

Where Are You? The County.

Theme: Sense of Place

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Subject Areas

American History, New Jersey History, Economics, Civics, Sociology, and Geography

Duration

A minimum of two days is suggested

Setting

Classroom and in route to and from school

Skills

Map reading and interpretation, land use and human impact (present and historical), geography of local landscape

Charting the Course

In relation to the “sense of place” indicative of the *Down Jersey* film, it is imperative that students understand their place within the region (county) and relate to the physical features present. This activity could be suited to being conducted once in the beginning, and again at the end to assess/evaluate the knowledge students have gained about their region, county, their place in Down Jersey.

Vocabulary

Development, land-use terms, residential, commercial, map direction

Correlation to NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards

Social Studies

6.7 (1, 2, 5)

6.8 (2, 3, 5)

Art

1.3 (2)

1.6 (1, 2, 3, 4)

Language Arts

3.1 (7, 8, 12)

3.2 (3, 6)

3.5 (1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 10)



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■ Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. List direction and routes from their city to certain specified locations within the county.
2. Explain the major geographic features of their county
3. Reach conclusions about the effects of human-environmental interactions in their county
4. Evaluate the conclusions they reach about the future of the county
5. Suggest ways human-environmental problems might be solved.

■ Materials

County map

State map

Optional maps to use:

State land use map

Population density map

Historical books, pamphlets, magazines

Census materials

Your county planning department may be able to provide GIS (Geographical Information System) and/or digital maps of your county.

■ Making Connections

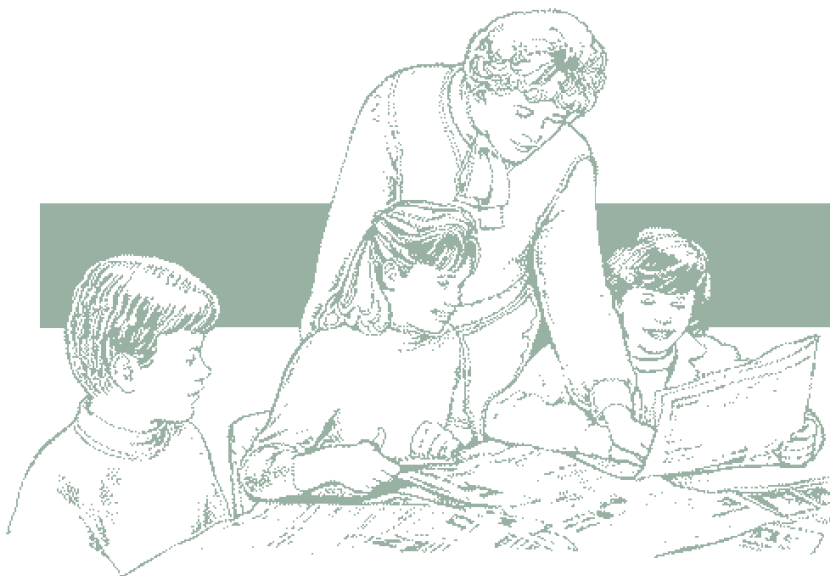
The film *Down Jersey* focuses on life along the Delaware Bay Shore of Southern New Jersey, which includes portions of Cape May, Cumberland, and Salem counties. In order for students to truly gain a “sense of place,” it is imperative that they have an understanding of their place within this region. This activity, although written specifically for Cumberland County, can easily be adapted to both Cape May and Salem. It is this type of general overview of a county that will allow students to understand and appreciate the interactions among people and places. Investigating county histories, development, and demographics is an important tool in understanding our place within this system of government.

■ Background

The county is the political and geographic unit about which most students know the least. They travel extensively throughout places within the county yet are generally unclear about the direction in which they are going, the relative locations of the area, and the implications of human-environmental interactions within the county.

This lesson plan allows the teacher to introduce or emphasize any one or all of the five geography themes, in a setting that is familiar and relevant to the student. It is adaptable to both elementary and secondary grades and to courses in American History, State History, Economics, Civics, Sociology, and Geography.

In addition to the materials suggested here, it is also recommended that Chapter 2: “Urban Development” in the *Blue Book* (Historic Themes and Resources within the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail Route) also be read and utilized for discussions. This chapter contains many useful diagrams and maps that could easily be incorporated into this activity, especially in relation to the historical aspects of county development and growth.



■ Procedure

Warm Up

Introduce the topic by questioning students about their knowledge of the county (i.e.; cities, topography, boundaries, location, economy, etc.).

Explain the purpose of the lesson and the objectives. Relate it to the film and to the students' sense of place within the region.

The Activity

1. Distribute materials (one county map and one worksheet) to each group of two or three students.
2. Groups have 30-40 minutes to complete the questions. They should work as a team and complete the worksheet.
3. Discussion (next day)
 - a. Briefly review factual answers that focus on relative location. Discuss in depth students' conclusions in terms of place and human-environmental interaction. Use land-use map if available.

Examples:

Vineland: largest city in New Jersey (area: 69½ square miles)

Bridgeton: smallest in county (6½ square miles), county seat, park, zoo, river, loss of major industries (glass, food processing, clothing) and impact on employment

Millville: arsenic in lake, use of Maurice River, Wheaton Village

Maurice River: prison, Route 55, river, proposed toxic waste site, Wild & Scenic River designation, maritime history

Commercial: oyster industry, sand mining, lake development
PINE BARRENS, SANDY SOIL (GLASS INDUSTRY)

Downe: sand mining, wetlands, wildlife areas
WETLANDS, STATE CONTROL

Lawrence: wetlands, farming, recreation, development
FISHING, RECREATION

Fairfield: river development, wildlife areas, Delaware Bay
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF RIVERS

Greenwich: history, river, Pre-Civil War black community of Springtown, underground railroad, Swedish settlement, Quaker community, conflict over development as a "Williamsburg," Bayside Tract (Nature Conservancy), Pre-historic Museum

Stow Creek: causeway, Gum Tree Corner, river, wetlands

Hopewell: shape, development, river, county home, detention center, cemetery (grave of first white settler), farming
RICH SOIL AND FARMING/EMPLOYMENT

Upper Deerfield: NJ Department of Agriculture, Rutgers Farm, Seabrook (tie to Japanese-American internment-museum; Estonian, Latvian and other cultures.)

Deerfield: County/State facilities, farming

Shiloh: size, location, 7th Day Adventist settlement

- b. Discuss the future of Cumberland County (or your county) in terms of human-environmental interactions and suggest solutions to potential problems (increased population, need for services, threat to farmland and wetlands vs. need for industry and employment). Discuss the need for proper planning, land and water management.



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Wrap Up

Compare student perceptions to actual “learnings.”

Homework: Have students describe the route from school to home. They should include enough detail (perhaps even draw a map) including landmarks, physical features, as well as direction, so that they could be easily followed. The next day in class, have the students exchange directions, give each small group the map, and have each student try to find his/her way to the other student’s house.

Assessment

Students’ worksheets could serve as an assessment tool.

In addition, an outline map of the county could be created and photocopied, students could be asked to “fill-in” as much information as they can recall on the map (i.e. major geographical features, towns, etc.).

Extensions

1. Invite in a guest speaker (names and phone numbers are in the Credits Section of this book).
(Nature Conservancy, Delaware Bay Schooner Project, Delaware Estuary Program, etc.)
2. Class Trips: Greenwich, Wheaton Village, museums in Vineland, Bridgeton, Upper Deerfield (Seabrook)
3. Class sail on A.J. Meerwald and tour of wetlands
4. Current events discussions related to county issues.

Adaptation of Activity for Other Counties

This activity can easily be adapted to be specific for any other county. This would require the teachers to develop a student map study worksheet for their particular county. Another option is to give teams of students a map and have each team develop a series of questions about the map. Teams could then trade “worksheets” (questions). This could be developed into a more meaningful experience for the students and be an actual contest/competition encouraging students to try to create difficult and “tricky” questions.

Additional Resources

***Ticket to Vineland:
The History and Culture
of Vineland, New Jersey,
An Activity Book for
Third Grade Students***

*Vineland Public Schools
625 Plum Street
Vineland, NJ 08360
c/o Mrs. Jeanne Doremus
(609) 794-6700*



Student Worksheet

Map Study: Cumberland County, New Jersey

1. What direction is Bridgeton from Vineland? _____
2. What two major roads connect Vineland with Bridgeton? _____
3. What direction is Millville from Vineland? _____
4. Approximately how many miles is it from Vineland to Millville?
(Measure from the intersection of West Landis Avenue and Delsea Drive
to the intersection of Routes 47 and 49.)

5. List four different routes you could take from Vineland to Millville.

A) _____
B) _____
C) _____
D) _____
6. What major county road would you take to Millville if you lived in the southeast section of
Vineland, near Union Road? _____
7. What direction is Bridgeton from Millville? _____
8. If you wanted to go from Millville to Bridgeton, what is the most direct state road?

9. Name the major state highways that go through the county.

A) _____
B) _____
C) _____

Continued

10. Below are the three cities and 11 townships that make up Cumberland County.

A. Describe their location from Vineland. B. List one distinguishing feature of each.

Vineland _____

Bridgeton _____

Millville _____

Maurice River _____

Commercial _____

Downe _____

Lawrence _____

Fairfield _____

Greenwich _____

Stow Creek _____

Hopewell _____

Upper Deerfield _____

Deerfield _____

Shiloh _____

11. Name and locate the borders of Cumberland County.

12. Look at a map of New Jersey. How would you describe the location of Cumberland County in relation to the rest of the state? _____

13. If you were to go west across Delaware Bay, what state would you meet? _____

14. What river runs from Vineland, through a lake in Millville and south, emptying into Delaware Bay? _____

15. Name two rivers that are tributaries. _____

16. What river goes through Bridgeton and empties into Delaware Bay? _____

17. Why are there very few towns on the coast of Cumberland County? _____

18. Can you guess from the map who the largest land owner is? _____

19. What conclusions have you reached about Cumberland County from the observations you have made?
