

TEACHING AND LEARNING WORLD GEOGRAPHY

Rainforest Resources: Cacao to Chocolate

Introduction:

This mapping activity allows students to learn about cacao, a rainforest resource. They will discover where cacao is produced and where cocoa is consumed. Students will also be able to analyze the economic activities associated with the growth and production of cacao, understand issues related to the economic development of countries that produce cacao and consume chocolate, and trace the diffusion path of a product on a global scale.

TEKS:

11 (A) identify the effects of population growth and distribution and predict future effects on the physical environment;

11 (B) trace the development of the conservation of natural resources, including the establishment of the National Park System and efforts of private nonprofit organizations.

21(C) analyze how the contributions of people of various racial, ethnic, and religious groups have helped to shape the national identity;

22 (A) explain the effects of scientific discoveries and technological innovations such as electric power, the telegraph and telephone, petroleum-based products, medical vaccinations, and computers on the development of the United States;

22 (B) explain how scientific discoveries and technological innovations such as those in agriculture, the military, and medicine resulted from specific needs;

23 (A) analyze how scientific discoveries and technological innovations, including those in transportation and communication, have changed the standard of living in the United States

Materials:

Handout 1 : 'Chocolate Lovers' reading from Maps101.com (class set)

Handout 2: Questions for 'Chocolate Lovers' reading with world map showing country borders

Map pencils

Data on producer and consumer countries from www.prb.org:

http://www.prb.org/pdf07/07WPDS_Eng.pdf (If you are not able to access this online during class you can print out the data sheets and use the charts as a class set)

Time:

45 - 50 minutes for reading and map.

(Consumers/producers chart at the end of Handout 2 is usually assigned as homework or extension)

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Learning Activities

Beginning the Activity

(5 minutes)

1. If possible, pass out sample of dark chocolate (chocolate candy that is at least 60% cacao - Try Dove for example) for students to taste. You can also have students bring their own chocolate to class to eat while they work. Discuss the different taste preferences people have for chocolate.
2. Review geographic concepts that students will use in the lesson: diffusion; primary/secondary/tertiary/quaternary economic activities; scale: local, regional, global; economic development, developed, developing; hearth.

Developing the Activity

(30 - 40 minutes)

3. Have students read the article from Maps101.com as a class (**Rainforest resources Handout 1**), in pairs or silently. As students read the article they are to answer the questions provided (**Rainforest resources Handout 2**) and create the cacao/chocolate diffusion map.

Concluding the Activity

(5 minutes)

4. Ask students after they have completed the reading why they think that Asia is a new market for chocolate consumption. Responses could include that Asian nations are becoming more developed and therefore have more expendable income, as Asian nations become more developed the people will be exposed to and want more 'Western' products such as chocolate.

Extension

5. Have students help each other complete the consumers/producers chart on Handout 2 if time allows or assign chart for homework.