



Waterbody Word Wizards

Grade Level:

Elementary

Subject Areas:

Language Arts, Social Studies, Geography

SD StandardsLanguage Arts

4.LVS.1.2

4.W.4.1

Social Studies

4.US.2.3

Geography

4.G.1.2

Setting:

Classroom

Skills:

Observation, prediction, interpreting

Prior Preparation:

Laminate the 1:500,000 scale state map. Make copies of the Waterbody Word Wizards waterbody list.

Objective: Students will use a map of the state to determine the locations of various waterbodies throughout the region. Students will also learn names of the water resources in the state as well as the counties in which those waterways are located.

Materials:

State of South Dakota 1:500,000 scale map

Waterbody Word Wizards waterbody list

2 water-soluble markers that are different colors (one red and one blue)

Pencils

Paper

Background:

Over 100 years ago, geographies showed what is now South Dakota, as part of the Great American Desert. In more recent years, quite a little has been said on the subject of drought, with even some mention of a "Dust Bowl." In view of this, it may be surprising to learn that South Dakota soil is crossed or touched by 1,103 creeks and rivers. Lakes number in the hundreds. Reservoirs, although lesser in numbers provide drinking water, recreation, wildlife habitat and any number of other things to the State's water resources.

Many names attached to South Dakota's waterbodies come from names of homesteaders, ranchers, prospectors, bandits, world-renowned individuals, colors, animals, trees, Native American names, minerals and chemicals, and directions. Names of historical significance and geographical features are also represented in South Dakota's waterways.

Procedure:

- Divide the class into two teams. Give each team one marker.
- Divide the Waterbody Word Wizards waterbody list in half (Note: you may want to base this division on the total waterbodies numbers shown at the bottom of each category on the list or alphabetically).
- Using the waterbody list, have one team at a time find each name on their portion of the list, on the state map. As the team locates each name, have one person on the team carefully trace with the marker the flow of the located waterbody on the map (For example, when the team locates the Big Sioux River, have a student from the team, trace the entire watercourse of the River, starting in Grant County and ending at the state line south of Vermillion where it empties into the Missouri River). Have another person mark off the "found" names on the list. Note: In South Dakota, there are many names that are duplicated (there are 16

creeks named Cottonwood and 5 Clear Lakes) - students may locate one or several of these duplicates as they peruse the map. Encourage them to keep track of the different locations of each duplicate.

- As each name from the list is located, have all the students on the team write down which county or counties the found waterbody flows through. In many instances, there will be several counties involved with a waterway.
- When Team One has located all the waterbodies on their portion of the list, allow Team Two to take over the map.
- As each team is finding the names, you may want to hold a brief discussion on watersheds, tributaries, etc. as additional information.

Notes: 1) On the word list, several waterbodies have been excluded - these would include any creek or river that is a “fork” of a larger waterway: “North Fork Vermillion River” or “East Badlands Creek,” etc.; 2) Not all waterbodies that are in the state are shown on the state map. The word list reflects ONLY the waterbodies shown on the map;

Extensions

- Using the Waterbody Word Wizards list, hold a spelling bee on South Dakota’s waterbodies.
- Using the map, assign each student a county. Have students make a list of all the waterbodies located in their county. Have them then write a story using the names of the waterways and the county they’ve been assigned in the story. Tell them to create their story from a Native American’s point of view.
- After doing the activity, have students play the “Alphabet Game”. Form a circle with your class. Say, “I am going to start the alphabet game using the waterbodies we’ve mapped in our state.” Begin by using one of the “A” waterbodies - “Lake Albert,” stressing the word “Albert”. The next person says “B” and tells a name from the map/list - “Beaver Dam Creek.” You might want to give a time limit for thinking. If a student wants to pass, he/she may just say “pass”. The next person must repeat the same letter and think of a waterbody. The letters Q, X, and Z are not used. You should skip these letters in your game.