

National Council for Geographic Education  
Curriculum & Instruction Committee  
Geography Club

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Fifth Month Activities

**Geography for Life: National Geography Standards**

***The World in Spatial Terms***

**Standard 1:** How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information

***Places and Regions***

**Standard 4:** The physical and human characteristics of places

**Standard 6:** How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions

***Human Systems***

**Standard 12:** The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement

**I. Warm-up Activity: Map Scraps**

*Examine each "Map Scrap" and try to determine the locations. Use an atlas and other reference materials to answer the questions.*

**Map Scrap 5-1**



**Questions:**

1. From which continent is this map taken?
2. Which neighboring continent lies closest to this peninsula?
3. What body of water separates these two continents?
4. Name the place on this continent lies at 90 degrees south.
5. What is the highest point and its elevation on this continent?

Map: National Geographic Magazine

## Map Scrap 5-2



Map: National Geographic Magazine

### Questions:

1. This map shows part of which island country in the Greater Antilles?
2. What is the capital city of this country?
3. Which U.S. state lies closest to this island?
4. What body of water lies to the south of this island?
5. Name the two countries that lie on the island located east of this county?

### II. Activity: What's in a Name?

The following activity engages students in examining *toponyms*, or place names. Students will explore the frequency of place names and how many places share their first or last name. Students can also learn how local places were named.

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*Materials needed:*

1. USGS Geographic Names Information System: <http://geonames.usgs.gov/>
2. Atlas / maps of the United States

*Procedures*

1. Use the query feature on the USGS Geographic Names Information website.
  - ❖ What are the most common names that your students can think of?
  - ❖ Which first or last name of the students in your class is the most common?
  - ❖ Are there any students' names that don't appear in the Geographic Names Information System?
2. How many states share your city, town, or community name?
  - ❖ Note that you can narrow a query by selecting a "Feature Type" in the drop-down box on the query page. "Populated place" designates a town or city.

3. Identify some interesting place names by exploring toponym websites at About.com: <http://geography.about.com/cs/toponyms/index.htm> Scroll down to Toponyms, Toponyms & Place Names I, and Toponyms & Place Names II.
4. What are some interesting place names in your community, county, and state? Share some of these with the Geography Club community by emailing them to [stevepierce@charter.net](mailto:stevepierce@charter.net).
5. Finally, you can get a list of populated places by county name at Hometown Locator Community Profiles <http://www.hometownlocator.com>. Enter your county name and state.
  - ❖ Are students familiar with all the places named in their county?
  - ❖ Are there any surprises?

### **III. Geo-Questions: National Park Service Sites**

*Students will hone their research skills as they use maps, atlases, or online resources to find answers to these questions. These questions feature **Physical and Human Characteristics of Place**.*

1. What is the name of the deepest canyon in North America?
2. Bhutan, Nepal, and Tibet are associated with which mountain range?
3. Name the place that produces much of the world's supply of the pungent spice called clove.
4. Algeria, Mali, and Chad are associated with what type of environment?
5. Buran, sirocco, and foehn are local names for what natural phenomenon?
6. The Tamils and the Sinhalese are two major ethnic groups of what country?
7. On which island country in Asia would you be most likely to find people practicing elements of both Shintoism and Buddhism in their daily lives?
8. The Hawaiian Islands were first colonized by people of what culture group?
9. What team sport, derived from a game played by Native Americans, is now played at many high schools and universities?
10. The cities of Venice, Copenhagen, and St. Petersburg all have an abundance of what kind of artificial waterway?

## **Answers**

### **I. Map Scraps**

#### **Map 5-1**

1. Antarctica
2. South America
3. Drake Passage
4. South Pole
5. Vinson Massif; 16,864 ft.

#### **Map 5-2**

1. Cuba
2. Havana
3. Florida
4. Caribbean Sea
5. Haiti and Dominican Republic on the island of Hispaniola

### **III. Geo-Questions**

1. Hell's Canyon or Snake River Canyon
2. Himalaya Mountains
3. Zanzibar
4. desert
5. wind
6. Sri Lanka
7. Japan
8. Polynesian
9. lacrosse
10. canals