

Geography Lesson Plan

Locate the Countries of Central America

Grade Level(s): 4-12

Class Time: 1 hour, or 2 hours with extensions

Purpose: To learn country names and country locations.

National Geography Standards Exemplified:

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective;
3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface;
18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

State Educational Standards or Indicators Exemplified: Indiana SSAI

3. Students will examine the physical and human geographic factors associated with population characteristics and distribution;
10. Students will analyze and evaluate the physical and human geographic factors that contribute to the formation of states (countries).

Background: Students will need to have learned how to read a map, know the principal directions, and know how to find the continents on a world wall map or in an atlas.

Materials Required: World wall map or atlases; outline map of Central America (either with or without individual country boundaries shown); pens or pencils (perhaps colored).

Procedures:

1. Initial instruction: Each continent or other regional area has numerous countries, often with a diversity of national cultures and languages. It is important to know where they are located.
2. Ask students, working in small groups, to consult the wall map or the atlases on their work tables and locate Central America. Ask them to make a numbered list and a map of the countries they find there. (For a greater challenge, a base map without country boundaries could be provided, and they could be asked to draw in the boundaries as accurately as possible, and then label each country.) Ask them to compare their list with their map to make sure all countries are identified.
3. Ask the students to locate and label the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea.
4. For a challenge and for fun, ask them to color the boundaries so that no two countries that share a border have the same color boundary, with as few colors as possible.
5. Ask students to complete the Level 1 Geography Crossword Puzzle for Central America.

Assessment: Informal assessment by instructor moving from group to group and assisting with the lesson. Formal assessment could follow, with a quiz to place country names correctly on an outline map with country boundaries shown (perhaps with numbers shown on the map for each country and a list of country names, requiring the students to write the correct number next to the name).

Adaptations/Extensions:

1. Ask students to locate and draw in other important features of Central America, such as the Lake of Nicaragua, the Gulf of Honduras, the Gulf of Panama, the Gulf of Darien, and the Panama Canal.
2. Ask the students to draw a new map locating the countries of Central America, entirely on their own, as homework.
3. Ask students to complete the Level 2 Geography Crossword Puzzle for Central America.

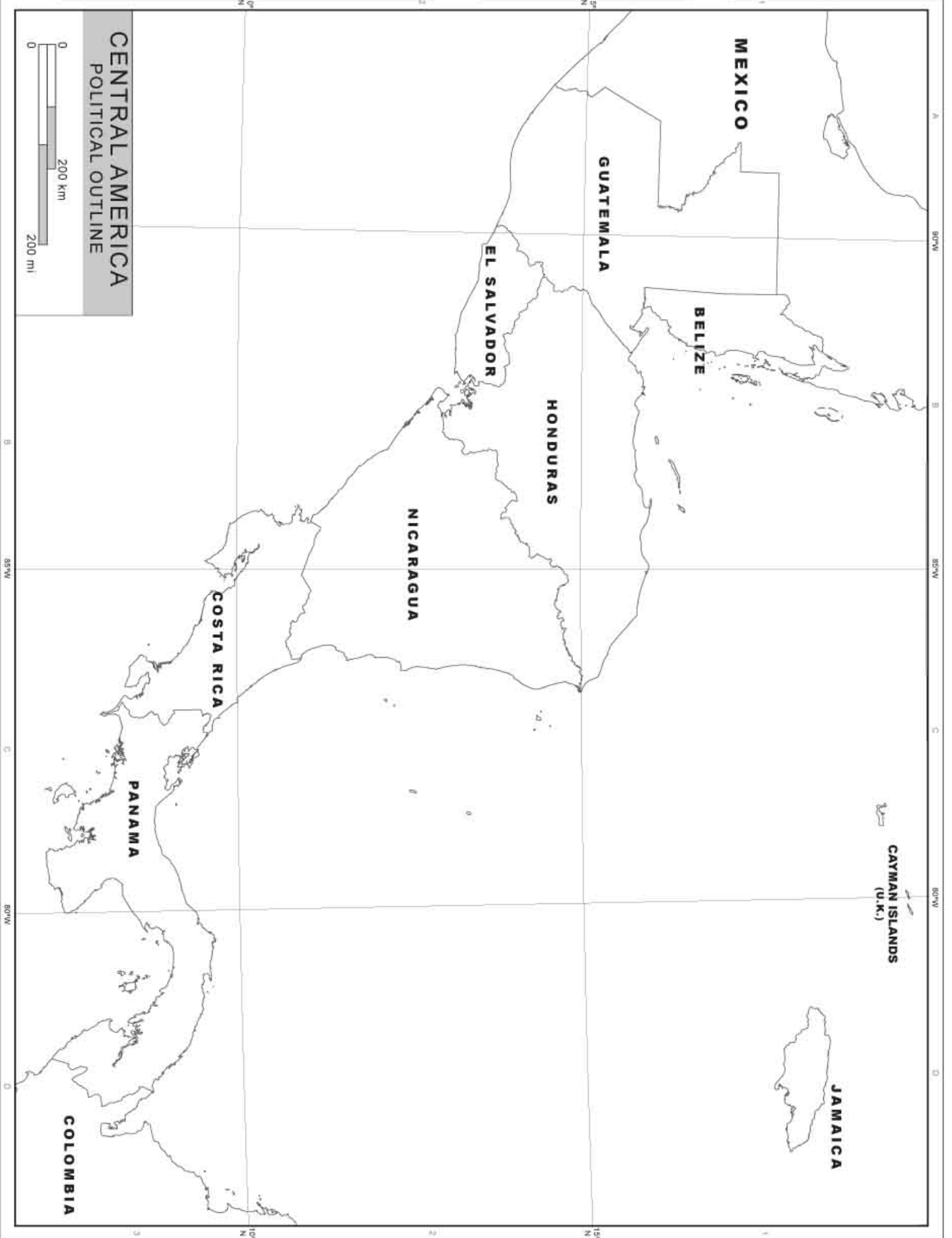
Resources: World Trade Press for world wall maps, atlases. AtoZMapsOnline.com for base maps (with and without country boundaries).

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Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

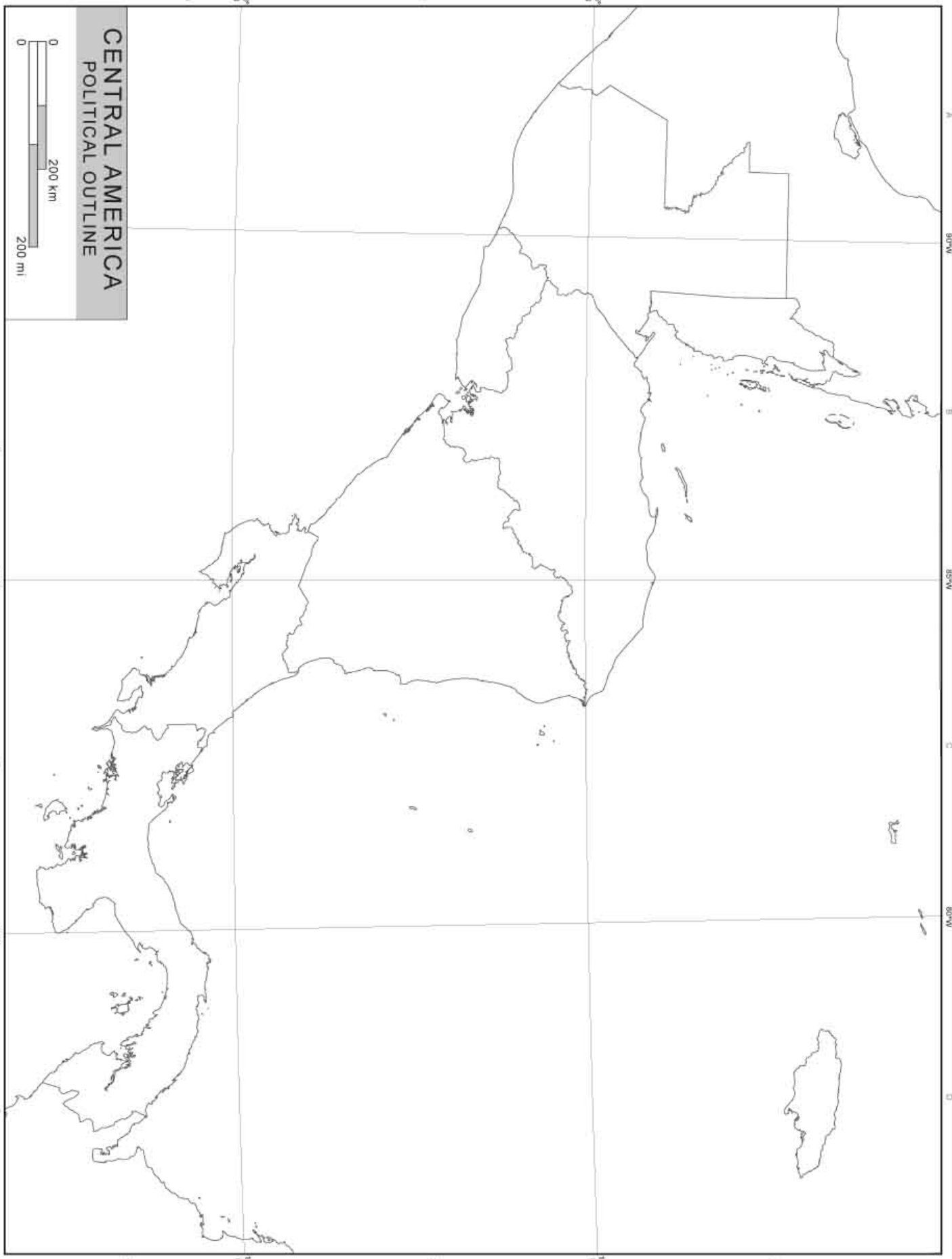
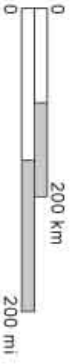


Name _____

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**CENTRAL AMERICA
POLITICAL OUTLINE**



Name _____

Date _____

Class _____

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