

THE GEOGRAPHY OF WORLD CUP SOCCER

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LESSON 1

Grades: 6-8

Time: 55 minutes

Geographic Theme

Location, Place, Movement, Region.

Purpose

This lesson uses the World Cup Soccer Tournament to teach geographic information and relationships.

Objectives

- The students will be introduced to the history of the World Cup.
- The students will graphically analyze the relationship between host location and eventual winner.

Materials

- Blank desk maps
- World map for reference
- World Cup factual data

Procedures

1. Introduce the topic by explaining briefly the history of the game of soccer. Explain that an attempt to determine a world champion among nations in the sport was first attempted in 1930.
2. Pass out a list of the World Cup winners since the tournament began, and blank world maps. Working in pairs, have the students label on the map each country which hosted the Cup and the year that it hosted it. Next, with a different color, have them label countries which have won the World Cup with the year that they won. Have the students connect with a line the winning country for each year to its host country.

3. Answer the following with their map, putting the answers in an open part of the map:
 - A. Which countries won furthest from home? How far in miles was it?
 - B. Which host countries have won the Cup the year they hosted it?
 - C. How many champions won on another continent? In another hemisphere?
 - D. Discuss the findings, then have the students list on their maps any contributing factors that they can think of that might favor a team playing close to home. (familiar climate, fan support, fewer distractions, etc.....)
Display finished products.

Evaluation

Discussion, completed map.

National Geography Standards

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.

15: How physical systems affect human systems.

LESSON 2

Grades: 6-8

Time: 50 minutes

Geographic Theme

Location, Place, Movement, Region.

Purpose

This lesson uses the World Cup Soccer Tournament to teach geographic information.

Objectives

- The students will be exposed to qualification process for the World Cup Final Tournament.
- The students will map the countries whose teams qualified for the finals.

- The learner will examine the spatial dispersion of these countries and attempt to determine qualities which are common to successful teams.

Materials

- Remarkable or paper blank desk maps
- World map for reference
- World Cup '94 Factual Data

Procedures

1. Describe how the tournament actually starts two years before the final tournament. Elimination rounds in numerous regions around the globe are held to determine the final 24 teams and to see that the entire world is given a chance to compete.
2. Pass out the list of the final 24 teams who qualified for the 1994 finals, and the remarkable, or paper blank world maps. Have each student label and color in the 24 countries.
3. On the back of their maps, have the students answer these questions:
 - A. Which continent has had the most nations qualify?... the least?
 - B. List two reasons why you think the answers to number one are true.
 - C. How many teams are from the Western Hemisphere? the Eastern Hemisphere?
 - D. How many teams are from the Northern Hemisphere? the Southern Hemisphere?
 - E. List at least three factors that you think are necessary for a nation to have a successful national team.
4. Discuss the answers, particularly #5. See that answers include political, climatic, economic, and cultural characteristics that might influence how good a team a nation might produce. Students should be encouraged to use their textbooks or other references for data on #5.

Evaluation

Completed map, corrected questions, discussion.

National Geography Standards

1: How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.

2: How to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context.

4: The physical and human characteristics of places.

9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on earth's surface.

10: The characteristics, distribution, and complexity of earth's cultural mosaics.

LESSON 3

Grades: 6-8

Time: 55 minutes

Geographic Theme

Location, Place, Movement, Region.

Purpose

This lesson uses the World Soccer Tournament to teach geographic information.

Objectives

- The students will learn the grouping system in World Cup Play.
- The students will examine physical and climatic data from different regions, compare and contrast that information to try to match similar regions.
- The students will analyze the variations in locales for different National Teams.

Materials

- pencil and paper
- U.S. map for reference
- World Cup factual data
- Desk atlases

Procedures

1. Divide the class into six groups of as equal size as possible. Designate each team as group A,B,C,D,E, or F. Explain that for the finals in the U.S. the teams have been somewhat arbitrarily divided into 6 groups of 4 for the first round. We'll pretend FIFA has called because the National Teams' coaches have heard what great geographers we have at our school and have requested information about which cities would be the best to play in. The groups in your class are going to learn more about the countries in their like-lettered group in the competition.

2. Each team is to use their desk atlas to research and record the predominate climatic characteristics of each of the countries in their group. They are also to determine at what height above sea level the majority of the population in their countries live. This information is to be recorded on paper for each term. Next, students are asked to mark the 9 venue cities for the '94 finals in the United States on the wall map at the front of the room. Again using a desk atlas, they are to investigate the climate and elevation qualities of the U.S. venues to see which, if any, would provide the best place to play.
3. Students' groups write the top 3 venue choices for each of the teams in their group and give the climatic, atmospheric, or other reasons for their choices. Have the teams share their answers orally with the class. Also discuss what other aspects of a place might help a team, such as a fan base of American immigrants from a team's country, or anything making it easier for fans to travel and support a team.

Evaluation

Group oral reports. Written data.

National Geography Standards:

1: How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.

4: The physical and human characteristics of places.

7: The physical processes that shape the patterns of earth's surface.

8: The characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems on earth's surface.

9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on earth's surface.

18: How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

LESSON 4

Grades: 6-8

Time: 55 minutes

Geographic Theme

Location, Place, Movement, Region.

Purpose

This lesson uses the World Cup Soccer Tournament to teach geographic information.

Objectives

- The students will integrate math skills into his/her study of the tournament by manipulating game and population data.
- The students will examine total population figures for countries, and analyze attendance figures in an attempt to explain their significance.

Materials

- Paper and Pencil
- Calculators
- Statistical data from World Cup '94
- Desk atlases or Almanacs

Procedures

1. The teacher will hand out the scores of all the games in the first round. Students, working in pairs, will create standings like the ones in the newspaper, based on the points given and goals scored in the games. Students determine, according to tournament rules, which teams advance to the second round (the round of 16). Discussion concerning the various scores and games is encouraged during this activity.
2. Students identify the teams who did not go through to the next round. Using population data from their atlases, have the students total the populations of those eight countries to get the total number of disappointed fans (assume all are loyal fans). Calculate the number of fans whose teams remain in the tournament.
3. Given the attendance at each game in the tournament so far, the students calculate the average attendance at each venue, then rank the venues from highest to lowest. Ask for student ideas which might explain the results.

Evaluation

Standings, calculations, rankings.

National Geography Standards

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.

9: The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on earth's surface.

LESSON 5

Grades: 6-8

Time: 55 minutes

Geographic Theme

Location, Place, Movement, Region.

Purpose

This lesson uses the World Cup Soccer Tournament to teach geographic information.

Objectives

- The students will research and create geographic data to analyze for meaningful patterns.
- The students will compare data from countries which produce successful teams with that from the countries which were less successful.

Materials

- World map for reference
- World Cup '94 factual data
- population data
- Desk Atlases
- Almanacs

Procedures

1. Provide students the results of the eight quarter final matches to arrive at the list of eight teams left in the tournament. Plot these teams on the world map. Also plot the locations of the teams which were eliminated from the tournament in the first round. Divide the class in half, with each half doing the calculations for either the eliminated teams or the remaining teams.
2. Assign these calculations to different students or pairs of students on both of the two groups:
 - Find the total GNP for each group.
 - Find the total population for each group.
 - Find the average population density for each group.

- Find the average annual temperature for each group.
 - Find the total distance traveled to the finals for each group.
 - Find the total number of past World Cups won by each group.
 - Do age profile trees on each country (this assumes profile trees have been taught previously).
 - Students finishing first should be encouraged to find data to compare which they feel could show a pattern, and to assist in posting the data.
3. Post the results of these calculations on the board to see if any patterns emerge. If so, have students explain why they might occur, or why patterns may not occur. Discuss how this data might be used in the prediction of future competitions.
 4. Use any remaining time to view highlight films of the semi-finals and final game. Enjoy.

Evaluation

Each student turns in the calculations he/she made. Discussion.

National Geography Standards

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.

4: The physical and human characteristics of places.

11: The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on earth's surface.

13: How the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of earth's surface.

15: How physical systems affect human systems.

16: The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

18: How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

Part of the Florida Geographic Alliance's collection of lesson plans.

<http://fga.freac.fsu.edu/resources.php?page=1995/soccer>

Geographic Education and Technology Program

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