

Lesson - Mapping the Cultural Geography of Washington State

Approach #2 – Cultural Diversity within a County

[using CD-ROM of Folk & Traditional Artists of Washington]

Learning Objectives

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the cultural geography of Washington state by locating cultural communities on a map of Washington.

Lesson Summary

Students use CD-ROM to find the locations (town and county) of specific folk and traditional artists. Each artist indicates the presence of a larger ethnic or occupational cultural community. They then determine the diversity of cultural communities located within a specific county of Washington state.

Lesson Outline

1. Students are given a map of Washington state that includes locations of towns and counties. They can also refer to maps on the CD-ROM itself.
2. Individual students or small groups of students (or 2 or 3) are then given a copy of the CD-ROM, which they open on computer. [It's also possible to do this activity as a full class if there is a projector available for presenting the CD-ROM on a screen].
3. Students select a specific county within Washington state to explore on the CD-ROM.
4. They then scan the list of artists listed under that specific county and open up each of their artist pages on the CD-ROM.
5. Students find the ethnic or occupational heritage of each artist.
6. Once each artist of that specific Washington state county is checked for ethnic or occupational heritage, the student indicates on a map of Washington, what ethnic communities are located in that county. [It is generally a safe assumption that the location of a specific artist will indicate the presence of a larger ethnic community] Students can indicate location by writing the different ethnic communities directly on the map, or by writing a list of ethnic communities that appear in that specific county on a piece of paper.

This activity can be repeated a number of times to locate the variety of cultural communities within several different Washington state counties (such as King County, Clallam County, Walla Walla County, etc.). It can be particularly interesting to compare the ethnic and occupational communities found in large urban counties like King or Pierce with those in more rural counties like Chelan or Okanogan.

Questions for Discussion:

Were you surprised by where you found certain ethnic or occupational communities to be located? Did you learn about ethnic communities that you didn't even know existed in Washington state? Which ones?