

CONNECT

3 | Maps of Home

GRADE LEVEL

3-6

**summary**

Students draw maps of their neighborhoods, including the nearest Great Lake, then compare these to professional maps. Using maps, students determine the best way to get from school to the lake, and discuss the location of the lake in relation to the rest of the United States.

objectives

- Assess personal perspectives of neighborhoods in relation to the lake.
- Explain where the lake is in relation to the school.
- Sharpen observations about surroundings.

prerequisite

None

vocabulary

None

setting**subjects**

Geography, Social Studies

standards

This Great Lakes in My World activity is aligned to the Common Core State Standards and to state learning standards in:

Illinois
Indiana
Michigan
Minnesota
New York
Ohio
Pennsylvania
Wisconsin

This alignment is available on your Great Lakes in My World CD in the "Standards" folder and on-line at <http://www.greatlakes.org/GLiMWstandards>.

materials

- Maps of local area that include the nearest Great Lake detailed enough to show street names
- One large map of the United States
- Journals
- Pencils, crayons and markers.

background

The Great Lakes are bordered by eight United States and two Canadian provinces: Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, Quebec and Ontario. Learning about where we live helps us to understand who we are. In this activity, students will be looking at traditional maps and making “sense of place maps.” About “sense of place maps:” Educator David Sobel says, “Mapmaking, in the broad sense of the word is as important to making us human as

language, music, art and mathematics. Just as young children have an innate tendency to speak, sing, draw and count, they also tend to make maps....The stories of their lives are folded into the niches of their neighborhoods; their maps are the weaving together of inner emotion and external forays.” (*Mapmaking with Children: Sense of Place Education for the Elementary Years*, David Sobel, Heineman 1998.)

procedure

Part One: Place Maps

1. Pass out art supplies to students.
2. Ask students to imagine their neighborhoods. They should think about where the following things are located in relation to each other: their school, home and the lake.
3. In their journals, students will create “sense of place maps” of their neighborhoods, including the above-mentioned places and other places they want to include. They may think of the maps more as pictures or representations of their neighborhoods than maps. It also helps to pretend they are flying above the area like a bird. What will they see when they look down?
4. These maps do not have to be exact, to scale or artistic. There is no right or wrong way to make these maps. Things that are more important to students may naturally be more prominent in their maps. They may go into as much detail as they like and time allows. Students should include several landmarks that they think are important. They may also include natural objects and draw plants and animals or their habitats.

procedure

Part Two: Looking at Local Maps

1. Break students into groups of four. Pass out one map of the local area to each group. As a class, review some basic map reading skills: how to use the key, the scale, and the cardinal directions.
2. In their groups, have students circle the following things on their map: the school, their homes, their local Great Lake and the local park.
In their groups, have students answer the questions in their journals.

extension

When you take a field trip to the lake, have the students figure out how to get there. Measure the distance en route and time how long it takes to get there.

assessment

Rubric on page 83

wrap-up

1. Display the place maps in the classroom. Allow students to present their maps to large or small groups. Ask students about the prominent features in their maps. Why are these things important?
2. Ask students where they think the lake is, and how far it is from their school and homes. Ask students if they have been to the lake. Ask if they consider the lake to be a part of their neighborhoods. Why or why not?

wrap-up

1. Discuss the following: Where is the lake? How can you get there from school or home? Have you ever been to the lake? If so, how did you get there?
2. As a class, look at a large map of North America. What states/provinces does your Great Lake border? How many states/provinces border on the Great Lakes? How big is your Great Lake?
3. Choose a city in the United States. Calculate its distance from the Great Lakes. Compare this with the distance from the lake to your school.
4. Look again at the place maps. Were students’ perceptions of their proximity to the lake correct? How does the location of the lake influence experiences with it? If some place maps include plants, animals or their habitats, discuss why they are not included on the local maps that you looked at. Why do students think indications of plant and animal life should or should not be included on maps?

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FIRST NAME																				
LAST NAME																				

[1] Which way do you go to get from school to the lake? (circle one)

NORTH

SOUTH

EAST

WEST

[2] Describe the route from your school to the lake.

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[3] How do you get to the lake from school or home? (circle one)

WALK

BUS

TRAIN

CAR

[4] What makes living near a Great Lake interesting?

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