AROUND THE WORLD AT 30° NORTH LATITUDE

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Purpose: This lesson will reinforce the students' use of an atlas and reference materials, strengthen students' critical thinking skills, and establish awareness of how geographic location can make living easier or harder.

Teaching Level: The following lesson is intended for the upper elementary grades or for the middle school grade levels.

Geography Standards:
#1 - How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information.
#7 - The physical processes that shape the patterns of Earth's surface.
#11 - The patterns and networks of economic interdependency on Earth's surface.
#12 - The processes, patterns and functions of human settlement.
#13 - How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth's surface.
#14 - How human actions modify the physical environment.
#15 - How physical systems affect human systems.

Objectives: At the end of this lesson, the students will demonstrate the following critical thinking skills relating to geographic themes:
1. draw their assigned journey on the map in a small group environment,
2. categorize the needs they have to survive on their journey,
3. prioritize their available options during their journey, and
4. utilize the following processes in making their decisions: fact/opinion, cause/effect, predictions, and point of view,

Materials:
- large class map of the world
- several group maps of the world
- 6-12 atlases for reference
- other world resource materials

Background: The best method to learn about an area is to travel to that area. Through the use of maps and atlases, the student will experience the "trip". The group activity will strengthen their knowledge base of a particular region and will develop their cooperative learning abilities.

Opening/Motivation: LUGGAGE TEST: Begin by discussing how important proper packing (essentials only) is for a trip. State a few common cities and ask what would be appropriate to pack to travel to that city. Then, state lesser-known cities... and, finally, relatively unknown locations. Discuss what steps to take to determine what is needed when packing for an unfamiliar destination, ie., atlas, AAA, encyclopedias, maps, and other resources.
Procedure:
1. Write the date on the chalkboard. Remind the students how climates/seasons need to be taken into consideration.
2. Break the class into six smaller groups.
3. Announce the starting points along the 30\(^\circ\) north latitude stretching along a 60\(^\circ\) degree route of travel: Group 1: 90\(^\circ\) West to 150\(^\circ\) West (New Orleans) Group 4: 90\(^\circ\) East to 30\(^\circ\) East Group 2: 150\(^\circ\) West to 150\(^\circ\) East Group 5: 30\(^\circ\) East to 30\(^\circ\) West Group 3: 150\(^\circ\) East to 90\(^\circ\) East Group 6: 30\(^\circ\) West to 90\(^\circ\) West
4. Remind the class to consider the climate, season, landforms, vegetation, etc... use the resources!
5. Send the groups on their journeys. Have them determine what essential items they need to pack (clothing, food, equipment). You may limit the number of items that they can take.

Closing/Summary: The groups are to share their information. The instructor leads the discussion as the first group leaves New Orleans. Highlight the effect that landforms have on the journey and on the chosen items being taken.

Extension: Have the groups of students complete the journey assuming that NO human life is present, and, thus, no human development has taken place, ie., no cities, no roads, no cars... Have the students complete a line of longitude journey.

Evaluation: The instructor will observe the small group discussions and work produced. Oral presentations will be the main evaluative tool.