

Canada's Regions

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Description:

This lesson is designed to help students learn about the different physical geographic regions of Canada.

Grade Level:

6th and 7th Grade

Subject(s):

Social Studies

Duration:

6th grade - approximately two 45-50 minute class periods
7th/8th grade - approximately two 45-50 minute class periods

Objectives:

- To get students to visualize the physical geography of Canadian regions.
- To get students to think about how the geography affects the people in those regions.
- To expand the understanding that Canada has 7 physically distinct regions.

Materials:

- Pre-cut regions of Canada on large butcher paper (draw regions by using overhead to enlarge map leaving out the region names, then cut them out). There is a regional map on page 15 of *Canada: Northern Neighbor*
- Notecards with descriptions of regions (1 for each; see *important information* at end of lesson plan)
- Crayons/colored pencils
- Tape
- Physical map displayed in classroom (if you don't have one, make copies of a small one for students)
- Political maps of Canada (outline map without names found on page 75 of *Canada: Northern Neighbor* (one for each student)
- Overhead of political map for drawing regions (to show overlap)

Procedures:

1. Introduce lesson explaining that students will use a written description of a region in Canada to visualize and draw on their cut-out region.
2. Divide students into 7 cooperative groups.

3. Assign roles within the groups (artist(s), facilitator/timekeeper, reader, and presenter). As the number of students in these groups varies according to class size, roles can be adjusted.
4. Hand out cut-out regions and notecards (1 notecard corresponding to each region)
5. Monitor student progress as they work to create the regional descriptions on the paper.
6. Beginning with the west coast, each individual group presenter displays his/her cut-out region and explains to the class by reading the information on the notecard and explaining how that corresponds with what is drawn on the map.
7. Teacher draws parallels from student drawings to physical map. Discuss how physical maps use elevation, charts, color, etc. to portray features similar to those on the students' maps. Continue discussing how the information on the students' maps may affect the people living in those areas.
8. Distribute political maps to students. Discuss how the different regions cross over the provinces and territories of Canada.
9. Using the overhead transparency of the political map, draw and label the regions as the students copy onto their papers. This demonstrates how different regions can overlap several areas. (You may or may not want to include the names of each province and territory at this time depending on if the students have already been familiarized with them).
10. Review the activity emphasizing what is found (physically) in each region. Explain that this information will be referred to again when discussing the politics and economics of Canada.

Assessment:

Students will be evaluated using a checklist. They must include at least 4 physical characteristics on their drawings and be able to explain them. At some future point, they should be able to explain the significance of Canadian regions (i.e. how Canada is divided physically, economically, culturally, etc.)

Student Rubric

4 points (A): Students include at least 4 physical characteristics on the map. The information is extensively explained to the class. Ideas are communicated clearly.

3 points (B): Students include 4 physical characteristics on the map. The information is broadly explained to the class (with less detail). Some ideas are communicated clearly.

2 points (C): Students include at 3 physical characteristics on the map. The information is minimally explained to the class. Presentation lacks organization in communication of ideas.

1 point (D): Students included 2 physical characteristics on the map. The explanation of those characteristics demonstrates a basic understanding of the concepts. Presentation lacks organization and detail.

0 points (F): Students include only 1 physical characteristic on the map. Students fail to explain this characteristic, or students do not complete the project.

Additional Notes:

A list of physical and cultural aspects is attached for your use (on the notecards). Only the physical aspects are used for this lesson. You may adjust the list according to your students' understanding. This lesson can be connected with later lessons (e.g. west coast reliance on fishing). One option is to have students evaluate their own abilities to work in cooperative learning groups.

Canada: Regions

Physical Aspects

Cultural Aspects

1. Appalachian Mountains

poor soils, marginal agr. Climate, modest forest res., imp. Fishing resources, petroleum off shore, rolling hills, rugged coastline

Settled by loyalists = Eng/Ir/Scot farmers out migration, modest higher education, bypassed by immigrants, resource oriented economy (fishing), "have not" region of Canada

2. St. Lawrence Lowland

flat-drainage issue, good soil adequate agr. Climate, useful rivers, transportation, hydro generation, mild climate, evergreen forest in north, wheatfields, livestock ranches oil and gas resources

immigration cut off in 1760, water trans., RR, dairying, Montreal, Quebec

3. Great Lakes Lowland

Absence of barriers, good soils (glacier origin), good agric. climate, great lakes with multiple functions, fairly flat

Heartland of Canada excellent transportation (water, St. Lawrence Seaway, rail/hwy/air), goes up to Quebec city, corporate headquarters, manufacturer employment, bus services, immigration destination

4. Canadian Shield

Ancient crystalline rock, glacial erosion, limited soil, poor climate for agric/forestry, rugged (scoured by glaciers in past), many small lakes and rivers

Few people, resource oriented, Cree-Quebec Hydro conflict

5. Interior Plains (prairies)

Rigorous climate temperature, extreme rainfall variability, marginal growing, season/rainfall, good soil, flay-lying sedimentary rock, treeless in south

European settlement followed R/R 1890-1910, wheat breeding, grain, Leduc 1947 (oil find), Winnipeg Gateway, potash

6. B.C. "Lotus Land" Western Cordillera

Mountainous, plains, W. coast marine climate with mountain Modifications, limited agric. Land, forests, natural gas, Minerals, coal, fishing

SW corner population concentration, agric. land reserves, crops similar to WA, Envir. Protection, software, B.C./WA conflicts (wtr/fish), B.C./WA cooperation

7. The North

Restrictive climate,
permafrost, no forests,
no agriculture, petroleum,
minerals, rocky, no soil,
frozen water

Very few people, Inuit/
Denendeh, rotating
population for resource
exploitation, high cost
transportation (air
dominance), population
divided between Inuit
and Denendeh