

Jack's Forest

Combining Geography and Literature by Mapping a Story

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Purpose: After listening to or reading a story, students will demonstrate an understanding of the relative locations of the significant events described in the story by creating three dimensional and/or two dimensional maps of the selected story.

Teaching Levels: This activity is designed for all teaching levels.

Geography Standards:

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process and report information from a spatial perspective.
2. How to use mental maps to organize information about people, places and environments in a spatial context.
3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places and environments on Earth's surface.
6. How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.
12. The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement.
17. How to apply geography to interpret the past and many additional standards may be addressed dependent upon the story being read.

Objectives: Upon completion of this lesson, the student will

1. use objects to symbolize the locations of important story events, placing them on a blank piece of paper to develop a three-dimensional map,
2. select a suitable title for the map,
3. develop a map key, selecting symbols and corresponding words to represent special places in the story,
4. use pictures, colors, and patterns (or tactile materials for visually impaired students) to indicate the locations of major events and places in the story to create a two-dimensional map of the story, and
5. demonstrate comprehension of the story by utilizing the maps to retell the story to her/his classmates.

Materials Required

- story to be read or told
- two (or more) identical sets of objects to represent locations in the story on the maps
- heavy paper or cardboard approximately 12" x 18" to serve as base for the three-dimensional maps
- crayons or colored pencils
- construction paper to draw the two-dimensional maps
- worksheet of sample symbols

Procedures

1. Read or tell a story to the class. Discuss mapping, map keys, map symbols; determine, as a

group, five* main events or locations that should be mapped. (*select the number according to the significant events/locations in the particular story that you are reading/telling).

2. Divide the students into cooperative groups to develop the three-dimensional maps which depict locations of main events in the story. You may need to assist the students with the placement of the first object; then, allow the students to work in their groups to develop their maps; remind the students to leave space for the title of the map and for the map key.
3. Talk about map terminology intermittently. Each group should determine a title for their map; you may need to assist the students with the writing of the title across the top of the map.
4. Distribute a sample map key symbol sheet for the students to review; discuss.
5. Work with each group to develop a map key for their 3-dimensional maps. Encourage them to be creative (almost anything is acceptable). Also, encourage students to utilize additional features on their maps, depending upon their level of comprehension (compass rose, scale, artwork,...).
6. Each group is to retell the story to the class using their maps.
7. Then, each student (or groups) is to develop a two-dimensional map of the story utilizing the same components mentioned above (map key, title, colors, texture,...).
8. A classroom-scale model may be constructed depicting the three-dimensional model; a tour may be taken of the classroom model by the students/parents.

Jack's One Wish:

A retelling or a retelling of a retelling of yet another retelling of *“Jack and the Wishgiver”*

This story happened in a time not too long ago, in a place not too far away. A young, honest, hardworking man named Jack lived in a very small cabin near the edge of a pine forest. He lived in this cabin with his wife and his blind mother-in-law. Times were hard and Jack did well enough to bring home food for his small family, sometimes catching fish in the big lake that was on the far side of the forest, sometimes hunting in the forest.

One morning, Jack was sitting on a log at the edge of the lake, fishing for that night's supper. The fish were not biting that day, and in an entire morning, he had only caught one small fish. Out of the forest walked a stranger, right up to Jack. He talked with Jack awhile about his life and his family. Jack could see that the man was hungry, and he gave him the one, and only one, fish that he had caught. The stranger, then, told Jack that he was a “wishgiver” and that he would grant Jack one, only one, wish, and the stranger cautioned him as well against wishing for extra wishes for he would not grant these. The wishgiver told Jack to meet him at dawn the next day at the bridge that crosses the creek near his house and he would grant Jack's wish. Jack agreed.

As Jack walked along the path to his home, he was in disbelief. He could not believe the incredible good fortune that had come upon him. He began to wonder if he had drifted off to sleep and if this had all been a fabulous dream. He hurried home, very excited, forgetting that he had no fish for that night's supper. When he got home, he told his wife about the wishgiver and that he had decided to wish for gold. Just think of all of the things they could do and have if they had all the gold that they could ever need. Jack's wife, although finding the story about the wishgiver hard to believe, and thinking that it was something that Jack had made up because he

had nothing for their supper, started thinking about what she might want to wish for. She begged and pleaded with him to wish for a child instead of the gold. Oh, how ashamed Jack felt. Of course his wife should have the child they have always hoped for. And to add to Jack's dilemma, his blind mother-in-law overheard their conversation. She asked Jack to restore her sight. Oh, how ashamed Jack's wife felt. Of course, her mother should have her sight. Oh, poor Jack. How could he ever make a decision. Jack struggled and struggled to decide.

That night he tossed and turned and turned and tossed and tossed. He had a restless sleep, indeed. When he finally awoke, just before dawn, he had thought of the perfect wish. He hurried down the path to the bridge that crosses the creek quite near his house. There, on the bridge, was the wishgiver. Jack greeted him with a big smile and a bigger sigh of relief. This wasn't all a dream after all. He really did meet the wishgiver the day before. The wishgiver asked Jack if he was ready to have his one wish granted. With a big smile on his face, Jack told the wishgiver his one wish. He asked that his mother-in-law could gaze upon his child while eating from gold plates every day of their lives.

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