



CULTURAL TOUR OF PENNSYLVANIA

LESSON PLAN

GRADE LEVEL Upper Middle School/High School

OVERVIEW Students design a regional tour of Pennsylvania (PA) in which they direct travelers to landmarks, features, and important cultural figures of the area. Study begins with an introduction to the geology of Pennsylvania, connecting the people to the landscape and collectively giving a sense of the history of the region. With over 1,200 literary and cultural figures in the PA Center for the Book (PACFTB) Literary & Cultural Heritage Maps of PA to choose from, students will have the ability to craft unique tours and research a variety of influential figures. Teachers can also narrow the biographies by time period or vocation to integrate study.

ANCHOR STANDARDS CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.10
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.2
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.6

PENNSYLVANIA CORE STANDARDS ELA CC 1.4 A
ELA CC 1.4 U
ELA CC 1.4 E
ELA CC 1.5 F
History 8.2 A
Geography 7.1.9.A
Geography 7.1.12.A

BIG IDEAS

- Literature is a reflection of the culture, space, and time in which it is created.
- The history of the Commonwealth continues to influence Pennsylvanians today, and has impacted the United States and the rest of the world.
- The phenomena of the earth, its physical features, places and resources, have been and will be an influence on freedom and liberty.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How does geography affect the way people live and work? How does *where* we live influence *how* we live?
- How can the story of another American, past or present, influence your life?

CONCEPTS

- Historical literacy requires a focus on time and space, and an understanding of the historical context, as well as an awareness of point of view.
- Textual evidence, material artifacts, the built environment and historic sites are central to understanding the history of Pennsylvania.
- Learning about the past and its different contexts shaped by social, cultural, and political influences prepares one for participation as active, critical citizens in a democratic society.

VOCABULARY

Physiography	Piedmont	Strip mines
Region	Atlantic Coastal Plain	Relief
Central Lowlands	Uplands	Slope
Appalachian Plateaus	Karst	Glacial
Ridge and Valley	Escarpment	Linear
New England	Undulate	Terrace

COMPETENCIES

- Enhance geographic literacy/geospatial education
- Note unique characteristics of different regions
- Identify significant events in a geographic area
- Describe contributions from those who would otherwise not be known
- Use digital media to present information spatially
- Articulate the role individuals from Pennsylvania have played in the cultural development of the U.S.

MATERIALS

 Computers with Internet Access

[Regional Map of Pennsylvania](#), based upon Pennsylvania Tourism Office (optional)

[Cultural Tour of Pennsylvania Notes](#) (optional)

[Cultural Tour of Pennsylvania Rubric](#)

[The North America Tapestry of Time and Terrain](#)

[PACFTB Cultural Heritage Maps of Pennsylvania](#)

[Cultural Heritage Map](#)

[Chronological Cultural Heritage Map](#)

[Feature Map](#)

[Google Earth](#) or a printed map such as the [National Geographic PA Tabletop Map](#)

SUGGESTED ONLINE RESOURCES

Google Earth Creation Tools [Tutorial](#)

[MapMaker Interactive](#), or [Google Maps](#)

[Jamboard](#), [Webjets](#), or [Padlet](#)

[Library of Congress Photographs](#) and [Library of Congress Maps](#)

[PA Historical Markers](#)

[Easybib](#) or [Bibme](#)

PREREQUISITE

Assume that students are familiar with proper MLA Works Cited format and plagiarism guidelines.

SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES

Exploration of Geological History & Introduction to Tour Project

To begin, share the [North America Tapestry of Time and Terrain](#) map (2003) – this colorful map illustrates the geological history of North America. Zoom in closer to the North Eastern portion of the United States, noting that the land formations of this area are varied.

- Can you identify Pennsylvania (without seeing clear political borders)?
- What do you know about the landscape of Pennsylvania?
- What are some clues? (Ohio, Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers, Lake Erie, Finger Lakes of New York)

Use a topographic map with political borders to confirm and compare knowledge (consider using the [MapMaker Interactive](#), a [Google map of Pennsylvania](#), or [Google Earth](#)).

Returning to the initial [North America Tapestry of Time and Terrain](#) map, share that Pennsylvania has land formations from different time periods as well (see legend). A more detailed representation of these differences is presented in the [Physiographic Provinces of Pennsylvania](#) map. Point out that Pennsylvania has six different physiographic provinces.

These are:

- Central Lowlands
- Appalachian Plateaus
- Ridge and Valley
- New England
- Piedmont
- Atlantic Coastal Plain

Briefly discuss the dominant topographic form present in each of these provinces. Review or introduce vocabulary (undulating, karst, escarpment – see Vocabulary above for more) that are present within the descriptors. The varied Pennsylvania landscape reflected in these provinces may not be familiar to students. The virtual tours will offer images to expand upon it further. From the water access of the Atlantic Coastal Plains to the coal fields of the Ridges and Valleys, the geology of Pennsylvania has influenced the people who have called this place home. Draw upon the prior knowledge of the students:

- What do you know about the types of work people do in Pennsylvania? What types of business or industry is reflected in the landscape (coal mining, fracking, farming, cities near rivers)?
- From what you know, how might the lifestyles/vocations/perspectives of the people living in region X of Pennsylvania differ from region Y (use names of physiographic provinces)?
- How can we confirm our understanding?
- Do you think that this has changed over time or remained somewhat the same?

There are numerous influential figures connected with the state of Pennsylvania. The lives of these figures can offer insight into how places might have influenced work or conversely, how figures may have influenced the place.

Ask what the students know of the people of Pennsylvania. Who lives or lived here? Some may know of Mr. Rogers in Pittsburgh, Pink in Doylestown, Joe Biden from Scranton, or Frank Lloyd Wright in Ohio. Depending upon student interests, other names might emerge.

Pennsylvania has a rich and vibrant history that can be seen in many different ways. Envisioning themselves as local tour guides, students will use the [PACFTB Cultural Heritage Maps](#) to create unique virtual tours of the region – highlighting landmarks, people of interest, and unique features.

Divide a Pennsylvania map among students (see the Regional Map handout based upon the [Pennsylvania Tourism Office](#)). Within some regions, there are several figures; therefore, a suggested subdivision is offered below. There are approximately 18 suggested county groupings representing 11 regions of the state; these can be divided for individual or group work.

- **Great Lakes**
 - Erie, Crawford, Mercer and Venango Counties
- **Pittsburgh and its countryside**
 - Allegheny County – *4-5 can explore*
 - Lawrence, Butler, Armstrong, Indiana, Beaver, Greene, and Washington Counties
- **Laurel Highlands**
 - Westmoreland, Somerset, and Fayette Counties
- **Pennsylvania Wilds**
 - Warren, McKean, Cameron, Elk, Forest, Clarion, Jefferson, and Clearfield Counties
 - Potter, Tioga, Lycoming, Clinton, and Centre Counties
- **The Alleghenies**
 - Bedford, Fulton, Huntingdon, Blair, and Cambria Counties
 - Mifflin and Juniata Counties
- **Valleys of the Susquehanna**
 - Union, Snyder, Northumberland, Montour and Columbia Counties
- **Upstate PA**
 - Bradford, Susquehanna, Sullivan, Wyoming, Luzerne, and Schuylkill Counties
- **The Pocono Mountains**
 - Carbon, Monroe, Wayne and Pike Counties
- **Lehigh Valley**
 - Lehigh and Northampton Counties
- **Philadelphia and its countryside**
 - Bucks County
 - Montgomery County – *2 can explore*
 - Chester County
 - Delaware County
 - Philadelphia County – *6-7 can explore*
- **Dutch Country Roads**
 - Franklin, Cumberland, Perry, Dauphin, Lebanon, Berks, Lancaster, York, and Adams Counties

Establishing Notes about Regions

Students will look at the region from many different lenses. Recalling the discussion of physiographic provinces, examine the assigned region more closely and begin taking notes to be used in the development of cultural tours. Model notetaking skills using the [Cultural Tour Notes Handout](#) or an online notetaking tool (such as OneNote, [Jamboard](#), [Webjets](#), or [Padlet](#)). A suggested [Cultural Tour of Pennsylvania Rubric](#) has been provided for the final tour presentation to guide content and form.

First, using the [Physiographic Provinces of Pennsylvania](#) map, document the physiographic sections and forms present within the counties (see the second page of the Physiographic Provinces map for full descriptions).

- Is the landscape varied within the region or fairly consistent?
- What do you notice about the landscape (mountains, rivers, forests, farmlands) – how might these influence the lifestyle of the people who live there?
- What natural pathways and barriers exist? What manmade pathways and barriers exist?

Next gather general information about counties. Students should look for information that would both inform and entertain their audience/peers. This could range from population size, to county history, to places or events of interest. This information can be gleaned from county tourism websites and general online searches.

Are these counties densely or sparsely populated?

- Are these counties densely or sparsely populated?
- What types of industry/business is prevalent in the area?
- What is the region known for?

Using the [PACFTB Feature Map](#), zoom into the assigned region, hover over pinpoint markers in the region, and use the hyperlinks to read Feature Articles about additional points of interest. These articles contain interesting facts, history, and events that can offer “fun facts” for the tour.

Homework: Continue exploring the region and developing notes about counties and features within the region.

People of Interest & Tour Development

Who is connected to this region? The lands of Pennsylvania were once inhabited by many different peoples. To acknowledge the history of the regions, research via crowdsourced resources such as <https://native-land.ca> or text (907) 312-5085 with the current name of the city to learn the Indigenous territories. Students will note the overlapping territories that represent the deep history of the land.

Sourcing data on Indigenous territories is a delicate process; therefore, these resources should be used with an understanding that areas may be incorrect according to local nations and individual interpretation. As crowdsourced maps, they are updated to reflect research; however, errors may exist.

- What is known about the traditions, language and culture of the Indigenous communities who once lived in the region?
- Why are there not defined boundaries but rather overlapping areas?
- What is crowdsourcing? What other common resources use this method? What are the benefits and hinderances of this type of resource?
- What purpose do boundaries serve?
- What happened to the people who lived here?

The [PACFTB Chronological Cultural Heritage Map of Pennsylvania](#) highlights known petroglyph sites, landmarks and trails for further exploration.

Examine the literary and cultural figures of the area on the [PACFTB Cultural Heritage Map of Pennsylvania](#). Students can use the +/- buttons to isolate a region and then toggle through vocation tabs to identify the cultural figures of interest. By clicking on the marker or thumbnail image of the literary or cultural figure, students are able to read a brief description of the figure. In many cases, an expanded biography is linked to the map for further information.

Students should select 10-15 figures to include in their tours. In reviewing the biographies of these figures, take note of interesting pieces of information. As students work, circulate and ask questions that can lead to additional inquiry and research.

- Why is this person notable?
- Where and when did this person live in Pennsylvania?
- Do you note any trends or connections emerging between the features and figures present within your region?
- What other landmarks or nearby sites might be of interest?

Ask students to compose paragraph descriptions of the selected literary and/or cultural figures that will become the tour script.

- Imagine your audience, what kinds of interesting facts will they enjoy?
- What drew you to selecting these figures over others?
- Is there an emerging theme to your tour?
- What, if anything, do your chosen figures have in common? Are they from similar time periods or vocations?

Gather photographs of the area, information about the figure, excerpts of literature, and video clips to add to the tour. (Webjets.io, OneNote, or Padlet.com can be beneficial in collecting and presenting content.) Suggested websites include: [Library of Congress photographs](#) and [Library of Congress maps](#); [National Archives Census Records](#); [National Archives Ethnic Heritage Links](#); [Google Arts & Culture](#); [Smithsonian Learning Lab](#); and [PA Historical Markers](#).

Homework: Continue exploring the region, developing paragraph descriptions and adding images of interest to the tour.

Presentations & Discussion

Conclude the project with a gallery walk or digital presentation of the tours.

As a class, reflect upon regional differences.

- Do the figures of the region have anything in common (type of education, family make-up, life experience)?
- Why might this be the case?
- Are there differences/similarities over time periods? Within physiographic regions?

ASSESSMENT

A suggested [Cultural Tour of Pennsylvania: Rubric](#) has been provided.

Options/Alterations

[PACFTB Chronological Heritage Maps](#) can be used to limit the time period of study.

[PACFTB Cultural Heritage Maps](#) can limit the vocations of study.

EXTENSION/FURTHER STUDY

Invite students to:

1. Compose Biographical Essays (see [Missing Voices: Biography Lesson Plan](#)).
2. Share the tour with the county or state tourism office.
3. Share the tour with the PACFTB.
4. Explore [Living Nations, Living Words](#) poets and poetry.
5. Create a classroom travel zine or blog for publication.
6. Create a podcast of a walking/driving tour.
7. Lobby for a marker or historic designation to be added.
8. Include some of the selected sites on a future educational field trip.
9. Develop a virtual reality tour using [Google Tour Creator](#).
10. Explore the local Indigenous organizations and communities.
11. Compare the maps of T.M. Fowler within the [LOC collections](#) to current aerial views.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LAND

The Pennsylvania State University campuses are located on the original homelands of the Erie, Haudenosaunee (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk, and Tuscarora), Lenape (Delaware Nation, Delaware Tribe, Stockbridge-Munsee), Shawnee (Absentee, Eastern, and Oklahoma), Susquehannock, and Wahzhazhe (Osage) Nations. As a land grant institution, we acknowledge and honor the traditional caretakers of these lands and strive to understand and model their responsible stewardship. We also acknowledge the longer history of these lands and our place in that history.

REFERENCES

- “A Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgment.” *Native Governance Center*, MABU (Marketing and Advertising Business Unlimited), 14 May 2020, nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment. Accessed 16 Feb. 2021.
- Barton, Kate E., et al. “The North America Tapestry of Time and Terrain.” *Geologic Investigations Series I-2781*, U.S. Geological Survey, Geological Survey of Canada, 24 Sept. 2009, pubs.usgs.gov/imap/i2781/. Accessed 16 Feb 2021.
- Baker, Thomas R. “Internet-Based GIS Mapping in Support of K-12 Education.” *The Professional Geographer*, Feb. 2005. 57:1, 44-50, doi: [10.1111/j.0033-0124.2005.00458.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0033-0124.2005.00458.x).
- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Topographic and Geologic Survey. “Physiographic Provinces of Pennsylvania: Map 13.” elibrary.dcnr.pa.gov/GetDocument?docId=1752507&DocName=Map13_PhysProvs_Pa.pdf. Accessed 10 Dec. 2020.
- Demirci, Ali, Ahmet Karaburun & Hatice Kilar. “Using Google Earth as an educational tool in secondary school geography lessons.” *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, 18 Oct. 2013. 22:4, 277-290, doi: [10.1080/10382046.2013.846700](https://doi.org/10.1080/10382046.2013.846700).
- Downs, Roger M. “Bringing Geography Back to Life: The Role of the Geospatial Revolution in the US School System.” *Geography*, vol. 101, no. 2, 2016, 77-84. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/26546720. Accessed 7 Dec. 2020.
- Jonassen, David H. “Thinking Technology: Toward a Constructivist Design Model.” *Educational Technology*, vol. 34, no. 4, 1994, 34-37. JSTOR, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44428173>. Accessed 7 Dec. 2020.
- LaDue, N. D. et al. “Earth Science Literacy: Big Ideas and Supporting Concepts.” *American Geophysical Union, Fall Meeting 2008*. Dec. 2008: ED21A-0601.
- Love, Cassandra. *The Geo-Inquiry Process: Educator Guide*. National Geographic Education. 2017. media.nationalgeographic.org/assets/file/Educator_Guide_Geo_Inquiry_Final_2.pdf. Accessed 17 Dec. 2020.
- Maddox, Lamont E., James B. Howell & John W. Saye. “Designing Geographic Inquiry: Preparing Secondary Students For Citizenship,” *Journal of Geography*, 5 Jan. 2018. 117:6, 254-268, doi: [10.1080/00221341.2018.1495249](https://doi.org/10.1080/00221341.2018.1495249).
- Merç, Ati, and Ali Ersoy. “The Effectiveness of Google Earth in the Acquisition of Spatial Perception Ability in Social Studies Courses.” *International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education*, vol. 11, no. 4, March 2019, 299-307. ProQuest, doi: [10.26822/iejee.2019450788](https://doi.org/10.26822/iejee.2019450788).
- Mohan, Audrey. “Empowering Students Through Geography,” *The Geography Teacher*, 2018. 15:2, 53-54, doi: [10.1080/19338341.2018.1436463](https://doi.org/10.1080/19338341.2018.1436463).
- “Native Land.” *Native Land Digital*, 2015. native-land.ca. Accessed 17 Dec. 2020.

- Oberle, Alex. Advancing Students' Abilities through the Geo-Inquiry Process, *Journal of Geography*, 6 Jan. 2020. 119:2, 43-54, doi: [10.1080/00221341.2019.1698641](https://doi.org/10.1080/00221341.2019.1698641).
- Patterson, Todd C. "Google Earth as a (Not just) Geography Education Tool." *The Journal of Geography*, vol. 106, no. 4, Jul/Aug 2007, 145-152. doi: [10.1080/00221340701678032](https://doi.org/10.1080/00221340701678032).
- Taylor, Whitney, and Brandon Plewe. "The Effectiveness of Interactive Maps in Secondary Historical Geography Education." *Cartographic Perspectives*, no. 55, 2006, 16-33. doi: [10.14714/CP55.325](https://doi.org/10.14714/CP55.325).