

Geography of Canada

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Description:

Grade Level:

This activity was prepared for a combination Grades 3-4 class but is adaptable for most grade levels.

Duration:

Three 45-minute sessions

Goals:

The students will understand and recognize the basic geography of Canada.

Objectives:

The students will:

- compare province configurations, similar to and different from each other;
- compare size and configuration, similar to & different from a known US state(s);
- identify and create land forms within a given province;
- locate capital and major cities within a given province.

Background Information:

Before this activity, students will have reviewed landforms and been introduced to Canada via a story called "All For a Fur Cap". (The story concerns a fur trapper's trip from Quebec to the mouth of the Mackenzie River. It vividly talks about the different landforms that the trapper encounters.)

Materials:

- Story "All For a Fur Cap" (taken from *Miracles and Milestones*, a Seventh-day Adventist 5th grade reader)
- An overhead projector
- A landform wall map of the US and Canada
- Two overhead maps one of Canada and one of the US as taken from *Canada Social Studies Activity Book*.
- Teacher's landform model of a province (made prior to class)
- Pre-cut tag board shapes of the different provinces (The purpose of the pre-cut provinces, for tracing, is for all the provinces to fit together to form a large puzzle of Canada).
- Enough tag board for each group to trace around the pre-cut template, scissors.
- Pre-mixed flour, salt, water dough mixture (you may substitute air drying, or modeling clay)
- Paint (different mediums can be used, i.e. markers, crayons)

Procedures:

Day One

1. Display the wall map of Canada and US, review the basic landforms (i.e. rivers, mountains, prairies, etc.) Discuss the similarities of landforms in the two countries (i.e. mountains ranges in the west, prairies in the center, Appalachian extension in the east.) Discuss the differences among landforms in the two countries (i.e. tundra and ice in the north, Canadian Shield, deserts, etc.)
2. Display the Canadian overhead map and discuss the size and configuration of the different provinces.
3. Teacher will then overlay the US transparency on top of the Canadian map. Have the children share their observations of similarities and differences in size and configuration, comparing the states to the provinces. (From their observations, have the children come to an understanding that the size of ten provinces and three territories is larger than the fifty US states).
4. Students discuss why they think there are such differences and similarities between state and province size, and landforms. If time permits, move into Day Two activities.

Day Two

1. Divide students into groups of two: one third and one fourth grader. (Teacher displays and explains his/her model).
2. Pass out needed materials to each group. (Pre-cut shape of a province/territory, tag board, scissors).
3. Students first trace onto tag board the pre-cut provincial/territory shape.
4. Students proceed to a designated table where they begin placing landforms on map, by utilizing the available media (flour, salt, and water mixture, or clay). The recipe for the model mixture is equal amounts of flour and salt with enough water to make soft dough. Everything is water soluble so protective clothing isn't needed.
5. When students have completed this, they will clean area and themselves, and let dry until the next day.

Day Three

1. Teacher, using a painted (colored) and labeled provincial model, exhibits the next step to the students.
2. Teacher and helpers pass out needed supplies (paint, markers, etc.).
3. Students paint (color) according to land forms, after first establishing a color key, (i.e. green= prairies, brown= mountains, blue= water).
4. A rose compass will be added.
5. While the paint, (color) is drying, students will work on designing computer-generated labels from a pre-designated teacher's list of provincial/territorial capitols, major cities, rivers, lakes, and mountains.
6. Students attach labels to their maps.

Assessment:

Students will be assessed on:

- Accuracy of landforms and capitol and city placement
- Overall appearance of map
- Oral presentation

Student Rubric:

Each group will show and explain about their provincial landform maps. After the presentations, students will put their provinces together to form the country of Canada. An additional extension would be for the students to research and write about their province.

Additional Notes:

The concepts of this activity are for students to demonstrate their recognition of Canada's landforms and to create a map illustrating land forms, capitols, and major cities within a given province.