

National Geographic Lesson: Five Themes of Iceland

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LESSON TITLE: Five Themes of Iceland

RECOMMENDED GRADES: 9-12

TIME NEEDED: One – 85 Minute Class

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

1. Understand the unifying themes of geographic study by finding examples of them in their own communities.
2. Recognize the ways to observe the world through the eyes of a geographer, with Iceland being an example of how the themes can lead to a better understanding of a place.
3. Use geospatial technologies and secondary sources to recognize geographic features at a local, national and global scale.

MATERIALS:

Materials that will need to be gathered or prepared for this lesson.

- Make sure Google Earth works with school computers
 - o You can use the online version (<https://www.google.com/earth/>) or download the desktop version (<https://www.google.com/earth/download/gep/agree.html>) but the downloaded version would need to be on each computer.

PREPARATION:

The following should be prepared in advance.

- Use Google streetview, google maps, or travel around your own community to find examples of each of the five themes that you can share with your students. Students will brainstorm as a class, but it is good to have backup ideas in case they struggle coming up with ones of their own.
- Take time to familiarize yourself with whichever version of google earth you decide to use so you can comfortably show students how to navigate the software.
- If needed, work with your school's technology people to make sure google earth works on your computers, or is downloaded onto the computers.

DIRECTIONS:

Suggested step by step instructions and pacing.

1. Anticipatory Set – “Come up with a list of 3-5 things that geographers study”
(5 minutes individual answer time – 5 minutes discussion)
2. Five themes of Geography Notes – Using the Powerpoint *Five themes of Iceland*, go over the five themes of geography and how they are present in the one country of Iceland. Emphasize what the themes are, and how they can be seen in everyday examples. Students should take notes on what the themes are, then use the pictures as discussion points as to how they themes are represented by each photo.
(20 – 25 minutes)

3. Local Five Themes – Give students *Local Five Themes* Handout and let them brainstorm 1-2 ideas of examples of each of the five themes (not particular sub-themes) for their own community. Then, as a class, brainstorm how each of the 5 themes, and their subsets are present and make a collective list.
(10-15 minutes)
4. National and Global Themes – Students work in pairs to use google earth or google street view to find an example of Movement, Human-Environment Interaction, or Place or one area within the country, and then an example from outside their country. Students can create either a presentation using screenshots from their computers, or by presenting in front of the class with google earth itself. Students explain how the location they found relates to the theme of geography.
(10-15 minutes research)
(15-20 minutes presentation)
5. Conclusion – Have students answer the following prompt on a piece of paper to turn in “How do the five themes of geography help understand an area, and humans’ place within it? Using the Iceland slides as an example.” Answers should be a good paragraph. Any time left over let students discuss their answer and write up the general ideas from each of the student’s responses.
(5-10 minutes)
6. Suggested at Home extension – Have students explore their own neighborhoods or surrounding areas to find an example of one of the five themes present in their local communities. Students can come to class with a picture/explanation of the example to present to the rest of the class where they discuss what theme and sub-theme of geography their picture relates to and how.
(Homework)

MODIFICATIONS:

Suggested ways in which the lesson might be modified for specific student audiences, different abilities, etc.

Pairing – The assignment is designed so that each student can choose their own partner for activates, or be assigned a partner. Students could be paired based on abilities, or just be paired to lessen the overall workload.

Resources – Some students may need assistance with finding additional suggestions to find examples in other countries. Directing them to look for massive changes in the land (eg. Dams, large amounts of scarring from mining) can be helpful. Also having them do searches on google, or National Geographic’s website can be helpful starting points. Making resources available or directing students to different websites or sources can assist.

Time – As needed the project can be lengthened or shortened to accommodate students of different abilities.

EXTENSIONS:

Possible ways to extend this lesson and enhance learning.

The suggested at home extension is a great way to extend the learning and have students look for examples in their own communities.

LEARNING FRAMEWORK:

Connections between this lesson and the attitudes, skills, and knowledge areas of the Learning Framework.

- **Attitude** – Curiosity: The goal of this activity is to get students looking outside their own communities by examining the country of Iceland. Then by looking within their own community they can hopefully view it in a different way that helps them understand it in a way they might not have before.
- **Skills** – Observe: Through learning about the five themes of geography by looking at Iceland, students will get an example of ways that they can observe the world through the eyes of a geographer, and then apply those skills to observing their own community.
- **Knowledge** – The Human Journey: By gaining an understanding of the ways that geographers view the world, students can increase their knowledge of the different ways that human culture is exhibited, how they are impacted by the environment, and how humans are spatially organized.

VOCABULARY:

New vocabulary students might need in order to learn and complete this lesson.

- **Location** - The Absolute and relative location of different things around the earth's surface
- **Place** - The human and physical characteristics of a place
- **Movement** - The forces of human migration, the spread of ideas, and the spread of physical resources and products and how they impact the planet.
- **Regions** - The formal, functional, and perceptual regions humans use to sub divide the earth.
- **Human-Environment Interaction** – The impacts that humans have on the environment, the ways they adapt to their environments, and the ways humans use the earth's resources

ASSESSMENT:

Suggested method of assessment for this lesson.

Methods of assessment will vary

Grading for Handout _____/10

_____/2 Brainstorming activity (Question 1)

_____/4 Examples and Informal Presentation (Question 2)

_____/2 Exit Question (Question 3)

_____/2 Homework

Local Five Themes Handout

Directions: Complete the following questions while going through the Five Themes of Iceland activity.

1. Brainstorm 1-2 example of the five themes of geography in your own community. For each one explain how it related to
2. Find an example of Movement, Human-Environment Interaction, or Place or one area within the country, and then an example from outside their country using Google Earth. You will present your examples to the class using either powerpoint, or by locating them on google earth and talking about them.
3. How do the five themes of geography help understand an area, and humans' place within it? Using the Iceland slides as an example.

Homework: Explore your own neighborhoods or surrounding areas to find an example of one of the five themes present in your local communities. Come to class with a picture/explanation of the example to present to the rest of the class and be prepared to discuss what theme and sub-theme of geography your picture relates to and how.