

Scrambling the United States: Practicing Map Reading Skills and Identifying Characteristics

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Grade Level	5
Class Periods	2

Adapted from a lesson: The Silly States: Where is Your State and City? by Sandra Cloyd

National Standards	AZ Standards	Arizona Social Science 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 3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface Element 5: Environment and Society 15. How physical systems affect human systems 16. The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources	SCIENCE Life Science 5.L4U3.11 Obtain, evaluate, and communicate evidence about how natural and human-caused changes to habitats or climate can impact populations. ELA Reading Integration of Knowledge and Ideas 5.RI.7 Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently. 5.RI.9 Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. Writing Production and Distribution of Writing 5.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. Research to Build and Present Knowledge 5.W.7 Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic and to answer a specific question. Speaking and Listening Standards Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas 5.SL.4 Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.	GEOGRAPHY The use of geographic representations and tools help individuals understand their world. 5.G1.1 Use and construct maps and graphs to represent changes in the United States. Human-environment interactions are essential aspects of human life in all societies. 5.G2.1 Describe how natural and human-caused changes to habitats or climate can impact our world. Global interconnections and spatial patterns are a necessary part of geographic reasoning. 5.G4.1 Describe how economic activities, natural phenomena, and human-made events in one place or region are impacted by interactions with nearby and distant places or regions.

Overview

The United States encompasses a vast territory with different characteristics. Students need to recognize that their state's physical features do not necessarily mirror other states' physical features.

Purpose

In this lesson students will 1) use political maps to give directions utilizing a compass rose and to determine distance by using a scale and 2) use

physical maps to complete a chart of geographical information (climate, vegetation, and natural hazards). This data can then be used to compare states.

Materials

- *The Scrambled States of America* by Laurie Keller or show YouTubeVideo (10.14 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxI9V_LODRM
- U.S. map (with state names) <http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/US-NAMES.pdf>
- Regions of the United States – Teacher’s Key http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/US_Regions_Teacher_Key.pdf
- Switching the States worksheet
- Characteristics of the States worksheet
- Atlases or handheld devices and Internet
- Scramble the States Scoring Guide

Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Use a compass rose to give directions.
2. Use a scale to measure distance on a map.
3. Use a political map to identify states belonging to two different regions.
4. Use a physical map to describe a state’s climate zones, vegetation, and natural hazards.
5. Compare states’ climate, vegetation, and natural hazards.
6. Describe how climate changes affect human systems.

Procedures

SESSION ONE

1. Begin the lesson by reading aloud *The Scrambled States of America* or show YouTubeVideo (10.14 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxI9V_LODRM
2. Tell the students that they will now have the chance to scramble the states themselves by choosing two states and switching their places.
3. Distribute copies of the U.S. map (with state names), Regions of the United States – Teacher’s Key, and Switching the States worksheet.
4. Model how to use the Regions of the United States map to select two states that are in different regions. Emphasize that the farther away the states are from each other, the better. Give students time to write down the state and region names. Instruct students to circle the two states they have chosen on their The United States (with state names) map.

7. Read the directions for the next part of the worksheet to the students. Review how to use a compass rose and give an example of directions using cardinal directions. (i.e. “If I’m switching Oregon with Florida, I can start by telling Oregon to go **east** through Idaho to Wyoming.”) Review how to use a scale and give an example of directions using a scale to estimate distance.
8. Model how they can draw the route on their The United States (with state names) map to help them figure out the directions.
9. Project the Scrambling the States Scoring Guide and explain how the worksheet will be graded.
10. Give students time to write out the directions.
11. Close the session by allowing students to swap directions with a classmate and see if they can follow their classmate’s directions correctly on an unmarked map.

SESSION TWO

1. Distribute the Characteristics of the States worksheet and atlases or allow students to use handheld devices and Internet. Tell them that they will need to find physical maps of the United States depicting climate zones, vegetation, and natural hazards. Model finding one map for the class.
2. Read the directions on the worksheet. Demonstrate how to use the physical maps, focusing on map symbols and legends. Model how to complete the chart by giving an example of a state that no student selected.
3. Project the Scrambling the States Scoring Guide and explain how the worksheet will be graded.
4. Give students time to read the maps and complete the chart on the worksheet. Students should describe the state before it switches places with the second state they chose, and after it switches places.
5. Brainstorm how the changes would affect people. (It would be colder-hotter. There will be more-less forests. There will be less-more earthquakes, etc.) Instruct students to answer the question beneath the chart using complete sentences. Students should refer to the chart for information to answer the question.
6. Close the session by having students summarize their state swap and its effects aloud to the rest of the class.

Assessment

Geography

The Switching the States Worksheet can be graded using the Scrambling the States Scoring Guide. Mastery will be considered a score of 20 points or more.

Geography, Science, and ELA

The Characteristics of the States worksheet can be graded using the Scrambling the States Scoring Guide. Mastery will be considered a score of 20 points or more.

Extensions

An art or writing component can be added to the lesson.

- Students can draw a cartoon of their states.
- Students can create a journal entry from the state's point of view describing their journey around the U.S.
- Students could write a poem using the information they learned about their state.
- Students could write a non-fiction report on their state.
- Students can write an essay comparing and contrasting the two states they chose.
- Students can draw postcards with an image of the state on the front and then a description of one or more changes on the writing side.

Individual students or student groups can do additional research into two states they have chosen, and answer some or all of the following questions:

Wildlife and Climate:

- What types of wildlife live in your state?
- How would climate changes affect the wildlife?

State Symbols:

- What are the state symbols of the states?
- Compare and contrast state symbols.
- Would the state symbols still make sense if the state moved? Why or why not?

Human Features:

- What is the population size?
- What are the largest cities?
- Do the states have any famous landmarks?
- Compare and contrast human features of the two states.

State History:

- Are the states known for certain historic events?
- What type of people settled the state?
- When did the state become a state?
- Compare and contrast state history.

Sources

Keller, L. (1998). *The Scrambled States of America*. New York: Henry Holt and Co. ISBN 0-8050-5802-8.

The Scrambled States of America YouTubeVideo (10.14 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxI9V_LODRM

The Silly States: Where is Your State and City? by Sandra Cloyd

<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/LessonFiles/Cloyd/CloydSillyT.pdf>

Regions of the United States (labeled)

http://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/US_Regions_Teacher_Key.pdf

The United States (states labeled)

<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/US-NAMES.pdf>