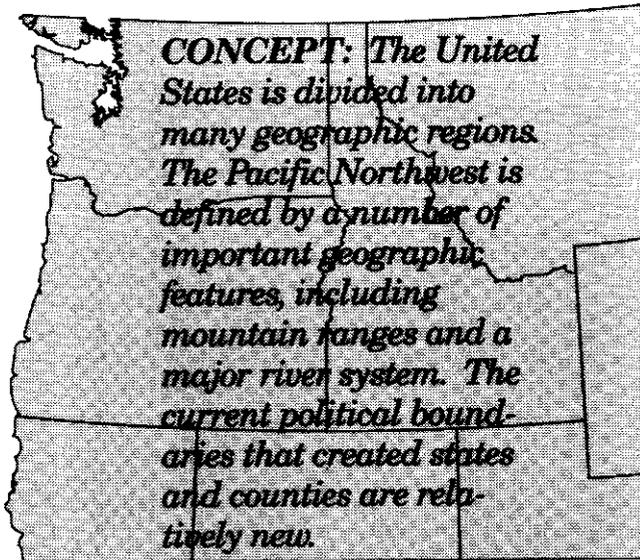


Orientation to the Pacific Northwest



DIRECTIONS: Hand out base maps (Appendix B) to students. Have students, working individually or in groups, identify and label as many of the following as possible:

- political boundaries (counties, states, provinces, countries)
- bodies of water (Pacific Ocean, Strait of Juan de Fuca, Puget Sound), and
- geographic features (Vancouver Island, San Juan Islands, mouth of the Columbia).

At the end of a set time, or when the first group declares that they have “all” of the labels in place, the teacher will debrief and declare the “winners.” All groups, especially the winning team, discuss the strategies used to identify and label the maps.

Was it cooperation? Did one person know all the geography? Has someone in the group traveled the Northwest? “Winners” can be tutors for the others.

INQUIRY*: Who defined and decided the political boundaries? When? Why? How would the students have decided?

What do the straight lines versus the irregular lines tell us about this process? Irregular lines generally indicate physical features, straight lines usually mean political boundaries. Students and teachers will find that the straight line boundary reflects the European American influence. Teachers should bring their own historical knowledge into the discussion and/or direct students to historical references.

EXTENSION: The lesson could include students drawing on their worksheets the approximate locations of major geographical features, such as mountain ranges, rivers, volcanoes, and cities. The next lesson focuses on the river system and students might enjoy testing their approximations of the rivers against the map.

* The inquiry section contains questions for teachers to ask their students. Their purpose is to challenge students to think about the issues raised. In many cases there is no single “correct” answer. The teacher need not provide students with answers to the questions. They will promote thought, controversy, discussion and independent study. In some cases answers are provided where it is deemed important or convenient.

CONCLUSIONS: The Pacific Ocean and the Northwest corner of the United States are important boundaries of the Pacific Northwest. Other geographical features play an important part, as we'll see in Lesson 2.