

RESOURCE LIBRARY  
ACTIVITY : 1 HR

## Many Ways to Name a Place

Students analyze maps of places from neighborhood to world and then create maps for the locations of their own homes at multiple scales.

### GRADES

2 - 4

### SUBJECTS

*Geography*

### CONTENTS

5 Images, 1 Link, 1 PDF

## OVERVIEW

Students analyze maps of places from neighborhood to world and then create maps for the locations of their own homes at multiple scales.

For the complete activity with media resources, visit:

<http://www.nationalgeographic.org/activity/many-ways-name-place/>

## DIRECTIONS

### 1. Introduce the concept of living in one place that can be identified by many different names.

Tell students that we all live in many places at this moment. Clarify that you are not talking about people who move from one place to another at different times. Ask students for ideas of what these places are. List their ideas on the board. Guide students to the understanding that they live in a home, in a neighborhood, and also a town or city, and a state, a country, a continent, and on Earth.

## 2. Compare several maps showing a “home” at different scales.

Use the provided gallery Ali's Location to take students on a tour of one girl's location. Explain that as the area seen on these maps changes, we are seeing the place where Ali lives at different scales.

- Project the map with Ali Fong's address and *neighborhood*. Have students describe what they see on this map of her neighborhood (streets, park, railroad, location of library, school, Ali's house).
- Next, move to the map of Ali's *state*, Missouri. Have students find Ali's *city*, St. Louis, and describe what else they see in the state. Ask: *What river runs along the eastern border of the state?* (Mississippi River) *In what part of the state is St. Louis?* (the east) *What is the capital of Missouri?* (Jefferson City)
- Move to the United States map, showing Ali's *country*. Have students find Missouri on the map, and describe what else they see (the fifty states, Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, Gulf of Mexico, large rivers, Great Lakes, Canada and Mexico to the north and south). Have students point to their own state on the map.
- Move to the map of North America and explain that this is Ali's *continent*. Ask: *What else is part of this continent?* (Canada, Mexico, Greenland, the countries of Central America and the West Indies)
- Move to the world map and have students find Ali's place in the *world*. Ask: *Is her home closer to South America or Africa?*

Show students that each place they see on the map is larger in the real world than the one before it. We call this a change in the scale of the map.

## 3. View students' many places on an interactive map.

Project the National Geographic MapMaker Interactive. Using the vertical bar at right to zoom in and out, find the location of your school. Add a “school” marker from the tab at left in the correct location. As with the maps in Step 2, have students describe the map of the neighborhood around your school.

Ask students to imagine you are all in a rocket flying straight up into space. Gradually zoom out on the interactive map so you can see your city. Use the drawing tools to outline the location of your city or town. Demonstrate—gradually—the movement further out in scale to state, country, continent, and world.

#### **4. Have students map their home at multiple scales.**

Divide students into pairs. Distribute one copy of the Many Ways to Name a Place worksheet to each pair. Have pairs work at computers to analyze the map of their neighborhood, city/town, state, country, continent, and world. Direct students to use the search feature on the map for help finding their home address, city, or state. On the worksheet, have them describe the features they see on the map for each. Discuss as a whole class the similarities and differences among the maps. Ask: *How does the map change when there is a change in the scale of the map, for example, from town to state?*

#### **5. Have students create their own atlases of their home at multiple scales.**

Have students create their own atlases of their neighborhood, city/town, state, country, continent, and world. Have them create, mark, and save maps using the MapMaker Interactive. Allow them to be creative with choosing the base maps or satellite imagery and adding labels and color to the map.

## Tip

Have students read *Me On The Map*, by Joan Sweeney, or *Mapping Penny's World*, by Loreen Leedy, to introduce or reinforce the concept of mapping where you live at different scales.

## Informal Assessment

Evaluate the completed worksheet Many Ways to Name a Place to check students' understanding.

## Extending the Learning

- Have students work in pairs or small groups to create their own “Many Ways to Name a Place” atlases for a series of global landmarks, such as Mount Rushmore, the Eiffel Tower, the Taj Mahal, and other places. Assign each group a landmark. Have them create, mark, and

save maps using the MapMaker Interactive. Allow them to be creative with choosing the base maps or satellite imagery and adding labels and color to the map.

- As a class, read "[Creating a Geotour with MapMaker Interactive](#)" as you model how to create a geotour using the map. Then have students create geotours of their personal or global landmark versions of the "Many Ways to Name a Place" atlases, or of a new task you assign.
- In small groups, have students create a series of 3-D maps of their school's many locations. Assign each group a different scale. Provide students with clay, construction paper, tissue paper, glue, paints, a cardboard base, and other art supplies.

## OBJECTIVES

# Subjects & Disciplines

Geography

# Learning Objectives

Students will:

- identify a location in a neighborhood, city, state, country, continent, and the world
- describe the map features at different scales
- identify their own location in the world

# Teaching Approach

- Learning-for-use

# Teaching Methods

- Discussions
- Information organization
- Visual instruction

# Skills Summary

This activity targets the following skills:

- 21st Century Student Outcomes
  - Information, Media, and Technology Skills
    - Information, Communications, and Technology Literacy
  - Learning and Innovation Skills
    - Communication and Collaboration
    - Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking Skills
  - Applying
  - Understanding
- Geographic Skills
  - Acquiring Geographic Information
  - Analyzing Geographic Information

# National Standards, Principles, and Practices

## NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM STANDARDS

- Theme 3:

People, Places, and Environments

## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY STANDARDS

- Standard 1:

How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

- Standard 5:

That people create regions to interpret Earth's complexity

## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & LITERACY

- Reading Standards for Informational Text K-5:

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, RI.3.7

- **Reading Standards for Informational Text K-5:**

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, RI.4.7

- **Reading Standards for Informational Text K-5:**

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas, RI.5.7

## THE COLLEGE, CAREER & CIVIC LIFE (C3) FRAMEWORK FOR SOCIAL STUDIES STATE STANDARDS

- **Geographic Representations: Spatial Views of the World: D2.Geo.1.3-5:**

Construct maps and other graphic representations of both familiar and unfamiliar places.

### Preparation

### What You'll Need

#### MATERIALS YOU PROVIDE

- Clay
- Construction paper
- Glue
- A cardboard base
- Other art supplies (optional)
- Paints
- Tissue paper

#### REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

- Internet Access: Required
- Tech Setup: 1 computer per classroom, 1 computer per pair, Projector

#### PHYSICAL SPACE

- Classroom

#### GROUPING

- Large-group instruction

## In Practice

Find resources that show best teaching practices and example student outcomes for this activity.

## MODEL STUDENT WORK

## BACKGROUND & VOCABULARY

### Background Information

Geographic distinctions have been created to interpret the complexity of our world. We all live in many places. Depending on the place where we live, we may be located in a home, a neighborhood, a city, a state or province, a country, a continent, and the world. Our lives are rooted in each of the places we inhabit. Each place has its own physical and human characteristics. By learning to distinguish these places from one another, students will develop a better sense of location, both absolute and relative, as well as a better understanding of their own place in the world.

Geo-technologies such as interactive maps and geographic information systems (GIS) enable us to look at the places where we live in innumerable ways. Giving students opportunities to work with these tools will inspire them to explore and learn about places virtually and through direct experience.

### Prior Knowledge

["maps as models or representations of areas on the Earth"]

### Recommended Prior Activities

- None

### Vocabulary

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
city	<i>noun</i>	large settlement with a high population density.
continent	<i>noun</i>	one of the seven main land masses on Earth.

Term	Part of Speech	Definition
country	noun	geographic territory with a distinct name, flag, population, boundaries, and government.
map skills	noun	skills for reading and interpreting maps, from learning basic map conventions to analyzing and comprehending maps to address higher-order goals.
neighborhood	noun	an area within a larger city or town where people live and interact with one another.
scale	noun	relationship between distances shown on a map and actual distances.
state	noun	political unit in a nation, such as the United States, Mexico, or Australia.
town	noun	human settlement larger than a village and smaller than a city.

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## For Further Exploration

### Books

- [Leedy, Loreen. \*Mapping Penny's World\*. New York: Square Fish, 2000.](#)
- [Sweeney, Joan. \*Me on the Map\*. Dragonfly Books: New York, 1998.](#)

### Interactives

- [Scale of the Universe 2](#)



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