

# Grade 3 Social Studies Toolkit

## **Students Interacting With People, Places, and Environments**

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## **Grade 3 Overview**

**Topic:** Describing locations and places and where people are from

**Objective:** Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the interactions among people, places, and the environment (general curriculum outcome: *People, Place, and Environment*)

This toolkit provides teachers with several resources and ideas to include in the classroom to make teaching a unit a smooth and valuable experience for all students and teachers. The unit teaches students about the importance of where they are located on the global map and how they fit into the picture as well as where other people are from. It enables teachers to create a global classroom and allows students the opportunity to interact and connect with other students across the world.

## **Arts-Based Lesson Plan**

**Objective:** Students will be expected to describe the interactions among people, places, and the environment

**Topic:** Introduction to global communication

**Time:** 60-90 minutes

### **Materials:**

- “This is My Country” by Lisa Bullard (book)
- Paper
- Pencils
- Colouring pencils
- Maps
- Non-fiction books about different countries in the world
- Laptop (with internet)

### **Procedures:**

- Have the students pretend they have a penpal and have them describe where they live
- Have them use the vocabulary they have learned from using maps (cardinal directions, referential points)
- Read “This is My Country” by Lisa Bullard
- Discuss how people interact with the world, first in their own space, then in their larger community
- Have the students choose a country (or pick it from a hat) and research their area using maps and books
- Have them draw and describe where they live to their penpal. (i.e. What does their house look like? Where do they get their food and water? Has their family always lived there or did they come from somewhere else?)

**Differentiation:** Students can draw or create a structure to show their location, then describe it to the teacher.

**Extension:** Have the students present their ideas to a partner and have a discussion of what other descriptions could be added to their piece. Or if they have kept their ideas very secret, they can do a practice round of “mystery skype” (asking questions to

determine their partner's secret location by narrowing down the possible mystery places).

## **Storybooks**

### **1. "Me on the Map" by Joan Sweeney**

This book touches on the theme of maps and descriptions throughout a story that follows a boy as he maps out his world. He starts with himself in his room, then in his house, and later on his street. He is constantly putting himself on different maps to see how he fits into the world. This is a useful resource because the vocabulary can be used to describe our own location. We can see how our street, country, and continent fit together in order to describe to others where we are in the world.

### **2. "This is My Country" by Lisa Bullard**

This story describes two penpals, one from the United States and another from Morocco, exploring their understanding of their home countries and sharing the information with one another via online penpals. In chapter one, Abdou (a boy from Morocco) writes to his penpal Will (in the United States) and describes the city of Rabat and also explains that the king and government are located there. Will responds by researching about his own country's government and describes his visit to Washington. In chapter two, Will begins to explore other countries by using a globe to compare country sizes and other geographical characteristics. Will compares climates and notes how parts of the USA are hot and dry like it is in Morocco. In chapter three, Will sends some photos of his country's monuments and expresses his hope to continue asking questions and one day visit Morocco. At the end of the novel there is a glossary for vocabulary that can be explored in this subject of global communities.

# **Online Resources**

## **1. MapFab**

This resource is amazing for utilizing a mapping system that allows students to interact with a map, as they will be able to add descriptions and draw on this map. Students can add where they have been and add comments about what that place means to them. By incorporating penpals, other students from other locations can add where they're from and their experiences to the map. Geography can be expanded upon and made into more than just simply maps and landmarks and more about people and where they come from along with their stories in those respective places. During our final project (mystery classroom skype), this map can be placed on the smartboard so that students can use it to narrow down the search to solve the mystery classroom activity.

<https://www.mapfab.com/editor/new>

## **2. iEARN Canada**

This resource provides teachers with a list of global projects that students can be a part of and allows teachers to connect with each other to start a project. By joining one of these groups, a teacher can connect with a classroom around the world to arrange a global activity like a penpal exchange or a mystery classroom skype. This is amazing for teachers who want to establish a global classroom, but do not have the connections yet to be able to create it. There is also an opportunity for an online forum where students and teachers can have a discussion, which would be wonderful and beneficial for implementing whole-class penpals rather than individual penpals. Other example projects that can be found to incorporate in the classroom include a holiday card exchange, a children's rights learning circle, and a teddy bear project.

<http://www.iearn-canada.org/>

## **3. Map Challenges by Mark Warner**

This resource allows students to discuss a map and its elements at a town scale. There are questions included with this map that stretch the thinking of students and challenge their learning. With an activity such as this one, students can also

create their own questions about the places and information indicated on the map. This map activity can be modified to the hometown of the students in the classroom so they are more familiar with it and can apply their learnings in the classroom to their outside community. It can also be a great stepping stone to having students create their own unique maps of a fictional town/city where they can include important map elements that are discussed on this example map such as road names, a legend or key, and symbols to represent buildings in the community.

<http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/maps-and-atlases/map-challenges>

#### **4. University of Calgary: Libraries and Cultural Resources**

*Grade 3 students will investigate life in four diverse communities around the world. The contemporary communities examined will be drawn from India, Tunisia, Ukraine and Peru. Students will inquire into how geographic, social, cultural and linguistic factors affect quality of life in communities in the world. Students will enrich their awareness and appreciation of how people live in other places. Their understanding of global citizenship will be further developed, and they will recognize Canada's involvement in other parts of the world.* -- from Program of Studies, Alberta Education (p.1 in Grade 3). This resource provides a catalogue to search from for texts under the theme of "Connect with the World". Two topics are covered under this overarching theme, "Communities in the World" and "Global Citizenship". There are also several keywords and subject headings included to search from such as children's rights and human geography that bring up useful resources for teachers.

<https://library.ucalgary.ca/c.php?g=255383&p=1705312>

#### **5. Canadian Elementary Social Studies Links**

This resource is super helpful for any teacher that may be teaching their class about the different governments and agencies involved within Canada. It provides a number of links that take you directly to more information and research about this topic and several others in social studies, geography, or history. Included amongst the links are lesson plan ideas, activities, and other resources that can be used by teachers to guide a unit on a certain topic. The links include a wide array of topics in social studies such as aboriginal issues in

Canada, Canadian war, mapping, and the Canadian Space Agency (which can be used cross-curricularly with science as well). This website saves the hassle of having to sift through the internet to find reliable and credible resources that can be applied in the classroom setting.

<http://www.pearsoned.ca/highered/divisions/text/wright/links.html>

## **6. National Geographic MapMaker Interactive**

This resource allows students to navigate the world map through a satellite view to learn about and describe their location on the map. It provides an interactive experience that highlights several realistic details such as streets, houses, trees, and all bodies of water. Students are able to search for their home and locate where they are from. Also this resource could be used for a whole class activity as every student's home could be labeled on the map which would create a class map. The distances between two points can be measured, so students could discover how far apart they are located on the map from their classmates. It allows students to explore the world and where they are from in relation to others through the use of technology.

<http://mapmaker.nationalgeographic.org/>



# Culminating Activity

## **Mystery Classroom Skype**

The students in the classroom will connect with students in another classroom in a different part of the world without being informed of where this is. Each class will alternate turns asking yes or no questions to the other “mystery classroom” to find out where they are located on the world map. Before starting, brainstorm strong and effective questions that help describe locations and places to narrow down the other classrooms location (i.e. Is your classroom located in the western hemisphere of the world?). All students will be assigned a particular role during the mystery skype to encourage collaborative learning and logical reasoning to problem solve.

\*It's a good idea to go through one or two practice runs with your class beforehand to ensure that your students understand the objective, each of the designated roles, and the types of questions to ask. As the teacher you can select a location somewhere in the world and challenge your students to deduce where you've chosen in as few questions as they can\*

### **Student roles/positions:**

- **Inquisitors** → these students ask the yes/no questions on skype to the other class
- **Question Creators** → these students create questions based on new information
- **Runners** → these students collect questions from the “question creators” and deliver them to the “inquisitors” while making sure the question is effective
- **Recorders** → these students document questions and answers from both classes
- **Google Earthers/Mappers** → these students find the possible places where the other class could be located with the help of globes, maps, and google earth based on the information gathered from their questions
- **Logical Reasoners** → these students relay information to the “mappers” and the “eliminators” to help decide how to proceed in the activity and where to go next
- **Eliminators** → these students identify where the other class cannot be located

- **Responders** → these students answer the questions from the other class about their own location
- **Photographers/Videographers** → these students take pictures and videos of the activity to document it, which can be looked back at post-activity as part of a debriefing/reflection period

Afterwards, have the students describe the experience and what they learned from it. Discuss how the questions could have been improved upon and/or how the reasoning could be better to locate the other classroom in a fewer amount of questions. Make ample time for reflection and mention any observations of the activity that you might have noticed as a teacher. This activity can be replicated several times with many classrooms and students can have an opportunity to attempt a different role each time.