

4th-5th Grade US Geography — Activity Guide

A deeper US geography pack for upper-elementary students. Builds on the 3rd-grade pack with physical geography, regions, and historical context.

What's in this pack

- Blank US Map — for advanced labeling exercises
- Labeled US Map with State Capitals
- Individual state maps with cities (50 states available)
- Individual state maps with counties (50 states available)
- This activity guide PDF

Suggested 6-week sequence

Week 1 — Regions in depth

Beyond the 4 basic regions, introduce sub-regions: New England, Mid-Atlantic, South Atlantic, Deep South, Gulf Coast, Great Plains, Great Lakes, Rocky Mountain, Pacific Northwest, Southwest. Use the blank map to color-code 10 sub-regions. Discuss what makes each distinct.

Week 2 — Major rivers

Identify the major US rivers on the blank map: Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Colorado, Rio Grande, Columbia, Hudson. Discuss why rivers shaped where cities grew. Mark the 10 largest US cities and notice how many are on rivers.

Week 3 — Mountain ranges

On the blank map, sketch and label: Appalachian Mountains, Rocky Mountains, Sierra Nevada, Cascade Range, Ozark Mountains. Discuss how mountains affect climate and weather (why is Seattle wet? why are the Plains flat?).

Week 4 — State capitals (full 50)

Memorize all 50 state capitals using the labeled map. Use spaced repetition: 10 per day, then quiz the previous day's 10 the next morning. By Friday, attempt no-look quiz of all 50.

Week 5 — One state deep dive

Pick one state — ideally one you can visit or have a connection to. Use the with-cities and with-counties versions. Research: 5 biggest cities, county your nearest relative lives in, state's biggest industry, one historic event that happened there, one famous landmark.

Week 6 — US geography quiz

Closing assessment: print the blank map and have student label all 50 states, all 50 capitals, 5 major rivers, and 3 mountain ranges from memory. Compare to labeled version. Note gaps for re-study.

Standards alignment

This pack supports **Common Core 4th-5th grade ELA Reading: Informational Text** and aligns with most state standards for 4-5 Social Studies (US physical and political geography, state and regional study, river and mountain systems).