Arizona Territory.

4. Use maps to solve problems.

**Procedures**

*Prerequisites: Students should know their cardinal directions (N,S,W,E) and their intermediate directions (NE, SE, NW, SW).*

Teacher Note: This is a good time to point out the difference between the words capital vs. capitol:

Capital – the governmental city of a political unit (such as a state capital like Phoenix, AZ or a national capital like Paris)

Capitol – the building complex of the government, sometimes called the State House (ie., the State Capitol Building)

SESSION ONE

1. Ask the following questions:
   What is a capital city? (the official place where all of our governmental activities take place.) Sometimes it is the largest city but not always. It may be near a physical feature such as a river.

How do you locate a capital on a modern map? (star)

2. Show The United States and Capitals map. Locate Arizona in the USA, What is the capital of Arizona today? (Phoenix) Was it always our capital location? (no) Where was our capital located prior to Phoenix? (It had various locations before it moved to Phoenix) Why would the people of Arizona keep moving the capital? Record the answers given by the students on the whiteboard.

3. Relate that before Arizona became a state in 1912, it was a territory for almost 50 years. When it became a territory in the mid-1800s, the government had to determine the best location for its new territorial capital.

   Explain that we will be using 2 maps of Arizona and decide where the first territorial capital should be located based on the facts shown on each map and information about Arizona at that time.

4. Hand out Arizona Territorial Capital – Map 1. This map includes the New Mexico Territory, its territorial capital of Santa Fe, the Gadsden Purchase, territorial and current boundaries, rivers, mining locations, and towns/forts. The whole map, excluding Mexico (south of the international border), became part of the United States as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

5. As a guided reading activity, use Reading Handout 1. It is background information about Arizona becoming a territory. Emphasize the locations that are in **bold** in the handout. Students will then find the locations on Map 1.

   This reading explains the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, New Mexico Territory, the Gadsden Purchase and the new Arizona Territory.

6. Pass out the Map 1 Worksheet. Students can work individually or be grouped to complete the worksheet. At the end of the worksheet, the student will choose his/her location for Arizona’s first territorial capital and why the location was chosen. Remind students that their decision is based on the facts of the map, and that this may or may not be the actual location of the new territorial capital. Have students share their answers. Answers may vary.

   Possible answers:
   Had water from rivers – Fort Yuma,
   Had jobs in a mining town – Tubac. Fort Whipple
   Near center of territory – Tucson
   Had protection of a military forts – Fort Yuma, Fort Whipple, Ft. Mojave
7. Hand out Arizona Territorial Capital –Map 2. This map shows additional details such as the Bradshaw Mountains, Chiricahua Mountains, the Apache Pass, Confederate Arizona region, the Gila Trail, Beale’s Wagon Road, and the Butterfield Overland Stage Route.

8. As a guided activity, read Reading Handout 2 while looking at Map 2. Show the Landform Regions Map of Arizona as you read the Geography section. Have students locate the 34° N parallel line on each side of their maps. Many of the early requests for an Arizona Territory wanted Arizona to be split from New Mexico along this line. This line would have been Arizona’s northern border. On this map, the diagonal-lined area would have been the Arizona Territory and probably later the State of Arizona! Ask, “Can you see how different our state would have looked if this had happened?” South of this line shows what was the Confederate Territory of Arizona for a short time during the Civil War (indicated by diagonal lines.) Explain that Arizona could only become a territory under the conditions of the Organic Act.

The Organic Act – 1863
1. Made the U.S. Arizona Territory
2. Signed by President Abraham Lincoln
3. Slavery was to be abolished
4. The dividing line between Arizona and New Mexico would be approximately 109° West Longitude.

9. Each student will receive Map 2 Worksheet referring to Map 2 to fill out. At the end of this worksheet, the student will again choose his/her location for Arizona’s first territorial capital. Students may change their decision from the one on Map 1 after taking the following into consideration.

a. Geography (physical location) – availability of water, terrain such as mountains and mountain passes, desert, forests, elevation, grasslands
b. Protection – threats from others such as Indian attacks, wars, location of military forts
c. Economic activities – mining, ranching, farming
d. Civil War – the desires of the North and the South in regards to Arizona
e. Transportation –passable trails, flat lands for future railroad lines and roads,

Have students share their answers and why they chose that location. Share the correct answer as Ft. Whipple.

10. Explain that though there were many things that could have affected the location of our capital, the most important was the Civil War and politics in Arizona.

11. Ask students why they believe the new territorial officials chose Ft. Whipple as the capital? What was there that would have attracted them to this location? What was not there? Look at the Arizona Landforms map. What landform region is this in?

12. Conclude the lesson by showing a transparency of Arizona’s First Capital which says: Our first “temporary” territorial capital was at Fort Whipple near Prescott in 1863. This location was chosen because of the existence of a fort for protection, the nearby gold mines, the location of forests for building supplies, and water in the streams and rivers. The following year in 1864, the permanent territorial capital was moved to the newly-built town of Prescott. It remained there until the Civil War ended, then it moved to Tucson in 1867. Ten years later it moved back to Prescott in 1877 and remained there until 1889. It finally moved to Phoenix where it remained when Arizona reached statehood and still is at that location today.

Capital Location Timeline:
1863 - Fort Whipple (temporary)
1864 - Prescott
1867 - Tucson
1877 - Prescott
1889 - Phoenix

Assessment
Map 1 and Map 2 Worksheets can be graded with 80% or higher considered mastery.

For the Multiple-choice Assessment, 8 out of 10 questions answered correctly will be considered mastery.

Extensions
Have the students create a newspaper advertisement for “selling” Phoenix as the capital.

Sources
Be It Enacted: The Creation of the Territory of Arizona by B. Sacks, M.D. Arizona Historical Foundation. 1964.

The Primary Source Document of the Organic Act that created the Arizona Territory:
http://lcweb2.loc.gov/cgi-bin/ampage?collId=llhb&fileName=037/llhb037.db&recNum=1985


Information about The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo:
http://www.loc.gov/rr/hispanic/ghtreaty/

http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/guadalupe-hidalgo/

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gadsden_Purchase
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http://capitalnews9.com/content/headlines?ArID=46837&SecID=33

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