

studies benefit from using outlines when the student plots the movement of his family from its country of origin to the United States, and further across the USA to his hometown.



**Regions:** An outline map of the world can be used by the very young to learn the seven continents and four oceans. These large regions of the world are easily distinguished, traced, and labeled. Outlines can be used to learn geographic regions by outlining the regions and labeling them. Other regions, such as agricultural areas, cultural, or religious regions are also easily marked and labeled. You'll find many good thematic maps in an atlas that depicts these regions, as well as regions of population density, average rainfall, land usage, and more.

## HANDS-ON MAPS

Here are some great map activities that will help your students with their geography and add interest to your school day!

### Salt Dough Maps

These maps are simple to make and promote learning in a true, hands-on fashion. Studying ancient Egypt? Print the map of ancient Egypt. Glue it onto a sturdy piece of cardboard. Mix up a batch of salt dough. Color with food coloring before applying, or paint it afterwards. Using food coloring is simple: color dough blue for seas and rivers, green for the fertile crescent, and reddish orange for the desert. Or, paint it after it dries.

Making 3-D maps gives kids a great opportunity to learn how to read topographical maps. Are there mountains in Egypt? If so, where? Use a topographical map in an atlas to help define the fertile crescent, deserts, etc. After spending time with their hands making the map, they'll remember the lay of the land.

Salt dough can be used in other ways, too. Students can demonstrate their understanding by making a 3-D poster of geographic terms. Let them model an isthmus, build a peninsula, and craft a plateau!

Salt dough is easier to work with than most clay, although it does have a tendency to crack as it dries out. Despite that, it's an inexpensive, quick, creative way to learn about the lay of the land. Add twigs, pebbles and grass as needed. Add people for interest: use Legos, plastic figures, or make your own.



Kids remember best what they can get their hands into!



### Time Saving Tip

**Salt Dough Recipe—So Easy!**

2 parts flour  
1 part salt  
1 part water

Mix well. If it's still crumbly, add a bit more water.

