

# Lesson Plan 5: Mapping the neighborhood

**SUBJECT(S):** Geography

**GRADE LEVEL:** 7 - 10

**DURATION:** two class periods

## Objectives

Students will understand that:

- there are many elements involved in map-making
- two-dimensional representation is an effective way to share information

Students will be able to:

- make and use maps to represent and enhance geographic information
- use symbols, keys and legends to convey information in the context of a map
- create maps, graphs, diagrams and charts to display spatial information

## Warm-up/Discussion

Display a map that uses symbols and discuss map legends with the class (you can use the large fold-out map of the Regional Transportation System that came with this book or a road map). Tell students that a map legend is a set of symbols that allows people to understand the features shown on maps.

Explain that a symbol is an object that stands for something else. You can ask students to name some common symbols and ask them to create symbols that everyone will use in making their neighborhood maps. For example, a single-family house might be a square with a peaked roof, a park might be represented by a tree and a post office by a postage stamp. Record their suggestions on the board and decide on a common set of symbols for the features found in the neighborhood (school, houses, park, religious buildings, restaurants, stores, etc.)

## Materials Included:

- Completed Neighborhood Survey (from Chapter 1; Lesson Plan 4) [pg. 32]
- Map Evaluation [pg. 35]

## Additional Materials Needed:

- large sheets of paper or poster board
- markers
- string or yarn
- color construction paper
- scissors
- glue

## Vocabulary

**cartography:**

*the study and making of maps*

**symbol:**

*something that represents something else*

**legend:**

*a list of the symbols appearing on a map*

## Learning Activities

### Period 1

Divide students into groups of six or fewer. Give each group a large sheet of paper or poster board, yarn or string, markers, construction paper, scissors and tape or glue. Tell them that each group will create a map of the school neighborhood using their completed *Neighborhood Surveys* (pg. 32) from the previous lesson plan. Tell them to begin by creating a legend on the paper with the symbols from the list on the board, adding that they may need to create additional symbols.

Students can begin by drawing and labeling streets and railroad tracks. Using yarn or string is a good way to experiment with the road and rail layout, as it may take a few attempts for students to feel as if they have the right arrangement. After they're satisfied with the layout, they can tape or glue the yarn to the paper or draw the lines on the map with markers.

Suggest that they cut construction paper to represent landmarks such as schools, religious institutions, post office, etc. This will allow them to move buildings until they're satisfied with the layout. Then have them add the smaller buildings and other features, gluing the buildings to the map. Encourage them to include as much detail as possible, such as the names of streets, public buildings, restaurants and businesses.

### Period 2

Students continue working on maps. Remind them to label features and encourage them to write as much as they like on the map, using details that they recorded in their *Neighborhood Survey* (pg. 32) handout.

Tape the maps to the wall of the classroom. Ask each group to choose a spokesperson to explain the group's map to the rest of the class.

## Assessment

Use the *Map Evaluation* (pg. 32) handout to assess the neighborhood maps.

## Wrap-up/Reflection

Use the questions on the *Map Evaluation* (pg. 32) handout as a guide for class discussion.

## Ideas for Additional Activities

**Geography:** Use Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com/>), MapQuest ([www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com)) or Yahoo Maps (<http://maps.yahoo.com>) to view three different representations of the area around your school (standard map, aerial photo or hybrid (aerial photo with some features)). What information do you get from these three different kinds of maps? Are different types of information important for different uses? For example, the standard map might be helpful if you're navigating by car, while the aerial photo might be more useful in finding a location for a new park.

# Map Evaluation

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

1) How detailed is the map?

2) How are the maps produced by different groups alike? How are they different?

3) Do the maps reflect any biases students might have? For example, are some parts of the neighborhood shown in great detail while other places have very little detail or are left out? Why do you think this happens?

