**Zippadeedoda: How to Read a ZIP Code**

Students gain a better understanding of how math is used as a code to designate regions in the US to deliver mail efficiently.

**Author**  Sara Jenkins  
**Grade Level**  4-5  
**Duration**  1 - 2 class periods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Geography Standards</th>
<th>Arizona Geography Strand</th>
<th>Other Arizona Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ELEMENT TWO: Places and Regions 5. People create regions to interpret Earth's complexity. | CONCEPT 2 Places and Regions  
GRADE 4  
PO 1 Describe how the Southwest has distinct physical and cultural characteristics  
GRADE 5  
PO 2 Describe the geographic characteristics of a state in the United States with the assistance of maps, the internet, atlases and other reference materials. | Mathematics Common Core Standards  
Standards for Mathematical Practice  
4.MP.7 and 5.MP.7. Look for and make use of structure. |

**Overview**
The change in the types of mail, the increase in mail volume, the revolution in transportation, along with the rise in manpower costs, made adoption of modern technology imperative and helped produce the ZIP (Zoning Improvement Plan) Code.

**Purpose**
In this lesson students will gain a better understanding of how mathematics is used as a code to designate regions in the United States to deliver mail more efficiently.

**Materials**
- Teacher Information on ZIP Codes  
- ZIP Codes®

**Objectives**
The student will be able to:

1. Identify the ZIP Code National Areas.
2. Identify their sectional facility and their zip code.
3. Given a zip code, tell whether or not it is in Arizona.
Zippadeedodo: How to Read A ZIP Code

Procedures

Before the activity have students bring in cancelled and stamped envelopes from home.

Prerequisite: Students should be able to identify the states in the United States. If students know the post office two-letter state abbreviation, this lesson moves faster.

1. Ask students if they know what their zip code is. Point out the locations on envelopes (a transparency of an envelope with an address and ZIP code is recommended). Also, remember to point out the bar code.

2. Discuss with the students how mail is delivered in the United States. Have the students read ZIP Codes and Zoning Improvement Plan Student Reading. Discuss what ZIP means and why and how ZIP codes are used.

3. With a transparency on the overhead, identify and color the 10 National Areas. Students may color each region a separate color (or you could map color the regions!).


5. Have the students complete Crack the Code Practice Sheet

Assessment

Have the students complete the Zippadeedoda Assessment. Geography mastery is 4 out of 5 questions answered correctly.

Test the students’ math skills by giving 10 zip codes (any that the teacher decides). Students will decode them according to whether or not they are in Arizona. Mastery is 8 out of 10.

Extensions

Visit the local post office and see how the mail is sorted

Research earlier methods the postal service used to sort and deliver mail

Research the new ZIP + 4 Codes

Communicate with Pen Pals

Research mail systems in other countries

Sources

U.S. Postal Service: https://www.usps.com/nationalpremieraccounts/findzipcodes.htm
Mr. Tyler Avondale/Goodyear, AZ Post Office

Signs, Symbols, and Codes