



Kindergarten Social Studies Unit 06 Exemplar Lesson 01: Physical Characteristics

This lesson is one approach to teaching the State Standards associated with this unit. Districts are encouraged to customize this lesson by supplementing with district-approved resources, materials, and activities to best meet the needs of learners. The duration for this lesson is only a recommendation, and districts may modify the time frame to meet students' needs. To better understand how your district may be implementing CSCOPE lessons, please contact your child's teacher. (For your convenience, please find linked the TEA Commissioner's List of [State Board of Education Approved Instructional Resources](#) and [Midcycle State Adopted Instructional Materials](#).)

Lesson Synopsis

A community is a place where people live, work and play. In this lesson, students learn about the physical characteristics of a place and the particular physical characteristics of their community. In doing so, they begin to learn map skills.

TEKS

The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) listed below are the standards adopted by the State Board of Education, which are required by Texas law. Any standard that has a strike-through (e.g. ~~sample phrase~~) indicates that portion of the standard is taught in a previous or subsequent unit. The TEKS are available on the Texas Education Agency website at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index2.aspx?id=6148>.

K.4 Geography. The student understands the concept of location. The student is expected to:

K.4C Identify tools that aid in determining location, including maps and globes.

K.5 Geography. The student understands physical and human characteristics of place. The student is expected to:

K.5A Identify the physical characteristics of place such as landforms, bodies of water, natural resources, and weather.

Social Studies Skills TEKS

K.15 Social studies skills. The student communicates in oral and visual forms. The student is expected to:

K.15B Create and interpret visuals, including pictures and maps.

GETTING READY FOR INSTRUCTION

Performance Indicators

Kindergarten Social Studies Unit 06 PI 01
Create a map of the local community or neighborhood. Identify three physical characteristics in the community.
Standard(s): K.4C , K.5A , K.15B
ELPS ELPS.c.1C , ELPS.c.1E

Key Understandings

- Physical characteristics of a place that shapes our communities.
 - What does our community look like?
 - What are physical characteristics of a place?
 - What are the physical characteristics of our community?
 - What are the important places in the neighborhood?
 - What do people do in these places?
 - What is important about these places?

Vocabulary of Instruction




- physical characteristics
- natural resources
- neighborhood
- community
- globe
- map
- landforms
- bodies of water
- relative locations
- weather

Materials

- Refer to the Notes for Teacher section for materials.

Attachments

All attachments associated with this lesson are referenced in the body of the lesson. Due to considerations for grading or student assessment, attachments that are connected with Performance Indicators or serve as answer keys are available in the district site and are not accessible on the public website.

-  [Teacher Resource: PowerPoint: Physical Characteristics of Place](#)
-  [Handout: Clip Art: Landforms, Weather and Natural Resources](#)
-  [Handout: Physical Characteristics of Our Town](#)

Resources

- None identified

Advance Preparation

1. Become familiar with content and procedures for the lesson, specifically that communities are defined, in part, by their physical characteristics.
2. Refer to the Instructional Focus Document for specific content to include in the lesson.
3. Select appropriate sections of the textbook and other classroom materials that support the learning for this lesson.
4. Preview websites according to district guidelines.
5. Set up centers or stations to support instruction on Day 1. The stations might include: the sand table to build the physical characteristics, play dough) to model various landforms, copies of photographs of landforms, maps to investigate, copies of photographs of Texas landscapes to examine, children's books about Texas with illustrations of landscapes, rocks and minerals and soil of the area, etc. (Centers or stations can continue for several days.)
6. Gather books to read aloud.
7. Take photographs of your local area and download it for use in PPT.
8. Prepare PPT to show students the various photographs or print photographs to share.
9. Prepare centers or stations for learning about landforms (sand table, play dough, pictures, maps, etc.).
10. Label a piece of chart paper with *Physical Characteristics of Our Town* or *Our Community* or *Our Neighborhood*, whichever is most appropriate. Several Clipart symbols are attached, or you can choose to use actual photographs or sketch items as appropriate.
11. Gather maps of the local area that show the physical characteristics of a place.

Background Information

Physical Characteristics of a Place – feature of the Earth that result from climatic and tectonic processes

- Landforms – features of the Earth's surface like plains, mountains, deserts, canyons (include local)
- Bodies of Water – water accumulates in natural or man-made depressions creating bodies of water from small to large like tanks, ponds, lakes, seas, oceans, rivers (include local)
- Natural resources – items provided by nature, from which people produce goods and provide services. Water, soil, trees, oil, minerals, metals
- Weather – meteorological conditions like temperature, wind, rain, humidity, storms, clouds, and precipitation (rain, snow)

Relative Location – the position of a place in relation to another place is its relative location. Where is the student's home relative to school... near, far, behind, next to? Where is the school in comparison to the park? All locations are described in relation to some known point.

GETTING READY FOR INSTRUCTION

Teachers are encouraged to supplement and substitute resources, materials, and activities to meet the needs of learners. These lessons are one approach to teaching the TEKS/Specificity as well as addressing the Performance Indicators associated with each unit. District personnel may create original lessons using the Content Creator in the Tools Tab. All originally authored lessons can be saved in the "My CSCOPE" Tab within the "My Content" area.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES

Suggested Duration: 4 days

<p>Instructional Procedures ENGAGE – Introduce physical characteristics of a place</p>	<p>Notes for Teacher NOTE: 1 Day = 30 minutes Suggested Day 1 – 10 minutes</p>
<p>1. Draw the following on the board or chart paper: mountain, lake, river, and valley. Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you name these pictures? (<i>landforms such as mountains, bodies of water such as lakes, natural resources, weather</i>) <p>2. Say: When we talk about mountains, valleys, rivers, and lakes, we are talking about physical characteristics of a place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rivers, streams, mountains, hills, valleys, oceans, plains • natural resources, such as water and soil • weather, such as rain, wind, and temperature <p>3. Show the Teacher Resource: PowerPoint: Physical Characteristics of Place. Show slides one at a time. Read aloud labels and give oral descriptions of each slide. Allow students to help describe slides.</p>	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Resource: PowerPoint: Physical Characteristics of Place <p>Purpose: The purpose of this section is to introduce the concept of physical characteristics of place with an emphasis on new vocabulary.</p> <p>TEKS: K.4C; K.5A; K.15B</p> <p>Instructional Note: This is an enormous amount of information including a lot of new vocabulary. It is important to provide as many visuals as possible in the classroom that will enhance understanding. Some of the concepts may be included in Science TEKS, but in this lesson the topics are viewed from a Social Studies perspective.</p>
<p>EXPLORE – Physical characteristics of a place</p>	<p>Suggested Day 1 (continued) – 10 minutes</p>
<p>1. Read aloud a book with illustrations showing physical characteristics of a place – bodies of water including lakes, rivers and oceans, landforms including prairies, mountains and hills. Point out the physical characteristics. (See background information above.)</p> <p>2. Brainstorm a list of vocabulary words related to the landforms (refer to a book read or the photographs in the Teacher Resource: PowerPoint: Physical Characteristics of Place from the ENGAGE piece). Add to the classroom Word Wall as they arise in discussion.</p> <p>3. Introduce centers or stations students will have access to during the week. (See instructional note.) Provide details about the management of the centers so that all students will have access to activities.</p>	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Books to read aloud: • Materials needed for centers/stations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play dough • Sand table & sand • Photographs • Books about landforms • Samples of rocks, minerals, and soil <p>Purpose: The purpose of this section is to introduce concepts and vocabulary describing the physical characteristics of a place.</p> <p>TEKS: K.4C; K.5A; K.15B</p> <p>Instructional Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up centers or stations to support instruction that might include: the sand table to build the physical characteristics, play dough to model various landforms; copies of photographs of landforms; maps to investigate; copies of photographs of Texas landscapes to examine; children’s books about Texas with illustrations of landscapes, rocks and minerals and soil of the area, etc. Centers or stations can continue for several days. • Conduct an image search using the term: “landforms” to find many excellent photographs and drawings of physical characteristics of a place.
<p>EXPLAIN – Create a Rebus story</p>	<p>Suggested Day 1 (continued) – 10 minutes</p>
<p>1. Model how to write a Rebus story. Give examples of several stories that have</p>	<p>Materials</p>

Suggested Duration: 4 days

physical characteristics in the setting of the story. Examples might include: “The Little Mermaid” (ocean), “The Three Billy Goats Gruff” (river or stream), “Little Red Riding Hood” (mountains/forest). A story might read:

- **Once upon a time a little girl and her dog lived by a (picture of a lake). Every day the little girl threw sticks in the (picture of a lake) so her dog could fetch them. The girl and her dog had fun at the (picture of the lake).**

2. Distribute copies of the Handout: **Clip Art: Landforms, Weather and Natural Resources** pictures to students. Allow students to choose one or more pictures to create a Rebus story that includes physical characteristics of a place.
3. Students tell a partner their story and listen to their partner’s story.

- Stories with physical characteristics in the setting

Attachments:

- Handout: **Clip Art: Landforms, Weather and Natural Resources** (approximately one set per child, with extras available, if needed)

Purpose:

The purpose of this section is to create a Rebus story and share with a partner in order to begin using the newly acquired vocabulary.

TEKS: K.4C; K.5A; K.15B

Instructional Note:

Stories will most likely be short, 1 to 3 sentences, and should include vocabulary learned in the Engage and Explore pieces. If students are not developmentally ready to write sentences, they may dictate their story to the teacher.

ENGAGE – PowerPoint review

Suggested Day 2 – 5 minutes

1. Facilitate a discussion to review physical characteristics using the Teacher Resource: **PowerPoint: Physical Characteristics of Place** and/or books from the previous day’s lesson. Focus on newly acquired vocabulary.

Attachments:

- Teacher Resource: **PowerPoint: Physical Characteristics of Place**
- TEKS: K.4C; K.5A; K.15B

Purpose:

The purpose of this section is to access prior learning by focusing on vocabulary learned in previous lesson.

EXPLORE – Physical characteristics of our town

Suggested Day 2 (continued) – 15 minutes

1. Adjust questions for the physical characteristics of your particular location. Sample questions to ask:

- **Do any of the pictures look like our town?**
- **Do we have mountains?**
- **Do we have rivers?**
- **Do we live near an ocean or beach?**
- **Do we live in a desert area?**
- **Does it rain a little bit here, a lot here, or just enough?**
- **Is it very hot in the summer?**
- **Is it very cold in the winter?**
- **How do the temperatures affect what we wear?**
- **Just what does our town look like and feel like?**

2. Say:

- **Each neighborhood or town has unique characteristics that give it its own “personality.” Describe the personality of our town or neighborhood. Those characteristics make it special.** (For example: A town in the western part of the state is affected by the lack of water. How are people’s lives influenced by this?) The idea is for students to understand that the geographic location of a place plays a big part in the everyday lives of the people who live there.

3. Take a walk around the neighborhood and have students look to see what physical characteristics they see in the town. (If an actual walk is not possible, a picture walk would work, but would need to be prepared ahead of time. Using Google Earth is another option.)
Ask:

Materials:

- Photographs of the physical characteristics of the town or neighborhood

Attachments:

- Teacher Resource: **Physical Characteristics of Our Town** (Use this as a model. Make a large version to be completed during this lesson with student input.)

Purpose:

The purpose of this section is for students to discover and articulate a description of their town or neighborhood.

TEKS: K.4C; K.5A; K.15B

Instructional Note:

Virtual map software (such as Google Earth) could be used if an actual walk is not possible. Use it to show the Earth, the continent, the country, the state, the city or town, neighborhood, and location of the school.

Suggested Duration: 4 days

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What makes our neighborhood unique or special? • Is our town like other towns? If so, how? • Is our town different from other towns? If so, how? • What are the important places in our town? • What do people do in these places? <p>4. When you return to the classroom, discuss what physical characteristics of place they saw (or know about). As students name physical characteristics, teacher writes, sketches, or attaches a picture or clip art symbol to the Teacher Resource: Physical Characteristics of Our Town (see Advance Preparation above).</p>	
EXPLAIN – In your own words – a description of our town	Suggested Day 2 (continued) – 10 minutes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide students the ClipArt pictures and actual pictures of physical characteristics of your town. Students will match the Clip Art pictures with the pictures of the physical characteristics of your town. 2. Students will describe the physical characteristics. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a hill. We have hills around our town. Hills are landforms. • This is a river. A river runs through our town. A river is a body of water. Water is a natural resource. • This is an ocean. Our town is near the ocean. The ocean is a body of water. • This is snow. Snow is a kind of weather. Our town has snow in the winter. 	<p>Purpose: The purpose of this section is for students to compare pictures of their town or neighborhood and use appropriate vocabulary to describe them.</p>
ENGAGE – Introduce maps and globe	Suggested Day 3 – 5 minutes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Display a globe. 2. Ask questions such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is this? (<i>a globe</i>) • What shape is it? (<i>round</i>) • Why is it round? (<i>It represents the shape of the Earth.</i>) • What does the blue stand for? (<i>water</i>) • What are the other areas? (<i>land</i>) 3. Display a variety of maps that show physical characteristics of a place. Say: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We used maps when we learned about the location of places in our school. These represent our town and/or surrounding area. Name the maps chosen for the lesson and point to the title of the map. 	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globe • Maps (at least two), one should be of the town and surrounding areas and one of the State of Texas.
EXPLORE – What do maps tell us?	Suggested Day 3 (continued) – 15 minutes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you see on the maps? (<i>Answers will vary and may include: water depicted by blue, land depicted by green or brown areas, mountains, trees, etc.</i>) 2. Point to various physical characteristics found on the maps, the legend and/or symbols that identify the physical characteristics. These will vary depending on the location of the town. They might include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rivers • lakes • hills • trees or forests • desert 	<p>Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • books to read aloud <p>Purpose: The purpose of this section is to provide an opportunity for students to begin to learn to read a map.</p> <p>TEKS: K.4C; K.5A; K.15B</p>

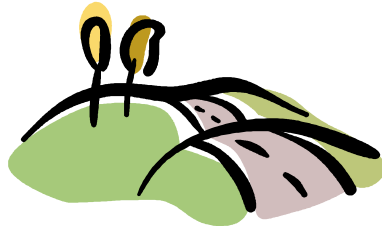
Suggested Duration: 4 days

<p>3. Guide students to examine the maps, identifying all physical characteristics. Refer to words written on the classroom word wall in the previous lessons. Guide students to understand that maps are a resource to use to learn about the physical characteristics of a place.</p> <p>4. Read a picture book about maps or geography skills to expand knowledge on the purpose of maps and globes.</p>	
<p>EXPLAIN – Play True or False</p>	<p>Suggested Day 3 (continued) – 5 minutes</p>
<p>1. Read aloud statements about the map of your town and/or surrounding area. Students will identify if the statements are true or false by showing thumbs up or thumbs down. If the statement is false, have students turn to a partner and tell how to make the statement true. Examples of statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The map shows the ocean. • The map shows trees. • The map shows a river. 	<p>Purpose: The purpose of this section is to check for understanding of knowledge of maps.</p> <p>TEKS: K.4C; K.5A; K.15B</p>
<p>ELABORATE – Bringing it together</p>	<p>Suggested Day 3 (continued) – 5 minutes</p>
<p>1. Facilitate a discussion that refers to the Key Understandings and Guiding Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical characteristics of a place shape our communities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What does our community look like? - What are physical characteristics of a place? - What are the physical characteristics of our community? - What are the important places in the neighborhood? - What do people do in these places? - What is important about these places? 	
<p>EVALUATE – Determine mastery</p>	<p>Suggested Day 4 (continued) – 30 minutes</p>
<p>Kindergarten Social Studies Unit 06 PI 01</p> <p>Create a map of the local community or neighborhood. Identify three physical characteristics in the community.</p> <p>Standard(s): K.4C , K.5A , K.15B ELPS ELPS.c.1C , ELPS.c.1E</p> <p>1. Model creating a map for students. Include physical characteristics of the town or neighborhood, as well as buildings such as the school, City Hall, library, parks and other identifiable places.</p> <p>2. Distribute 11" x 14" white drawing paper to each student and ask them to create their own map of the town or neighborhood. Tell them to draw (or use clipart pictures) at least three physical characteristics on their map.</p> <p>3. Use a rubric to determine mastery</p>	<p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paper, 11x14 1/4, one sheet per child <p>Instructional Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper provided to students may be blank or may have the basic layout of the town. This decision can be made based on ability of the students. • Clip Art or other pictures of physical characteristics can be provided for the three physical characteristics. • Scaffolding this activity is very important for students as they attempt to complete this Performance Indicators.

Landforms:



Mountain



Hills



Desert



Canyon



Grassland



Plains

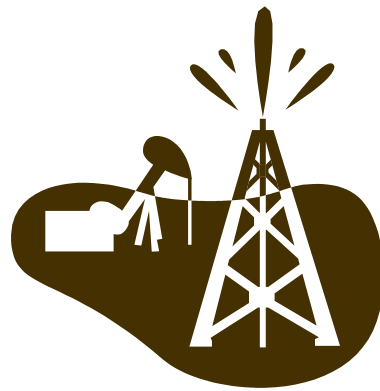


Mesa



Valley

Natural Resources



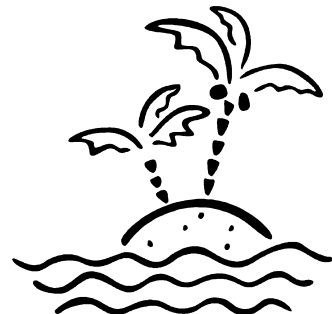
Bodies of Water



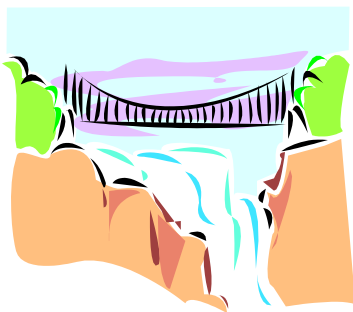
Lake



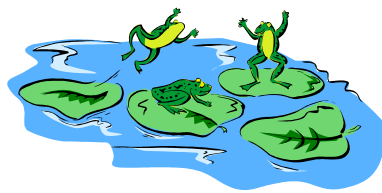
Stream



Ocean



Waterfall

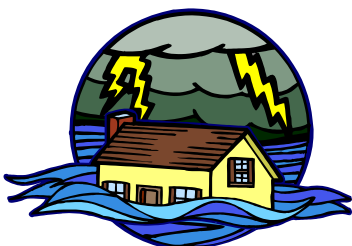
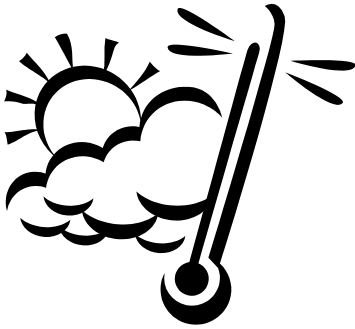
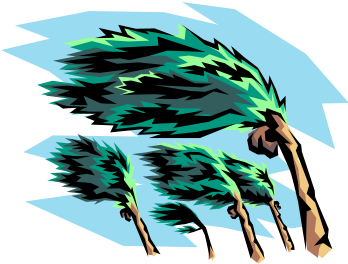
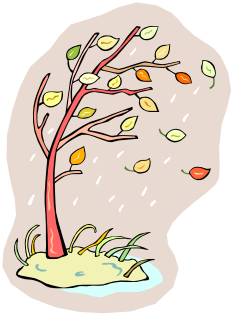


Pond



River

Weather



Physical Characteristics of Our Town

YES

These **are** physical characteristics of our town.
characteristics of our town.

NO

These **are not** physical