Grade 5: Social Studies

Topic A: Canada: Its Geography and People

Learning Objectives

Knowledge Objectives: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the following:

Major Generalization: The environment plays a major role in determining where and how people in Canada live.

Generalization: Canada has distinct physical regions and political divisions

Concepts:
- physical regions
- political divisions

Related facts and content:
- major distinctive characteristics of physical regions and political divisions
- difference between physical regions and political divisions
- the name of provinces, territories, and their capitals
- vegetation patterns, climate, and soil zones related to latitude

Skill Objectives: The student will be able to do the following:

Process Skills:

Locating/Organizing/Interpreting Information
- acquire information (main ideas and supporting facts) on a specific topic by reading, skimming, listening, and viewing
- gather information by interpreting relationships and drawing inferences from graphs, tables, charts, pictures, atlases
- organize information by using different types of graphs, charts, or diagrams
- use computer programs to assist in the study of specific content areas, to write a paragraph or report

Geography/Mapping:
- locate places, using an atlas
- identify, locate, and label on a map: physical regions of Canada
- read and interpret maps/legends of Canada showing: political divisions, physical features, major natural resources within regions

Analyzing/Synthesizing/Evaluating:
• draw conclusions about how the characteristics of a physical regions affect natural resources, occupations, population distribution and transportation
• from physical geography and latitude, infer human activities and ways of living

Communication Skills:

• summarize information from a variety of sources by writing two or more paragraphs, supporting main ideas with appropriate details
• collect and organize information on a clearly defined topic, using a simple outline
• illustrate the choices Canadians have in adapting to change in their environment

Participation Skills:

• Demonstrate respect for the rights and opinions of others
• make meaningful contributions to discussions, supporting ideas with facts and reasons

Attitude Objectives: The student will be encouraged to develop:

• appreciation for how the environment affects the way Canadians live, and how an individual can affect the environment
• concern for the future of Canada’s natural resources
• respect for someone else’s viewpoint or opinion

Lesson 1: Getting to Know Canada Through Mapping

Begin the discussion by having student decipher between PHYSICAL REGIONS and POLITICAL DIVISIONS. Allow students to create their own definitions of the terms before offering the following definitions. It is important that students can recognize the difference.

Students may copy the following definitions into their notes:

PHYSICAL REGIONS: Physical regions share similar physical characteristics such as similar plant and animal species. Physical regions are also known as natural or geographic regions. They are not constrained to political divisions. For example, the Rocky Mountain natural region is found in British Columbia and Alberta. There are eight physical regions in Alberta.
POLITICAL DIVISIONS: Political divisions are invisible boundaries between provinces, territories and other countries.

Distribute to students two blank maps of Canada. Using their atlas as a guide or classroom maps they must create two maps. One map will illustrate the physical regions of Canada including major bodies of water and mountains. The second map will highlight the different provinces, territories, including capital cities. Both maps should include a title and legend.

Follow up this activity by giving students a blank map of Alberta. Using the information from the Student Zone, have students label the eight physical regions in Alberta, the capital city, plus major waterways and bodies of water, and mountain ranges. The map must include a title and legend.

Lesson 2: A Focus on Alberta

Reiterate the information the students discovered/learned during the previous political and physical mapping exercise. Students should be somewhat familiar with the physical characteristics of Alberta. The focus of this lesson is for the students to increase their knowledge base about population distribution in Alberta, natural resources found in the province, vegetation and climate patterns, as well as transportation routes.

This information can be used in a later context when students will have the opportunity to compare other regions/provinces/territories in Canada to Alberta.

Discuss with students the basis of population distribution. Reflect on how there are six natural regions in Alberta. How do the students think the populations in the six regions might be affected by factors like the climate and natural resources? Brainstorm ideas and then break students into six groups based on the six natural regions in Alberta:

1. Grasslands Region
2. Parkland Region
3. Boreal Forest
4. Rocky Mountain Region
5. Canadian Shield
6. Foothills Region

Once in their groups they will be responsible for creating a research report that includes a poster on their respective region. The student may begin their information search by utilizing the Student Zone section of the Edukit.
Students will want to focus on the climate and vegetation of their region, the natural resources found in their region, and transportation routes. Students will be responsible for developing opinions/theories as to how the above elements may affect the population of their area. Students must also infer how they believe these factors contribute to different occupations in their respective region. They will also want to address other interesting facts that they find will be useful for their classmates.

The poster should express the information gathered for the written report but in a creative fashion. The poster is the medium for sharing the groups findings with the rest of the class so that all of the students will gain knowledge of the six natural regions in Alberta. Students may want to use graphs, maps, or photographs on their poster to increase visual understanding.

Supplementary Lesson

Students can use the above information to compare Alberta to another province and or territory in Canada. The information can be expressed in a chart, graph, written report, or class presentation. The Web Links section of the Student Zone will be a good resource for the students in getting started on their research.