

Geography Lesson Plan

Locate the Capital Cities of Western Europe

Grade Level(s): 4-12

Class Time: 1 hour, or 2 hours with extensions

Purpose: To learn capital city names and capital city 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;
5. Students will examine the physical and human geographic factors associated with the origin and growth of towns and cities in different regions of the world and with the internal spatial structure of those urban centers.

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 Western Europe (with 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. Each country has a capital city, which is the seat of the national government. Often the capital city is also the most important city in the country for other reasons as well, such as population size or economic activity.
2. Ask students, working in small groups, to consult the wall map or the atlases on their work tables and locate Western Europe. Ask them to make a numbered list of the capital cities of each country and to locate each city accurately on the outline map. Ask them to compare their list with their map to make sure all capital cities are identified.
3. Ask the students to locate and label the Atlantic ocean and the Mediterranean, North, and Baltic seas.
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 Western Europe.

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

Adaptations/Extensions:

1. Ask the students to draw a new map locating the capital cities of Western Europe, entirely on their own, as homework.
2. Ask students to complete the Level 2 Geography Crossword Puzzle for Western Europe.

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

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