

Defining Regions – Grade Five

Ohio Standards Connection:

Geography

Benchmark B

Identify the physical and human characteristics of places and regions in North America.

Indicator 5

Explain, by identifying patterns on thematic maps, how physical and human characteristics can be used to define regions in North America.

Lesson Summary:

This lesson will help students explore and understand the definition of a region. Students will work in cooperative-learning groups to research North American regions and create presentations to share with their classmates. To show what they have learned, students will create maps of North American regions and write explanations of what characteristics make the regions different from the surrounding areas.

Estimated Duration: *Three hours*

Commentary:

This lesson introduces regions in North America and fits well at the beginning of the fifth-grade study of North America. During this lesson, students are challenged to identify factors that determine regions, create thematic maps based on one of those factors and teach the class how that factor can be used to divide North America into regions. One reviewer stated that this lesson is “in-depth with great activities for the students. I really like the extension activities and the interdisciplinary connections.”

Pre-Assessment:

Have students answer the three questions on Attachment A, *What is a Region?*

Scoring Guidelines:

The pre-assessment may be scored using the rubric provided on Attachment B. Use the pre-assessment and teacher judgment to determine how much students already know and to plan instruction.

Suggested Answers:

1. Region: an area with one or more common characteristics or features, that give it a measure of homogeneity and make it different from surrounding areas.
2. Answers could include physical regions (e.g., coastal plain, Midwest, Rocky Mountain states, desert, etc.) or human regions (e.g., Spanish-speaking areas, urban areas, Corn Belt). See Attachment E for more examples.
3. Students should list characteristics that make an area different from surrounding areas.



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Post-Assessment:

Have students complete Attachment C, *Post-Assessment*. Provide students with an outline map of North America to draw in regions for question number four.

Scoring Guidelines:

Use the rubric provided on Attachment D, *Post-Assessment Rubric*, to assess student understanding.

Instructional Procedures:

Day One

1. Conduct the pre-assessment using Attachments A and B.
2. Have students brainstorm criteria that can be used to define regions. For example, growing seasons, animal habitat, climate, natural vegetation, political boundaries, cultures, languages, land use, agriculture or even sports divisions. Background information is available on Attachment E, *Examples of Types of Regions*.
3. Create a list of criteria from student responses.
4. Through class discussion, have students categorize criteria as physical or human. Work with students to infer what characteristics might be used to define these types of regions. Students may infer that agricultural regions are defined based on the crops grown in different areas.
5. Ask students to brainstorm names of regions that would fit into these criteria. Sample answers are available on Attachment E. Help students identify some of these regions from their prior knowledge. Students also can be provided with atlases to help them identify possible regions. Record student responses on a class chart.
6. Ask students to identify the region in which they live. Explain that one place may be considered to be part of more than one region depending on the criteria used. For example, Illinois could be identified as part of the Midwest, the Great Plains or the Corn Belt. Ask students to identify two regions that include Ohio.

Day Two

7. Divide the class into heterogeneous groups of two to four students. Assign each group a criterion by which they must divide North America into regions: crops, terrain, language, growing season, land use, political boundaries. (Other criteria may be used depending upon information available in student textbooks or atlases.)
8. Explain that each group will be responsible for teaching the class about how North America can be divided into regions using its assigned criterion.
9. Have students use available classroom resources to gather information about their topics and create posters explaining the regions created by their criteria. Instruct students to create a thematic map that includes a title and key as part of their poster.
10. Instruct students to prepare to teach their classmates why the regional boundaries are drawn where they are. What makes each region different from another? For example, a group studying land use might explain that the boundaries are not drawn based on state borders, but based on where certain types of land use are more popular or profitable. The



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people in each region use their land differently. For example, the people who live in the manufacturing region use the land to build factories that produce goods.

Day Three

11. Provide students with enough outline maps of North America to take notes during each group's presentation. On each map, have students write a title and draw in the regions described in the presentation. On the back of the map, have students write five facts from that presentation.
12. Provide time for students to share their posters and information with the class. During each presentation, allow students enough time to draw the regions on their maps and ask questions.

Day Four

13. Conduct the post-assessment using Attachments C and D.

Differentiated Instructional Support:

Instruction is differentiated according to learner needs, to help all learners either meet the intent of the specified indicator(s) or, if the indicator is already met, to advance beyond the specified indicator(s).

- Provide students with a list of keywords they may use as they research their topics.
- Limit the number of criteria for identifying regions.
- Have students work individually, with partners or in heterogeneous groups.
- Challenge students to identify other types of regions, research and report on them to the class.
- Any student wishing to explore a region in greater depth should be encouraged to do so.

Extension:

- Have students complete a Venn diagram comparing two regions.
- Have students create their thematic maps on transparencies. Overlay the transparencies to compare different types of regions and regional boundaries. Have students look for and discuss regional patterns.

Homework Options and Home Connections:

Have students look for examples of regions referred to in the newspaper or in Internet news reports. Have students summarize these stories and locate them on a North American map.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

English Language Arts

- **Research**
Benchmark A: Formulate open-ended research questions suitable for inquiry and investigation and develop a plan for gathering information.
Indicator 1: Generate a topic, assigned or personal interest, and open-ended questions for research and develop a plan for gathering information.

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Benchmark C: Organize information in a systematic way.

Indicator 3: Identify important information found in sources and paraphrase the findings in a systematic way (e.g., notes, outlines, charts, tables or graphic organizers).

Benchmark E: Communicate findings orally, visually and in writing or through multimedia.

Indicator 6: Use a variety of communication techniques, including oral, visual, written or multimedia reports, to present information gathered.

The Arts: Visual Arts

- **Connections, Relationships and Applications**

Benchmark C: Use key concepts, issues and themes to connect visual art to various content areas.

Indicator 3: Use artwork to communicate and enhance understanding of concepts in other subject areas (e.g., science, English language arts, mathematics and social studies).

Materials and Resources:

The inclusion of a specific resource in any lesson formulated by the Ohio Department of Education should not be interpreted as an endorsement of that particular resource, or any of its contents, by the Ohio Department of Education. The Ohio Department of Education does not endorse any particular resource. The Web addresses listed are for a given site's main page, therefore, it may be necessary to search within that site to find the specific information required for a given lesson. Please note that information published on the Internet changes over time, therefore the links provided may no longer contain the specific information related to a given lesson. Teachers are advised to preview all sites before using them with students.

For the teacher: Chart paper, books, reference resources.

For the students: Books, reference resources, poster paper, computer, art supplies.

Vocabulary:

- region
- land use
- vegetation
- agriculture
- climate
- tropic
- arid
- tundra
- glacier
- plateau
- plain



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- tropical
- temperate
- manufacture
- subsistence
- livestock

Technology Connections:

- Have students create a slide-show presentation to share regional information.
- Have students use a web-creating program to organize the different types of regions.
- Encourage students to use mapping programs and GIS software to study further and report on North American regions.
- As students create their thematic maps, have students access The National Atlas of the United States provided by the United States Department of the Interior:
<http://www.nationalatlas.gov/index.html>

Research Connections:

Marzano, R. et al. *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement*, Alexandria, VA.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 2001.

Cooperative-learning strategies strongly affect student learning. They include:

- Positive interdependence;
- Face-to-face interaction;
- Individual and group accountability;
- Interpersonal and small-group skills;
- Group processing.

General Tips:

Check your classroom resources for information about North American Regions. Regional definitions are not universal and may vary in textbooks and atlases. Assign students topics for which information is readily available.

Attachments:

Attachment A, *What is a Region?*

Attachment B, *Pre-Assessment Rubric*

Attachment C, *Post-Assessment*

Attachment D, *Post-Assessment Rubric*

Attachment E, *Examples of Types of Regions*



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Attachment A What is a Region?

Name: _____

1. What is a region? _____

2. Give four examples of regions in Ohio, the United States or North America.

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

3. Describe each region. What characteristics make this area different from others?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____



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Attachment B Pre-Assessment Rubric

Name: _____

4 Strong Understanding	3 Good Understanding	2 Satisfactory Understanding	1 Minimal Understanding	0 Little or no Understanding
Includes a detailed and accurate definition of a region.	Includes an accurate definition of a region.	Includes an incomplete definition of a region.	Includes an unclear definition of a region.	Does not include a definition of a region.
Correctly identifies four regions.	Correctly identifies three regions.	Correctly identifies two regions.	Correctly identifies one region.	Does not identify any regions.
Accurately describes four regions.	Accurately describes three regions.	Accurately describes two regions.	Accurately describes one region.	Does not accurately describe any regions.

Grade: _____/12

Comments:



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Attachment C Post-Assessment

Name: _____

1. What is a region? _____

2. Give four examples of criteria that you could use to divide North America into regions.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 2. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 4. _____ |

3. Choose a criterion to divide North America into regions. Use an outline map to draw a map showing the different regions created by that criterion. Be sure to label each region and include a title and key on your map.

4. Explain what makes each of the regions different from the surrounding areas.

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Attachment D Post-Assessment Rubric

Name: _____

4 Strong Understanding	3 Good Understanding	2 Satisfactory Understanding	1 Unsatisfactory Understanding	0 Little or no Understanding
Includes a detailed and accurate definition of a region.	Includes an accurate definition of a region.	Includes an incomplete definition of a region.	Includes an unclear definition of a region.	Does not include a definition of a region.
Correctly identifies four types of regions.	Correctly identifies three types of regions.	Correctly identifies two types of regions.	Correctly identifies one type of region.	Does not identify any types of regions.
Includes an accurate map of North American regions including clearly labeled regions, a title and key.	Includes an accurate map of North American regions including clearly labeled regions.	Includes an incomplete map of North American regions; may be missing region labels, title or key.	Includes an unclear map of North American regions.	Does not include a map of North American regions.
Provides an accurate and detailed description of what makes each region different from surrounding areas.	Provides an accurate description of what makes each region different from surrounding areas.	Provides an incomplete description of what makes each region different from surrounding areas.	Provides an unclear description of what makes each region different from surrounding areas.	Does not include a description of what makes each region different from surrounding areas.

Grade: _____/16

Comments:



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Attachment E Examples of Types of Regions

Physical Regions

North American Topography	Climate	Natural Vegetation	Biomes
Atlantic Coastal Plain Appalachian Mountains Central Lowlands Great Plains The Rocky Mountains and Coastal Ranges Intermountain Region Canadian Shield	Tropical Semi-arid Arid Humid continental Mediterranean Marine Subarctic Tundra	Needleleaf trees Mixed trees Broadleaf trees Grass Grass with shrubs Shrubs Tundra Barren land	Tropical forest Grasslands Temperate forest Mountain Boreal forest Desert Tundra

Human Regions

Political Boundaries	American Indian Cultures	Language	Land Use	Agriculture	NCAA Basketball Regions
Northeast Southeast Midwest Southwest Rocky Mountain Pacific	Arctic Subarctic Pacific Northwest Coast Great Plateau California Great Basin Plains Northeastern Woodlands Southeastern Woodlands Desert Southwest	Spanish French English American Indian languages	Manufacturing Subsistence farming Ranching or grazing Crops and livestock Forest products	Dairy Cattle Sheep Poultry Corn Wheat Vegetables Cotton Tobacco Mixed farming	West Midwest East South