

Unit 1 Overview: Exploring the Landscape of San Diego

California History-Social Science, Grade 3, Standard 1

Students describe the physical and human geography and use maps, tables, graphs, photographs, and charts to organize information about people, places and environment in a spatial context by:

1. identifying geographical features found in their local region (e.g., deserts, mountains, valleys, hills, coastal areas, oceans, lakes)
2. tracing the ways in which people have used the resources of the local region and modified the physical environment (e.g., a dam constructed upstream changed a river or coastline)

California Historical and Social Sciences Analysis Skills

- Students use map and globe skills to determine absolute locations of places and interpret information available through a map's or globe's legend, scale and symbolic representations.
- Students judge the significance of the relative location of a place ...
- Students pose relevant questions about events they encounter in ... maps
- Students identify the human and physical characteristics of the places they are studying and explain how those features form the unique character of those places.

Description of the Unit

The unit begins with the construction of a “Flip-Book” titled “Where I Live.” In Lesson 2, students study geographical terms and definitions and use local maps to identify key geographical features of the San Diego region. In Lessons 3 and 4, students construct a map of San Diego and identify key physical features and human-made features of the area. The focus in Lesson 5 is on how the physical environment of the local region has been modified over time. Students interview long-term residents to ask about the changes they have observed. Several writing projects, including a descriptive paragraph of a physical feature and a compare/contrast paragraph describing how the region has changed over time, reflect the Grade 3 writing strategies and writing application standards. Extensions are also provided for English Language Learners (ELL). All projects are compiled at the end of the unit into an *Atlas of San Diego*.

Correlation: This unit is correlated with San Diego Unified School District's Grade 3 Literacy Unit 1 *Looking Closely, Thinking Big: Investigating Ideas in Non-Fiction Text*.

Focus Questions for Unit 1

Lesson 1	Where is San Diego located?
Lesson 2	What are the geographical features of a place?
Lesson 3	What physical features are unique to the San Diego region?
Lesson 4	What are the human-made features of the San Diego region?
Lesson 5	How have people changed or modified the physical environment of San Diego?

Assessment: Prompt and Rubric

Standard	Lesson	Title	Teacher Directions	Handout for students with the prompt and rubric
3.1	Lesson 4	<i>Map of the Geographical (Physical and Human) Features of San Diego</i>	page 22	page 23, Handout #4.1

Additional Assessments for the Unit Include:

Lesson 1

- Flip Book of “Where I Live” (Activity 3)
- Lesson Structure: Previewing the Organization of a Lesson or Scavenger Hunt (Activity 4)
- Pre-assessment sketch, from memory, of a map of the San Diego (Activity 5)

Lesson 2

- Previewing the Organization of a Lesson or Scavenger Hunt (Activity 1)
- Geographical Terms and Definitions Match-Up (Activity 2)
- Students work in pairs or small groups to complete “Right Here in San Diego” (Activity 3)

Lesson 3

- Cartographer’s notepad with sketches of physical features visible from the school yard (Activity 1)
- Map - Physical Features of the San Diego Region (Activity # 2)

Lesson 5

- Changes in the Local Region - Interview a Long-Term Resident (Activity #3)
- Compare/Contrast Paragraph (Activity #4)

Unit Project

- San Diego Atlas

Recommended Map Resources for the Unit

It is suggested that the teacher collect a series of maps for student use, including a world map, a United States map, a map of California, a variety of maps of the San Diego region, and a map of the school and its neighborhood. A globe, wall maps, and laminated desk maps are also useful. It is helpful if students have access to an *atlas* in their social studies textbook and other atlases.

Recommended maps include:

- *San Diego, San Diego Region* and *California* maps from the American Automobile Association (AAA).

Map resources may be obtained at some of the following locations:

- Map stores, the local Chamber of Commerce, the Visitor’s Bureau, book stores, gas stations, and the front of the telephone directory. Often public libraries distribute such maps. The Thomas Bros. maps for San Diego County are useful for finding streets in the local community.