

RESOURCE LIBRARY
ACTIVITY : 1 HR

Exploring the Characteristics of Places

Students use facts to create a poster about the natural and cultural characteristics of a place in the United States.

GRADES

1, 2

SUBJECTS

Geography, Human Geography, Physical Geography

CONTENTS

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OVERVIEW

Students use facts to create a poster about the natural and cultural characteristics of a place in the United States.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/exploring-characteristics-places/>

DIRECTIONS

1. Introduce the place in the United States that students will explore.

Divide students into small groups. Tell the groups that they will explore the characteristics of one specific place in the United States. Introduce the place you have chosen and identify its location. Distribute one blank outline map of the United States per group, and have students mark the location on the map. Then ask students what they already know about that town, city, or state. List their responses on the board.

2. Have small groups discuss the natural and cultural characteristics of the place.

Provide each group with the list of natural and cultural characteristics of the place. Have them discuss the characteristics and choose the three they think someone visiting the place would consider the most important.

3. Have groups create a poster-sized travel brochure.

Provide groups with posterboard, markers, glue sticks, safety scissors, and magazines. Ask them to create a poster-sized travel brochure that includes the following:

- a title
- the labeled United States map
- information about the three characteristics
- an image for each, either hand-drawn or cut and pasted out of magazines
- the name of each student in the small group

OBJECTIVES

Subjects & Disciplines

Geography

- [Human Geography](#)
- [Physical Geography](#)

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- use factual information to create a poster of the natural and cultural characteristics of a place in the United States

Teaching Approach

- Learning-for-use

Teaching Methods

- Cooperative learning
- Discussions

- Hands-on learning

Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- Critical Thinking Skills
 - Applying
 - Remembering
 - Understanding
- Geographic Skills
 - Acquiring Geographic Information
 - Answering Geographic Questions

National Standards, Principles, and Practices

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM STANDARDS

- Theme 3:

People, Places, and Environments

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

- Standard 4:

The physical and human characteristics of places

Preparation

What You'll Need

MATERIALS YOU PROVIDE

- Glue sticks
- Magazines
- Markers
- Poster board

- Safety scissors

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Internet Access: Optional

PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom

GROUPING

- Small-group instruction

OTHER NOTES

Before you begin this activity, choose the specific place in the United States that you would like learners to explore. It should be very different from or far from your place and its location. Research 2-3 natural characteristics and 2-3 cultural characteristics of that place.

BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

Background Information

A place is defined by its natural and human features. You can learn a lot about what defines a place by looking beyond your own community.

Prior Knowledge

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Recommended Prior Activities

- [Characteristics of Place](#)
- [Introduction to Place](#)

Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
cultural characteristic	<i>noun</i>	feature of an area or population that identifies it. Cultural characteristics are often defined as food, language, art, clothing, religion and holidays.
natural characteristic	<i>noun</i>	feature that occurs naturally in a place or an organism.
place	<i>noun</i>	area having unique physical and human characteristics.



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