Let's Learn: All About Geography (Pre K - 3rd Grade)
Teacher Guide

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This Book is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Instructional Materials by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.
Inside you will find fun activities to help you learn about maps and geography. Keep an eye out for Sandy, the Chinook Salmon, for fun facts and helpful hints along the way!
All About Geography!

Geography skills are an essential part of navigating and understanding today’s world, and this workbook is meant to serve as an introduction to maps and geographic concepts for Pre K – third grade.

Pages 22-23 – National Geography Standards (NGS), the Oregon Geography Standards (OGS), and the Oregon Environmental Literacy Standards (OELS).

Each of the activities in this book includes at least one of the following symbols—which serve as a guide to how the workbook activities connect to the state and national standards:

- National Geography Standards (NGS)
- Oregon Geography Standards (OGS)
- Oregon Environmental Literacy Standards (OELS)

Additional Resources: A red apple (🍎) at the bottom of the page indicates additional activity resources for teachers, which are located on Page 24.

We hope you find this workbook helpful in improving map and geographic literacy in the State of Oregon!
What is Geography?

Geography is the study of the Earth and everything on it. Some geographers study how nature affects where—and how—people live, while others study the environment, including things like earthquakes, volcanoes, and how the landscape was formed. Many geographers also create maps.

Hi kids, my name is Sandy! I’m a Chinook Salmon: the official Oregon state fish. I’ll be your friendly guide throughout the activities in this book.
Globe: A globe shows all of planet Earth in a round form

Map: A map is a flat drawing of a place

Compass: A compass shows direction – North (N), East (E), South (S), and West (W)

Fish don’t need maps or compasses because we are born with an “internal compass” which helps us get where we need to go. Pretty cool, huh?

Can you match the vocabulary word to the correct image?

- **globe**
- **compass**
- **map**
**Landform:** Landforms are natural structures, such as mountains, hills, rivers, and canyons.

**Landmark:** A landmark is an easily recognizable object that helps you to locate a specific place. Landmarks can be many things: a big tree, your favorite restaurant, or your school.

**Weather:** Weather describes what is happening in the sky above us. Rain, sun, snow, and wind are all examples of weather. Some places on Earth see lots of changes in weather throughout the year, while others have fairly constant weather conditions year-round.

**Climate:** Climate describes the typical (or normal) temperature and weather conditions at a certain place throughout the year—for example, cold in summer, or wet in winter.

**Direction:** Direction indicates where something is located. “Left”, “right”, “up”, “down”, “in front of”, and “behind” are all direction words you’re probably familiar with. A compass uses “North”, “East”, “South”, and “West” to show direction.

**Scale:** Scale describes the size of things compared to one another. For example, a mountain is big and an ant hill is small, but they are both kinds of hills.

**Flag:** Flags are symbols of places, ideas, and organizations. Each country in the world (and each state in the United States of America) has a flag that is unique to it. The American flag is red, white, and blue.

You should refer back to these vocabulary words while you’re completing the activities in this book.
**Water Body:** A water body is any place that has water. Oceans, lakes, ponds, rivers, streams, creeks, marshes, lagoons, and swamps are all considered water bodies.

**Ocean:** Oceans are big bodies of salt water that cover over 70% of our Earth. There are five different oceans on Earth; the ocean off the Oregon coast is called the Pacific Ocean.

**Lake:** Lakes are salty or fresh bodies of water that are surrounded by land. Crater Lake in central Oregon is an example.

**Pond:** Ponds are also bodies of water surrounded by land, but they are not as deep or as big as lakes. You might have one in your backyard or neighborhood.

**River:** Rivers are flowing bodies of water that usually run or flow into oceans or lakes. The Columbia River separates Oregon and Washington and runs into the Pacific Ocean.

Let’s try filling in the blank spaces in this sentence with the following new vocabulary words: compass, water body, direction, ocean, weather.

“The other day I went to the __________________. It was a huge _________. The ___________ was very nice and sunny, a perfect day for a picnic. After lunch I went on a hike. Thank goodness I had my ___________ with me, or I wouldn’t have known which ___________ to go in!”
People live in all kinds of places. Some of these homes you might see in a city, others you might find in the countryside, on a mountain, or on the water. Circle the one that looks the most like your home. Where might you find some of the other homes?

Various answers possible

If you could live in any of these homes, which would you pick? Draw a square around it!

House
Boat
Apartment Building
House
House
Bus
Tree House
Castle
Igloo
Log Cabin
House
Tee-Pee

NGS: 4, 9 OGS: 2, 3 OELS: 2
A landmark is an easily recognizable object that helps you to locate a specific place. Let’s take a look at some different kinds of landmarks. Examples of landmarks include barns, streetlights, and schools.

Some landmarks are very famous and can be recognized worldwide, like the Eiffel Tower in Paris, and the Seattle Space Needle. Other landmarks are things that might just be familiar to you or people in your neighborhood – like a big tree, or your favorite park.

What kind of landmarks are near your home? Draw two here!

Various answers possible
Scale is used to describe the size of things compared to one another. Where you live can be compared to many different scales. 

What is the name of your neighborhood or town? What is the closest city to you? What state is it in? What country is it in? ____________________________________________

What is the name of your neighborhood or town? What is the closest city to you? What state is it in? What country is it in? ____________________________________________

Where in the World Am I?

- HOUSE/HOME
- NEIGHBORHOOD or TOWN
- CITY or METRO AREA
- OREGON
- STATE
- COUNTRY
- WORLD

Various answers possible
Flags

Flags are used as symbols for different countries and states, and usually have some significance for the places they represent. The United States of America has a flag with 50 stars; each star represents one of the 50 states. The 13 red and white stripes represent the original 13 colonies, which eventually became the first states in America.

Now, let’s design our own flags.
What colors or symbols are important to you? Think of using things on your flag that represent who you are and where you live.

Fun fact! Oregon is the only state in the USA that has an emblem on both sides of the state flag. The state seal and the year that Oregon became a state are on the front, and a beaver (the official state animal) is on the back.
Let’s match the images of landforms to their definitions on the next page. If you’re having trouble remembering what a landform is, check Page 3 for a hint.
I am a type of mountain. I am filled with hot red lava. Sometimes smoke comes out of my top, and occasionally I erupt.

I am a ___________________________.

**volcano**

I go way up into the sky from the ground. My top is often covered with snow, and people like to ski or snowboard down me.

I am a ___________________________.

**mountain**

I am known for having many trees that grow close together. I can be evergreen or tropical, and many people like to use me for fun activities like camping, bird watching, and hiking.

I am a ___________________________.

**forest**

Water meets land here. I am covered in sand, and I can be a great place to look for seashells. You can also visit me to dip your toes into the water.

I am a ___________________________.

**beach**

I am very hot and dry, with lots of rocks, sand, and spiky plants called cacti. I don't get very much rain.

I am a ___________________________.

**desert**

I have water surrounding me on all sides. I am often tropical. I can be big like Australia, or small like Hawaii. I make a great vacation spot.

I am an __________________________.

**island**

I like the beach, but a volcano might be a little too hot for me! Which of these places would you most like to explore?
Where might a frog live? Probably near a lake or a pond. What animals share the same bodies of water? **Draw a line matching the water creature to the body of water where it might live.** Hint: some creatures might live in more than one kind of water body.
Oceans are home to millions of different plants and animals. Unfortunately, trash and other waste is often dumped into the ocean, which can pollute the water and hurt the plants and animals that live there. Help make the ocean clean for Sandy and the other sea creatures. Circle all the trash you see.

Remember to recycle your plastic, paper, and metals, these can be reused and won’t end up in the oceans. Try to use reusable water bottles and other non-disposable items, too.
In Oregon, some days the weather is hot, some days it is cold, and some days it is wet. **Circle the word which best matches the kind of weather described below.**

**SUN**

When the sun is in the sky is it **WARM** or **COLD**?

**RAIN**

When there is rain coming from the clouds is it usually **WET** or **DRY** outside?

**CLOUDS**

When there are lots of clouds can you see the blue sky? **YES** or **NO**?

**SNOW**

When there is snow coming from the clouds is it usually **COLD** or **WARM** outside?
One way to show direction is with a Compass. On a compass, there are four main directions that we use: North, East, South, and West. A compass with drawings in the center is called a compass rose.

To the left are two examples of different compasses. Use the outline below to color in a special compass rose of your own.
We use *directions* to describe where things are in relation to each other, and we use distance to describe how far things are from each other. Below, the ball is moving around the table, and the word tells you where it is in relation to the table.

- **Above**
- **Below**
- **In Front of**
- **Behind**

**Near**

**Far**

**To The Left of**

**To The Right of**

**Between**
Circle or fill in the correct answers below.

Is the ball on the **LEFT** or the **RIGHT** of the tree?

Is the ball **ABOVE** or **BELOW** the tree?

Is the ball **NEAR** or **FAR** from the tree?

Is the ball in the **FRONT** or the **BACK** of the tree?

The ball is positioned **above** the tree.

The ball is positioned **near/to the left of** the tree.
This map of Washington Park in Portland shows you where all the parks attractions are located. The map key shows you what the different symbols on a map represent. Use the map and its key to answer the questions below.

1. There are lots of different things to do in Washington Park. What would you want to see first? What other attractions is it located near?

Various answers possible

2. If you get hungry, where is a place where you can get food? What is its symbol? What is it next to? You can get food at the Oregon Zoo or the International Rose Test garden. Symbol is a knife and fork. These locations are next to various things.

Various answers possible

3. On the map, trace the route you would take from the Portland Children’s Museum to the Sacajawea Statue. Make sure to follow existing roads and trails.

4. Circle all the places on the map where you see a picnic area. Various answers possible
Next time you are on a walk or in a car, bus, or train, look at your surroundings to see what is there. What do you usually see on your way to school?

- Clouds
- Bicycles
- Farm Animals
- Road Signs
- Mail Boxes
- Road Work
- Road Construction
- Tractors
- Dogs
- Runners

When I’m traveling around, I usually see lots of other fish friends and big rocks on the river bottom. I’m always looking for tasty bugs to snack on, too!

What did you see on your way to school that is not on this page? Draw it here.

Various answers possible
Things to do Outside

Being outside lets you explore the environment, and exploring the environment makes you a geographer! There are many fun activities you can do outdoors year-round. A few are listed below.

Walking  Roller Blading  Skiing  Hiking
Sailing  Horseback Riding  Surfing  Camping
Swimming

When you’re outside remember to be sun safe. Always wear sunscreen and try to stay in the shade. You don’t want to burn your scales (or your skin)!

What do you like to do outside? Write it down and then draw it here.
I like to __________________________________________________ outside!

Various answers possible
Now that you know more about geography, use what you have learned to draw a map in the box below of a place that is important to you. Examples could include your house, neighborhood, school, or favorite vacation spot. Make sure to include a **map key**.

Various answers possible

I would map my home: the Columbia River!
The images in this workbook come from the sources listed below. Any images not listed come from the Center for Geography Education in Oregon's *Student Atlas of Oregon (second edition)*.

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*A free copy of the Atlas can be obtained from [http://studentatlasoforegon.pdx.edu/](http://studentatlasoforegon.pdx.edu/).*
National Geography Standards (NGS)

**Essential Element: The World in Spatial Terms**
1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information
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

**Essential Element: Places and 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

**Essential Element: Physical Systems**
7. The physical processes that shape the patterns of Earth’s surface
8. The characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems and biomes on Earth’s surface

**Essential Element: Human Systems**
9. The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations 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

**Essential Element: Environment and Society**
14. How human actions modify the physical environment
15. How physical systems affect human systems
16. The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources

**Essential Element: The Uses of Geography**
17. How to apply geography to interpret the past
18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future
Oregon Geography Standards (OGS)

1. Apply geographic skills, concepts, and technologies (e.g. maps, GIS, Google Earth) to gather, display, and analyze spatial information.
2. Analyze economic, social, human migration, settlement, and distribution patterns.
3. Locate and examine physical and human characteristics of places and regions, their impact on developing societies, and their connections and interdependence.
4. Evaluate how human cooperation and competition for resources shape the Earth’s political, economic, physical, and social environments.
5. Evaluate how technological developments, societal decisions, and personal decisions and actions influence Earth’s sustainability.

For geography standards by grade, please see:
http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/subjects/socialscience/standards/adoptedsocialsciencesstandards8-2011.pdf

Oregon Environmental Literacy Strands (OELS)

1. Systems Thinking
   Students study systems and issues holistically, striving to understand the relationships and interactions between each system’s parts. They use the knowledge gained to assess the effects of human choices on economic, ecological, and social systems, and to optimize outcomes for all three systems.

2. Physical, living, and human systems
   Students understand the characteristics of Earth’s physical, living, and human systems.

3. Interconnectedness of people and the environment
   Students understand the interdependence of humans and the environment, and appreciate the interconnectedness of environmental quality and human well-being.

4. Personal and civic responsibility
   Students understand the rights, roles, and responsibilities and actions associated with leading or participating in the creation of healthy environments and sustainable communities.

5. Investigate, plan, and create a sustainable future
   Students apply civic action skills that are essential to healthy, sustainable environments
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| 1. | Locate Yourself:  
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/activity/locate-yourself-map-americas/ |
| 2. | Mapping Storybooks:  
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/activity/mapping-storybooks/ |
| 3. | Introduction to Place:  
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/activity/introduction-to-place/ |
| 4. | Characteristics of Place:  
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/activity/characteristics-of-place/ |
| 5. | Exploring Characteristics of Places:  
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/activity/exploring-characteristics-places/ |
| 6. | Land, Water, and Animals Map:  
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/activity/land-water-and-animals-map/ |
| 7. | How People Affect Ocean Animals and Plants:  
| 8. | Healthy Beaches:  
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/activity/healthy-beaches/ |
| 9. | Create a Weather Map:  
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/activity/create-weather-map/ |
| 10. | Measuring Distances:  
| 11. | Cardinal Directions and Maps:  
| 12. | Sun, Earth, and Cardinal Directions:  
| 13. | Using the Language of Location:  
| 14. | Using a Grid Map of the Zoo:  
| 15. | Places in the Park:  
http://education.nationalgeographic.com/activity/places-park/ |
C-GEO is dedicated to the improvement of geographic education and awareness in the State of Oregon. C-GEO’s mission includes: increasing public awareness of the importance of geographic education, increasing emphasis on geography in grades pre-K through 12, and improving geographic teaching methods and materials.

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http://www.pdx.edu/geography-education/instructional-materials-0

- Let’s Explore History Using Maps! Student/Teacher Editions
- Let’s Learn All About Maps! Student/Teacher Editions
- Let’s Learn All About Geography! (Pre-K-3rd) Student/Teacher Editions