

Using a wall map or overhead projection, teach the information on relative and absolute location, regions, rivers, mountains, cities, transportation routes, and historical sites of Arkansas. Point out that every place has an exact location as well as a relative location, and that physical and cultural features of a region are often influenced by the location.

Divide the class into groups of 4 to 5 students in a group. Give each group an instruction card, with one of these assignments:

1. Use crepe paper or yarn to draw an outline map of Arkansas on the floor or very large pieces of paper (I used three strips of the wide bulletin board paper taped together). Make it as large as space and materials will allow but it must be accurate in its size and dimensions. Write longitude and latitude coordinates on the cards for two opposite corners of the state.
2. Use cards to label the surrounding states. Place cards in appropriate places around the state. Make a card for each of the major transportation routes with its name written on it, then “draw” each route with markers and place the card.
3. Make a card for each of the rivers with its name written on it, then “draw” each river on the map using blue crepe paper or yarn.
4. Make a card for each of the cities with its name written on it and place in the proper locations. Do the same for the historical sites (this can be given to another group if needed)
5. Make a card (a larger sheet of paper can be used) with a different region’s name, then draw symbols representative of that region around its name. Place on the map in the proper location.
6. Make a card of each of the mountain ranges and specific mountains, mark the highest and lowest elevation points with the cards and place in the proper locations. Use the brown paper bags crumbled up to represent the Ozark Plateau and folded into ridges to represent the Ouachita Mountains.

While one group works on the map the other groups can be researching the information they will be adding to the map. You may want the group to get additional information, like population of cities, importance of the historical site to our state, etc.

Evaluation:

Have the students collect, prepare their materials needed for their portion of the map and place it in the proper location. Have each group explain to the rest of the class what they added to the map and any other information they gathered. Wrap up the activity by reviewing the map and talking about how each feature is important to the state of Arkansas and helps to make the state what it is.

ENRICHMENT:

- Invite guest to visit your “state.” Use the students as “tour guides” to give the guest a guide tour. Have the “guides” explain various features of the map that they help with or have the “guide” explain the complete map. This is a great activity to do on a Parent’s Night.
- Follow-up with the students making their own Arkansas Salt Relief Map. They will have a much better understanding of what to do after working with the “Arkansas Floor Map”.
- The places to be located on the map could be historically related to a lesson that you are studying at that point and then add to the map as you go on to new chapters or units throughout the year. Such as routes traveled by explorers, Civil War battles, places of racial tension after the war, Japanese Relocation Camps....

LIST OF INFORMATION TO BE LOCATED ON MAP

Surrounding States

Missouri
Oklahoma
Texas
Louisiana
Mississippi
Tennessee

River:

Arkansas
White
St. Francis
Red
Mississippi
Ouachita

Mountains:

Boston Mountains
Mount Magazine
Rich Mountain
Springfield Plateau

Regions:

West Gulf Coastal Plain
Mississippi Alluvial Plain
Crowley's Ridge
Arkansas River Valley
Ouachita Mountains
Ozark Plateau

Cities:

Little Rock
Hot Springs
Pine Bluff
West Memphis
Fayetteville
Texarkana
El Dorado
Jonesboro

Historical Sites:

Arkansas Post
Old Washington
Pea Ridge
Prairie Grove
Helena
Fort Smith

Major Transportation Routes:

I-40
I-540
I-30
I-55
I-530
State Highway 65
State Highway 64
State Highway 71

Based on a lesson developed by Janet Simpson
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