

Do You Have Anything To Declare? An Introduction to the U.S.-Canada Border

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Description:

This three-lesson unit introduces students to the United States-Canada border by looking at its geography, evolution, and issues. Students will create a map showing border provinces and states with major border cities, a map showing the evolution of the creation of the border, and research/report a particular issue unique to this border region.

Grade Level(s):

Grades 6-12

Subject(s)

Social Studies, Reading, Writing, Public Speaking

Duration:

1-2 weeks

Goal:

Raise student awareness of the geography, creation, and issues concerning the US-Canada border.

Objectives:

1. Student will label a map of the border region showing the Canadian provinces, U.S. states, and major border cities;
2. Students will color-code a map of the border which shows its evolution from Atlantic to Pacific Oceans;
3. Students will research a particular border issue and report their findings to the class.

Standards:

- AZ State Social Studies: **3SS-E3 PO5** How and why people create boundaries
3SS-E5 PO3 Relationships and interactions between regions
3SS-E8 PO3 Use geo. knowledge & skills to analyze contemporary issues
- AZ State Reading Standards: **R-E2** Use reading strategies such as making inferences and predictions, summarizing, paraphrasing, differentiating fact from opinion, drawing conclusions, and determining author's purpose and perspective to comprehend written selections.
- AZ State Writing Standards: **W-E3** Write a summary that presents information clearly and accurately, contains the most significant details and preserves the position of the author.

- AZ State Public Speaking Standards: Prepare and deliver an organized speech and effectively convey the message through verbal and nonverbal communication with a specific audience.

Materials:

- Transparency map of border region
- Student copies of map of border region
- Key to border region map
- United States-Canada Comparison Chart transparency
- Border Cities Data Chart transparency
- Key for Border Evolution map
- Border Evolution Chart transparency
- Group Job Sheets

Procedures:

Lesson One

1. As a class, label the Canadian provinces/territories, U.S. states, and major cities on border region map.
2. Share with students Border Cities Data Chart and discuss border cities are locations.
3. Discuss the United States-Canada Comparison Chart transparency.

Lesson Two

1. Color code a second border region map to show when each section was added using the following colors: red for 1783, purple for 1818, blue for 1842, green for 1846, and brown for 1867.
2. Share with and discuss Border Evolution Chart transparency.

Lesson Three

1. Divide the class into four groups and assign each group one of the following border issues: environment, criminal activity, First Nations, and economic.
2. Distribute Job Sheet to each group and have them research their issue.
3. Each group prepares a written report of their findings and gives an oral presentation to the class.

Topics:

Students will base their written report and oral presentation on the following issues:

- Environment: Describe the physical geography of the U.S.-Canada border. Research the problems facing the border concerning water pollution, air pollution, and acid rain.
- Criminal Activity: Research the problems facing the border concerning drug trafficking, smuggling, illegal immigration, and the possibility of terrorists using this border to enter the United States.
- First Nations: Which tribes live on both sides of the border and where? Research problems tribes face crossing the border, citizenship, and conducting business across the border.
- Economics: What industries are on the border? Why do Americans and Canadians cross the border? What are the issues concerning free trade and resources that exist on both sides of the border? Are US businesses relocating to Canada? Which ones and why? Are Canadian businesses doing so?

Student Rubric for Assessment:

1. Written Report (75 pts. Possible) _____

Title and Names = 5 pts.

Content (40 pts. Possible)

Explains topic = 15 pts.

Clarity = 10 pts.

Thoroughness = 15 pts.

Mechanics (30 pts. Possible)

No or few errors = 30 pts.

Minor errors = 20 pts.

Major errors = 10 pts.

2. Oral Report (25 pts. Possible) _____

Appropriate voice = 5 pts.

Appropriate pace = 5 pts.

Covers topic = 5 pts.

Eye contact = 5 pts.

Organized = 5 pts.

3. Total Points (written reports + oral presentation) ___/100

Additional Notes/Resources:

1. Plattsburg Press Republican, www.pressrepublican.com, column by Peter Black written for Americans about Canada.
2. "Headin' South" series, The Globe and Mail, Toronto, Ontario, www.globeandmail.com, articles on business leaving Canada for the U.S.
3. www.ga.ca, Canadian government website.
4. www.onlinenewspapers.com, links to Canadian and U.S. newspapers.
5. www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca, Canadian trade issues.
6. www.usite.gov, U.S. trade website.
7. www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca, First Nations website.
8. www.enn.com, Canadian environmental website.
9. Nystrom Canadian Desk Atlas
10. Nystrom World Desk Atlas
11. Cobblestone Magazine, Volume 9, Number 3, March, 1988, Canada and the United States.
12. Canadian Geographic, www.canadiangeographic.ca
13. "Common Ground, Different Dreams", National Geographic, February, 1990