

Lesson Title: I'm on the Map, too!

Grade Levels: 1-3

Lesson Description

This lesson is designed to teach primary grade students to create maps of places at a variety of scales and then locate themselves on those maps. Young children sometimes struggle with the idea that they can be in a neighborhood, a city, and a state all at the same time. This activity will help students recognize that there are multiple ways of describing one's location.

Literature Connection

Me on the Map by Joan Sweeney (illus. by Annette Cable)

Readers of this book will enjoy following a little girl as she locates herself in an ever-widening geographic area. After drawing a map of her bedroom, she moves on to map her house, street, town, state, country, and planet. She then retraces her path and ends up back where she began her journey.

Concepts and skills: location and map making

NCSS Standards

IIIb Interpret, use, and distinguish various representations of the earth, such as maps, globes, and photographs

National Geography Standards

1B Show spatial information on geographic representations

1C Use geographic representations, tools, and technologies to answer geographic questions

4C Describe and compare different places at a variety of scales, local to global

Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. explain that they can describe their location at multiple scales
2. use aerial images to create simple maps of their location at different scales
3. locate themselves on the maps they make

Google Earth Skills Needed

- ability to use the *fly to box* to travel around the world
- ability to zoom in and out of locations
- ability to create a placemark

Materials Needed

Me on the Map by Joan Sweeney

Computer with Google Earth software installed

LCD projector or electronic whiteboard

Copies of aerial images students will need to create their maps

Small stickers that each student can use to indicate his/her location on the maps he/she makes

Lesson Procedures

Literature Connection

1. Ask students the following questions: Can you be in two locations at one time? Why or why not? Explain that by the end of this lesson, they will be able to answer this question.
2. Introduce the book, *Me on the Map*, and explain that as you read they should think about whether or not people can be in more than one location at the same time.
3. After reading the first page ask students where the little girl in the book is located (her bedroom)
4. Read the next page and ask how the little girl describes her location now (house)
5. Ask: Can she be in her bedroom and her house at the same time? How is this possible?
6. Continue reading until the little girl is looking at the world, stopping regularly to ask questions about her location
7. Finish the book
8. Ask students: What does the story teach you about your location?
9. Ask students: can you be in two locations at the same time? Why or why not?

Using Google Earth (turn off all layers)

10. Tell students that you are going to use Google Earth to look at the location of your school
11. Open Google Earth and show students what happens when you type the address of your school into the Fly To box and hit enter
12. Zoom in as close as possible but be sure to include all of the school grounds
13. Ask students how they know this is their school (assuming a birds-eye view can be difficult for students in the primary grades, so you may need to help a bit)
14. Create a placemark where the school is located (label it with the name of your school)
15. Zoom out so students can see the school and its surrounding neighborhood
16. Ask students:
 - Can you still see your school?
 - What can you see now that you could not see when you were only looking at the school?
 - What could you see when you were zoomed in on the school that you cannot see now? Why? (emphasize that as you move farther out the area that can be seen increases, but the detail of that area decreases)
 - How would you describe your location? (emphasize that they are in a school and their school is in a neighborhood, so they are in the neighborhood, too)
17. Zoom out so students can see first the city, then the state and country, and finally the world that includes your school. After each view, ask students:
 - Can you still see your school?
 - What can you see now that you could not see in the previous view?
 - What could you see in the previous view that you cannot see now? Why?
 - How would you describe your location?
18. Repeat the process in the reverse order so you end up back at your school

19. Ask: Can you be in more than one place at the same time? (emphasize that you are in fact in one location but that there are different ways to describe that location)
20. Ask a student to tell you one way to describe his/her location (e.g., I'm in {city name}, I'm in {school name}, etc.)
21. Explain that each student will be creating a book that is similar to the book, Me on the Map)
22. You might begin by leading students through the creation of a map of the classroom. Identify the elements you want students to include in their maps (e.g., a title, date, orientation, symbols, and a legend for young students) You might also emphasize that maps are usually made from a birds-eye view.
23. Return to the close-up aerial view of your school on Google Earth
24. Model how to use the picture to make a map
25. Continue to move farther out and have students create maps (in addition to the map of the school, two additional maps will probably be enough to reinforce the concept of identifying one's location in different ways)
26. Share books
27. Close with a brief discussion that reviews the key concepts and skills covered in the lesson.
Possible questions:
 - What did you learn about making maps?
 - What did you learn about the relationship between maps and scale? How does scale influence what you see on a map?
 - Where are you on the map of your schoolyard, city, state, country?
 - Can you be in a city and a state at the same time? Can you be in a city and a country at the same time?
 - Can you be in more than one place at the same time? Why or why not?

Assessment

Fulfillment of the objectives will be assessed when students respond to teacher questions, create their maps, and mark their location on the maps.