

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Success with Simulations	4
Cooperative Learning Teams	5
Simulations	
<i>Section I: Map Skills–Physical and Political Features</i>	
1 – The Continent of West Podiatry (landform features and map scale).....	6
2 – Direction March (cardinal and intermediate directions)	11
3 – A LEGEND-ary Masterpiece (map keys)	15
4 – Up Periscope (latitude and longitude)	17
5 – Cumulative Geography (using graphs)	20
6 – Bus Stop (using map scale with regional geographic features).....	24
7 – Georummy (regional political/physical features)	32
8 – River Cruise (rivers of the world)	36
<i>Section II: Humanity and the Environment</i>	
9 – Yum-Yum Trees (humans and the environment: conservation of resources)	41
10 – Green Thumb (climatic region’s effects upon agriculture)	45
11 – One Person’s Bread, Another Person’s Poison (consequences of a hazardous resource, asbestos).....	48
12 – Cramped Quarters (use of limited space in Japan)	52
13 – Leftovers (subsistence farming).....	54
<i>Section III: Regional Interaction</i>	
14 – Apple Market (economics within various world regions)	57
15 – The Import Collection (imported goods in the Australian economy)	61
16 – Symbolic Resources (regional national resources)	63
17 – Temps, Inc. (temporary migration within North America/Europe)	66
18 – Economic Dominoes (relationships between a land’s resources and its industrial capacities)....	69
19 – Bilingual Lingo (multilingual regions)	76
20 – Southeast Asian Exchange (overview of Southeast Asia)	85
Management Tools	
Simulation Completion Certificate	88
Awards and Rewards	89
World Map	90
Brainstorming Web.....	91

Introduction

Contemporary surveys have made us aware that many students lack geographic knowledge. When a percentage of high school seniors believes Vietnam is the nation directly south of the United States, one knows there is work to be done.

Perhaps educators need to move away from traditional, passive methods of instruction and towards a more interactive approach. *Geography Simulations* is written from such a belief: namely, that pupils must be actively involved, obtaining knowledge through cognitive, affective, or kinesthetic approaches to learning.

In *Section I: Map Skills — Physical and Political Features* simulations, simulated review games, and problem-solving dilemmas are used to employ the use of map skills and enhance understanding of the physical and political features of our world. However, a clear understanding of political and physical features of geography is not sufficient in itself. Thus, *Section II: Humanity and the Environment* provides simulations, situations, and activities that demonstrate how humans interact with the geographic environment, placing students squarely at the center of active situations that call for participation. Furthermore, *Section III: Regional Interaction*, involves students in critical thinking, enabling them to identify some of the interconnecting relationships that exist among the peoples of the planet.

By making optimal use of a cooperative learning environment, *Geography Simulations* will help middle school students think of geography as an adventure rather than work. Through action and participation, the knowledge students are exposed to will be internalized. Simulations make the learning process more natural and enjoyable and give results that last longer than those achieved with rote memorization.

Success with Simulations

The activities in *Geography Simulations* have been selected in order to get students affectively involved with geography by simulating conditions of a particular geographical area within the limited confines of the school environment.

Whether you intend to use a simulation for the purposes of introduction, review, or as part of the closure process, it is wise to establish procedures throughout each unit that will maintain consistency and organization. Suggestions on how best to utilize and store the units in this book follow.

Simulation Format

Each simulation begins with a lesson plan designed to assist the teacher with the preparations and procedures necessary and closes with valuable background information which connects the simulation to the geographical conditions being studied. The lesson plan for each simulation follows this format:

- Title of Simulation
- Topic
- Objective
- Materials
- Preparation
- Procedure
- For Discussion (where applicable)
- Background (where applicable)
- Follow-Up (where applicable)

Storing Simulations

As you use each activity, you will want to save the components of the simulation by using a readily available and well-organized system which will serve the future as well as the present. Labeled file folders or large manila envelopes can be easily sorted and organized by simulation units and kept in a file box. Pages that will be duplicated or made into overhead transparencies can be stored in the file folders or envelopes. Game cards, labels, etc., should be placed in envelopes or resealable plastic bags before storing them in their respective folders. If possible, use index paper or heavy stock for reproduced items, such as game pieces, that will be used over and over again. Lamination will help preserve these items.

Outside materials such as candy or plastic spoons should be readily available and noted on the outside of the activity's folder to serve as a reminder that these items need to be accessible for the simulation.

Once the simulations have been organized into a file box, you will be prepared for each unit on a moment's notice.

Let the simulations begin!

Cooperative Learning Teams

Cooperative learning is an important instructional strategy because it can be used as an integral part of many educational processes. It is made-to-order for thinking activities. It acts as a powerful motivational tool.

Many of the activities in this unit involve the cooperative learning process in order to find solutions or come to conclusions regarding the simulations. With this in mind, consider the following information as you initiate team activities.

Four Basic Components of Cooperative Learning

1. **In cooperative learning, all group members need to work together to accomplish the task.** No one is finished until the whole group is finished and/or has come to consensus. The task or activity needs to be designed so that members are not simply completing their own parts but are working to complete one product together.



2. **Cooperative learning groups should be heterogeneous.** It is helpful to start by organizing groups so that there is a balance of abilities within and among groups. Some of the simulations in this book, however, require a specific type of grouping for cooperative teams in order to achieve the simulation objective. Under such circumstances, a balanced and heterogeneous cooperative learning team arrangement would not be appropriate for the success of the simulation.



3. **Cooperative learning activities need to be designed so that each student contributes to the group, and individual group members can be assessed on their performance.** This can be accomplished by assigning each member a role that is essential to the completion of the task or activity. When input must be gathered from all members of the group, no one can go along for a free ride.



4. **Cooperative learning teams need to know the social as well as the academic objectives of a lesson.** Students need to know what they are expected to learn and how they are supposed to be working together to accomplish the learning. Students need to process or think and talk about how they worked on social skills as well as to evaluate how well their group worked on accomplishing the academic objective. Social skills are not something that students automatically know; these skills need to be taught.

The Continent of West Podiatry

Topic

Landform features and the use of map scale

Objective

Students will identify more than one dozen geographic terms pertinent to physical features found on a map. They will calculate distances between locations on a map using map scale.

Materials

- overhead projector
- pages 8 and 9, reproduced (one copy for each student)
- overhead transparencies of pages 9 and 10

Preparation

1. Prepare overhead transparencies of West Podiatry maps.
2. Reproduce copies of pages 8 and 9 for students.
3. Obtain and ready an overhead projector.

Procedure

1. Discuss or review primary landform terminology, then display the transparency of page 9 (map with locations numbered) on the overhead and hand out copies of page 9.
2. While the transparency is on view, students can work individually or in cooperative teams to label the map features on their copies of the map, matching geographically named features with the numbered locations on the map.
3. The transparency of page 10 can be used for correction and discussion of geographic features after students have completed page 9.
4. After page 9 has been completed, hand out page 8 for students to complete. The answers to pages 8 and 9 are shown on page 7.

