

Literature Based Lesson Plans for Maps and Globes - Lesson Two

Regions of the United States

Introduction

Where we live often determines how we live. The natural features that surround us impact every facet of our lives. Each region of the United States has natural characteristics that make that region unique. Those characteristics influence the life-style of the people who live there.

Shared Book Literature Source

When I Was Young in the Mountains, Cynthia Rylant.

This book tells of a child's remembrances of living in the Appalachian Mountains. The warmth of family life is revealed through story and beautiful illustrations.

Other Materials Needed

- United States Discovery Map
- Landscape Picture Map
- Map Markers

Suggested Lesson

As a pre-reading activity, show the students the Physical Map at the top of the United States Discovery Map. Ask the students to predict what the different colors may mean. List their responses.

Show the students where the Appalachian Mountains are located. Tell them that they are the setting for this book. In a shared book experience, read the book to the children.

Compare the setting of the book with your setting. List the things that are different and the things that are the same. A geography theme is regions. A region is a place with a common set of characteristics. When students organize information about the physical characteristics of a place, they begin to create an area of study, such as a mountain region, a desert region, etc.

Have the students do a quick-write (simply jot down their thoughts without regard for proper punctuation, capitalization, or perfect handwriting) about their favorite part of the story. After writing for one or two minutes, stop them and have them illustrate their writings. Next, have them bring their work to the front of the room and sequence their pictures to follow the order of the book. For example, the student whose picture was of something that happened in the first part of the book would be first in line. Have each

student describe his/her picture.

Next, on the US Discovery Map show the students where they live in relation to where the Appalachian Mountains are located. Refer to the list your class made of comparisons with the two settings, focus on the physical characteristics, such as flat land, mountainous land, etc, to tell what is unique about your "place."

Using the Landscape Picture Map have the students predict where this story may have taken place.

Have the students write about pleasant experience they've had where they've lived. Entitle it, "When I was young in _____." Illustrate, and make into a class book.