

Lesson 6: The West

□ Getting Started

People living in America gradually migrated from the eastern seaboard to the West. Read pages 60-61 in *Smart About the Fifty States*. These pages explain how the United States grew. The West has wide-open spaces, and the population is not as dense as it is in other regions of the country. There are some very large cities in the west: Seattle, San Francisco, and Los Angeles to name a few. The West has a rich history involving cowboys, gold, oil, and cattle. There have been many movies made about the "Old West."

If you are using the "Timeline of American History," record that the Louisiana Purchase took place in 1803, western land was won from Mexico in the Mexican-American War in 1848, and The Oregon Treaty was signed in 1846.

Stuff You Need

- | | |
|---|---|
| ✓ "Timeline of American History"*
(optional) | ✓ <i>Smart About the Fifty States: A Class Report</i> by Jon Buller |
| ✓ blue and brown icing | ✓ cardboard |
| ✓ chocolate chips | ✓ cookie dough |
| ✓ journal | ✓ rolling pin |
| ✓ toothpick | |

Ideas to Think About

- What relationships and interactions do residents have with the states in which they live?
- How does the geography of a state affect the culture?

Things to Know

- The western region includes the states of California, Nevada, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, Washington, Montana, and Oregon.
- The climate and geography vary in different parts of the West. Some parts have flat and dry deserts; other parts have dense forests and mountain ranges; and still others have coastal climates on the ocean.
- In the West, people enjoy swimming in the ocean, skiing in the mountains, and going to the rodeo.

- Relief maps are three-dimensional representations of the terrain found in a geographic area.

Reading and Questions

Read about the western states in *Smart About the Fifty States*. On the "Geography of the West" page, illustrate and label a landform or body of water found in each of the following states listed below. You can also use the Internet or an encyclopedia to find this information.

1. Idaho

2. Wyoming

3. Montana

4. Oregon

5. Washington

6. California

7. Nevada

8. Colorado

9. Utah

Activities

Activity 1: About the West

On the "About the West" sheets, record the following information about the states in the West.

Some of the information for these pages will come from *Smart About the Fifty States*, but you should also use other sources such as the Internet or an encyclopedia.

- States (List the names.)
- Climate (Describe the overall climate of the region and how it changes with the seasons.)
- Natural resources (List and/or illustrate at least five natural resources found in the region.)

- Important landforms and bodies of water (Describe important landform(s) and bodies of water in the region. Include at least one landform and one body of water.)
- Culture (Describe the people and their way of life. What unique traditions do they have? How are they recognized by the rest of the country?)
- Wildlife (Illustrate and label at least two plants and two animals found in the region.)
- Famous person (Describe a famous person from the region and what the person has accomplished.)
- Jobs (List two important industries in the region.)

To find more information about this region, use the following websites or an encyclopedia.

Interactive Map of the Western States

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/7714/

Use the interactive map to discover information about the geography and people of the Western United States.

New World Encyclopedia: Western United States

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/2866/

Activity 2: Relief Map of the West

The West has some amazing mountains and bodies of water. Maps that show mountains and bodies of water are called relief maps. Relief maps are three-dimensional representations of the terrain found in a geographic area. A relief map feels bumpy to the touch. For this activity, you will create a relief map of the West. Your map will actually be a cookie! Follow the instructions on the "Cookie Relief Map of the West" activity page.

Wrapping Up

The West is a unique region and is the youngest region of our country. When the pioneers moved out west, they did not know what they would encounter. But they knew they would find free land and possibly oil or gold.

Life Application

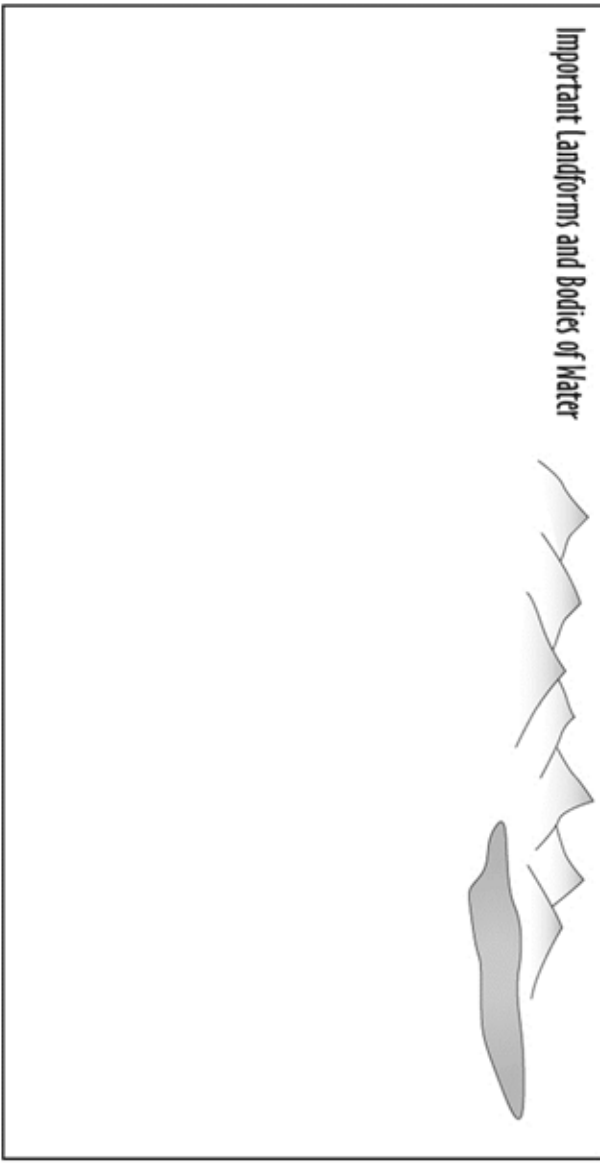
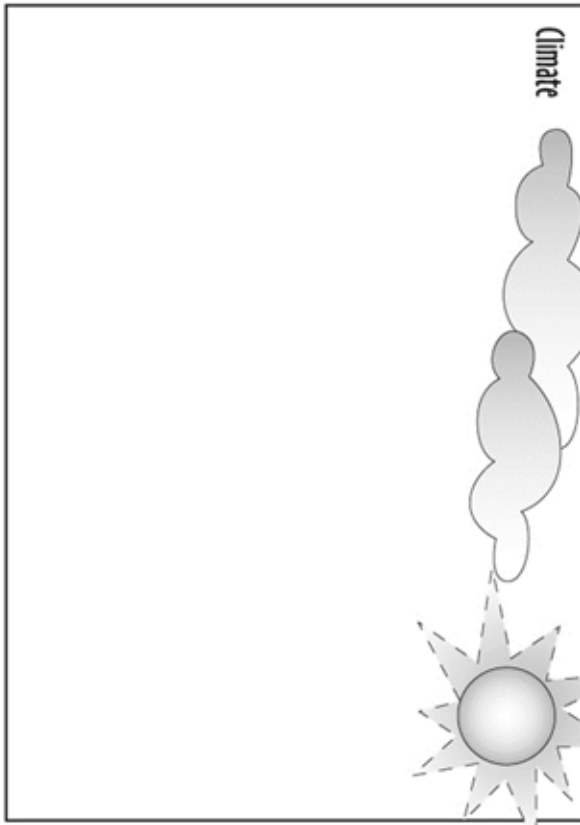
Watch an old western movie. Look for examples of the culture, geography, and weather that you learned about in today's lesson.

Geography of the West

Directions: Illustrate and label a landform or body of water found in each state.



ABOUT THE WEST



Culture



A large empty rectangular box for notes, with the word "Culture" written vertically on the right side. To the right of the box is an illustration of a plate with a fork and musical notes.

Famous Person




A large empty rectangular box for notes, with the words "Famous Person" written vertically on the right side. To the right of the box is an illustration of several stars.

Jobs



A large empty rectangular box for notes, with the word "Jobs" written vertically on the right side. To the right of the box is an illustration of several hands.

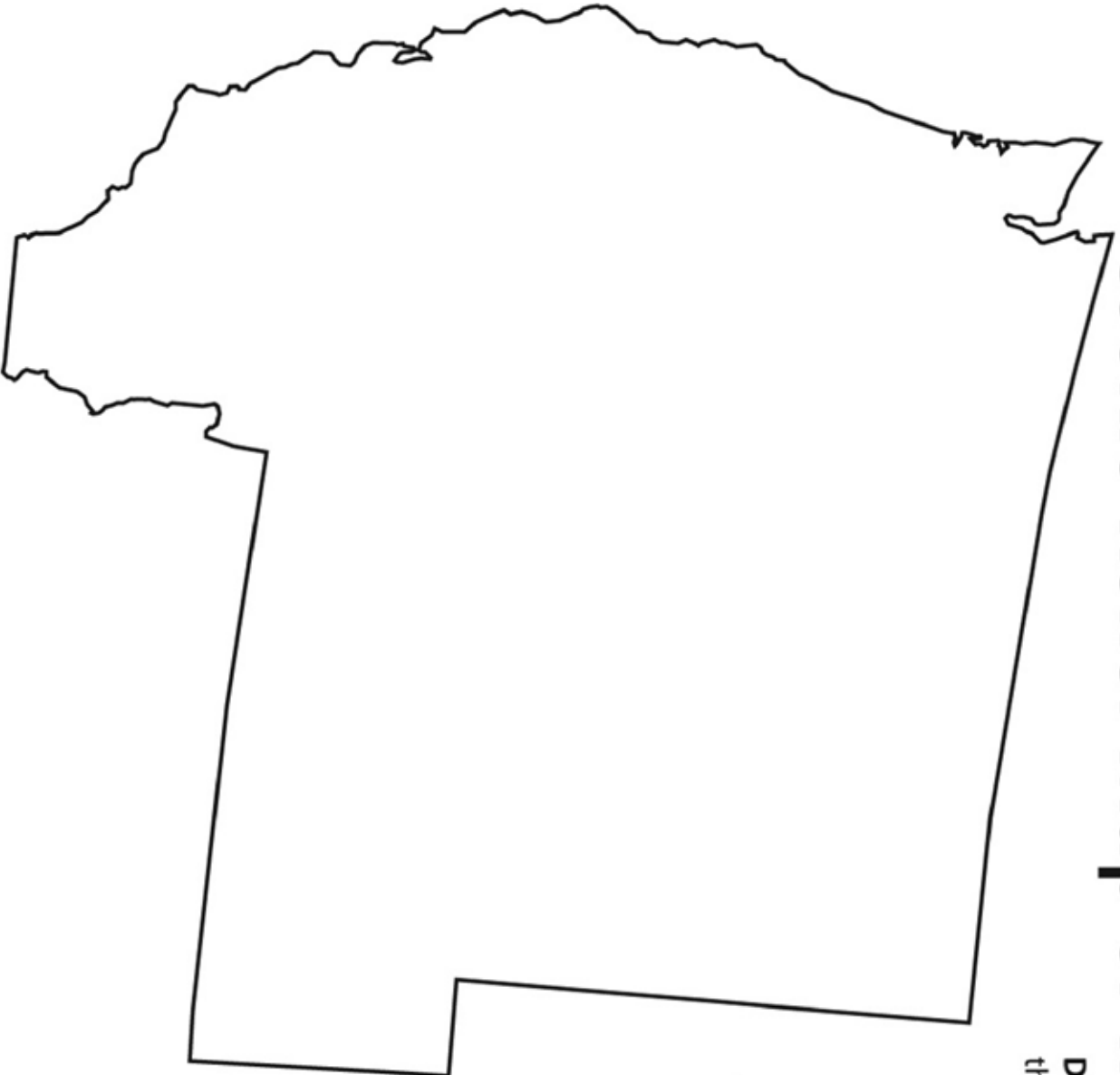
Wildlife



A large empty rectangular box for notes, with the word "Wildlife" written vertically on the right side. To the right of the box is an illustration of various animal tracks.

Cookie Relief Map of the West

Directions: Create the relief map using the pattern on this page.



1. Trace the pattern of the West on cardboard.
2. Roll out cookie dough in the shape of the West. Place the cardboard on top and cut around it. Then remove the cardboard from the cookie dough.
3. Bake the cookie.
4. Use a toothpick to trace important rivers. A small, round, flat object can be used to make indentions in the dough for lakes.
5. When the cookie cools, use chocolate chips and chocolate icing for the landforms; trace the lakes and rivers in blue icing.

Parent Overview

Lesson 6: The West

Getting Started

? Big Ideas

- What relationships and interactions do residents have with the states in which they live?
- How does the geography of a state affect the culture?



Facts and Definitions

- The western region includes the states of California, Nevada, Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Idaho, Washington, Montana, and Oregon.
- The climate and geography vary in different parts of the West. Some parts have flat and dry deserts; other parts have dense forests and mountain ranges; and still others have coastal climates on the ocean.
- In the West, people enjoy swimming in the ocean, skiing in the mountains, and going to the rodeo.
- Relief maps are three-dimensional representations of the terrain found in a geographic area.

⦿ Skills

- Explain patterns of settlement at different time periods. (SS)
- Describe the distribution of settlement in the United States. (SS)

Introducing the Lesson

Explain to your child that today she will finish her journey across the continental United States, ending in the West.

Reading and Questions (Answers)

1. Idaho
2. Wyoming
3. Montana
4. Oregon
5. Washington
6. California
7. Nevada
8. Colorado
9. Utah

Your child will draw and label a landform and body of water found in each state of the West.

Outline of Activities and Answer Keys

Activity 1: About the West

Review the information your child records about the geography and culture of the American West. Discuss any other important information that may help her understand more about the region.

Activity 2: Relief Map of the West

Spend some time looking at relief maps with your child. The following websites provide great images:

Relief Maps

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/2106/

United States Geophysical Raised Relief Map

www.movingbeyondthepage.com/link/4096/

Move your mouse over the map to zoom in on a specific area.

Your child will need assistance baking her cookie. When it cools, she will decorate it to create a relief map.

Wrapping Up

Questions to Discuss

- (If you do not live in the West) What would you enjoy most about visiting the West?
- (If you live in the West) What do you enjoy about living in the West?
- What do you think is the most incredible landform in the West? Body of water?
- How do you think the geography of a region impacts the people who live in the region?
- How has the West shaped American culture?

Things to Review

Review the states that are in the West. Discuss how people in the West interact with the environment.

Special Notes

Let your child watch a movie about "The Old West" to get a feel for the culture and the environment. Students will study Westward Expansion in a future unit.