



My Wonderful World.org

A National Geographic-led campaign

Geography Fun! *Activities for Everyone*

For Kids

Home Sweet Home: Learn your address and find it on a local map. When you go someplace with an adult, use a map to find out how to get there.

Fridge Finds: Look for stickers on the fruit and vegetables at the grocery store or in your refrigerator. Where were they grown? How many countries are represented in your fridge?

Tubetrotting: Keep a globe, world atlas, or a world map where you watch television. When a place is mentioned on one of your favorite shows, look it up.

Flag It! On a map of North America, use a flag to mark the home fields of your favorite sports team. Move the flag each week to show where your team is playing.

Go 3-D: Make a map of your state using Play-Doh or modeling clay. Shape physical features, like mountains or lakes.

State Your ABCs: Name a state. Now think of a state whose name begins with the *last* letter in the name of the first state. (Like this: Wyoming ... Georgia ... Alabama ...) Carry on until someone gets stumped!

Map Your Hood: Make a map of your neighborhood. Include a map key, title, and scale, and design your own compass rose.

Weather Watch: Record your local weather (high and low temperatures, precipitation, storms, etc.) for a month. Compare your weather with cities around the world.

Como Está? When you're with your parents at the bank, grocery, video store, or other business, ask if there are employees who speak other languages. If so, ask politely if they would be willing to teach you how to say "Hello," "How are you?" and "Thank you."

Where's It From? Find out where your drinking water comes from, which natural resource you use to heat your house, and which natural resources are probably used to generate your electricity.

For Teens

X Marks the Spot: Use an Internet site to find and print out a map of your town. Make four Xs out of sticks and place them around your neighborhood, then mark their locations on the map. Have a friend, brother, or sister try and find the Xs.

Click-a-Switch Contest: Record the amount of your family's latest electricity bill. Be in charge of switching off all unused and unnecessary lights and appliances for a month. Compete with a friend to see who can reduce your bills by more!

Collect Maps: Collect different kinds of maps—a state highway map, a subway or bus route map, an amusement park map, a city map, a map of your school, a bike path map, a ski area map, a state park map. How many different kinds can you find?

Get Some Sun: Locate sunrise and sunset times for your town in a newspaper, on the local news, or on the Internet. Make a chart, and record these times for a month. Compare these times with the sunrise and sunset times for another country.

Find a Pen Pal: Choose a large city in another part of the world. Look online to find an International or American School there. Contact the school and request a pen pal who is approximately your age. Learn as much as you can about the place your pen pal lives.

Climb Your Family Tree: Look at old photos of family members. Talk to relatives about what life was like when they were children. Ask them about where they were born and where they grew up and went to school. After your conversations, write a biography of one of your relatives and present it to them as a special gift.

Spot the Source: Think about how you receive information and new ideas—from watching TV, listening to the radio, surfing the Internet, talking to your family and friends, and reading magazines or newspapers. Make a list, and think about how each one gives you different kinds of information. Think about if there are any differences and which ones are the most reliable.

Give Kids the Power of Global Knowledge

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For Parents and Children

In the Car

Tanker Trivia: Find a tank truck. What's it transporting? Where do you think it came from and where is it going?

Association Game: One person names a state, city, or country, and everyone else calls out the first word that comes to mind. For example: Wisconsin—"cheese," "snow," and "lakes."

State Tag: How many different state license plates can you find? After you spot ten different states, have everyone in the car guess which one is the farthest away. Check in the atlas.

Be the Navigator: Use a compass when you are driving. Talk with your child about direction when you travel from place to place.

At Home

Find Your Roots: Honor and celebrate your own cultural heritage. If you do not know much about your background, research it together with your child.

Go Global: Study a globe together. Identify lines of latitude and longitude. Locate the North and South Poles, the Equator, the Prime Meridian, and the International Date Line. Find the latitude and longitude of your town and other places.

Make an Earth: Together, make a globe using papier-mâché and a balloon. Paint the continents and oceans on the globe and label them.

Geo-Puzzler: Using a map as a guide, have your child draw the United States on a large sheet of paper. Label each of the states and major physical features, such as the Rocky Mountains, the Great Plains, and the Great Lakes. Carefully paste the map to a piece of cardboard. When it's dried, cut the map into puzzle pieces. Reassemble the puzzle!

Simon Says: In a backyard or at a local park, play Simon Says using distance and direction. Say, "Simon Says take ten steps north," "Simon Says take five big jumps west," etc.

International Night: Have a party for dinner! Pick a culture and do a little research together. Dress in clothing native to that culture, play some of their music, and make a representative meal together.

In Your Town

Build Up: Use blocks to make a three-dimensional map of your neighborhood with your child. Include important locations, such as your address, parks, the grocery store, police and fire departments, school, the library, etc. Next, map the same locations on paper. Include a title, key, compass rose, and estimated scale.

Eat Out: Take your child to a restaurant that has food from a different culture. Find the country or countries on the map. Talk about the culture of the country over your meal.

Make a Treasure Hunt: Go on a natural treasure hunt in your backyard or a local park. Let your child collect things that are of interest to him or her. On paper, map where you found each of the treasures. Have your child hide the treasures again and then make a map for a sibling or friend. See if that child can find all the treasures, too!

Explore: Visit a variety of habitats around your home: beach, wetland, forest, grassland, etc. Talk with your child about the importance of preserving habitat. If you do not have access to natural areas, visit your local zoo. Compare the habitats of various animals. Learn together about efforts to conserve animals and their habitats.

Get Regional: Help your child understand the idea of "region." Map the house in terms of regions for eating, sleeping, working, playing or relaxing, being alone, or being with the family. Identify regions of your town: areas for shopping, government, living, making things, playing, learning, etc. Visit different regions of your state or research the regions at the library.

Get Involved: Discuss with your child that you are part of a community, and that members of a community have many rights and responsibilities. Together, pick age-appropriate ways your child can help in your community—by sorting recycling, volunteering at a food pantry, saving money for a local charity, or visiting a local nursing home.

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