Navigating Historic Maps: Teaching Geographical and Historical Thinking

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Workshop Goals:

- Analyze maps and primary documents using geographical and historical thinking methods.
- Access a variety of primary sources.
- Discuss how primary sources can support teaching strategies, (for example – geographical thinking, historical thinking, literacy, inquiry).
- “Walk away” with a primary source set, mini-activities, strategies, and new ideas of how to prompt students to think with a geographic and historic lens.
Take 1 minute to finish this sentence.

*Historical maps help students learn...*
Thinking Historically & Maps: An “Unnatural Act”

- Sourcing
- Contextualization & Chronology
- Close Reading
- Corroboration
BACKGROUND

Thinking Geographically

• Where is the place? (Location)

• What region is the place a part of? (Region)

• How is the place connected to other places? (Connection)

• What is the link between humans and nature at the place? (Human-Nature/Environment)

• Introducing geographic terms and concepts
Think like a Geographer

LOCATION
Where is the place?
REGION
What region is the place a part of?

PATTERN
Are there any distinct geographic patterns?
CORRELATION
How are some of the patterns similar or different?

GRADIENT
How does the place transition into other places?
DIFFUSION
How do things spread to and from the place and what is the process?

HIERARCHY
How does the place fit with other places (town/state/country)?
COMPARISON
How are places alike and different?

Think like an Historian

What questions can we ask about the past?
What kind of evidence answers our question?
Can you arrange things that happened in chronological order?
Can you use chronological order to understand cause and effect?

How did people live together in the past?
How did this change over time?

How has technology changed over time? Why?

How did people’s ideas and beliefs change over time? Why?
Panoramic or “Bird’s Eye” Maps
PANORAMIC OR “BIRD’S EYE” MAPS

Before Google Earth...

Early aerial photograph taken from a balloon

Boston, 1860
PANORAMIC OR "BIRD’S EYE" MAPS

- Available for many U.S. towns/cities, especially Midwest and East
- Often created to promote the town/city
- Include houses, schools, churches, businesses, streets, railroads, landscape features, etc.
- Not drawn to scale; “copy and paste” effect
- Most completed in mid to late 1800s, but some early 20th century
- Library of Congress digital collection includes over 1500 “bird’s eye” maps
Panoramic Map, New York City, New York, 1870
https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3804n.pm005970/
Panoramic Map Austin, Texas 1873 (Amon Carter Museum)
PANORAMIC OR “BIRD’S EYE” MAPS

Library of Congress Collections

https://www.loc.gov/collections/panoramic-maps/about-this-collection/

Amon Carter Museum

http://www.birdseyeviews.org/index.php
Analyzing a Source Using Historical and Geographical Thinking
Alton, Madison Co., Illinois 1867

https://www.loc.gov/item/73693340/
Analyze the following map:

• **What details do you see?**
  ◦ *Is it a physical or human characteristic?*

• **Where is this place? How do you know?**

• **When do you think this map was created, and for what historical event?**
  *How do you know?*

How do the physical and human characteristics offer insight into the place of the map in a certain time?
# Bird’s Eye Map Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>List what you see.</em></td>
<td><em>List what you see.</em></td>
<td><em>List what you see.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Where is it?</td>
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<td>How do you know?</td>
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<tr>
<td>When is this?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How do you know?</td>
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*How do the physical and human characteristics offer insight into the place of the map in a certain time?*
Stage 1
Analyze the following map:

• **What details do you see?**
  ◦ *Is it a physical or human characteristic?*

• **Where is this place? How do you know?**

• **When do you think this map was created, and for what historical event? How do you know?**

**GROUP PARTICIPATION**

How do the physical and human characteristics offer insight into the place of the map in a certain time?
Stage 2
Analyze the following map:

• What new details do you see?
  ◦ Is it a physical or human characteristic?

• Where is this place? How do you know?

• When do you think this map was created, and for what historical event? How do you know?

How do the physical and human characteristics offer insight into the place of the map in a certain time?
Stage 3
Analyze the following map:

• **What details do you see?**
  ◦ *Is it a physical or human characteristic?*

• **Where is this place? How do you know?**

• **When was this map created, and for what historical event? How do you know?**

How do the physical and human characteristics offer an insight into the place of the map in a certain time?
Souvenir map of the World's Columbian Exposition at Jackson Park and Midway Plaisance, Chicago, Ill, U.S. A. 1893

https://www.loc.gov/item/2010587004/
Chicago Hull-House Neighborhood Ethnicity Map, 1895
“Then we moved slowly up the Court of Honor, pausing every now and then while the teacher described the beautiful scene to me: the groups of noble buildings; the lagoons dotted with fast-moving boats; the stately statue of the Republic; the fluted columns of the peristyle; and, beyond, the deep, deep blue lake.” — Helen Keller
“Onward we went, and how can I explain how it was to us? There was no night. White electricity had lit the world and erased the stars. Now we were standing beside a long body of water, busy with drifting gondolas. On both sides of the pond stood the great pavilions of the Columbian Exposition, the White City. It was Greece and Rome again, and every column and curlicue lit by an incandescent bulb.” (p. 62-63)
Connecting Maps to Literature


## Connecting Maps to Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geography</th>
<th>Elements of a Story</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The World in Spatial Terms</td>
<td>Sequence, Order of Events, Plot</td>
<td>In both literature and nonfiction, writers use spatial thinking, such as a sequence of events that could include movement. For example, <em>Make Way for Ducklings</em> by Robert McCloskey is set in Boston and students could fellow or create a map of the events found in the book.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Places and Regions</td>
<td>Location, Setting, Symbolism</td>
<td>Setting and symbolism can be found throughout text, for example, the use of geographic vocabulary in a novel about the Wild West.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Systems</td>
<td>Tone, Character, Symbolism, Setting</td>
<td>Physical geography and systems have a setting and can be used for tone, character, and in some cases symbolism, for example, a bubbling brook or a dark swirling vortex.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Systems</td>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Human geography is focused on the political/cultural components regarding how the world is organized. These characteristics are seen in the motivation and description of character(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment and Society</td>
<td>Conflict, Theme, Plot</td>
<td>The theme, plot, and conflict found in literature, in many cases, is the tension between humans and the environment. Classic and modern examples include <em>The Lorax</em>, <em>The Old Man and the Sea</em>, <em>The Hunger Games</em>, and <em>A Tale of Two Cities</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Uses of Geography</td>
<td>Point of View, Message, Moral</td>
<td>Geography helps inform point of view, message, and moral by giving context; for example, the multiple points of view based partially on geography found in <em>My Brother Sam is Dead</em> by Christopher Collier and James Lincoln Collier.</td>
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[https://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/common-core-ela-geography-connections/](https://www.nationalgeographic.org/media/common-core-ela-geography-connections/)
PANORAMIC OR “BIRD’S EYE” MAPS

Library of Congress Collections
https://www.loc.gov/collections/panoramic-maps/about-this-collection/

Amon Carter Museum
http://www.birdseyeviews.org/index.php
FINDING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WEBSITE

Teachers Page

Library of Congress
https://www.loc.gov/
### PREPARING AN ACTIVITY WITH HISTORIC MAPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard(s) / Curriculum</th>
<th>Primary Source</th>
<th>What Geography Concept(s) and vocabulary can be taught with this source?</th>
<th>What History Concept(s) and vocabulary can be taught with this source?</th>
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• Analyze historic maps through a historical and geographical lens to understand relationships between people, events, and places over time.

• Application of thinking practices and skills into other disciplines (such as social sciences and literature)

• Encourage students to engage in the inquiry process
Questions and Discussion
Thank You

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Maps: Getting Started from Center for History and New Media, George Mason University

Analyzing Maps from the Library of Congress

Mapping History from Docs Teach, National Archives

Reading Like a Historian from Stanford History Education Group