

Community Connections With Geography and the Newspaper



Level One:
Understanding Maps and Communities

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**Culminating Lesson*

Introduction

Geography and Civic Engagement

Geography is at the core of social studies. Whether the subject matter is history, economics, civics or current events, students must begin with a sense of where things are and how they fit into the world.

In social studies, civic engagement answers the question, "Why do we have to learn this?" Before we can care about the world and the people in it, before we can wonder about what came before, what is happening now and what is likely to happen in the future, we must feel we are part of a community connected to the greater world around us.

Without a sense of community, without a sense of place, civic engagement doesn't happen. Without a sense of belonging and participating in the various communities that surround us, we have no reason to care or learn about them.

Instructional Levels

This curriculum is divided into two levels by complexity of the concepts in each.

Level One blends mapping skills with a discussion of the various communities to which everyone belongs as individuals. As students learn to make and interpret maps, the curriculum addresses local, regional, state and national identity, as well as government and community. This section is written with elementary students in mind, but the clarity of language will be helpful for anyone working to grasp these basic elements.

Level Two is designed for students with a basic grasp of maps and a sense of the levels of government and geographic division. It expands that understanding while discussing how communities create and maintain their identities, and while emphasizing how geography affects local economies, lifestyles and community identity. It is written with middle-school and older students in mind, but younger students who can grasp the more complex concepts will be likely to understand the language.

We hope that you and your students will enjoy learning about your community through this curriculum and through your local newspaper.

The creators wish to thank the teachers who consulted on this project: CherylAnne Amendola, The Montclair Kimberley Academy, Montclair, N.J.; Marie Earnhardt, Ellen Glasgow Middle School, Alexandria, Va.; Daphne Green, Doe Elementary School, Mountain City, Tenn.; Seth Harris, Shaker Junior High School, Latham, N.Y.; Robin Hohe, Jefferson Elementary School, Allentown, Pa.; and Jessica Parthemore, Main Elementary School, Beavercreek, Ohio.

Format Notes

Newspapers

Newspapers today come in several formats, including print, electronic or "e" editions, websites and mobile applications. The term "newspaper" refers to the format you prefer to use in class.

Students who have difficulty finding enough examples from today's newspaper should review editions from previous days, either in print or in the archives for e-editions and websites.

Other Resources

These lessons are written in a way that encourages use of computers and interactive whiteboards as teaching and learning tools. However, we have attempted to pose questions so students can complete the activities using atlases, city maps, encyclopedias and other traditional reference materials.

Student handouts may be reproduced and distributed, or used with interactive whiteboards, overheads and other projection methods.

The appendix includes graphic organizers that are general and applicable to all lessons, as well as others designed for specific lessons. Review and select graphic organizers to use before, during and after your study of geography and the news. The first two organizers in the general category assess students' knowledge and learning about community before and after using the curriculum.

Lesson Structure

Each lesson follows this outline:

- ▶ Standards (National Council for Geographic Education)
- ▶ Anticipatory Set
- ▶ Required Materials/Equipment
- ▶ Direct Instruction (handouts and online resources with information for classroom presentation)
- ▶ Extensions/Practice (graphic organizers)
- ▶ Assessment (exit slips or questions)

Geography Standards

This curriculum has been created with the specific intention of helping you meet national geography learning standards. You also will find it helpful in meeting geography standards of your state, which may vary from national standards.

Activities are also likely to help you address or meet standards in other social studies subjects, English language arts and other subject areas.

These national geography standards, endorsed by the [National Council for Geographic Education](#), were used in developing this curriculum.

The geographically informed person knows and understands:

The World in Spatial Terms

Geography studies relationships among people, places and environments by mapping information about them into a spatial context.

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools and technologies to acquire, process and report information from a spatial perspective.
2. How to use mental maps to organize information about people, places and environments in a spatial context.
3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places and environments on Earth's surface.

Places and Regions

The identities and lives of individuals and peoples are rooted in particular places in those human constructs called regions.

4. The physical and human characteristics of places.
5. That people create regions to interpret Earth's complexity.
6. How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

Physical Systems

Physical processes shape Earth's surface and interact with plant and animal life to create, sustain and modify ecosystems.

7. The physical processes that shape the patterns of Earth's surface.
8. The characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems on Earth's surface.

Human Systems

People are central to geography in that human activities help shape Earth's surface, human settlements and structures are part of Earth's surface, and humans compete for control of Earth's surface.

9. The characteristics, distribution and migration of human population on Earth's surface.
10. The characteristics, distribution and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics.
11. The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface.
12. The processes, patterns and functions of human settlement.
13. How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface.
14. How human actions modify the physical environment.

Environment and Society

The physical environment is modified by human activities, largely as a consequence of the ways in which human societies value and use Earth's natural resources. Human activities are also influenced by Earth's physical features and processes.

15. How physical systems affect human systems.
16. The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution and importance of resources.

The Uses of Geography

Knowledge of geography enables people to develop an understanding of the relationships among people, places and environments over time — that is, of Earth as it was, is and might be.

17. How to apply geography to interpret the past.
18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

Lesson 1: Mapping My Classroom

Standard: 1

Anticipatory Set:

Students will begin to learn basic map skills and the concept of community.

Required Materials/Equipment:

Provide print or digital newspapers and the three student handouts.

Direct Instruction:

Help students make a map of their classroom, showing the location of their desks. Introduce the concept that a map is an overhead view of a place, with details to show where various items are.

Allow 25-35 minutes for direct instruction.

From the *Right Here* handout, read aloud the introduction to mapping. Pause for comments as students discuss the concepts of place and scale. Younger students may need help understanding the joke – that the concept of “here” is meaningless if you don’t know where “here” is relative to other things.

Read aloud the *Mapping My Classroom* handout to help students prepare to map their classroom.

1. Solicit their responses to reach consensus about the proper orientation of the blank map and placement of the door.
2. Discuss why the square representing the teacher’s desk would be larger than the squares representing students’ desks. This will form their first concrete example of the concept of scale.

Distribute the *My Classroom* handout. Make students aware of how the door’s hinge side is indicated and whether the door opens in or out. This will assist them later in understanding orientation on maps that include north, south, east and west as well as how “right” and “left” work in decoding a map.

Extension/Practice:

Select from the graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- ▶ Graphic organizer (Mapping My Classroom – Mapping My Room) for Lesson 1.
- ▶ General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Read the directions aloud to younger students and have them rely on photos and other visual elements in the newspaper. Refer to maps when students have questions. If using digital newspapers, point out items for students to put in their rooms and/or homes. They can draw based on what they see on the screen. You may also use digital newspapers to model or show students what they should look for in their print editions.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- ▶ I know more about ...
- ▶ I liked what we did in class today because ...

Lesson 1: Student Handout 1

Right Here

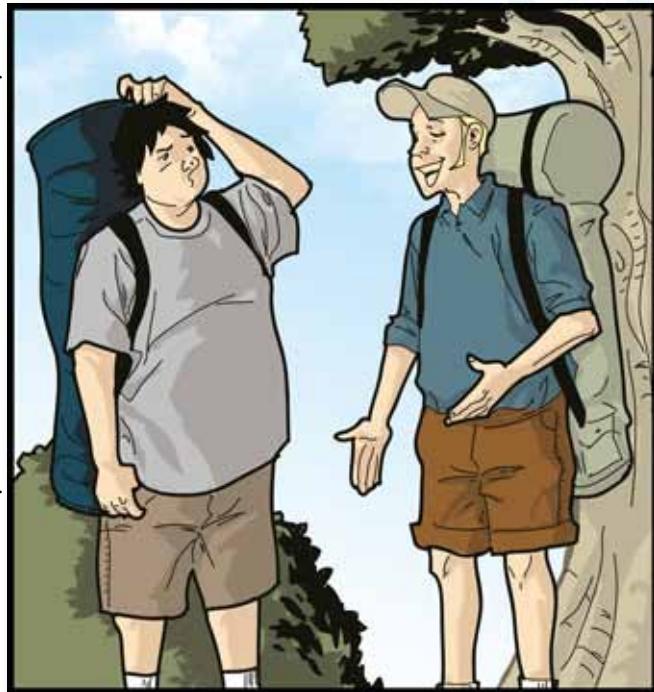
.....
Here's an old joke:

First hiker: I think we're lost.

Second hiker: No, we're not.
We're right here.

First hiker: OK, but where's the path?

Second hiker: The path is lost.

.....

Where are you right now? Right here.
Where's that? Well, it depends.

For instance:

- ▶ If someone is looking for you in the school gym, you're not there. You're in your classroom.
- ▶ If someone is looking for you at your house, you're not there. You're at school.
- ▶ If someone is looking for you in Australia, you're not there. You're in the United States.
- ▶ And if someone is looking for you on the moon, you're not there. You're on Earth.

But let's not worry about the moon yet. Let's start in your classroom.

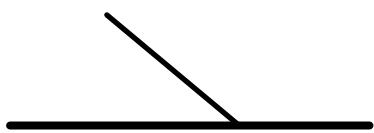
Lesson 1: Student Handout 2

Mapping My Classroom

Start with a rectangle and pretend it is a picture of your classroom floor. Most classrooms are rectangles, with two walls that are longer than the other two walls.

Look around your classroom. Which two walls are longer?

Are you facing one of those long walls, or are you facing one of the two shorter walls? Turn the piece of paper so it matches the direction in which you are sitting.



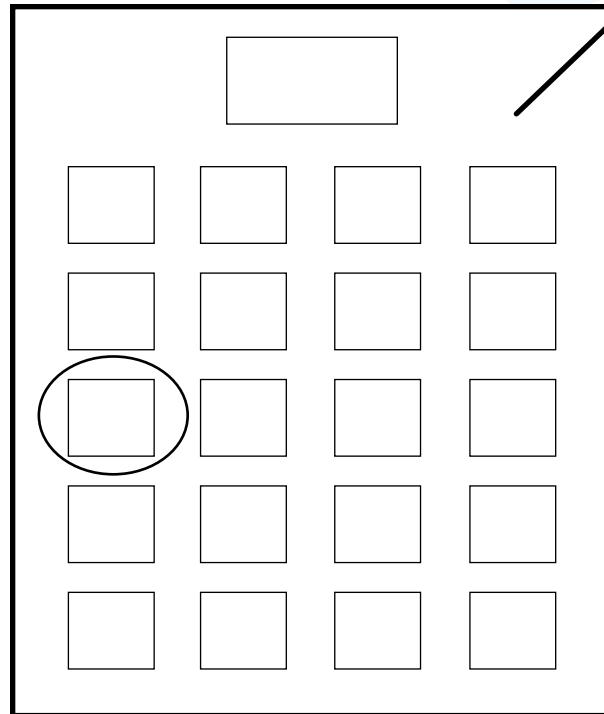
This is a picture of how the open door would look if you were on the ceiling staring down at it.

Now, how many doors are in your classroom? Draw your classroom door or doors on the rectangle.

Draw a square to show where your teacher's desk is.

Then draw smaller squares to show the students' desks. Did you count them correctly?

Which desk is yours? Circle it. That's where you are now – that's "right here."



Your picture might look something like this.

You just drew a map of your classroom.

What good is that?

Well, what if you started to go home and, just as you went outside, remembered that you left a book in your desk?

You could ask friends to get it for you. Giving them this map would make it easy to find your desk.

But what if they didn't know where your classroom is? What could you do that would help them find your classroom?

Lesson 1: Student Handout 3

My Classroom

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for a student to draw a diagram of their classroom.

By _____
(your name)

Lesson 2: Mapping My School

Standard: 1

Anticipatory Set:

Students will expand their learning with a map showing how to get to their classroom from the school entrance. In this activity, best done in groups, they will consider the kinds of decisions that real mapmakers make – how much of the school must be mapped and what features (landmarks) and other information must be included.

Required Materials/Equipment:

Provide the student handout. For mapping, use an interactive whiteboard or other projection method for large-group instruction. A flip chart or large sheet of newsprint may be used for small groups or when projection is not possible. Print or digital newspapers are needed for the graphic organizer in Extension/Practice.

Direct Instruction:

Working in groups, students should answer the following critical questions before beginning their maps.

- ▶ How much of your school needs to be on the map? All or just part of it?

Students will learn that proper scale begins with making useful decisions about the outer boundaries of a map and that a map should show only the portion of an area necessary for its purpose.

- ▶ What are the important things to show on your map? What things would help someone find your classroom?

Students will learn the concept of landmarks as a tool for making maps useful.

- ▶ What else must be on your map? What can you leave out?

Students will learn that irrelevant detail, such as diagrams of all rooms in a school, makes a map cluttered and difficult to use.

Build on what students learned about scale in Lesson 1 when they were required to fit desks into a diagram of their classroom. Hold a more formal discussion about the use of scale. Your approach may be either general – “Is that a long hallway?” – or mathematical, actually measuring distances and converting them to an appropriate scale. Allow 20-30 minutes for direct instruction.

Extension/Practice:

Select from graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- ▶ Graphic organizer (Mapping My School – Arranging My Home) for Lesson 2.
- ▶ General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- ▶ I learned how to ...
- ▶ I want to know more about ...

Lesson 2: Student Handout

Mapping My School

Just as a map of your classroom could help someone find your desk, a map of your school could help someone find your classroom.

Before you begin to draw, talk to members of your group and determine answers to these questions:

How much of your school needs to be on the map?

All of it, or just part of it?

If your classroom is at the front of the school, maybe you don't need to draw the whole school. If it's in the back, maybe you do. What do you think?

What are the important things to show on your map? What things would help someone find your classroom?

Things found easily are called landmarks. In most schools, the gym and library are landmarks because they are big and easy to find. The office is an important landmark because visitors must go there as soon as they enter the building.

People use landmarks to help others find their way. They might say, "Turn right at the library" or "Go three doors past the gym."

What are landmarks in your school that would help people understand your map and find your classroom?



The map of your classroom was a rectangle. But what shape will your school map be?

What else must be on your map?

You don't need to draw all of the classrooms and desks. That would take too long and make your map too crowded.

But you might want to draw just the doors so a person walking down the hall could count doors to help find your room. Those doors aren't really "landmarks," but they would make it easier to find your room. Add words such as "library" or "Room 212" to help people know where they are on the map.

Ready? Have you made your decisions? Draw a map that would help someone find your classroom.

Lesson 3: My School on the Map

Standard: 1

Anticipatory Set:

Students will move from their own diagrams to actual maps, seeing the connection between the two and understanding that a map is a picture of an area seen from above.

Required Materials/Equipment:

Use online mapping resources if available. However, you can modify the activity and use a city map. Appropriate alternatives would be to enlarge the map on a photocopier and make copies for each student, or to create a transparency for use on an overhead projector. Make an additional map at less magnification, either copying for distribution or formatting for overhead use. Print or digital newspapers are needed for the graphic organizer in Extension/Practice.

Direct Instruction:

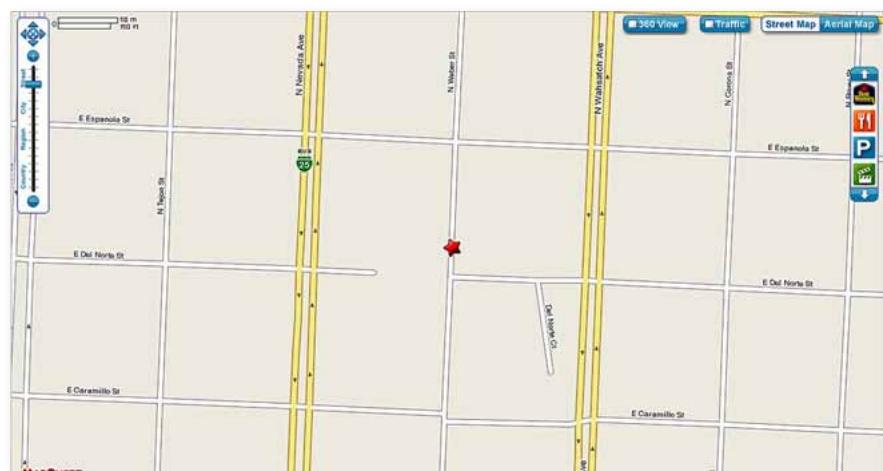
Follow the steps outlined here to explain the location of the school to students and engage them with technology. Allow 30-40 minutes for direct instruction (time may vary significantly depending on Internet use and connection speed). You can use Google Maps, Google Earth or MapQuest, but try each before class to make sure they show your school accurately. Choose the one that seems most user-friendly.

Note: Google Maps and Google Earth

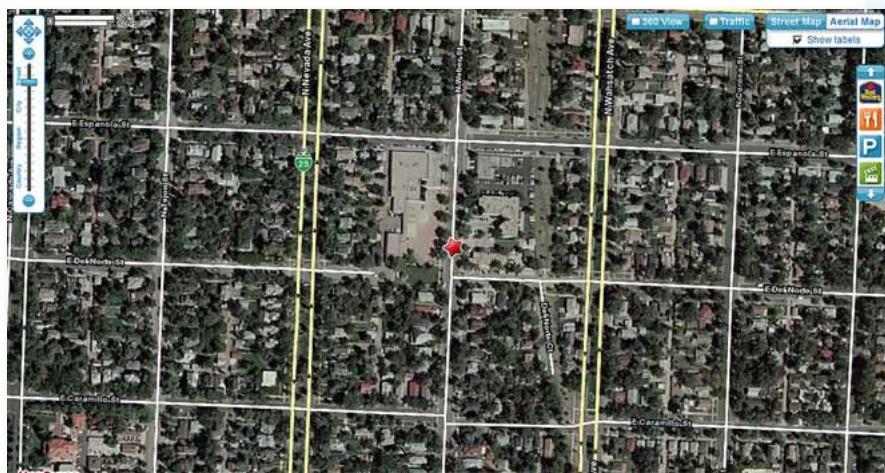
allow users to add comments. If you plan to use one of these, check the comments to make sure nothing is displayed that you don't want students to read. You can avoid this by using MapQuest or by scrolling on the map of your town rather than searching for the school by name.

Help students understand map orientation using the street map format, showing all street names in a scale limited to a few blocks surrounding your school.

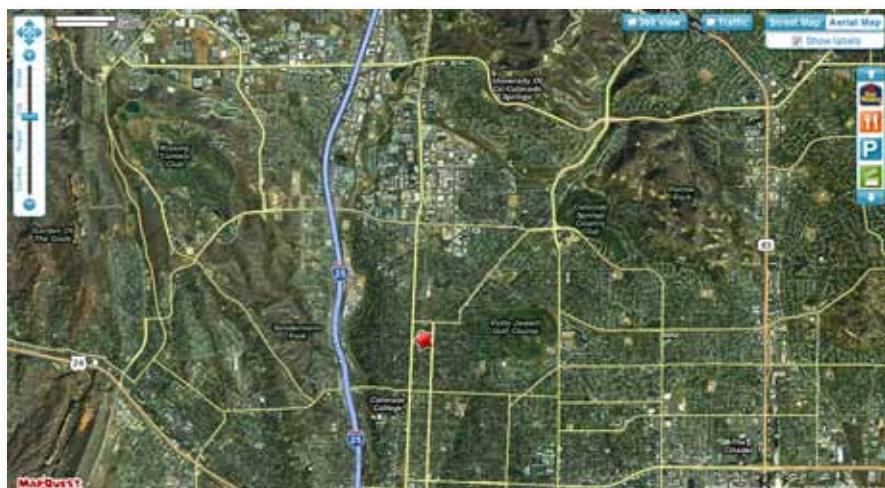
1. In mapping their classroom, students turned the picture so the wall they faced was at the top. Explain that on maps, "north" is at the top.
2. Beginning with the street in front of the school, point out streets they know and trace with them any familiar routes, such as walks they may take regularly to a library, park or other neighborhood resource. Use common terminology such as "right" and "left" rather than compass points.



Switch to the aerial view and review streets and routes you have just discussed.



Remind students of landmarks they used in mapping their school. Point out or solicit from them examples of landmarks on the aerial view. For those using paper maps, solicit suggestions for landmarks and add them to the map.



Toggle the minus button to zoom out, showing how their school and its neighborhood fit into the larger community. Using compass points, rather than "right" and "left," point out landmarks such as major highways, rivers or lakes, sports stadiums and other features of the larger community.

Extension/Practice:

Select from graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- Graphic organizer (My School on the Map – Landmarks) for Lesson 3.

- General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- I was surprised to learn ...
- I would like to know more about ...

Lesson 4: My Communities

Standards: 2, 4

Anticipatory Set:

Students will connect geographic areas with communities of common interest, seeing the connections between sense of place and sense of belonging.

Required Materials/Equipment:

Provide the student handout and print or digital newspapers.

Direct Instruction:

With your students, discuss the many large and small communities to which they belong. Solicit examples from students of such groups. Examples might be your class, scouts or 4-H, sports teams, place of worship or religious affiliation, and/or youth theater groups. Examples of less formal groups might be those taking art or music lessons, those who play at an area youth center, those volunteering for a community project, etc.

Students are also members of family groups, including their nuclear families and their extended families of grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, etc. Students may be comfortable with mentioning they have two homes and two families.

Using Venn diagrams, discuss how these communities may or may not overlap. For example, members of a dance class may attend different schools, while scouts are often centered in a particular school. Although scale will vary, most groups are defined in some sense by geography, ranging from a classroom to a nation or even the world. Allow 25-35 minutes for direct instruction.

Have students work alone, in small groups or as a class to locate communities in their newspapers as the handout directs.

Extension/Practice:

Select from graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- ▶ Graphic organizer (My Communities - Group Events) for Lesson 4.
- ▶ General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Consider having students interview adults to find out if they participate in online communities (such as social networks, online reunion and alumni sites, hobby groups, etc.). Students should ask what brings people together in virtual communities.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- ▶ I enjoyed learning about ...
- ▶ I was confused when ...

Lesson 4: Student Handout

Mapping Communities

People live in communities. Your town is a community, but you also belong to smaller and larger communities. Your classroom is a kind of community. It is a group of people who come together for a reason.

Your classroom is part of a larger community – your school, which is also a group of people who get together regularly. You probably don't know everyone in the school, and you know the people in your classroom better, but it's still a community to which you belong.

Your school is part of an even larger community – your school district. Most school districts have more than one school. In some, school buildings are close together. In others, they are quite far apart. You certainly don't know all of the people in your school district. But that is still a community to which you belong.

You probably also belong to other communities. Perhaps you're a scout or a member of a sports team. You might attend a church, temple or mosque regularly. Maybe you're part of a theater group or the Boys and Girls Club.

Even though you aren't old enough to vote or have a job, you're also part of the bigger world outside. You live in a town or city that is part of a county, which is part of a state that is part of a nation



that is part of the world. These are all communities, and you are part of all of them.

So let's start looking for communities in the newspaper.

Look in the newspaper to find communities you belong to, then list them here.

Lesson 5: My School in My Newspaper

Standard: 4

Anticipatory Set:

Students will learn to relate what they hear and see about a school to the place it occupies on the physical map and in their mental maps of their community.

Required Materials/Equipment:

Provide the student handout and print or digital newspapers.

Direct Instruction:

Ask students to name schools in your district. This not only allows them to demonstrate their knowledge, but also reinforces their mental maps when you ask where each school building is before looking it up on the map. Students' mental maps of your district will vary because of where their parents work, whether they belong to more than one household and other reasons involving the different communities in their lives.

Look up each school on the map and discuss relative distances. In particular, talk about where students will attend school in the future, for middle or high school, and about the location of those buildings relative to your school and to their homes. Who will travel farthest to school? Who will be closest to his/her new school?

Have students work in small groups during their search for stories and photos to complete the handout. Students should be involved in conversation and peer assistance.

After students have reported on their search for newspaper stories about their school district and its schools, discuss how those stories show the schools being part of the larger community. For example, an engagement announcement might show how the friendship between two high-school alumni evolved after graduation. A sports story might show two regional schools interacting with members of their communities attending the game. Allow 30-40 minutes for direct instruction.

Extension/Practice:

Select from graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- ▶ Graphic organizer (My School in My Newspaper – Sports News) for Lesson 5.
- ▶ General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- ▶ I think today's lesson was ...
- ▶ I had a hard time when ...

Lesson 5: Student Handout

My School in My Newspaper

Let's start with your school – but not just your school building. Let's look for your school district.

1. What is your school district called?

2. How many school buildings are included in your district? List each.

Can you find each of those schools on the map? Is geography part of the name of your school district or any of the buildings in it?

Look through the newspaper for photos and stories about your school district and the schools in it. Can you find at least one mention of your schools in each of these categories? Make notes about each item you find.

NEWS

FEATURES

CALENDAR ITEMS

Lesson 5: Student Handout (*Continued*)



SPORTS

OBITUARIES

HELP-WANTED ADS

In which category did you find the first mention of a school in your district?

In which category did you have the hardest time finding a mention of a school?

Lesson 6: My Hometown in My Newspaper

Standards: 4, 5

Anticipatory Set:

Students will explore the concept of a municipality as a governmental unit and as a community.

Required Materials/Equipment:

Provide the student handout and print or digital newspapers.

Direct Instruction:

Explain that the term “hometown” is purposely vague because students may live in a city, town, village or other municipal unit. Instruct students appropriately, depending on the structure in your area.

For example, White River Junction, Vt., is an unincorporated village within the town of Hartford. It is located in a significant place – at the junction of two interstate highways – and has its own post office, ZIP code and U.S. Census data. However, White River Junction has no actual governmental status and is governed as part of Hartford. It would appear as a dateline in newspapers, as would Hartford. Students from White River Junction would mark stories and pictures for White River Junction as well as stories and photos for Hartford.

Have students complete the handout, finding photos and stories about their towns. They may work on their own, in teams or small groups, or as a class. Allow 50-60 minutes for direct instruction.

Extension/Practice:

Select from graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- ▶ Graphic organizer (My Hometown in My Newspaper – Place Words) for Lesson 6.
- ▶ General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- ▶ I was surprised when I learned my hometown ...
- ▶ I wonder why ...

Lesson 6: Student Handout

My Hometown in My Newspaper

Let's look at your hometown.

What's your home address? (If you live in more than one place, use the address closest to your school.)

In what town (or city) do you live? Find your home on the map.

Look through the newspaper for photos and stories about your hometown. Below, write the headlines or describe the photos for three examples.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Newspapers sometimes include a map to show readers where a story happened. Draw a map that would help newspaper readers from other towns know where your town is.

Hint: Readers need to know where things happen. News and feature stories sometimes have a "dateline," which means that before the story actually begins, you see the name of the town where the story takes place. If not, you might find the name of the town very early in the story or in the caption below a photo.

The dateline is circled here.

Country Life Festival coming

ENFIELD — The Enfield Shaker Museum is sponsoring their annual Country Life Festival to introduce Upper Valley residents to ways they can live in conjunction with the land Saturday, June 6, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Activities and exhibits include horse-drawn wagon rides, chickens, llamas, goats, bees, and dogs herding ducks; horses plowing, displays of tractors, gardening techniques, food preparation and food

Does your newspaper apply datelines to local stories, or do you find the names of towns early in local stories?

How many different local places did you find? _____

Which place is least familiar to you?

Find that place on a map.

Lesson 7: My County in My Newspaper

Standards: 11, 12, 13

Anticipatory Set:

Students will explore the concept of county (or parish in Louisiana) as a unit of government that includes several towns.

Required Materials/Equipment:

Provide the student handout and print or digital newspapers.

Direct Instruction:

Have students find information about their county in their newspapers and complete the handout.

Through classroom discussion, newspaper exploration and map work, students should be made aware that a county takes on certain responsibilities individual towns cannot handle alone. These might include providing road maintenance and other services, as well as maintaining cultural and recreational facilities such as parks, libraries and community colleges. In rural areas, more than one county may cooperate to provide some of these community elements.

Students should be encouraged to recognize the cooperative nature of governmental units as part of a community and to seek evidence of that cooperation. Offer an example: A community college based in one county may use the county's name as part of its own, while a college governed by more than one county would likely choose a more regional name. The name of the school suggests the community it is chiefly intended to serve.

Students should also be encouraged to bring their own experiences to this lesson. They may know of county facilities that are free for residents but charge a fee to nonresidents, or they may be aware that people must travel to a particular municipality to renew a driver's license.

Students should learn the term by which the seat of county government is designated in your state. Common terms include "county seat," "shire town" and "parish seat." Allow 45-55 minutes for direct instruction.

Extension/Practice:

Select from graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- ▶ Graphic organizer (My County in My Newspaper – KWL) for Lesson 7.
- ▶ General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- ▶ The most important thing I learned about my county was ...
- ▶ I want to know more about ...

Lesson 7: Student Handout

My County in My Newspaper

Let's look at your home county.

A county is an area that includes several towns. Your county may be responsible for the sheriff's department and a court system, for maintaining some roads and water systems, and for other things that reach beyond a single town, such as a community college.



Find your hometown on the map and see what county it is in, or look up your hometown online or in an atlas. Does your school district include more than one county?

Look through the newspaper for photos and stories about your county. Below, write the headlines or describe the photos for three examples.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How many references to different towns and/or communities in your county does your newspaper include? Does it mention yours?



Hint: It may be difficult to find your county on a map. However, the U.S. Census Bureau has county maps on its website.

This is Onslow County, N.C. This map doesn't show every town in Onslow County, but if you looked at a road map or on the MapQuest website, you could compare the two and determine what other towns are in the county but aren't on this map.

Lesson 8: My State in My Newspaper

Standards: 4, 5

Anticipatory Set:

Students will explore the state as a political entity and see how scale begins to create a sense of regional identity.

Required Materials/Equipment:

Provide the student handout and print or digital newspapers.

Direct Instruction:

As students prepare to search for newspaper stories about their state, guide discussion to cover the political body of the state and the identity shared by state residents. Solicit suggestions about what gives your state identity – its nickname, the name by which residents are known and historical elements of popular culture.

Review and reinforce concepts taught in other lessons. Return to the map that shows a scale drawing of your school and its neighborhood. As you review what has been covered – school, town, county – zoom to those levels. In this example, we start with Lincoln Elementary School, then zoom to show Evansville, Ind., and then zoom even more to show Evansville's position within Indiana and its proximity to Kentucky and Illinois.

TIP: For the question on distance to the state capital, you may have students use an online route-mapping resource to determine highway miles, or a ruler and mileage scale to find mileage "as the crow flies." This exercise will help to reinforce the concept of scale.

Allow 35-45 minutes for direct instruction.

Extension/Practice:

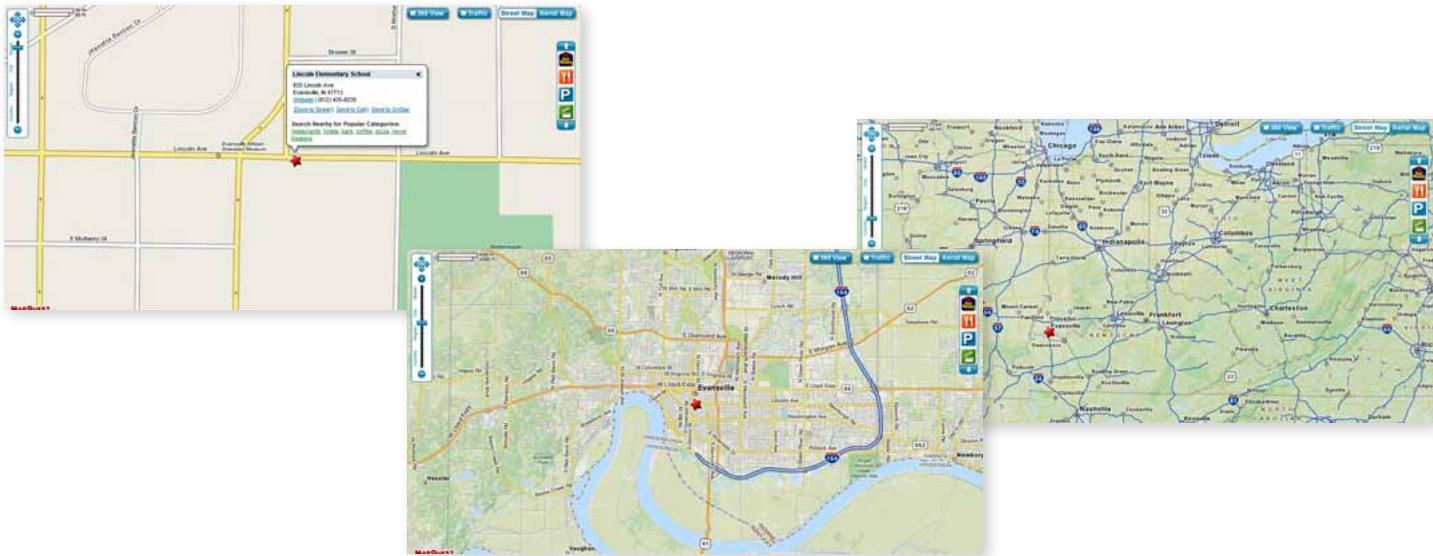
Select from graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- ▶ Graphic organizer (My State in My Newspaper – Geography Clues) for Lesson 8.
- ▶ General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- ▶ The most interesting thing I learned about my state was ...
- ▶ I wonder about ...



Lesson 8: Student Handout

My State in My Newspaper



Let's look at your state. First, mark it on this map. Then write down the following information and tell where you found it.

My state's name _____

My state's population _____

My state's capital city _____

It is _____ miles from my town to the state capital.

Look through the newspaper for photos and stories about your state. Below, write the headlines or describe the photos for three examples.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Stories about the state may deal with laws and government, professional sports teams, state universities, parks and recreation or other topics. What topics do the stories about your state cover? Write them on the back of this sheet.

Lesson 9: My Nation in My Newspaper

Standards: 4, 5, 6

Anticipatory Set:

Students will explore the concept of "United States" and connections among the various states and their own. Students will share their knowledge of climate, customs and topography in other states and how they have learned about distant places, reinforcing the connection between their mental maps and the formal map of the United States.

Required Materials/Equipment:

Provide the student handout and print or digital newspapers.

Direct Instruction:

Before students explore the newspaper, show them the outline map of the United States and ask them to volunteer whether they have lived, or have family living, in other states. Mark each state named, asking for a show of hands by other students who have lived there or who have family there.

Do students have observations about these states? What can they tell the class about differences in customs, topography or climate between another state and yours? Can they share information about landmarks and special places in those states?

Count the number of states marked on your map. Do patterns emerge, such as having most of the states marked in one part of the country? Are there bordering states with no contacts?

Have students work in teams, small groups or as a class to find photos and stories about other states in their newspapers and complete the handout.

After students have completed the newspaper exercise, discuss the stories and photos they identified. Ask: How many of those stories or photos are from states marked on your map? Allow 35-45 minutes for direct instruction, including online instruction.

Online instruction: map games

<http://www.maps.com/FunFacts.aspx?nav=FF#>

On this website, you'll find fun map games and puzzles to play: Name state capitals, put together state jigsaw puzzles, complete crossword puzzles and more. Included are U.S. and world map games.

Extension/Practice:

Select from graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- ▶ Graphic organizer (My Nation in My Newspaper – Comparing Two States) for Lesson 9.
- ▶ General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- ▶ The most surprising thing I learned about the United States was ...
- ▶ I wish I knew more about ...

Lesson 9: Student Handout

My Nation in My Newspaper

You know what a state is. What does the word “united” mean? And what does “United States of America” mean?

Do you have friends or relatives living in other states? Have you ever visited other states? On this map, mark an “R” on each state where you have a relative. Mark a “V” on each state you have visited.



Look through the newspaper for photos and stories about the United States or people and things from other states. Below, write the headlines or describe the photos for three examples.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What do the photos and stories tell you about life in the United States?

Lesson 10: My World in My Newspaper

Standards: 4, 5, 6

Anticipatory Set:

Students will explore the concept of nations and the connections between various nations of the world and their own. Students will share their knowledge of climates, customs and topography in other nations and how they have learned about distant places, reinforcing the connection between their mental maps and the formal map of the world (or the globe, still an excellent representation of Earth).

Required Materials/Equipment:

Provide the student handout and print or digital newspapers.

Direct Instruction:

Show the outline map of the world and ask students to volunteer whether they have lived, or have family living, in other countries. Mark each nation named, asking for a show of hands by other students who have lived there or who have family there.

Do students have observations about these nations? What can they tell the class about differences in customs, topography or climates between these nations and the United States? Can they share information about landmarks and special places in those countries? Ask students how they learned these things and differentiate among firsthand knowledge, secondhand reports and stereotypes that may not be factual or timely.

Count the number of nations marked.

Students should volunteer information so any who are sensitive about family background or concerned about relatives on deployment may choose whether to remain silent.

Have students work in teams, small groups or as a class to find photos and stories about other countries in their newspapers and complete the handout. Explain that some community newspapers focus on local news. In those newspapers, students are more likely to find photos and stories about the impact that events in other countries have on the local community. They also may discover people and things that came to their community, town, county and/or state from other countries.

Extension/Practice:

Select from graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- ▶ Graphic organizer (My World in My Newspaper – Advantages and Disadvantages) for Lesson 10.
- ▶ General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- ▶ The most important thing I learned about the world was ...
- ▶ I'd like to explore ...

Lesson 10: Student Handout

My World in My Newspaper

Do you have friends or relatives living in other nations? Have you ever visited other nations? On this map, mark an "R" on each nation where you have a relative. Mark a "V" on each nation you have visited.

Look through the newspaper for photos and stories from outside the United States or about people and things that came from other nations. Below, write the headlines or describe the photos for three examples.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



What do the photos and stories tell you about life outside the United States?

Lesson 11: My Community in My Newspaper

(Culminating Lesson)

Standards: 3, 6

Anticipatory Set:

Students will review and show mastery of the concepts of school, town, county, state, nation and world. They will demonstrate their ability to locate these places on maps.

Required Materials/Equipment:

Provide the student handout and print or digital newspapers.

Direct Instruction:

Have students work on their own or in teams, small groups or as a class to find examples in their newspapers to complete the handout.

Online instruction:

Community in History

<http://community.rice.edu>

This page is a cooperative effort between Rice University and local schools to create a framework for conducting oral histories and fostering a sense of community. The site provides lots of how-to information from a successful series of oral history projects.

Invite students to share an answer, moving from school through world. As each child shares an example from the newspaper, ask students to identify the best map on which to find that location and then to show the location of the story, photo or advertisement on that map.

Extension or practice:

Select from graphic organizers published in the appendix of this curriculum:

- ▶ Two graphic organizers (My Community in My Newspaper — Cause and Effects and/or Improving Community) for Lesson 11.
- ▶ General organizers designed to introduce key terms and concepts that apply to all lessons in the curriculum.

Assessment:

Use answers to the following as exit slips to evaluate learning.

- ▶ Now that I know more about my community, I think ...
- ▶ The thing I liked best about today's lesson was ...



This concludes the **Level One** unit. Students should now know how maps are made and how to interpret basic information on a map. They should be able to translate their mental maps into actual maps. They should also have a sense of how real-life events, people and things translate into places on a map and, if you have used online mapping resources, be able to move with comfort between maps and aerial photography.

In **Level Two**, students will be exposed to the human dimensions of geography – why people choose to live in a particular place and how people interact with their environment. The language and concepts in Level Two are somewhat more complex than those in Level One. If you think it is above the skill levels of your students as presented, then use the guide for ideas on how to teach the concepts and use the resources included in it.

Lesson 11: Student Handout

My Community in My Newspaper

You belong to many communities. Some are quite small. Some are very large. But each community you belong to is part of who you are.

Look through the newspaper for photos, stories and advertisements about the communities that help make up your life.

Below, write the headlines or describe the photos or ads for each example you find.

My school _____

A place I go often _____

A place I go sometimes _____

A store where I shop _____

My town _____

A different town where a friend lives _____

My county _____

My state _____

Another state _____

The United States _____

A different nation _____

What else did you find in the newspaper that describes life in your community?

Graphic Organizers

The following graphic organizers provide students with background for effective use of newspapers and geography lessons in this guide. The general organizers apply to any lesson, while the other organizers extend the work on concepts in specific lessons.

General

PAGE	
34	Before – What Do You Know?
35	After – What Do You Know?
36	Get Acquainted With Community Newspapers
37	Understanding Community
38	The Root Word for "Community"
39	The Root for "Geography"
40	How Words Develop
41	Time and Place
42	Weather

Specific

PAGE			LESSON
43	Mapping My Classroom	Mapping My Room	Lesson 1
44	Mapping My School	Arranging My Home	Lesson 2
45	My School on the Map	Landmarks	Lesson 3
46	My Communities	Group Events	Lesson 4
47	My School in My Newspaper	Sports News	Lesson 5
48	My Hometown in My Newspaper	Place Words	Lesson 6
49	My County in My Newspaper	KWL	Lesson 7
50	My State in My Newspaper	Geography Clues	Lesson 8
51	My Nation in My Newspaper	Comparing Two States	Lesson 9
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53	My Community in My Newspaper	Cause and Effects	Lesson 11
54	My Community in My Newspaper	Improving Community	Lesson 11

General Graphic Organizer

Before – What Do You Know?

Before starting the lessons on geography and the news, rate your knowledge below.

Topic	Not familiar	A little familiar	Very familiar
My community			
My state			
My country			
Other countries			

What sources of information have you used to learn about your community?

Your state?

Your country?

Other countries?

What else would you like to know?

General Graphic Organizer

After – What Do You Know?

Having studied geography and the news, rate your knowledge below:

Topic	Not familiar	A little familiar	Very familiar
My community			
My state			
My country			
Other countries			

For the lessons on geography and the news, what sources did you use to learn about your community?

Your state? _____

Your country? _____

Other countries? _____

What else do you want to know? _____

Where will you look for information about your community, state, nation and other countries in the future?

General Graphic Organizer

Get Acquainted With Community Newspapers

Work with your teacher and other students. Refer to both print and digital editions of the newspaper to answer the questions about your local and regional newspapers.

Primary Newspaper

1. What's the name of your local newspaper? _____
2. Does it publish only local news? (circle one) yes no
3. What areas does it serve? _____

4. Does it include state news? (circle one) yes no
5. Does it include stories from The Associated Press or other wire services? (circle one) yes no
6. What sections or special pages explain what it includes? _____

Secondary Newspaper

1. What's the name of your regional newspaper? _____
2. What areas does it serve? _____

3. Does it include news about the state? (circle one) yes no
4. Does it include news about the nation? (circle one) yes no
5. What sections or special pages explain what it includes? _____

Use the back of this sheet to answer the following questions.

Do you know of other sources of news for your community?

What other sources of information do people in your community use?

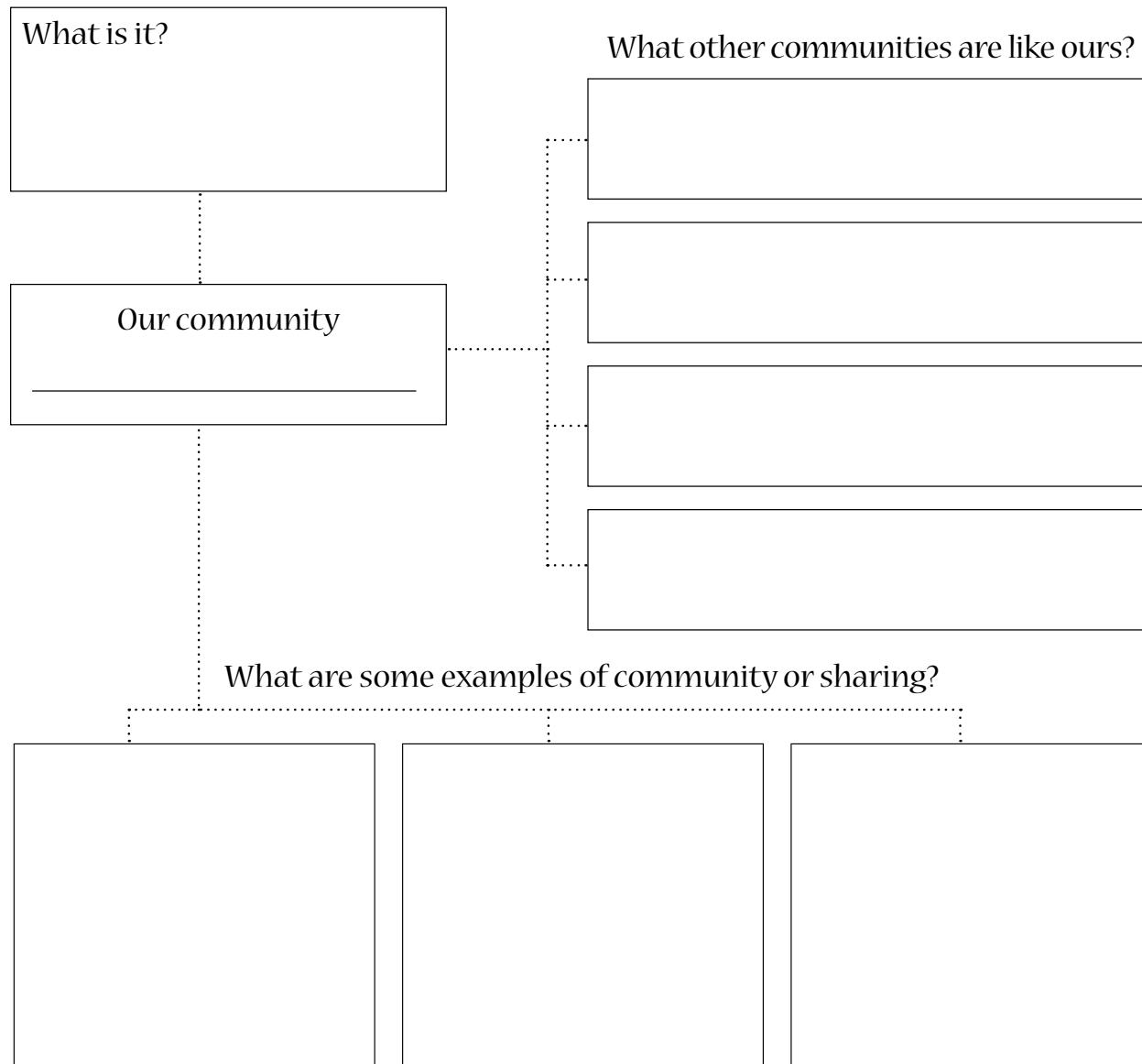
Where do other students, friends and family members get their news?

What makes news sources trustworthy?

General Graphic Organizer

Understanding Community

Define community using a print or online dictionary. Complete the chart using what you and other students know and learn from studying your own and other newspapers.

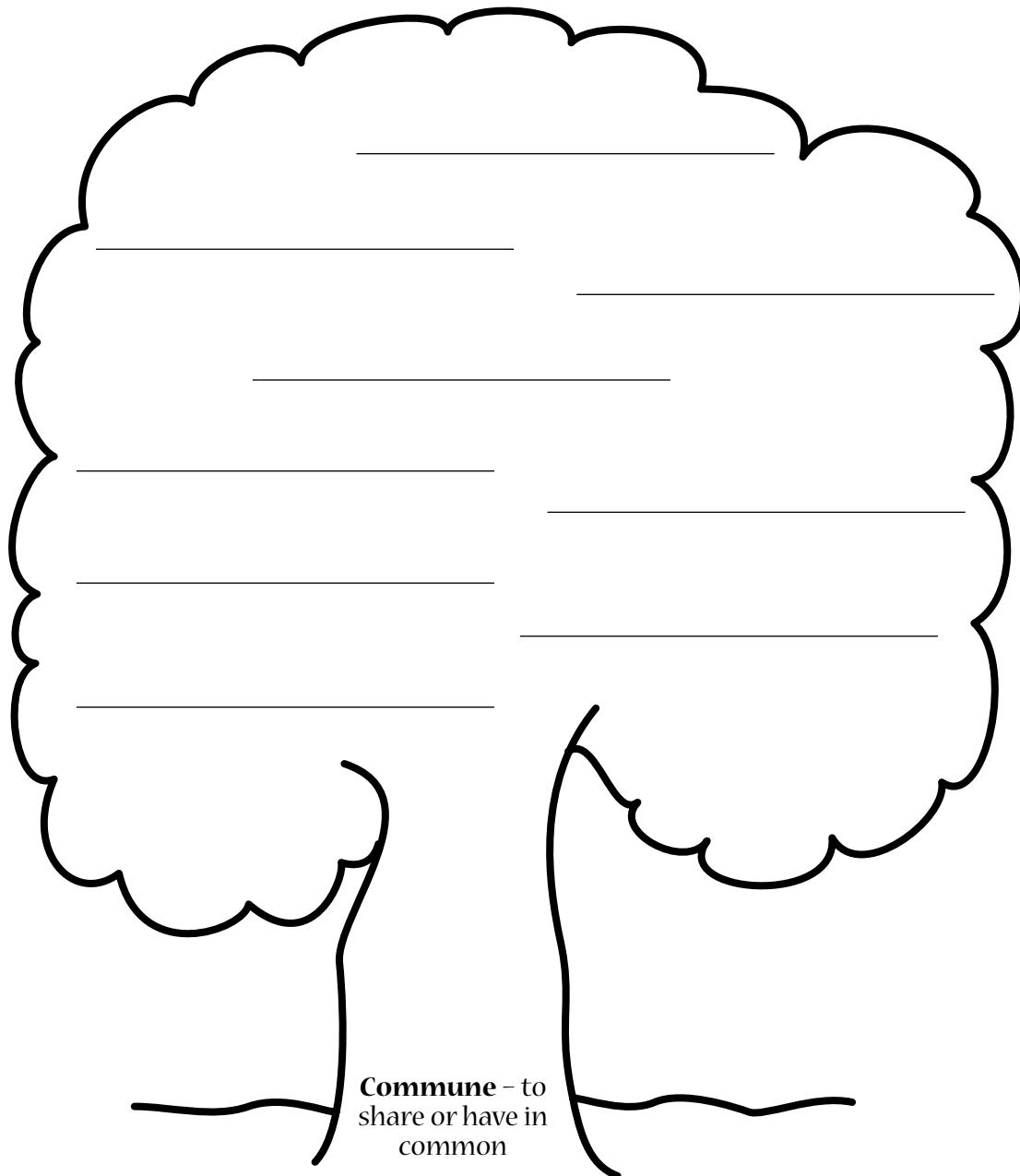


Identify a community that is divided. What is causing citizens to disagree?

General Graphic Organizer

The Root Word for “Community”

Use newspapers to locate words that share the word “**commune**,” the root word on which “**community**” is based. Search available newspaper archives. Write the words you find on the tree.

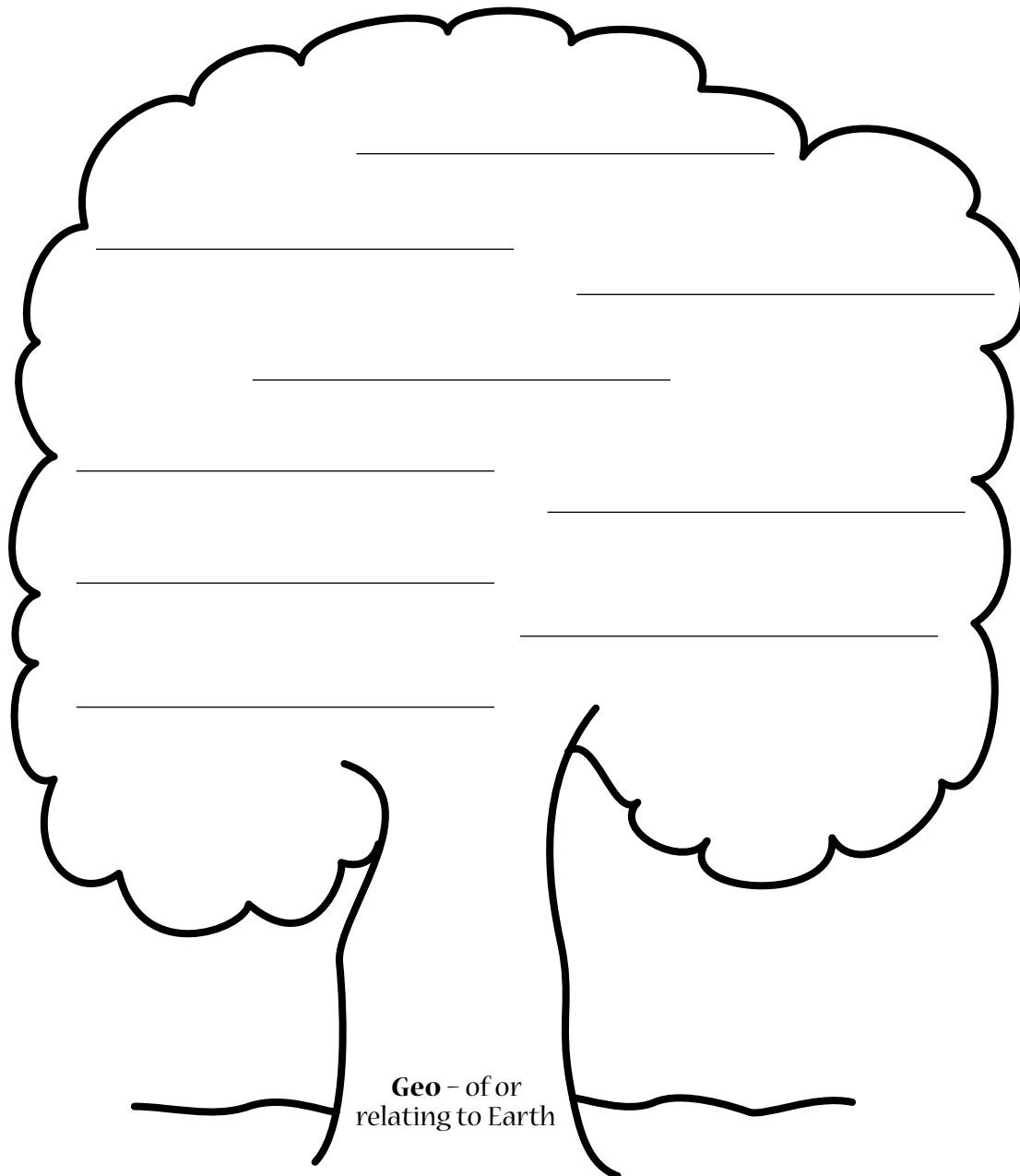


Check (✓) words you know and use. Underline words new to you. When you use the new words in writing or conversation or find them in other reading, check them.

General Graphic Organizer

The Root for “Geography”

Use newspapers to locate words that include “**geo**,” the root for the word “geography.” Search available newspaper archives. Write the words you find on the tree.

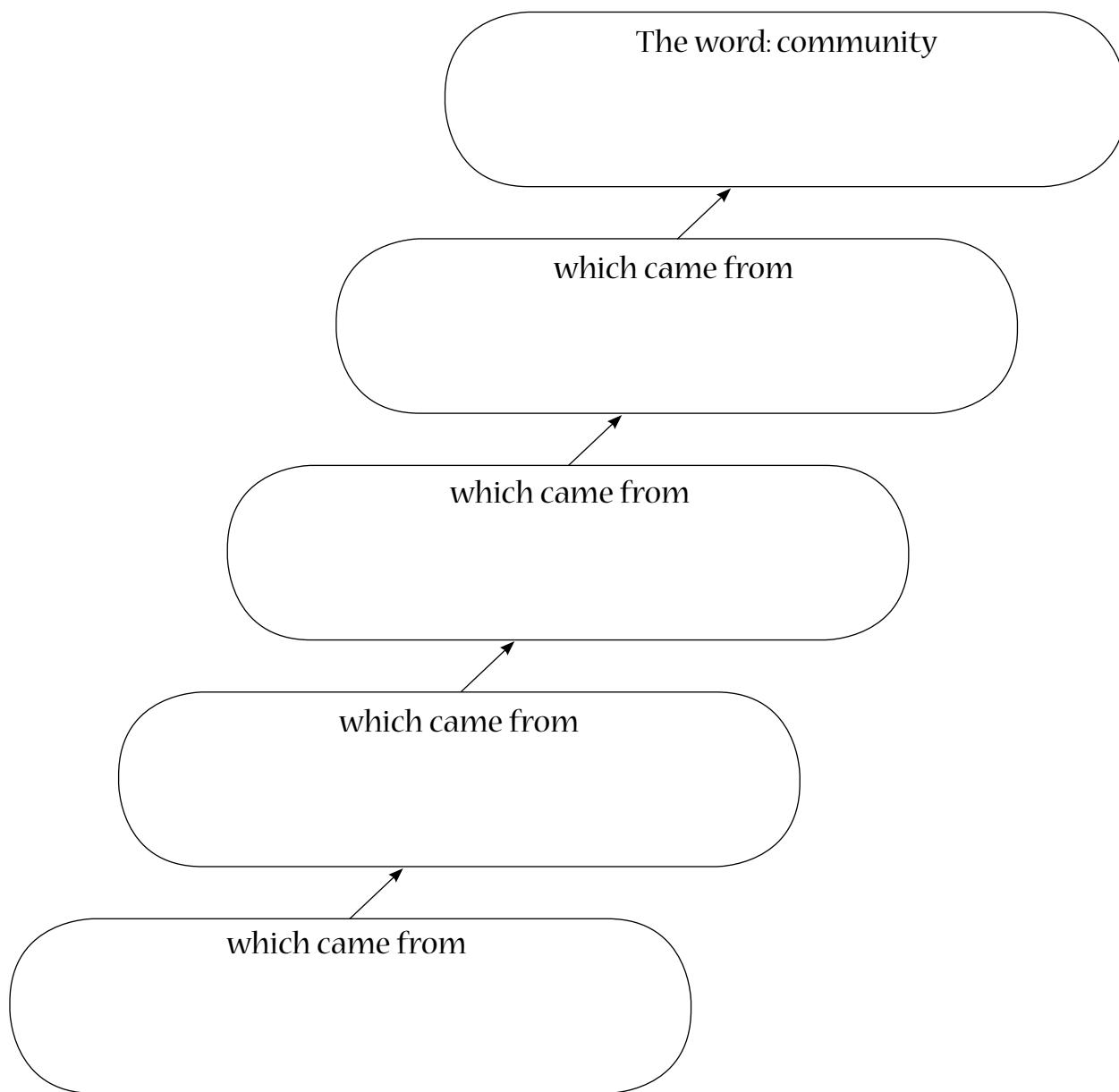


Check (✓) words that you know and use. Underline words new to you. When you use the new words in writing or conversation or find them in other reading, check them.

General Graphic Organizer

How Words Develop

Use print and online dictionaries to learn when and how the word "community" developed. In each oval, report the language, word and meaning of the word that explains the origin and current use of the word "community." Ignore ovals you do not need.



Use print and online dictionaries to trace development of the word "geography." Record your findings on the back of this sheet.

General Graphic Organizer

Time and Place

Choose a story from your newspaper and answer the following questions about its setting.

What is the topic? _____

TIME

When does the story take place?

How do you know?

PLACE

Where does the story take place?

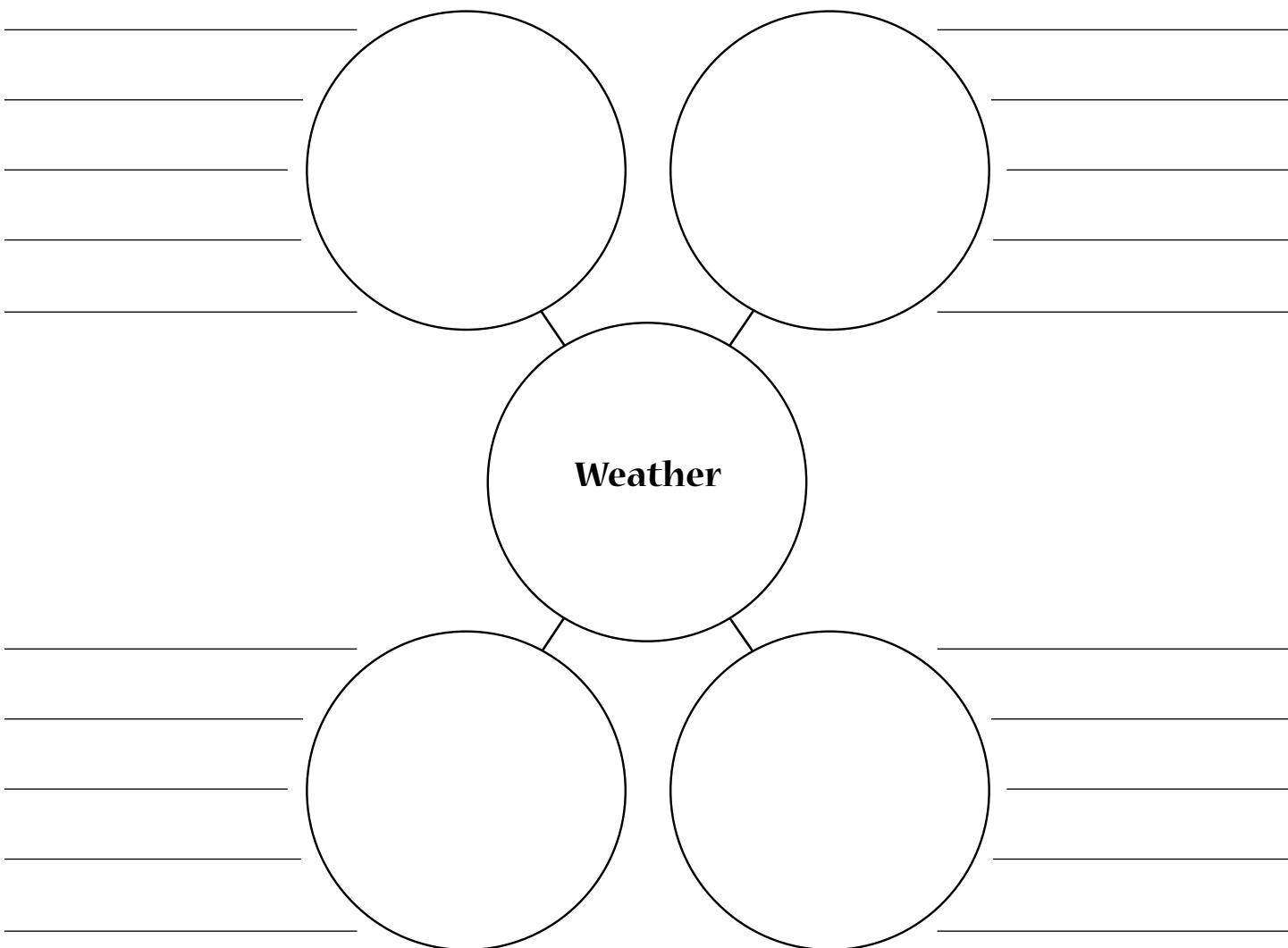
How do you know?

Why do you and other readers need to know the setting? How does the setting affect events described in the story?

General Graphic Organizer

Weather

Using news stories and reports about area weather, record what occurs over an extended period. List the different weather conditions in the circles and characteristics of each on the lines.



What clues do weather conditions provide about the climate of your community?

Specific Graphic Organizer

Mapping My Classroom

Mapping My Room (Lesson 1)

Below, draw a favorite room or a room of your dreams. The room may be a bedroom, play room, study, living room or other space. Choose furnishings from your newspaper and then place and draw to scale what you select.

Cut out and paste on large paper what you found in print newspaper ads to furnish a bedroom, den, study or other favorite room. Outline the room, indicating doors and windows. Place the furnishings in the room. Keep track and figure out how much the purchases cost.

Specific Graphic Organizer

Mapping My School

Sketch the rooms in your home on a large sheet of paper. From your print newspapers, cut out and paste items that belong in each room.

Below, list each item and its cost.

Map a tour of your home (or room) on the back of this sheet. If you were showing this to a friend, what would you show first, second, third, etc.? Why did you choose that order?

Specific Graphic Organizer

My School on the Map

Landmarks (Lesson 3)

What landmarks are necessary to include on a map of your school? Use the chart below to organize your ideas before you begin drawing.

Landmark	Include it on the map?		Why or why not?
	YES	NO	

Look through the newspaper for landmarks (words and images) that represent your community. What are they? Is there a landmark that lets you know you are getting close to school?

Specific Graphic Organizer

My Communities Group Events (Lesson 4)

With a classmate, use a newspaper to select three local events you would enjoy. Do the events appeal to young people and/or other groups? Which event appeals to the most groups?

Event #1

Event #2

Event #3

Who would like this event?

Who would like this event?

Who would like this event?

Does your newspaper publish events planned by and for different groups?

Do the groups welcome others to their events?

What do you learn about events in your community from your newspaper?

Specific Graphic Organizer

My School in My Newspaper Sports News (Lesson 5)

List the schools you find in the sports section. Check (✓) whether you find the school mentioned in a photo and/or story. Indicate whether the school belongs to your school district.

School	Photo	Story	School district (yes or no)

How many different schools did you find?

How many sports?

Did you find references to local teams that do not play for a school?

Specific Graphic Organizer

My Hometown in My Newspaper

Place Words (Lesson 6)

Look through the newspaper for people, places and things that show the meaning of the following words that refer to place. Add words to the list, then use the words to describe what you observe in your newspaper. Draw/write about what you find.

Near	Up	_____
Far	Down	_____
Close	Beside	_____
Under	Behind	_____
Over	Next to	_____
Around	Across	_____
Through	_____	_____



On the back of this sheet, draw a simple map of some places you enjoy visiting in your town. Use the words to explain where your favorite places are located. Are they beside or across from each other?

Specific Graphic Organizer

My County in My Newspaper

KWL (Lesson 7)

Before starting the lesson, briefly write in the "know" column what you know about the county you live in. Then record what you want to know. After the lesson, write what you learned about your county from newspapers and other sources.

<u>Know</u>	<u>Want to know</u>	<u>Learned</u>

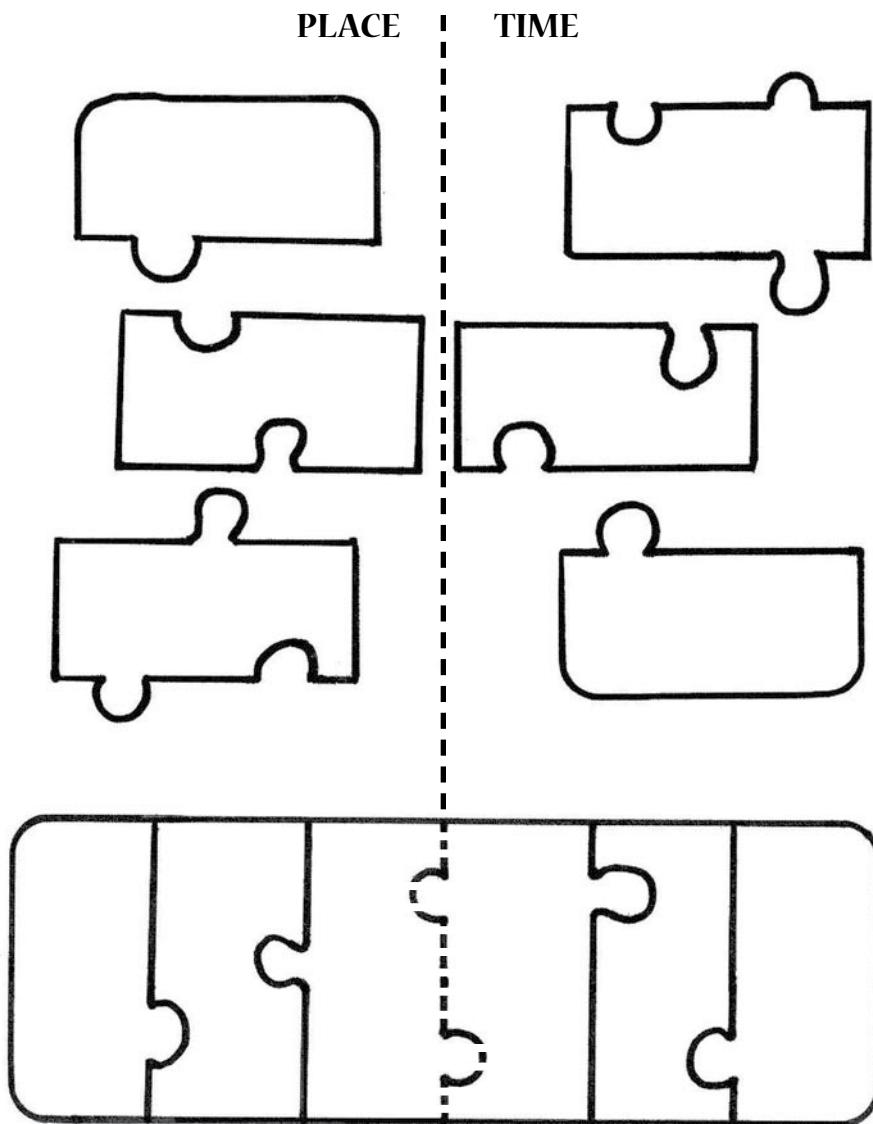
What more would you like to know, and where will you look for the information?

Specific Graphic Organizer

My State in My Newspaper

Geography Clues (Lesson 8)

How do you know the geography of a place from its newspapers? You must piece together clues. Below, write selected geography clues about your state that appear in newspapers. Be sure to include references to both time and place, which establish the setting for any story.



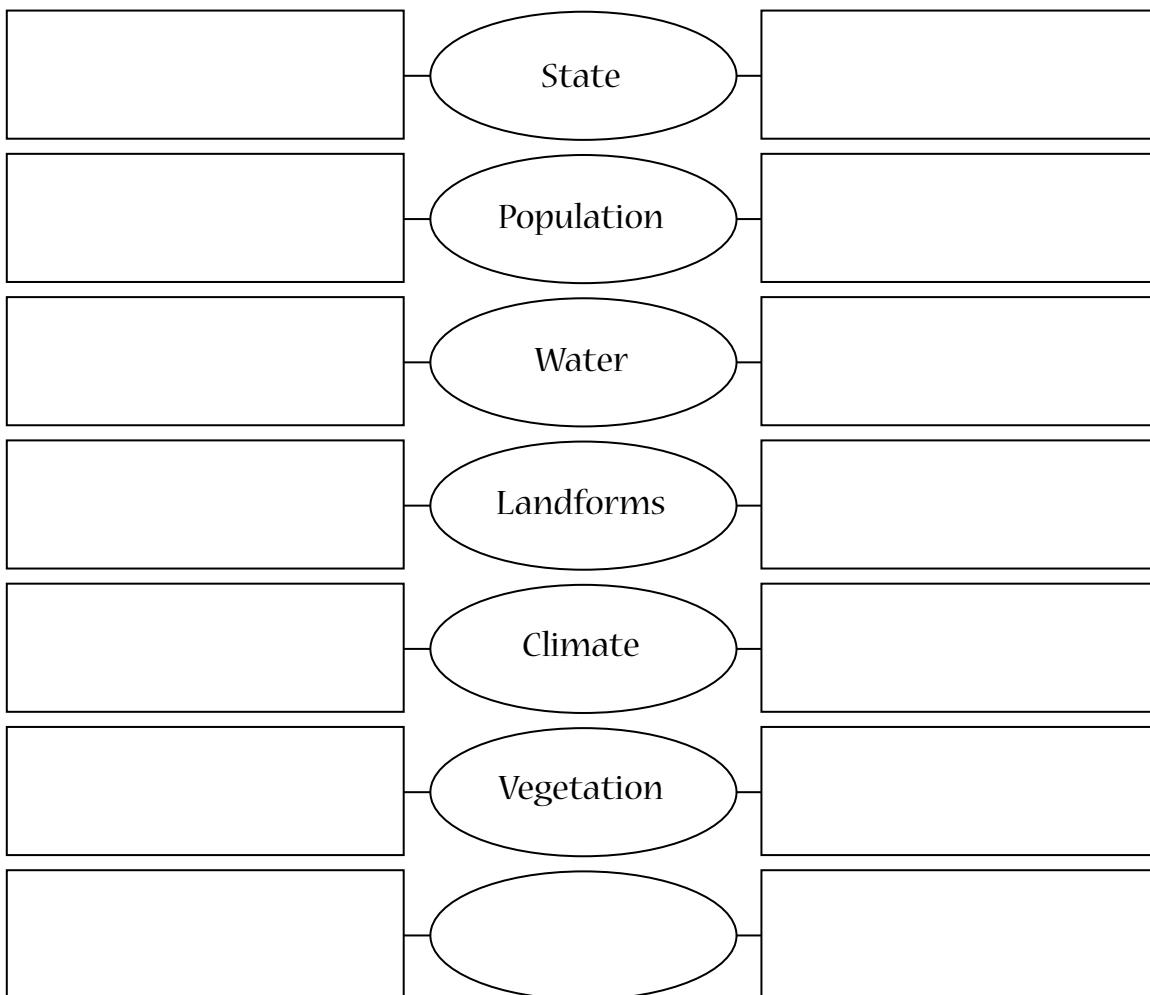
Based on the clues you selected, what do you now know about your state? Working in groups, pull together clues gathered by other students in your class. What more can you conclude?

Specific Graphic Organizer

My Nation in My Newspaper

Comparing Two States (Lesson 9)

Select two states to compare. Fill in the chart below using information you find in your newspaper, newspapers from other states (print or digital) and other resources.



Use what you learned to explain how the two states differ.

Specific Graphic Organizer

My World in My Newspaper

Advantages and Disadvantages (Lesson 10)

Using what you learn from your newspaper and interviews with people who have lived in or visited other nations, choose three countries to compare. List them on the lines on the left. On the right, list advantages (+) and disadvantages (-) of living in each.

+ _____

+ _____

1. _____

- _____

- _____

+ _____

+ _____

2. _____

- _____

- _____

+ _____

+ _____

3. _____

- _____

- _____

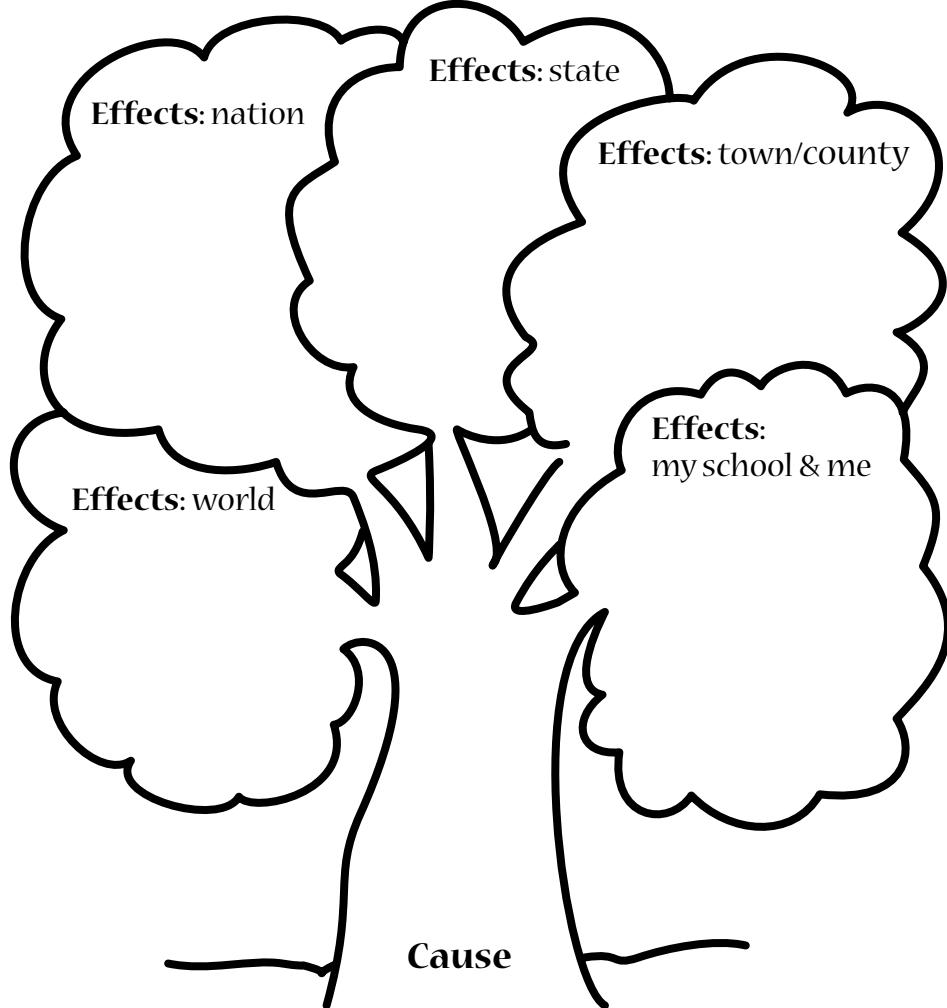
How are these places like or different from where you live?

Specific Graphic Organizer

My Community in My Newspaper

Cause and Effects (Lesson 11, Extension 1)

Choose the cause of a problem presented in the news and explain its effects on you and/or your school, town, county, state, the nation and/or the world. Fill in the graphic with what you learn from reading the newspaper and your research on the effects.



Are the effects positive or negative?

If negative, what action can you take to help improve the situation?

Specific Graphic Organizer

My Community in My Newspaper

Improving Community (Lesson 11, Extension 2)

Using your experiences and what you learn from reading newspapers, answer questions about your community. Choose to focus on your school, neighborhood, town or county when you write about ways to improve your community.

What is community?

Why is it important?

What are others doing to improve our community?

How can I improve my community?

What have you learned about the background of people working to improve your community?

Were they born in your community?

Have they lived in your community a long time?

Did they move to your community from another place?

Online Resources

www.factmonster.com/homework

The geography section of Fact Monster's homework helper features helpful materials, including mapping resources, a glossary and information on famous explorers, online quizzes and other activities.

www.gatm.org.uk

Based in the United Kingdom, Geography at the Movies is a resource for sharing short videos on geography. Some videos address geography in that part of the world, but most are universal and help add spark to interactive presentations.

[https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook](http://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook)

The Central Intelligence Agency's World Factbook is one of the best sources for maps and information on countries worldwide. Besides maps, flags and copyright-free photos of each country, it offers physical and political maps of continents and of the world.

<http://sitescontent.google.com/google-earth-for-educators>

The teachers' guide to Google Earth makes use of the extensive resources available. Check out this cross-curricular social studies and technology project by Hartford High School in Hartford (White River Junction), Vt.:

www.creatinghartfordvt.com

<http://gelessons.com/lessons>

This lesson plan site arranges information in useful clusters for those planning coursework around Google Earth.

www.infoplease.com/atlas

This is a good source of printable maps, including outline maps of your state.

www.census.gov/schools

You'll find information on the 2010 Census and curriculum materials created by Scholastic Inc. for the U.S. Census Bureau and divided into grade levels.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>

This is another Census-related website with quick access to demographic materials nationwide for young researchers and to help you prepare teaching tools.

Online Resources *(Continued)*

www.nationalgeographic.com/education

National Geographic provides in-depth resources for applying critical thinking skills to geographic topics.

<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/lessonplans/geog.html>

Discovery Education offers an extensive library of geography lesson plans.

www.smithsonianeducation.org/MyWonderfulWorld

The Smithsonian Institution offers educational plans, resources and graphics.

www.loc.gov/teachers/additionalresources/relatedresources/ss/geog.html

The Library of Congress lists geography resources for teachers.

<http://education.usgs.gov/common/lessons/geocaching.html>

The U.S. Geological Survey provides lessons, data, maps and more to support teaching, learning and K-12 education.

www.ncge.org

The National Council for Geographic Education offers a host of resources, including lessons, activities and information on professional development opportunities.

www.fsdb.k12.fl.us/rmc/content/interactivesites.html

This site lists resources for use on an interactive whiteboard (or computer) in a variety of subject areas, including geography resources in the social studies category.