Kindergarten Social Studies Unit 10 Exemplar Lesson 02: Physical Characteristics of the Local Community

This lesson is one approach to teaching the State Standards associated with this unit. Districts are encouraged to customize this lesson by supplementing with district-approved resources, materials, and activities to best meet the needs of learners. The duration for this lesson is only a recommendation, and districts may modify the time frame to meet students’ needs. To better understand how your district may be implementing CSCOPE lessons, please contact your child’s teacher. (For your convenience, please find linked the TEA Commissioner’s List of State Board of Education Approved Instructional Resources and Midcycle State Adopted Instructional Materials.)

Lesson Synopsis

In this lesson, students review the physical and human features of their local community and explore how those features affect how people live.

TEKS

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) listed below are the standards adopted by the State Board of Education, which are required by Texas law. Any standard that has a strike-through (e.g., sample phrase) indicates that portion of the standard is taught in a previous or subsequent unit. The TEKS are available on the Texas Education Agency website at http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=6148.

K.5 Geography. The student understands physical and human characteristics of place. The student is expected to:

K.5A Identify the physical characteristics of place such as landforms, bodies of water, natural resources, and weather.

K.5B Identify how the human characteristics of place such as ways of earning a living, shelter, clothing, food, and activities are based upon geographic location.

Social Studies Skills TEKS

K.14 Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

K.14B Obtain information about a topic using a variety of valid visual sources such as pictures, symbols, electronic media, print material, and artifacts.

K.15 Social studies skills. The student communicates in oral and visual forms. The student is expected to:

K.15A Express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences.

K.15B Create and interpret visuals, including pictures and maps.

GETTING READY FOR INSTRUCTION

Performance Indicators

Kindergarten Social Studies Unit 10 PI 02

Identify on a map the physical characteristics that are part of the local community and those that are not. Write or dictate to explain what features are unique to the community and how the physical characteristics affect the way people live.


ELPS ELPS.c.3D

Key Understandings

- Human (man-made) and physical (natural) features shape our community and affect the way we live.
  - What does our community look like?
  - What are physical characteristics of place?
  - What are the physical characteristics of our community and how do they affect the way we live?
  - What are the human characteristics of our community and how do they affect the way we live?
  - What are the important places in the neighborhood?
  - What is important about these places?

Vocabulary of Instruction

- physical characteristics
- human characteristics
- compare
- similar
- different
- landforms
- relative location
- map

Materials
butcher or bulletin board paper

drawing paper, 8 ½ X 11 or 12 X 18, one per student

Each teacher will need to create his/her own map because each Box Town will be unique. The map can be hand drawn or computer generated and should include at least five features that are not a part of the local community.

variety of maps from places in Texas and the United States

Attachments

All attachments associated with this lesson are referenced in the body of the lesson. Due to considerations for grading or student assessment, attachments that are connected with Performance Indicators or serve as answer keys are available in the district site and are not accessible on the public website.

Handout: Parent Letter (1 per student)

Resources

• None identified

Advance Preparation

1. Become familiar with content and procedures for the lesson, specifically that communities are defined, in part, by their physical characteristics.
2. Refer to the Instructional Focus Document for specific content to include in the lesson.
3. Select appropriate sections of the textbook and other classroom materials that support the learning for this lesson.
4. Preview websites according to district guidelines.
5. Gather books to read aloud.
6. Create a sample Box Town.
7. Handout: Parent Letter may need to be sent home well in advance so that ample time will be given to create the box buildings.
8. Gather maps that show the physical characteristics of a place.
9. Prepare materials and handouts as needed.

Background Information

Physical places have characteristics or features such as soil, landforms, bodies of water, types of vegetation, and climate. These result from climatic and tectonic processes. Tectonic forces within the Earth cause volcanic activity and earthquakes which result in mountains and other natural features of the landscape. Climate, including effects of temperature, precipitation, and wind, also shape the physical characteristics of places. For instance, fertile deltas result from repeated flooding.

Human characteristics of places include the types of houses people build, the ways they earn a living, the games children play, the languages people speak, their religious beliefs, their ethnicity, the daily schedules they follow, the foods they eat, and how they govern themselves.

Landforms are features of the Earth’s surface which include plains, mountains, deserts, hills, and canyons.

Water accumulates in natural or man-made depressions. Bodies of water result, ranging in size from small tanks or ponds to lakes, seas, and oceans.

Natural resources are items provided by nature from which people produce goods and provide services. Some examples of natural resources include water, soil, trees, and oil as well as minerals and metals such as gold and iron ore. Even abundant fish can be a natural resource.

The position of a place in relation to another place is its relative location. Where is the student’s home relative to school? Is it near or far, north, south, east, or west? Where is the school in comparison to the park?

All locations are described in relation to some known point.

A symbol is something which stands for or suggests something else. It can be a visible sign of something which is intangible. The Statue of Liberty, for example, is a symbol of freedom. Symbols are also used on maps to make them easier to read.


GETTING READY FOR INSTRUCTION

Teachers are encouraged to supplement and substitute resources, materials, and activities to meet the needs of learners. These lessons are one approach to teaching the TEKS/Specificity as well as addressing the Performance Indicators associated with each unit. District personnel may create original lessons using the Content Creator in the Tools Tab. All originally authored lessons can be saved in the “My CSCOPE” Tab within the “My Content” area.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES

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<th>Instructional Procedures</th>
<th>Notes for Teacher</th>
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<tr>
<td>ENGAGE – Similarities of Maps</td>
<td>NOTE: 1 Day = 30 minutes</td>
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</table>
Several days BEFORE the lesson begins, follow the instructions below:

1. Distribute the Handout: Parent Letter (1 per student), read it aloud to the students, and allow time for questions.
2. Explain that students will bring a box from home, covered in plain paper, decorated like a building from the community. From these "box buildings" the class will construct an example of their community. (The teacher may want to assign students specific places such as the school, grocery store, retail stores, bank, post office, restaurants, homes, etc.)
3. Demonstrate how to make at least one box building. Students create one box building to contribute to a class Box Town of their community. These can be assigned or chosen independently by students.

**Day of the lesson:**

1. Display a variety of maps.
2. Ask students what they notice about the maps. Make a list of the similarities the students might see in the maps, for example: legend, labels, landforms, bodies of water, symbols, etc. Encourage the use of academic language.
3. After completing the list, read a selected book about maps and physical characteristics of place.

### EXPLORE – Physical and Human characteristics of a Community

**Suggested Duration:** 15 minutes

| Purpose: | The purpose of this section is for students to recognize that physical and human characteristics of a community can be found on maps. |
| TEKS: | K.5A; K.5B; K.14B; K.15A |
| Instructional Note: | Virtual map software (such as Google Earth) is a resource that can be used to show the Earth, the continent, the country, the state, the city or town, neighborhood, and location of the school. If students do not have support or resources at home to make their buildings, the teacher could provide materials in the art center to complete the project during free center time. Materials can also be used to create additional buildings. |

1. Facilitate a discussion about maps based on the book selected in the Engage.
2. Guide students to identify landforms such as mountains, hills, valleys, plains, deserts; bodies of water such as oceans, lakes, ponds, rivers and streams.
3. Assist students in making a connection between the physical characteristics in the book and the physical characteristics of the local community. Explain that the physical characteristics of the community determine what a map of the local community might look like.
4. Ask: How do we find our way around our community? (Answers will vary) Explain that knowing the location of landforms, bodies of water, landmarks, and roads is an important key to finding one’s way around a community.
5. Ask: What else helps us find our way around our community? (Answers will vary) Explain to students that physical characteristics of the community determine other characteristics of our community, such as what places are available to help us meet our basic human needs such as what food they eat, the types of houses they build, etc. These locations are also found on maps of our local community and are known as human characteristics of place.
6. Students work in pairs to identify the physical and human characteristics of the town.

### EXPLAIN – Map of the community

**Suggested Duration:** 5 minutes

| Purpose: | The purpose of this section is for students to demonstrate an understanding of what is found on a basic map of the community. |
| TEKS: | K.5A; K.5B; K.15A; K.15B |

1. Demonstrate how to draw a simple map of the local community on the board.
2. Working with a partner, students draw a simple map of the local community. They should include landforms, bodies of water, landmarks, roads, local businesses, and homes.
3. Students write or dictate a description of their map using the language from the lesson.

### ELABORATE – Planning the Box Town

**Suggested Duration:** 10 minutes

| Purpose: | The purpose of this section is to create a plan for the map of the local community to use to make the Box Town Community. |
| TEKS: | K.5A; K.5B; K.14B; K.15A; K.15B |

1. Explain that the class will create a map and a box town reflecting their specific community.
2. Brainstorm with students the physical and human characteristics of a section of the community that most students frequent. Include the businesses and other key landmarks that surround the area as well as landforms such as beaches, farm land, lakes, etc. that are unique to the community.
3. Introduce TODAL, the components of a map that includes: title, orientation, date, etc. Provide materials in the art center to complete the project during free center time. Materials can also be used to create additional buildings.
It may be helpful to provide students with a template for the map rather than a blank paper. Use your judgment on how much scaffolding to provide for this activity.

Every map should include TODAL:
- T = title
- O = orientation (compass rose)
- D = date created
- A = author
- L = legend

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<tr>
<th>EXPLORE – Community Map</th>
<th>Suggested Day 2 (continued) – 20 minutes</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Organize students into small groups of 3-4.</td>
<td>Materials:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Assign each group one part of the community.</td>
<td>• butcher or bulletin board paper</td>
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<td>3. One group at a time goes to the large butcher paper supplied by the teacher and draws their assigned part of the community. The teacher facilitates and guides students what to draw and where to draw their roads, landmarks, etc. on the classroom map.</td>
<td>Purpose:</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. While other groups are waiting their turn to add their part of the community to the large map, they may practice drawing their part of the community on a smaller paper, may work in centers, or may complete an activity as directed by the teacher.</td>
<td>• The purpose of this section is for students to create a map of their community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. This map will be used the following day as a guide to tape the buildings the students have made at home for their Box Town.</td>
<td>TEKS: K.5A; K.5B; K.14B; K.15A; K.15B</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Teacher circulates, offering support as students work in small groups on the map.</td>
<td>Instructional Note:</td>
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<th>EXPLAIN – Physical and Human Characteristics</th>
<th>Suggested Day 2 (continued) – 5 minutes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Arrange students in a large circle.</td>
<td>Purpose:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Go around the circle and have each student think first and then “Tell One Thing” about the physical and human characteristics of their community, based on the map they created.</td>
<td>• The purpose of this section is for students to explain a physical or human characteristic of their community.</td>
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<tr>
<th>ENGAGE – Assembling the Box Town</th>
<th>Suggested Day 3 – 5 minutes</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Students bring the buildings they made at home and begin assembling their community on the butcher or bulletin board paper.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Students sit in a circle and observe as each building is placed. Demonstrate placing a building on the map. Ask: Why is this where this building should be placed? Guide the discussion to ensure the students’ understanding of the connection between the geography of the community and the businesses that exist. For example, a canoe rental business would be placed in the park near the lake; or a feed store would be found in a community that was surrounded by farm and ranch land; a boat dock would be located on the coast or lake.</td>
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<tr>
<th>EXPLORE – Physical &amp; human characteristics shape our town</th>
<th>Suggested Day 3 (continued) – 10 minutes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Go around the circle as each student places his/her building.</td>
<td>Purpose:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Further explain that the homes we live in, the clothes we wear, the food we eat and the activities we participate in are based on the place we live.</td>
<td>• The purpose of this section is for students to explore how physical &amp; human characteristics shape the town where we live.</td>
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<tr>
<td>TEKS: K.5A; K.5B; K.14B; K.15A; K.15B</td>
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<tr>
<th>EXPLAIN – Turn and tell a partner</th>
<th>Suggested Day 3 (continued) – 5 minutes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Students tell a partner about a connection between a physical characteristic of the community and how it affects the way people in the community live.</td>
<td>Purpose:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The purpose of this section is for students to explain the connection between physical characteristics of their community and how it affects the way they live.</td>
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### ELABORATE – Key Understandings

Suggested Day 3 (continued) – 10 minutes

1. Facilitate a discussion focusing on Key Understandings and Guiding Questions:

   - Human (man-made) and physical (natural) features shape our community and affect the way we live.
     - What does our community look like?
     - What are physical characteristics of place?
     - What are the physical characteristics of our community and how do they affect the way we live?
     - What are the human characteristics of our community and how do they affect the way we live?
     - What are the important places in the neighborhood?
     - What is important about these places?

2. Ask students how their community might be different if it didn’t have one of its physical features.

   - For example, if the community is located close to a lake, what would happen if the lake levels became very low or if the lake evaporated?
   - If that resource was no longer available, how would that affect the way in the community live?
   - Would local businesses be able to stay in the community or would they have to close?

### ENGAGE – Physical characteristics not found in our community

Suggested Day 4 – 5 minutes

1. We have learned what physical characteristics are found in our community. Ask:

   - What physical and human characteristics are not found in our community?

2. Allow students to brainstorm a list of characteristics not in the community. Write their ideas on the board.

### EVALUATE – Determine mastery

Suggested Day 4 (continued) – 25 minutes

**Kindergarten Social Studies Unit 10 PI 02**

Identify on a map the physical characteristics that are part of the local community and those that are not. Write or dictate to explain what features are unique to the community and how the physical characteristics affect the way people live.


ELPS ELPS.c.3D

1. Distribute a teacher-created map that is a smaller version of the Box Town community.

2. The map should include five features that are not a part of the local community.

3. Students will identify the features that are found in the local community by coloring them. Students will identify the features that are not found in the local community by drawing an X on them. Students will write or dictate what features are unique to the community and how the physical characteristics affect the way people live.

4. Teacher circulates, providing assistance as needed.

### Purpose:

- The purpose of this section is for students to use Guiding Questions and Key Understandings to summarize learning.

**TEKS:** K.5A; K.5B; K.15A

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Printed By Karen Johnson, MIDLAND ISD
Dear Parents and Guardians,

We have been learning about our local community and examining how the geography of a place affects how people live. Your child has an exciting task for homework. We are going to be working together to create our own community. Each child needs to make a building of his/her choice.

The buildings can be made out of shoe boxes, cereal boxes, or any other form of paper that you wish. Your child will need you to help cover the box with paper so that none of the original box shows. Then he/she can decorate the building as desired. Other recyclable materials can be used to enhance the buildings. These might include smaller boxes, toilet paper or paper towel tubes, or scrap paper.

If you need some of the materials (construction paper, scissors, glue, etc.) in order to complete the project, please let me know and I will send them home with your child so that it can be returned to school on time. This assignment is due on ____________________________.

Thank you in advance for your participation with this assignment!

Sincerely,