

Comparing Landscapes: Arizona and South Sudan

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Grade Level 7
Duration 2 class periods

National Standards
GEOGRAPHY
Element 2: Places and Regions
4. The physical and human characteristics of places

AZ Standards
ELA
Reading
Key Ideas and Details
7.RL.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
Writing
Text Types and Purposes
7.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.
a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
c. Use appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.

Arizona Social Science Standards
GEOGRAPHY
Human-environment interactions are essential aspects of human life in all societies.
7.G2.2 Analyze cultural and environmental characteristics that make places both similar and different.

Overview

Deserts, rivers, mountains, plateaus, and plains are found all over the world. But do these physical features all look the same? So to better understand our world, students should know about the diversity of Earth's landscapes.

Purpose

In this lesson students will learn geographic features of South Sudan and Arizona in order to have a

better understanding of how diverse our world is or isn't. Students will read the novel "A Long Walk to Water" to learn about South Sudan and then compare its landscape to Arizona. The activities in this lesson can be templates for analyzing any two landscapes, especially one found in a book and then the student's own environment.

Key Vocabulary

swamp: (noun) land that is always wet
savanna: (noun) large flat grassland with very few trees



lake: (noun) body of fresh water surrounded by land
mountain: (noun) land that is higher than a hill
landlocked: (adjective) surrounded by land
climate: (noun) usual weather patterns or conditions of a region
plateau: (noun) large region that is higher than the surrounding area and relatively flat
river: (noun) large stream of flowing fresh water
desert: (noun) a large, dry area of land usually having less than 10 inches of rain in a year
valley: (noun) area lower than surrounding land

Materials

- World map
<http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/World-at.pdf>
- Vocabulary Cards
- Vocabulary Test
- Comparing Arizona to South Sudan Graphic Organizer
- Comparing Arizona to South Sudan PowerPoint
- Landscapes of Arizona and South Sudan Comparison Paper Scoring Guide
- The Long Walk to Water by Linda Sue Park

Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Describe landforms and geographic features.
2. Compare physical features in two locations in the world.

Procedures

SESSION ONE (Before reading the novel)

1. Introduce the novel by passing out a world map.
<http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/World-at.pdf> Have students identify with an “X” the locations of Arizona and South Sudan. Project the correct answers so students can see how closely they came to the right locations.
2. Draw a KWL chart on the white board. Have students tell you what they know about South Sudan. If they give you correct information that will be put in the K column, ask them to compare this statement to Arizona. Example: Student response--They have a desert. Teacher asks— Does Arizona have a desert?
3. Introduce the vocabulary by giving them the Vocabulary Cards. Have students refer to the images on the card and draw in a picture in the

box that will help them remember the definition for the physical geography terms.

4. Then explain that as they read the novel, they will be looking for descriptions of these physical geography terms. As they find a description of the geography of South Sudan, they should write it in the left column of the Comparing Arizona to South Sudan Graphic Organizer. Tell them to not worry about the right column (Arizona) yet. Distribute the Comparing Arizona to South Sudan Graphic Organizer.

SESSION TWO THROUGH ??????

5. Students are reading the novel and completing column one on the Comparing Arizona to South Sudan Graphic Organizer.
6. Towards the end of the novel, show the Comparing South Sudan and Arizona PowerPoint. Have students add details to the graphic organizer on the South Sudan side and complete the column on Arizona. They should have descriptions for all 10 of the vocabulary words.
7. Have students share the information they have recorded with table partners.

FINAL SESSION

8. Have student write a comparison paper on the topic of comparing the physical features of Arizona and South Sudan. It is a teacher option to allow students to use the graphic organizer as they write. Share the scoring guide with students before they begin to write so they are familiar with the requirements.

Assessment

Geography and ELA

- The Comparing Arizona to South Sudan Graphic Organizer can be graded for accuracy and completeness. Mastery will be considered 100%.
- The comparison paper will be graded with the Landscapes of Arizona and South Sudan Comparison Paper Scoring Guide. Mastery will be considered 48 points or higher.

Extensions

In the book, the main character must carry water for hours a day. Fill containers with water to weigh approximately what she was carrying each day and have students carry the water across the football

field or other area of the school. Have them write a reflection on what this was like and how lucky they are to have water accessible everywhere.

Create a graphic organizer similar to the one in the lesson where students can analyze the cultural characteristics of South Sudan and compare them to the cultural characteristics of Arizona.

Sources

<http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/world-at.pdf>

The Long Walk to Water by Linda Sue Park (\$5.50 on Amazon)