



# GEOGRAPHY AND YOU



In this learning plan, students will explore the impact of geography on personal identity through a series of engaging activities. Students will investigate the role the geographical features play in the development of communities and, by extension identity formation.



## STANDARDS

- NYS K-8 Social Studies Framework: Grade 4: Social Studies Practices:
  - A: Gathering, Interpreting, and Using Evidence
  - B: Chronological Reasoning
  - D. Geographic Reasoning
- NCSS Standards: Theme 3: People, Places, and Environments

## OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Students will be able to identify key vocabulary related to the study of geography.
- ✓ Students will be able to understand the importance of geographical features on personal and community identity.
- ✓ Students will be able to analyze their school identity as it relates to local geography.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

What are key terms related to geography?

How do geographical features impact the formation of our community, school, and personal identities?

Why do we incorporate geography into our identity formation?

## MATERIALS

- What's Geography Anyway? worksheet
- Geography And Culture worksheet
- Geography And Identity Get Personal worksheet
- Geography And Identity Matching Game
- Our Geography, Our School Project worksheet
- Images, maps, or videos that illustrate the case studies in lesson plan (optional)
- Local maps for student reference
- Art supplies (colored pencils, markers, crayons, etc.)
- Poster paper or large sheets of paper
- Digital tools for creating digital projects (optional)



## ASSESSMENTS

Formative assessments and checks for understanding occur throughout the lesson:

- Students' participation in discussion
- Student completion of activities, including worksheets and projects

**Summative Assessment:**  
Our Geography, Our School  
Project

## DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES

- Provide visual organizers to support oral information/instruction.
- Allow students to work independently or in small groups.
- Allow students who need support with fine motor skills to film their summative assessment and submit it digitally.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Consider how identities can be impacted by the location of the state where they live.
- Students can create a short digital collage about the geographical factors that impact their school's identity and what makes it unique.





# ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

## Activity 1

### What's Geography Anyway?

Students will explore key vocabulary related to geography.

## Activity 2

### Geography And Culture

Students will discuss how geography impacts the development of culture.

## Activity 3

### Geography And Identity Get Personal

Students will consider how their geographical location affects their identity.

## Activity 4

### Geography And Identity Matching Game

Students will explore the relationship between identity and geography.

## Activity 5

### Our Geography, Our School Project

Students will analyze the impact of geographical features on their school identity.

## ACTIVITY 1: WHAT'S GEOGRAPHY ANYWAY?

Prior to this activity, procure several images:

- Images of different cultures from geographic regions around the world, which could include desert bedouins of Asia, the Inuit tribe of the Arctic Circle, the Masai tribe of Kenya, etc.
- Images of different geographical features, which could include mountain ranges, deserts, oceans, bays, etc.
- Write the heading: "Geography can impact our identity." on a board or large piece of paper.
- Share images of different cultures and geographical features with students on a board or wall in the learning environment.
- Inform students that the images represent different aspects of geography and invite them to think about what the terms geography and identity mean to them.
- Provide a copy of the What's Geography Anyway? worksheet and review the instructions with students.
- Analyze the display with students and facilitate a brief discussion using the Think-Puzzle-Explore thinking routine. Consider the following together:
  - What do you think you know about the topic?
  - What puzzles or questions do you have about geography?
  - How can we explore the topic of geography to create a deeper understanding of the subject?



# GEOGRAPHY AND YOU



## CONTINUED -- ACTIVITY 1: WHAT'S GEOGRAPHY ANYWAY?

- Provide time for students to work independently or with a partner to complete the chart on their worksheet.
- Encourage students to share their ideas and record them for further discussion.
- Share the definition:
  - Geography is the study of places and the relationships between people and the environments where they live.
- Inform students that they will be exploring how geography impacts their culture and identity.
- Share the following definitions and encourage students to use them to complete their worksheets.
  - Geography: The study of places and the relationships between people and the environments where they live
  - Identity: The qualities, beliefs, personality, looks, and expressions that make a person or group different from others
  - Region: An area of land that has common features; natural or man-made features can define a region
  - Climate: The weather conditions prevailing in an area over a long period
  - Culture: The customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group
  - Environment: The surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates
  - Group Identity: The sense of pride or belonging that individuals draw from membership in various groups, be they of a certain ethnicity, nationality, religion, profession, etc.
- Invite students to reflect on the vocabulary words by sharing which they feel is most important to their understanding of geography and why.



# GEOGRAPHY AND YOU



## ACTIVITY 2: GEOGRAPHY AND CULTURE

Prior to this activity, prepare case study materials (texts, images, maps, etc.) for three different/distinct cultures.

- Share the images of different groups of people and different geographical locations.
- Invite students to match the culture with the geographic features present in their environment, e.g., the Masalai with the desert and the Inuit peoples with the Arctic.
- Explain that the environment where we live impacts our culture and identity in several ways.
- Share and discuss the following:
  - What We Do for Fun: Where we live can influence what we do for fun. For example, people who live near the ocean might enjoy swimming or fishing, while people who live in the mountains might like hiking or skiing.
  - What We Think is Important: What's around us can change what we think is important. For example, people who live in forests might think it's really important to take care of nature.
  - Jobs We Do: Where we live often decides the jobs we have. For example, if you live in a place with lots of farms, you might be a farmer. If you live in a place with lots of minerals, you might work in a mine.
  - What We Eat: Where we live changes what food we can get. For example, people who live near the sea might eat lots of fish, while people who live where there's lots of farmland might eat lots of fruits and vegetables.
  - How We Talk: Where we live can even change how we talk. For example, if people live in a remote area, they might have a different accent or vocabulary words.
- Introduce the case studies that will be examined during the lesson.
- Walk through the case study materials (e.g., books, maps, websites) as a class, discussing the key points and how geography has influenced people's lifestyles and identities.



# GEOGRAPHY AND YOU



## CONTINUED -- ACTIVITY 2: GEOGRAPHY AND CULTURE

- Encourage students to ask questions and engage in discussion.
- Provide each student with a copy of the Geography and Culture worksheet.
- Review the instructions with students to ensure understanding.
- Divide students into groups of three and assign each a region/group to read about, discuss, and summarize.
- Invite groups or individuals to share their biggest takeaways from their case summary.
- Reflect on the commonalities and differences between the case studies.

## ACTIVITY 3: GEOGRAPHY AND IDENTITY GET PERSONAL

- Invite students to consider the importance of personal geography and how it impacts our identities.
- Engage students in a brief discussion about their ideas and record them on the board or a large piece of paper.
- Provide each student with a local map and identify key geographical features of their neighborhoods or towns.
- Distribute the Geography And Identity Get Personal worksheets to each student.
- Read through all instructions with students.
- Model how to use the maps and personal experiences to answer the questions by walking through the first few questions with them.
- Allow students time to complete all questions and activities.
- Encourage students to share some of their responses and discuss common themes and unique insights.



# GEOGRAPHY AND YOU



## ACTIVITY 4: GEOGRAPHY AND IDENTITY MATCHING GAME

- Review the ways that geographical locations can impact the personal identities of students.
- Allow students to use notes and previous activities to participate in the discussion.
- Record student responses on the board or a large paper in the learning environment.
- Inform students that they will be playing a game to demonstrate their understanding of the concepts they have discussed.
- Encourage students to work with a partner or in small groups of up to three students.
- Provide each student with a copy of the Geography And Identity Matching Game worksheet.
- Read through the instructions with students to ensure they understand.
- Model the thinking process by walking through one example with students, and encourage them to record the rationale for their choices.
- Engage students in a brief discussion about their answers and allow students to share the rationale behind their choices.
- Reflect on the most challenging part of the game with students.



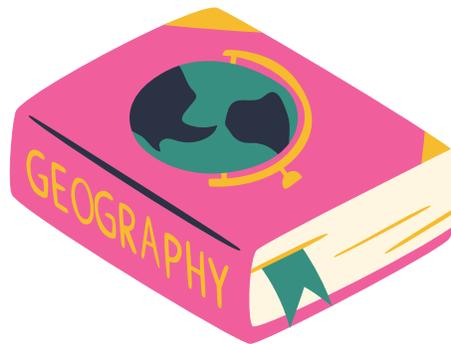


# GEOGRAPHY AND YOU



## ACTIVITY 5: OUR GEOGRAPHY, OUR SCHOOL PROJECT

- If you have one, share your school motto with students, and invite them to share what it means to them.
- Discuss the school's geographic location and encourage students to consider the natural and man-made features they notice around their learning environment. This could include anything from the climate and vegetation to nearby landmarks and buildings.
- Consider how these features might impact daily school life.
- Inform them they will be completing a project to assess their understanding of how geography impacts their school identity.
- Provide a copy of the Our Geography, Our School Project worksheet and review the directions with students.
- Encourage students to ask questions as needed and provide students with resources to complete their projects.
- Allow students to work independently or with a partner to complete the assessment.



## WHAT'S GEOGRAPHY ANYWAY?

With your teacher's help, complete the chart below by filling in the blank. Then rewrite the definition in your own words or draw a picture. An example has been done for you.

<b>Term:</b>	<b>Definition:</b>	<b>In my own words or pictures:</b>
Geography	The study of places and the relationships between people and the environments where they live.	How people relate to their environment
Identity	The qualities, beliefs, personality, looks, and _____ that make a person or group _____ from others.	
Region	An area of land that has _____ features. A region can be defined by natural or _____ features.	
Climate	The weather _____ prevailing in an area over a long _____.	



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Term:	Definition:	In my own words or pictures:
Culture	The customs, arts, social institutions, and _____ of a particular nation, people, or other _____.	
Environment	The surroundings or _____ in which a person, animal, or plant lives or _____.	
Group Identity	The sense of pride or _____ that individuals draw from _____ in various groups, be they of a certain ethnicity, nationality, religion, profession, etc.	



NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

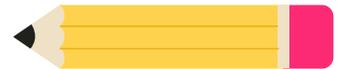
# GEOGRAPHY AND CULTURE

Choose a region of the world and a distinct culture or group that makes their home in that region. Use resources such as books, maps, pictures, or the internet to learn about this group. Then analyze how their geographical location impacts their identity.



Culture: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_



What they do for fun:	
What they think is important:	
Jobs they do:	
What they eat:	
How they talk:	

How does their geographic location shape their identity? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





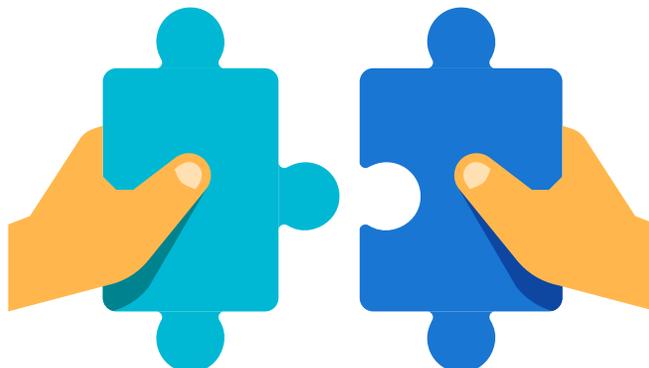


# GEOGRAPHY AND IDENTITY MATCHING GAME

Cut apart the cards on the next two pages with scissors. There are two sets of cards: one set has descriptions of geographic features, and the other has lifestyles associated with those features. Then follow the instructions for gameplay below.

## Gameplay Instructions:

- Shuffle each set of cards separately and spread them out face down on a table or desk.
- One member from each team will pick one card from each set.
- Decide if the geographic feature and lifestyle/identity are a match.
- If they believe they have a match, they place the pair of cards in front of them. If not, they put the cards back face down, and the next person takes their turn.
- The game continues until all the cards have been matched correctly.
- The person with the most correct matches at the end of the game wins.



# GEOGRAPHY AND IDENTITY MATCHING GAME

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## Geographic Features

A towering range of snow-capped mountains, with rocky cliffs and deep valleys.

A coastal area with sandy beaches, gentle waves, and a salty breeze.

A tropical area with warm temperatures, high humidity, and lush rainforests.

A busy urban area with towering skyscrapers, busy streets, and diverse neighborhoods.

A vast, arid desert with rolling sand dunes and few plants.

A quiet countryside with rolling hills, quiet forests, and meandering rivers.

Grass-filled plains with rich soil, abundant sunshine, and regular rainfall.

A polar region with icy landscapes, short summers, and long, cold winters.

# GEOGRAPHY AND IDENTITY MATCHING GAME

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## Corresponding Lifestyles or Identities

A lifestyle centered around mountain climbing, where people often engage in activities like rock climbing, hiking, and skiing. Homes might be log cabins with fireplaces for warmth.

A maritime culture where fishing, boating, and water sports are common. People might live in beach houses and enjoy seafood as a staple part of their diet.

An identity deeply connected to the rainforest, with people fishing in rivers and living in stilt houses to avoid floods. They may grow fruits and vegetables.

An urban lifestyle with people engaged in a variety of professions, from tech to finance to art. People might live in apartments or condos and have access to diverse cultural experiences.

A nomadic lifestyle where people travel across the desert, often on camels, setting up tents where they stop. They might engage in trade or craftwork for a living.

A rural way of life where people might be involved in small-scale farming, local crafts, or outdoor tourism. Homes could be cottages or farmhouses, and life might be closely connected to the changing seasons.

An agricultural way of life where farming is a major occupation. People might live in farmhouses and grow a variety of crops like corn, wheat, or vegetables.

A polar lifestyle where people adapt to extreme cold and long winters, perhaps engaged in fishing, hunting, or scientific research. They might live in specially insulated houses and have a strong sense of community to survive the harsh conditions.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# OUR GEOGRAPHY, OUR SCHOOL PROJECT - 1



You will complete a short research project about the impact of geography on your school's identity. Use maps, photos, books, and your school website to complete the table below. Then reflect on how these characteristics impact the identity of your learning environment.

Geographical Characteristic	Examples:
Local climate	
Natural features and resources	
Man-made features and resources	
Buildings	
Businesses and Industries	

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

# OUR GEOGRAPHY, OUR SCHOOL PROJECT -2



You will complete a short research project about the impact of geography on your school's identity. Use maps, photos, books, and your school website to complete the table below. Then reflect on how these characteristics impact the identity of your learning environment.

## Reflection:

How do these factors shape your school's identity?

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What new aspects of your school's identity did you discover through this activity?

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