TLC Elementary School Lesson Plan
U.S. Geography: The Northeast

Subject
U.S. Geography

Grade level
3-5

Duration
One or two class periods

Objectives
Students will

- use maps to learn about the natural resources of the Northeast;
- become familiar with specific map features, including scales, keys, and compass roses;
- create maps of the Northeast, indicating all renewable, non-renewable, and recyclable natural resources for each state; and
- discuss the similarities and differences between the resources and geography of the Northeast states and possible reasons for these similarities and differences.

Materials

- Colored pencils, crayons, or markers
- Pencils and rulers
- White construction paper
- Computer with Internet access (optional)
- *U.S. Geography: The Northeast* video and VCR
- Geography texts, encyclopedias, and library resources
- Physical, topographic, and political maps of U.S. Northeast (or of the whole United States)

Procedures

1. Open this lesson by discussing the Northeast region. A good way to do this is to show segments of the video *U.S. Geography: The Northeast*. Ask students: Which states are part of the U.S. Northeast? What natural resources do they provide? Make sure students understand the differences between renewable, non-renewable, and recyclable resources.

2. Using a map of the United States or of the Northeast, discuss how mapmakers use compass roses, scales, keys, and other features to show distance, direction, and geographic placement of natural features and urban

centers on maps.

3. Instruct students in making individual maps of the Northeast. Students will use construction paper and colored pencils, crayons, or markers to make maps of the Northeast. Student maps should include
   - state names and borders;
   - a key;
   - a compass rose;
   - a scale;
   - indicators for each state's renewable, non-renewable, and recyclable natural resources;
   - indicators for major urban centers; and
   - indicators for major physical features (such as rivers, lakes, or mountains).

4. Discuss ways to create map keys. Students may be creative with the symbols they use to indicate natural resources and urban centers on their maps. Discuss different ways to use scale to represent map distances.

5. Students may use U.S. maps, maps of the Northeast, geography texts, encyclopedias, and other library resources to find their map information. Information on individual states in the Northeast can also be found on the following Web sites.
   http://www.50states.com/
   http://www.theus50.com/
   http://www.ipl.org/div/kidspace/stateknow/
   http://www.netstate.com/

6. Once students have completed their maps, discuss the information they collected. Ask students: Which natural resources did they already know about, and which ones surprised them? What possible environmental and economic issues might certain states face because of the natural resources they supply or depend on? What differences and similarities did they notice among states in the Northeast, and what are some possible reasons for them? Finally, ask students to explain why they chose to use certain symbols in their map keys and how they determined their scales.

Evaluation
Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

3 points: Students actively participated in class discussions; used books and other resources wisely; created highly attractive maps that correctly include all seven criteria; correctly labeled each natural resource as renewable, non-renewable, or recyclable.

2 points: Students participated in class discussions; used books and other resources to some degree; created presentable maps that correctly included four criteria; correctly labeled some natural resources as renewable, non-renewable, or recyclable.

1 point: Students did not participate in class discussions; were unable to use resource materials without guidance; created presentable maps that correctly

included two criteria; correctly labeled some natural resources as renewable, non-renewable, or recyclable.

Vocabulary
compass rose
Definition: A circle or similar shape containing lines of direction that is printed on a map to show the orientation of the map on Earth
Context: On almost every map you will see a compass rose that shows the cardinal directions of north, east, south, and west.

scale
Definition: An indication of the relationship between distances on a map and corresponding actual distances
Context: The scale of a map tells you how the distance on the map shows the actual distance on the Earth's surface.

natural resource
Definition: Any material found in the environment that is useful to humans
Context: Natural resources provide food, fuel, and, in some cases, delicious, fresh maple syrup.

recyclable resource
Definition: A natural resource that can be reused after cycling through a renewing process
Context: Water is a recyclable resource because it cycles through a process in the environment to renew itself.

renewable resource
Definition: A natural resource that continues to supply or replace itself
Context: Like other plants and animals on Earth, apples are a renewable resource.

non-renewable resource
Definition: Minerals and fossil fuels, including coal, petroleum, and natural gas, that can be used once and cannot be replaced
Context: Because non-renewable resources cannot be replaced, it is important to protect these natural resources.

Academic Standards
The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of the NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to http://www.socialstudies.org.

This lesson plan addresses the following standards:
- People, Places, and Environments
- Production, Distribution, and Consumption
- Global Connections

The National Council for Geographic Education (NCGE) provides 18 national geography standards that the geographically informed person knows and understands. To view the standards online, go to www.ncge.org.

This lesson plan addresses the following standards:

- Places and Regions
- Physical Systems
- Human Systems
- Environment and Society

Credit

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