

# LOUISIANA

## Giant Traveling Map Lesson

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**Louisiana ACADEMIC STANDARDS / SUITABLE DISCIPLINES:**

### **OBJECTIVES:**

Participants will:

- Learn about major cities in Louisiana during three different historical periods
- Practice using grids and cardinal directions to locate cities in the state
- Practice using latitude and longitude lines (if appropriate for grade level)
- Analyze change over time
- Discuss topics such as the census (source of data), distribution of resources in the state, physical features associated with settlements, and implications of changes in population for political representation at various levels of government

**RECOMMENDED GRADES:** Fourth through adult

**TIME NEEDED:** 20 to 25 minutes, depending on whether discussion is held as part of the map visit or at a later time

### **MATERIALS:**

- Compass rose
- 15 flat markers
- 15 tall cones
- 15 shorter, flexible cones
- 3 to 4 plastic chains for dividing the state
- List of Louisiana cities by population for 1850/1960/2010

### **PREPARATION:**

- Discuss reasons why people choose to live in different places
- Review historical settlement patterns in Louisiana:
  - Historically, Louisiana settlement patterns are either linear or nucleated. Settlers first used linear settlement along the state's numerous rivers and bayous, as these waterbodies were the safest and fastest means of transportation for both people and goods. Nucleated settlement, where a town is established and the population grows outward, came with the introduction of railroads and later, major highways.

- Review Louisiana historical era information found online at the Reference Desk's Louisiana History Timeline: <http://www.ereferencedesk.com/resources/state-history-timeline/louisiana.html> and the Data and Events Louisiana History Timeline: <http://www.datesandevents.org/american-timelines/18-louisiana-history-timeline.htm>.
- Additional general Louisiana history and geography references include Anne Campbell's "Louisiana: The History of an American State" (chapters can generally be found online in a pdf format) and Elaine Yodis and Craig Colten's "Geography of Louisiana."
- Encourage participants to develop predictions about where they think people might live.
- Consider push and pull factors in migration

### **RULES:**

- Shoes are not allowed on the map. Please have participants remove shoes before walking on the map.
- No writing utensils on the map.
- No sliding on the map.

### **DIRECTIONS:**

Using the list of cities and colored cones, participants will locate the fifteen most populous cities in Louisiana for the years 1850, 1960, and 2010. They will then look for trends based on the east/west axis and north/south axis, waterways adjacent to and within Louisiana, and defensive settlements from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Encourage speculation about the factors that contributed to population development among the various regions of the state.

On the map:

1. Provide participants with an overview about exploring the top fifteen populated places in Louisiana in 1850, 1960, and 2010 using U.S. Census data as a source of information.
2. Ask participants about the kinds of jobs they imagine people were doing in Louisiana in 1850. Ask them to predict where people might be living. (If needed, ask the participants to consider where they live and why? What does a location need for people to live there?)
  - During the 1840s, the City of New Orleans was one of the largest ports in the world, handling goods coming down the Mississippi River from the interior of North America and imports from around the world. Additionally, the state was heavily tied to agriculture, growing cotton in the north and sugar cane in the south. In 1850, Louisiana's largest cities are located along rivers, which serve as cheap form of transportation.
3. Take 15 of the round markers. Pass them out to 15 of the participants (usually just ask them to take one and pass the remainder along).
4. Read the 15 largest cities one at a time, going down the row of participants and asking the participants to place the marker on the dot identifying the town (star in the case of Baton Rouge).

5. Remind the participants that they can provide assistance to other students or colleagues about the location of a city based on cardinal directions or the grid. They should avoid shouting “over there”, “this way”, “left/right”, etc. From the beginning of the lesson, model the use of cardinal directions or the grid. Participants may use the compass. Place NSEW labels on the walls or around the map.
6. After the flat, round markers are all on the map, ask the participants to interpret the new information that has been added to the map. Remind them that this is similar to adding a layer to a geographic information systems map.
7. Move on to the 1960 census and ask participants what jobs people were doing then. Ask them to predict where people might be living.
  - Agriculture and the ports were still large industries during the 1950s. However, we also see an increase in manufacturing jobs in the oil and gas sector which are tied to the discovery of massive oil and gas deposits both onshore and in the Gulf of Mexico.
8. Pass out the 15 larger cones. Assign individual participants to place their cones on the 15 cities. For cities in the top 15 list by population in both 1850 and 1950, have participants pick up the flat marker and place it on top of the cone.
9. After the larger cones are all on the map, repeat Item 6 above, asking participants to think about what has changed and why.
10. Repeat process with 2010 census data and smaller or flexible orange cones. Have participants put the orange cone on top of the flat, round marker creating a pyramid, or on top of the large cone if the city was previously in the top 15 only in 1960.
11. Discuss where most of the people live and why. What areas of the state have no large settlements? Why? This is also an opportunity to review the concentration of people in the state in terms of electoral districts.

### **NOTES:**

Review the Major Eras in Louisiana History for contextual information for the time periods highlighted in this lesson.

### **GUIDING QUESTIONS:**

#### **Q. What factors influenced where people settled?**

The Mississippi River dominates both the physical and cultural geography of Louisiana. About two-thirds of the land surface in the state was formed with sediment from the river. Much of this land is covered by highly fertile loam soil which has sustained Louisiana agricultural industry for centuries. Additionally, an ancient version of the Mississippi River is responsible for Louisiana’s huge deposits of oil and natural gas (ONG). The exploration, extraction, refining, and distribution of ONG has dominated the state’s economy since roughly the 1950’s to the present.

Culturally, the river is the reason why the early Europeans were interested in what would become Louisiana. The early Europeans recognized the importance of the Mississippi for retaining control over their lands claimed in the new world and established the City of New Orleans at the mouth of the river. With the city in place, all ships, and their cargo,

entering and exiting the river had to move through the city; thus, whoever controlled the city controlled the river.

Throughout its long history, the City of New Orleans has been a major port of entry for immigrants to the United States. Europeans came to Louisiana in search of a better life and would either settle in the City of New Orleans and its environs or migrate to other areas of the US, using the Mississippi River as their main means of travel. Large numbers of Africans unwillingly immigrated to work in the state's enormous agriculture industry and in other menial jobs. Many Africans were forcibly settled in rural areas of the state; others were transported outside of Louisiana for work.

**Q. How many of the fifteen largest cities are located along a river (or bayou) or lake in 1850? 1960? 2010?**

A.

1850	1960	2010
14	13	15

**Q. How many of the cities were in the various regions? Are they spread evenly or grouped together?**

A.

1850	1960	2010
NW-5, NE-1, SW-0, SE-9; SE- grouped along Miss. R.	NW-1, NE-2, SW-2, SE-10; SE- grouped along Miss. R.	NW-2, NE-0, SW-1, SE-12; SE- grouped along Miss. R.

**Q. For what reasons did this pattern exist?**

A. Importance of the Mississippi River: transportation, jobs, commerce

**Q. How did Louisiana compare with the rest of the United States?**

A.

	1850	1960	2010
Louisiana	517,762	3,257,022	4,533,372
United States	23,191,876	189,323,175	308,745,538

**Q. How many cities in the new top fifteen in 1960 were also in the top fifteen in 1850? What percentage is that?**

A. 8 of 15, just over half, 53%

**Q. How many cities in the new top fifteen in 2010 were also in the top fifteen in 1850? In 1960?**

A. 1850: 6 of 15

1960: 9 of 15

**Q. Where are most of the large cities in Louisiana located in 2010? Why?**

A. Southeast: major cities of New Orleans and Baton Rouge, which are world class ports, centers of education, finance, and government.

**Q. Are major cities and suburbs significantly more concentrated than they were in 1960?**

A. Depending on which suburbs are counted as being part of major cities, the concentration of population in major cities is similar to what it was in 1960.

**Q. Generally speaking, how would you describe the majority of population movement and growth in the Louisiana over the past one hundred years?**

A. The population is still concentrated in the southeast due to the importance of the Mississippi River. The coastal areas of the state also have expanded due to development on the oil and gas sector. The northwest has had some expansion to a major military installation and gambling.

**Q. Why? What factors have encouraged people to move and live in cities?**

A. Jobs, schools, quality of life, family

### **MODIFICATIONS:**

For younger participants, focus on the map key and compass rose. For older participants, invite them to have more autonomy in the lesson and incorporate additional mathematical concepts.

### **EXTENSIONS:**

Consider using the census data in math lessons. How much larger is New Orleans today than in 1850? How much larger is New Orleans than the 15th largest city? How concentrated is the population in New Orleans over time? How did the population of your city change?

For use with the GeoCivics activities (<https://www.uccs.edu/geocivics/>), invite participants to think about the current configuration of United States Congressional Districts in the state. Ask them to remember the key characteristics of how districts are drawn (equal population and contiguous). Invite them to pretend that their state has just two Congressional Districts; ask two people to pick up one of the chains and divide the state generally in half by population; invite two more people to divide the state into four districts (they may choose to move the original chain, or not). Discuss why some districts would likely be smaller in area than others. If appropriate, determine how to divide the state into state senate districts.

Consider when a giant floor map is a good tool for understanding geographic phenomena and when other tools (paper maps, online maps) might be more appropriate.

### **NOTE:**

Thanks to National Geographic's Giant Traveling Maps team for the inspiration for this lesson, which is based on "People on the Move," a lesson for the North America Giant Map.

### **RESOURCES:**

<http://www.ereferencedesk.com/resources/state-history-timeline/louisiana.html>

<http://www.datesandevents.org/american-timelines/18-louisiana-history-timeline.htm>

<https://www.census.gov/prod/www/decennial.htm>

	City	1850	v		City	1960	v		City	2010	v
	State				State				State	4,533,372	
1	New Orleans	116,375	29.9° N, 90.1° W	1	New Orleans	627,525	29.9° N, 90.1° W	1	New Orleans	343,829	29.9° N, 90.1° W
2	Lafayette	14,190	30.2° N, 92.0° W	2	Shreveport	164,372	32.5° N, 93.8° W	2	Baton Rouge	229,493	30.5° N, 91.2° W
3	Baton Rouge	3,905	30.5° N, 91.2° W	3	Baton Rouge	152,419	30.5° N, 91.2° W	3	Shreveport	199,311	32.5° N, 93.8° W
4	Shreveport	1,728	32.5° N, 93.8° W	4	Lake Charles	63,392	30.2° N, 93.2° W	4	Lafayette	120,623	30.2° N, 92.0° W
5	Carrollton (Jefferson Parish)	1,470	29.9° N, 90.1° W	5	Monroe	52,219	32.5° N, 92.1° W	5	Lake Charles	71,993	30.2° N, 93.2° W
6	Natchitoches	1,261	31.8° N, 93.1° W	6	Lafayette	40,400	30.2° N, 92.0° W	6	Kenner	66,702	29.9° N, 90.2° W
7	Thibodaux	1,242	29.8° N, 90.8° W	7	Alexandria	40,279	31.3° N, 92.4° W	7	Bossier	61,315	32.8° N, 93.7° W
8	Barataria (Jefferson Parish)	1,176	29.7° N, 90.1° W	8	New Iberia	29,062	30.0° N, 91.8° W	8	Alexandria	47,723	31.3° N, 92.4° W
9	Franklin	891	29.8° N, 91.5° W	9	Houma	22,561	29.6° N, 90.7° W	9	Houma	33,727	29.6° N, 90.7° W
10	Gretna	717	29.9° N, 90.1° W	10	Bogalusa	21,423	30.8° N, 89.8° W	10	New Iberia	30,617	30.0° N, 91.8° W
11	Alexandria	672	31.3° N, 92.4° W	11	Gretna	21,967	29.9° N, 90.1° W	11	Slidell	27,068	30.3° N, 89.8° W
12	Minden	533	32.6° N, 93.3° W	12	Opelousas	17,417	30.5° N, 92.1° W	12	Central	26,864	30.6° N, 91.0° W
13	Monroe	435	32.5° N, 92.1° W	13	Kenner	17,037	29.9° N, 90.2° W	13	Ruston	21,859	32.5° N, 92.6° W
14	Homer	418	32.8° N, 93.1° W	14	Crowley	15,617	30.2° N, 92.4° W	14	Sulphur	20,410	30.2° N, 93.4° W
15	New Iberia	306	30.0° N, 91.8° W	15	Bastrop	15,193	32.8° N, 91.9° W	15	Hammond	20,019	30.5° N, 90.5° W

	<b>City</b>	<b>2020*</b>	√
	<b>State</b>	<b>4,657,757</b>	
1	New Orleans	383,997	
2	Baton Rouge	227,470	
3	Shreveport	187,593	
4	Metairie	143,507	
5	Lafayette	121,374	
6	Lake Charles	84,872	
7	Kenner	66,448	
8	Bossier City	62,701	
9	Monroe	47,702	
10	Alexandria	45,275	
11	Houma	33,406	
12	Prairieville	33,197	
13	Marrero	32,382	
14	Central	29,565	
15	Laplace	28,841	

\*2020 Census data is from Redistricting Data Hub using the State and Place level PL 94-171 datasets.

<https://redistrictingdatahub.org/data/download-data/#state-menu>