



Mapping Roxaboxen

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Grade Level 3
Duration 2 class periods

National Standards

GEOGRAPHY

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 4: Human Systems

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

AZ Standards

ELA

Reading Literature

Key Ideas and Details

3.RL.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes

3.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

a. Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.

d. Provide a sense of closure.

Production and Distribution of Writing

3.W.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

Arizona Social Science Standards

GEOGRAPHY

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

3.G1.1 Use and construct maps and graphs to represent changes in Arizona over time. Key concepts include but are not limited to locating physical features including the Grand Canyon, Mogollon Rim, Colorado River, Salt River, Gila River. Key concepts include but are not limited to locating human features including major cities, counties, Hoover Dam, Roosevelt Dam, and state capital. Key concepts include but are not limited to distinct physical and cultural characteristics of Arizona including landforms, the 5C's, climate zones, elevations, plants, animals, Arizona's 22 Indian Nations, diverse ethnic, racial, and religious cultures

Overview

Roxaboxen is an imaginary town built by children in early 20th century Yuma, Arizona. After reading about Roxaboxen, students can recall information by drawing a map of the imaginary town and writing about make-believe play of their own.

Purpose

The lesson gives students the opportunity to recall story events while practicing mapping skills. Students will also identify human features of Yuma,

Arizona, and compare the play of children in the past with theirs today.

Materials

- *Roxaboxen* by Alice McLerran, Puffin Books-Penguin Group, New York, 1991. ISBN 0-14-054475-5
- 12 x 18 white construction paper
- Rulers
- Colored pencils or crayons
- Map of Arizona Cities
- A map of Yuma, Arizona
- Scoring guide for Roxaboxen map
- Writing paper

Mapping Roxaboxen

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Make a map based on the events of the story as they occurred.
- Locate Yuma on a map of Arizona.
- Identify human features on a city map of Yuma, or any Arizona city if Yuma map is not available.
- Compare the imaginary play of the children in the story with children today.

Procedures

1. Read the book *Roxaboxen* to the students.
2. Have students orally recount the events in the story as they happened, explaining how Roxaboxen began to grow as buildings were added.
3. Tell students they will draw a map of Roxaboxen as you reread parts of the story.
4. Hand out paper and rulers. Have students lay their paper lengthwise and measure 3 inches from the top edge and both side edges. They will fold these 3 edges back. As these edges are unfolded, it will give students space to add features to their map as Roxaboxen grows.
5. Instruct students to unfold the space on the left in which to make their map legend and compass rose. The map title should be written above the legend.
6. As a whole class activity, list all the human features from Roxaboxen that will be included in their map.
7. Instruct students to list these features in their legends, choosing the symbols they wish to use for each item.
8. Have students draw their maps as you reread portions of the story, starting in the unfolded area of the paper. Remind them that Roxaboxen grows, so their map will also grow as they add places. Use the following information:
Page 2 – River Rhode across the bottom
Page 7 – Main Street and houses for the first 8 children
Page 9 – Town Hall
Page 11 – other streets, house of jewels (unfold top edge as needed)
Page 14 – a bakery and 2 ice cream shops
Page 15 – a jail
Pages 19 - 20 – 2 forts at opposite ends of Roxaboxen (unfold the 2 sides for the forts)
Page 21 – a cemetery
Page 24 – 3 new houses and 2 new shops on Main Street
9. Read the author's note on the last page, which explains that Roxaboxen was located on a hill on the

southeast corner of Second Avenue and Eighth Street in Yuma, Arizona.

10. Use Google Earth, a paper map, or an electronic mapping program such as Google Maps or MapQuest to project the southeast corner of Second Avenue and Eighth Street in Yuma, Arizona. What is there now?

11. Have students identify other human features found on the map of Yuma. Compare this list with the human features the children in the story had in their town. What common features did the children leave out of their town?

12. Discuss how the children in the story played in their make-believe town. Then ask students to write a 1 to 2 paragraph personal narrative. The narrative will explain to a friend a make-believe game they have played or a special place where they have played with their friends.

Assessment

Geography can be evaluated by using the Map of Roxaboxen Scoring Guide. Mastery will be considered 9 points or higher out of the 12 points possible.

The map can be used to evaluate **reading** by using items in the legend to determine whether students correctly recalled events in the story.

Evaluate the personal narrative by using the 6-trait **Writing** Rubric for Voice, Word Choice and Ideas. Mastery will be considered 4 or higher in each category.

Extensions

Discuss and compare other ways life today is different from life in the past. For a good example, see *School Today and Long Ago* and *Now and Then*, in the National Geographic "Windows on Literacy" Series.

Visit the author's website, <http://alicemclerran.us/> for more information about and photos of Roxaboxen. Students may be saddened to learn of Alice McLerran's illness which could lead to a discussion about how our lives can change.

Sources

McLerran, A. (1991). *Roxaboxen*. New York: Puffin Books, Penguin Group. ISBN 0-14-05447