

Blue Ridge Mountains

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Overview

This lesson is to introduce students to the basics of the Blue Ridge region of SC. Students will become familiar with a few facts about the mountains, types of rocks, forests, and the vegetation of this region. Students will also locate the region relative to the region where they live and compare the similarities and differences of each region. The students will also take the time to write a short reflection on the region and its characteristics. An extension of a math lesson is included where students can calculate the direction of their home region relative to the Blue Ridge region. Students can also use a road map to plan a trip to the region from their home.

Connection to the Curriculum

This lesson can be applied to geography, science, literature and math. It is applied to geography by studying the landforms. It is applied to science by studying the different types of rocks and vegetation. It is applied to language arts by reading and writing, and it is applied to math by finding the direction and constructing a map from a home to the mountains.

South Carolina Social Studies Academic Standards

- 3-1.1 Identify on a map the location and characteristics of significant physical features of South Carolina, including landforms; river systems such as the Pee Dee River Basin, the Santee River Basin, the Edisto River Basin, and the Savannah River Basin; major cities; and climate regions.
- 3-1.2 Interpret thematic maps of South Carolina places and regions that show how and where people live, work, and use land and transportation.
- 3-1.3 Categorize the six geographic regions of South Carolina—the Blue Ridge Mountain Region, the Piedmont, the Sand Hills, the Inner Coastal Plain, the Outer Coastal Plain, and the Coastal Zone—according to their different physical and human characteristics.
- 3-1.4 Explain the effects of human systems on the physical landscape of South Carolina over time, including the relationship of population distribution and patterns of migration to natural resources, climate, agriculture, and economic development.

Social Studies Literacy Elements

- F. Ask geographic questions: Where is it located? Why is it there? What is significant about its location? How is its location related to that of other people, places, and environments?
- G. Make and record observations about the physical and human characteristics of places
- H. Construct maps, graphs, tables, and diagrams to display social studies information
- I. Use maps to observe and interpret geographic information and relationships
- L. Interpret calendars, time lines, maps, charts, tables, graphs, flow charts, diagrams, photographs, paintings, cartoons, architectural drawings, documents, letters, censuses, and other artifacts
- P. Locate, gather, and process information from a variety of primary and secondary sources including maps

Grade Level

Adaptable for 3rd to 8th grade

Time

This lesson can take anywhere from one class period to several. If teaching younger grades it would be a one-day introduction to the region, its location, and making a quick travel map on direction just to expose students to the concept. For the younger students, this would be incorporated throughout the day in several different classes but using the same theme. (Social Studies, science, and math.) When used with older students this lesson would be at least a two-day lesson where the first day would be studying the region and what is contained within it. Discussions within groups and writings would be a part of the first day. The lesson would be the math extension using the maps and direction.

Materials Needed

South Carolina: An Atlas

school textbooks

library books

ruler, paper

pencil

other materials on the regions of SC

Objectives

1. Students will discuss the Blue Ridge Region of SC and its unique characteristics. (Mountains, rocks, forests, vegetation, and trees.)
2. Students will locate the Blue Ridge region and the region where they live on the map on page 6 of the atlas and give their locations relative to each other. (The Blue Ridge region is N, W, NW, or SW from where they live.)
3. Students will compare the similarities and differences between the two different regions. (Note: If students live in the Blue Ridge region they can contrast their home to a different area of that same region.)
4. Students will write a short reflection of the Blue Ridge region and include some of its unique characteristics.

Suggested Procedures

Prior to this lesson students will have completed reading assignments. This would include textbook, teacher read materials, and other related resources. If possible students would have visited the Blue Ridge region by way of a Virtual Field Trip. The teacher will be walking around the classroom assuring the maximum amount of involvement and interest.

1. The teacher will divide students into groups of threes or fours and have them discuss in detail the unique characteristics of the region. Each group will make a list of these detailed characteristics. Teacher will monitor to assure that all of the students take part.

2. Each group will come up to the front of the classroom and tell what they observed about the region. Each student in the group will participate. While one student is talking another will be writing what they observed on the board.
3. Afterwards the teacher will have students locate the Blue Ridge region on the class map relative to where they live. The student will write this down on a sheet of paper. (Ex.- I live in Sumter so the Blue Ridge region is located to the west and northwest of Sumter.)
4. Students will orally compare and contrast the similarities and differences between the two regions. The teacher will also have students write these comparisons on the board under the titles **Similarities** and **Differences**.
5. Students will write a reflection of the Blue Ridge region and its characteristics being sure to note a few of its differences compared to where they live. This will need to be as descriptive and detailed as possible.
6. Students will share their reflections with the class.

Lesson Extensions

The teacher will divide the room into two teams (just split the room in half) and asking a series of true/false/fill in the blank questions. All students will get a question. If a student on one team misses a question, the other team gets a chance to answer and rather than one point they will get two points and still receive their next question. After each person has had a chance to answer one question the game is over. There will be a prize of treats. The losing team gets a treat and the winning team gets two.

In the prior lesson students had located the Blue Ridge region relative to where they lived. Now the students would observe a map of SC and locate where they live. They would then visually search for a route to the Blue Ridge region. After observing, students would then plan a trip from their home to any place in the Blue Ridge region. Students would work independently on this project. They would start at their home and write down each direction they would travel, and then they would write the names of each road/highway needed to travel on. When they finish they should have a complete road map from their home to the Blue Ridge region and be able to go to a class map and explain to the class the routes and directions they would need to go to make it to their destination.

The teacher could also have students calculate the approximate distance and the total distance from their beginning point to their endpoint.

Suggested Evaluation

The teacher will observe and monitor group work and class presentations. The teacher will keep written notes of each child's participation for assessment purposes.

Resources

South Carolina: An Atlas and South Carolina Interactive Geography CD-ROM produced and distributed by the South Carolina Geographic Alliance

1-888-895-2023

www.cas.sc.edu/cege

SCIGLET CD-ROM - SC Geographic Alliance

Highway Map – SC Department of Transportation

SCGA Landform Region poster - SC Geographic Alliance