# A Country’s Shape Is More than Its Borders: Population Pyramids

Students learn to read and interpret population pyramids.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Geography Standards</th>
<th>Arizona Geography Strand</th>
<th>Other Arizona Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ELEMENT ONE: THE WORLD IN SPATIAL TERMS</strong></td>
<td>Grade 6</td>
<td>ELA Common Core Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.</td>
<td>Strand 4 Geography Concept 4 Human Systems</td>
<td>Reading Standards for 6-8 for Literacy in History/Social Studies</td>
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<td>4. The physical and human characteristics of places.</td>
<td>PO 1 Interpret the demographic structure of places and regions using a population pyramid Concept 6 Geographic Applications</td>
<td>Key Ideas and Details</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ELEMENT SIX: THE USES OF GEOGRAPHY</strong></td>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>6-8.RH.2 Determine the central ideas or conclusions of a text; provide an accurate summary of the text distinct from prior knowledge or opinions. <strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
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<td>17. How to apply geography to interpret the past.</td>
<td>Strand 4 Geography Concept 4 Human Systems</td>
<td>6-8.RH.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts. <strong>Reading Standards for 9-10 for Literacy in History/Social Studies</strong></td>
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<td>18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.</td>
<td>PO 5 Analyze the effects of settlement on places (e.g., quality of life, transportation, population density)</td>
<td>Key Ideas and Details</td>
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<td>Grade 7 and 8</td>
<td>9-10.RH.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text. <strong>Integration of Knowledge and Ideas</strong></td>
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<td>Strand 4 Geography Concept 6 Geographic Applications</td>
<td>9-10.RH.7 Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text. <strong>Writing Standards for 6-8 for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects</strong></td>
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<td>PO 3 Use geographic knowledge and skills (e.g., recognizing patterns, mapping, graphing) when</td>
<td>Text Types and Purposes</td>
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<td>6-8.WHST.1 Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.</td>
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| | | a. Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue,
Overview

Demographics is the study of population characteristics. Population pyramids examine the age and gender characteristics of a country’s population. Understanding how to read and interpret a population pyramid will give students the opportunity to examine a country’s past, present, and implications for the future through its population.
A Country’s Shape is More than Its Borders: Population Pyramids

Purpose

In this lesson, students will learn how to read and interpret population pyramids and then write a paragraph explaining the implications.

Materials

- A Country’s Shape is More Than Its Borders reading
- Practice Sheet
- Population Pyramid Assessment (multiple choice quiz)
- Assessment Answer Key and Scoring Sheet for Writing Assignment
- Writing Prompt for Paragraph
- Population Pyramids for France, India, and Australia

Objectives

The student will be able to:
- read population pyramids.
- analyze and interpret population pyramids, including writing a paragraph using this information.

Procedures

1. As a class, read and discuss the A Country’s Shape is More Than Its Borders reading. Instruct students to underline/highlight information they feel is important. After each paragraph, have students share what they have underlined/highlighted. Allow time for students to make adjustments and to answer questions.

2. After the reading activity is completed, distribute the Practice Sheet for A Country’s Shape is More Than Its Borders. Students may use the reading to answer the questions. When they are done, have students share answers. Allow time to clarify any questions.

3. Review the important information concerning population pyramids. Then distribute the multiple choice Population Pyramid Assessment. Allow students time to complete and collect for a grade.

After that, distribute the Paragraph Prompt and go over the directions. Allow time to clarify any questions. Students may complete this in class or as homework.

Assessment

The multiple choice quiz may be used for a geography grade. A score of 8 or higher would be considered mastery.

The paragraph may be used for a writing grade. You can use the scoring guide provided (8 or higher would be considered mastery) or use the 6 Trait Rubric for Writing for measuring Ideas/Content (4 or higher would be considered mastery).

Extensions

Students can update the population pyramids using the most current data and compare the changes if any.

Students could make population pyramids using the website http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/informationGateway.php. They could also make population pyramids of their school.

Research US population pyramids for different states to do an analysis of the demographics of our country. http://www.census.gov/population/projections/data/statepyramid.html

Sources

- National Geographic Society 1998 Geography Awareness Week packet
- Geography: Focus on Economics National Council on Economic Education
- http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/informationGateway.php