

Mapping the World's Wonders

Activity Guide

Objective

Students will identify key geographical features using map skills and create symbolic representations to enhance their understanding of each feature's significance.

Materials:

- Colorful world map
- Clear overlay with longitude and latitude lines, Equator, and Prime Meridian
- Provided dry erase markers (if you use your own, test to make sure they clean off easily)
- Erasers or cloths for cleaning overlays
- This activity guide.

Preparation:

1. Review the instructions and familiarize yourself with the geographical features and coordinates.
2. Prepare a short introductory presentation on the geography to the country/region, emphasizing diversity and significance. See recommendations.
3. Demonstrate how to use the clear overlay with the map and markers.

Activity Instructions:

1. Introduction (5 minutes): Briefly introduce the geography. Explain how to use the clear overlay and the importance of latitude and longitude.

2. Map Work (30 minutes):

- Divide students into three groups of 5 – 7 and assign 6 landmarks to each group.
- Student groups take turns locating their assigned landmarks and drawing a symbol or representation of each feature on the overlay.
- Encourage creativity but stress symbolic accuracy.

3. Discussion and Sharing (10 minutes):

- Hold a reflective discussion on what was learned.

Assessment:

- Participation and engagement in the activity.
- Accuracy in locating geographical features.
- Creativity and thoughtfulness in symbolic representation.





Georgia Standards of Excellence (GSE) for Social Studies Alignment:

1. Geographic Understandings (Middle School Grades):

- **SS6G:** Locate selected features in Africa, South and East Asia, and Southwest Asia.
- **SS6GI:** The student will locate selected features of Africa, South and East Asia, and Southwest Asia.
- **SS7G:** Understand the diverse geographical features of Africa, South and East Asia, and Southwest Asia.
- **SS7GI:** Find and discuss the locations and characteristics of various geographical features in Africa, South and East Asia, and Southwest Asia.

2. Map and Globe Skills:

- Use a compass rose to identify cardinal directions.
- Use intermediate directions.
- Use a letter/number grid system to determine the location.
- Use latitude and longitude to determine the location.

3. Information Processing Skills:

- Compare and contrast the categories of natural, cultural, and political features found on maps.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Alignment:

1. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7:

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

2. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2:

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

National Geography Standards Alignment:

1. The World in Spatial Terms:

- **Standard 1:** Use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information.

2. Places and Regions:

- **Standard 3:** Understand the physical and human characteristics of places.
- **Standard 4:** Understand the physical and human characteristics of regions.

3. Physical Systems:

- **Standard 7:** Understand the physical processes that shape the patterns of Earth's surface and the characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems.

EXPLORING THE DIVERSITY OF *Africa's* GEOGRAPHY

INTRODUCTION

"When we think of Africa, a myriad of images may come to mind – vast deserts, dense rainforests, wide savannas teeming with wildlife, and towering mountains. Today, we're embarking on a journey to explore the rich tapestry of Africa's geography, understanding how this incredible diversity shapes the continent's culture, history, and global significance."

THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

Script: "Africa is the second-largest continent on Earth, home to over 1.3 billion people and more than 3,000 ethnic groups. It's a land of contrasts, from the Sahara, the largest hot desert in the world, to the lush Congo Basin, the world's second-largest rainforest. Let's dive into these landscapes and discover how they contribute to Africa's unique character."

THE DESERTS OF AFRICA

Script: "The Sahara Desert, stretching over 9 million square kilometers, dominates North Africa. It's not just sand dunes; it includes mountains, oases, and even areas of vegetation. Farther south lies the Kalahari, known not only for its dry terrain but also for its diverse wildlife. These deserts challenge life but are home to resilient communities and diverse ecosystems."

AFRICA'S RAINFORESTS

Script: "In stark contrast to the deserts, the Congo Basin in Central Africa houses the world's second-largest tropical rainforest. This rainforest is a haven for biodiversity, hosting thousands of species, many of which are unique to this region. It's a critical global resource for oxygen production and climate regulation."

THE SAVANNAS AND GRASSLANDS

Script: "The African savannas, such as the iconic Serengeti, are vast grasslands dotted with trees, supporting a magnificent array of wildlife, including elephants, lions, and zebras. These ecosystems play a crucial role in tourism and conservation efforts, drawing attention to the beauty and fragility of Africa's natural environments."

MOUNTAINS, VALLEYS, AND RIVERS

Script: "Africa's geography is marked by breathtaking mountains like Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa, and the Great Rift Valley, a monumental trench stretching over 6,000 kilometers. The continent is also nourished by life-giving rivers, including the Nile, the longest river in the world, which has supported civilizations for thousands of years."

CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Script: "Africa's diverse landscapes have shaped human history and culture in profound ways. However, this rich geography also faces significant environmental challenges, from desertification to deforestation. As global citizens, it's essential to understand and respect the interplay between nature and human activity, ensuring the preservation of this incredible continent for future generations."

CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

Script: "As we conclude our journey through Africa's geography, let's reflect on how this diversity influences not just the continent's ecosystems and wildlife but also its cultures, histories, and our global environment. What aspect of Africa's geography intrigued you the most, and why do you think it's important to learn about these diverse landscapes?"

Unveiling the Mysteries of Southwest Asia's Geography

INTRODUCTION

"Today, we'll embark on an enlightening journey through Southwest Asia, a region often referred to as the Middle East. This area is a mosaic of contrasting landscapes, from vast deserts and rugged mountains to verdant valleys and vibrant cities. Our exploration will unveil how this geographical diversity has been a cradle of civilizations, shaping the region's culture, history, and its role in the global narrative."

THE GEOGRAPHICAL TAPESTRY OF SOUTHWEST ASIA

Script: "Southwest Asia is a crossroads of continents, bordered by Europe, Africa, and the rest of Asia. This strategic location has made it a historical hub for trade, cultural exchange, and conflict. The region is home to the Arabian Desert, the Taurus and Zagros mountains, the fertile crescent, and significant water bodies like the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. Let's delve deeper into these features and their profound impacts."

THE DESERT LANDSCAPE

Script: "The deserts of Southwest Asia, including the vast Arabian Desert, are not mere barren wastelands but landscapes teeming with life and history. These deserts have shaped the nomadic cultures of the region, with oasis settlements serving as crucial trade and cultural exchange points. The adaptation of life here is a testament to human resilience and ingenuity."

MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS

Script: "The rugged mountains of Southwest Asia are not just natural barriers but have been the birthplaces of early civilizations. The Tigris and Euphrates rivers, originating from these mountains, nurtured the fertile crescent, the cradle of civilization. These rivers and their valleys have been the backdrop for the rise and fall of empires, shaping the region's history profoundly."

SEAS AND STRAITS

Script: "The waters of Southwest Asia are vital arteries for global trade and energy supply. The Persian Gulf and the Red Sea are not only rich in marine biodiversity but also in oil reserves, making them geopolitical hotspots. The Mediterranean coastlines of the region have seen the intermingling of cultures, leaving a rich tapestry of heritage and history."

FERTILE LANDS AND URBAN CENTERS

Script: "Amidst the deserts and mountains lie fertile plains that have supported agriculture and civilizations for millennia. Today, Southwest Asia is a blend of ancient and modern, where traditional bazaars exist alongside towering skyscrapers. Cities like Dubai and Istanbul are testaments to the region's rapid development and its pivotal role in the global economy."

CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL NEXUS

Script: "The geographical diversity of Southwest Asia has birthed a mosaic of cultures, languages, and religions, enriching the global cultural heritage. However, this diversity is under threat from pressing environmental challenges. Water scarcity, desertification, and the impacts of climate change are calling for sustainable solutions to preserve this land for future generations."

CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

Script: "As we conclude our journey through the diverse landscapes of Southwest Asia, let's reflect on the intricate ways geography has shaped the region's past, present, and future. How do these geographical features influence the lives of those who call this region home, and what lessons can we learn about resilience, coexistence, and sustainability?"



JOURNEY THROUGH THE LANDSCAPES OF South and East Asia

OBJECTIVE:

"Today, we embark on a captivating journey through South and East Asia, regions renowned for their extraordinary geographical diversity and rich cultural tapestries. From the highest peaks of the Himalayas to the dense tropical rainforests and vibrant urban centers, these landscapes have played a pivotal role in shaping human history, cultures, and economies across the continents."

THE GEOGRAPHICAL DIVERSITY OF SOUTH AND EAST ASIA

Script: "South and East Asia stretch from the frozen tundras of Siberia to the tropical islands of Indonesia, encompassing a wide array of climates and terrains. This region is home to the world's highest mountains, vast river systems like the Yangtze and Ganges, and unique biodiversity hotspots. Let's explore these features and their profound influence on the region."

THE MIGHTY MOUNTAIN RANGES

Script: "The Himalayas, not just a physical barrier between South Asia and the rest of the continent, have been a cultural bridge, nurturing diverse civilizations in their foothills. Meanwhile, East Asia's Kunlun and Tianshan ranges have shaped the climate and water resources, crucial for the region's agriculture and human settlements."

RIVERS: THE LIFELINES OF CIVILIZATIONS

Script: "The great rivers of South and East Asia are the lifelines of the region, supporting billions in their basins. The Yangtze, Asia's longest river, along with the Ganges and Mekong, have nurtured ancient civilizations and continue to be vital for agriculture, drinking water, and transportation."

FORESTS, DESERTS, AND COASTS

Script: "The ecological diversity in South and East Asia is staggering. The region's rainforests are among the most biodiverse on Earth, the Gobi Desert showcases the stark beauty of Asia's interior, and the lengthy coastlines have facilitated trade and cultural exchanges for millennia."

URBAN GIANTS AND RURAL HEARTLANDS

Script: "Asia's urban centers, such as Tokyo, Seoul, and Shanghai, are at the forefront of global innovation and economic power. In contrast, the rural heartlands, with their timeless agricultural practices, remain the soul of Asia's cultural heritage, offering a glimpse into the region's rich traditions and way of life."

CULTURAL RICHNESS AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

Script: "The tapestry of cultures across South and East Asia, from the intricate dances of Bali to the ancient traditions of Japan, is a testament to the region's human diversity. However, rapid urbanization and environmental degradation pose significant challenges, threatening the delicate balance between humans and nature."

CONCLUSION AND REFLECTION

Script: "As we conclude our journey through the diverse landscapes of South and East Asia, let's reflect on the intricate interplay between geography and human development. How do these varied landscapes influence the daily lives and futures of billions? And what lessons can we draw about harmony, resilience, and sustainable coexistence? "

