

RHODE ISLAND

Giant Traveling Map Lesson

TITLE / AUTHOR: Rhode Islanders on the Move / Author

Rhode Island ACADEMIC STANDARDS / SUITABLE DISCIPLINES:

Geography

G 1: The World in Spatial Terms: Understanding and interpreting the organization of people, places, and environments on Earth's surface provides an understanding of the world in spatial terms.

- 1 Students understand maps, globes, and other geographic tools and technologies.
- 2 Students interpret the characteristics and features of maps.

G 2: Places and Regions: Physical and human characteristics (e.g., culture, experiences, etc.) influence places and regions.

- 1 Students understand the physical and human characteristics of place.
- 2 Students distinguish between regions and places.
- 3 Students understand different perspectives that individuals and groups have.
- 4 Students understand how geography contributes to how regions are defined and identified.

G 3: Human Systems: (Movement) Human systems and human movement affect and are affected by distribution of populations and resources, relationships (cooperation and conflict), and culture.

- 1 Students understand why people do or do not migrate.
- 2 Students understand the interrelationships of geography with resources.
- 3 Students understand how geography influences human settlement, cooperation or conflict.

G 4: Environment and Society: Patterns emerge as humans settle, modify, and interact on Earth's surface to limit or promote human activities.

- 1 Students explain how humans depend on their environment.
- 2 Students explain how humans react or adapt to an ever-changing physical environment.
- 3 Students explain how human actions modify the physical environment.

Civics and Government

1 People create and change structures of power, authority, and governance in order to accomplish common goals.

Students demonstrate an understanding of political systems and political processes by...

- a. explaining how leaders are selected or elected (e.g., election process, appointment process, political parties, campaigns).
- a. explaining how various factors affect how leaders are selected or elected through an election process (e.g., election process, public agenda, special interest groups, and media).

4 People engage in political processes in a variety of ways.

Students demonstrate their participation in political processes by...

- b. describing the voting process for a local, state, or national election.

OBJECTIVES:

Participants will:

- Learn about major cities in Rhode Island 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 Rhode Island cities by population for 1810/1910/2010

PREPARATION:

- Discuss reasons why people choose to live in different places
- Review historical settlement patterns in Rhode Island
- Review Rhode Island era info [SOURCE]
- Develop predictions by participants 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.
- Participants should wear socks on the Giant 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 Rhode Island for the years 1810, 1910, and 2010. They will then look for trends based on the east/west axis and north/south axis, waterways adjacent to and within Rhode Island, and defensive settlements from the 18th 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 Rhode Island in 1810, 1910, 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 Rhode Island in 1810. 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?)
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 Providence).
5. Remind the participants that they can provide assistance to their classmates 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. Students 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 1910 census and ask participants what jobs people were doing then. Ask them to predict where people might be living.
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 1810 and 1910, 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 the 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 1910.

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 Rhode Island History for contextual information for the time periods highlighted in this lesson.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:

Q. What factors influence where people settle(d)?

A. Water, safety, transportation routes, physical geography

Q. How many of the fifteen largest cities are located along a bay, inlet, river or lake in 1810? 1910? 2010?

A.

1810	1910	2010
~14	~13	~12

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

A.

Region	1810	1910	2010
	East - 3	East - 3	East - 1
	Water - 4	Water - 2	Water - 2
	Center - 7	Center - 3	Center - 3
	Providence - 1	Providence - 7	Providence - 8
			West - 1

Q. For what reasons did this pattern exist?

A. Transportation opportunities, employment opportunities

Q. How did Rhode Island compare with the rest of the United States?

A. Consider how much the population of Rhode Island increased compared to the increase in the United States. What percentage of the population in the United States has lived in Rhode Island? How has it changed over time?

	1810	1910	2010
Rhode Island	76,931	542,610	1,052,567
United States	7,239,881	92,228,531	308,745,538

Q. How many cities in the new top fifteen in 1910 were also in the top fifteen in 1810? What percentage is that?

A. 6, 40%

Q. How many cities in the new top fifteen in 2010 were also in the top fifteen in 1810? In 1910?

A. 1810: 5 of 15; 1910: 11 of 15

Q. Where are most of the large cities in Rhode Island located in 2010? Why?

A. On the coast.

Q. Are major cities and suburbs significantly more concentrated than they were in 1910?

A. Yes.

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

A. ??.

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

A. Jobs.

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 Providence today than in 1810? How much larger is Providence than the 15th largest city? How concentrated is the population in Providence 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:

Rhode Island Department of Education

<https://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/CivicsSocialStudies.aspx>

	City	1810	v		City	1910	v		City	2010	v
	State	76,931			State	542,610			State	1,052,567	
1	Providence	10,070		1	Providence	223,326		1	Providence	178,042	
2	Newport	7,907		2	Pawtucket	51,622		2	Warwick	82,672	
3	Smithfield	3,828		3	Woonsocket	38,126		3	Cranston	80,387	
4	South Kingston	3,560		4	Newport	27,149		4	Pawtucket	71,148	
5	Coventry	2,928		5	Central Falls	22,754		5	East Providence	47,037	
6	Tiverton	2,837		6	Warwick	26,629		6	Woonsocket	41,186	
7	Bristol	2,698		7	Cranston	21,107		7	Coventry	35,014	
8	Foster	2,613		8	East Providence	15,808		8	Cumberland	33,506	
9	Scituate	2,568		9	Cumberland	10,107		9	North Providence	32,078	
10	North Kingstown	2,957		10	Bristol	8,565		10	South Kingstown	30,639	
11	Portsmouth	2,681		11	Burrillville	7,878		11	Johnston	28,769	
12	Glocester	2,310		12	Warren	6,585		12	West Warwick	29,191	
13	Exeter	2,256		13	Johnston	5,935		13	North Kingstown	26,486	
14	Cumberland	2,210		14	Coventry	5,848		14	Newport	24,672	
15	Cranston	2,161		15	North Providence	5,407		15	Westerly	22,787	

	City	2020*	√
	State	1,097,379	
1	Providence	190,934	
2	Cranston	82,934	
3	Warwick	82,823	
4	Pawtucket	75,604	
5	East Providence	47,139	
6	Woonsocket	43,240	
7	Newport	25,163	
8	Central Falls	22,583	
9	Westerly	18,423	
10	Newport East	12,337	
11	Valley Falls	12,094	
12	Greenville	9,061	
	Wakefield-Peace		
13	Dale	8,925	
14	Cumberland Hill	8,140	
15	Kingston	7,825	

*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>