Elementary Social Studies Content Area Assessment Task

Winter 2010

EDUC 203

Students:

Fourth grade class in Watsonville, CA. Approximately 90% Latino, primarily of Mexican-descent. About 80% participate in FRP Lunch program. School information [here](#).

Objectives from CA HSS Standards

4.1   Students demonstrate an understanding of the physical and human geographic features that define places and regions in California.

1. Explain and use the coordinate grid system of latitude and longitude to determine the absolute locations of places in California and on Earth.

2. Distinguish between the North and South Poles; the equator and the prime meridian; the tropics; and the hemispheres, using coordinates to plot locations.

3. Identify the state capital and describe the various regions of California, including how their characteristics and physical environments (e.g., water, landforms, vegetation, climate) affect human activity.

4. Identify the locations of the Pacific Ocean, rivers, valleys, and mountain passes and explain their effects on the growth of towns.

5. Use maps, charts, and pictures to describe how communities in California vary in land use, vegetation, wildlife, climate, population density, architecture, services, and transportation.

Lessons: All lessons were taught during October or November, 2009 during the class' routine social studies time (~1:15-2:00).

Lesson 1: Slide show illustrating 5 CA landforms (Redwood forest, Oak woodland, Mojave Desert, North coast beach, Alpine lake). Students wrote about what they noticed about each photograph

Lesson 2: Using the compass function on the iPhone, students walked to various locations on the school campus and recorded their location (See attachment).

Lesson 3: Whole class lesson using Google Explorer to explore latitude, longitude, and elevation.

Lesson 4: Lesson using a table comparing climate and other features of Watsonville and Mammoth Mountain.

Lesson 5: Lesson on the relation between precipitation and elevation in CA. Students used water bucket and sponge to simulate how mountains "squeeze" moisture from clouds.

Culminating Activity: Students created salt/flour maps showing major features of CA geography.

Cumulative Test-MC Section

Multiple Choice: Please choose or write in the best answer.

1. Landmark School is located in what city and state?
      (a) Watsonville, California
      (b) Death Valley, California
      (c) Watsonville, Oregon
      (d) California

2. California's landforms *do not* include which of the following?
      (a) Deserts
      (b) Low elevation Frozen Arctic Tundra
      (c) Redwood Forests
      (d) Oak Woodlands

3. Latitude and longitude are measured in degrees, minutes, and _____?
      (a) north
      (b) 180
      (c) map
      (d) seconds

4. If you walk from the Landmark Parking lot to Room 6, you will be going in which general direction?
      (a) south
      (b) north
      (c) west
      (d) east

5. California's people live mostly
      (a) in the far northern part of the state
      (b) in the low elevation deserts
      (c) near the ocean
      (d) in the ocean

6. Snow falls in some regions of California because
      (a) they are closer to the Arctic circle
      (b) they are at high elevation
      (c) they have few people
      (d) they have rocky soil

7. Wet, winter storms in California drop most of their rain and snow in the
      (a) deserts
      (b) coasts
      (c) mountains
      (d) south

8. California's central or San Joaquin valley is able to grow food because
      (a) it rains so much in the valley that plants can grow all year long.
      (b) it's very cold, so the plants stay cool.
      (c) it's at a high elevation which makes it snow all year long.
      (d) people have built dams that save water for use all year long.

9. An aqueduct is a:
      (a) man-made concrete channel or pipe to carry water
      (b) long mountain stream that flows to the ocean.
      (c) tool to measure the elevation in the high mountains.
      (d) way to decide how to use California's water.

10. Which sentence below best describes California's water supply:
      (a) We will always have all the water we need so we don't have to worry
      (b) We don't need more water because California's population will decline
      (c) We will always have arguments about how to use our water
      (d) We don't need water at all.

Use the paper map to answer the following questions:

Name _____ Date _____

Latitude and Longitude in California
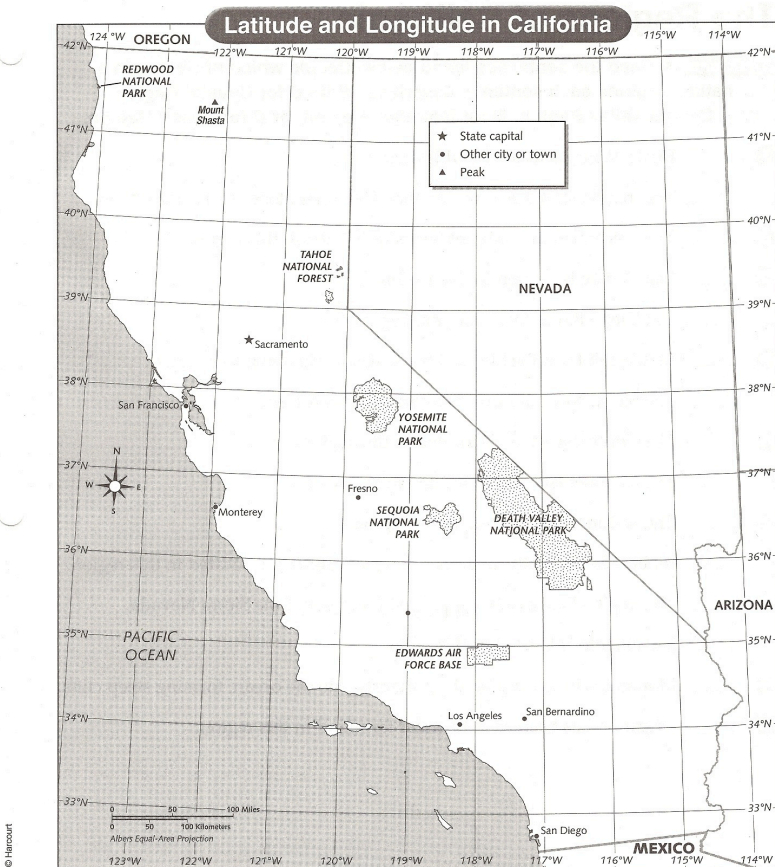
11.What line of latitude goes through Yosemite National Park?
        (a) 113 degrees, 0 minutes, 0 seconds
        (b) 50 degrees, 0 minutes, 0 seconds
        (c) 30 degrees, 0 minutes, 0 seconds
        (d) 38 degrees, 0 minutes, 0 seconds

12.What is the northernmost national park shown on your map?
        (a) Yosemite National Park
        (b) Death Valley National Park
        (c) Sacramento
        (d) Redwood National Park

13.Find the city of Monterey on the map and fill in the two missing numbers below. You can make your best guess.

Latitude: 36 Degrees, _____ **Minutes,** _____ **Seconds**
Longitude: 121 Degrees, 58 Minutes, 30 Seconds

14.The northern part of the California-Nevada border follows which line of longitude?
        (a) 39 degrees
        (b) 124 degrees
        (c) 120 degrees
        (d) equator

15. How many miles is Fresno from Monterey?
       (a)100 miles
       (b) 1000 miles
       (c) 10 miles
       (d) 100000 kilometers

16. The state capitol of California is:
       (a) Las Vegas
       (b) San Diego
       (c) Los Angeles
       (d) Sacramento

17.The largest city in California is:
       (a) Santa Cruz
       (b) San Diego
       (c) Los Angeles
       (d) San Francisco

Use the pull-down map at the front of the class to answer the following questions.

Note: The pull down map in the classroom showed elevation using a color-coded legend.

18. This map shows what feature of California's land?
       (a) legend
       (b) vegetation
       (c) elevation
       (d) rainfall

19. Which region of California do you think receives the least rainfall?
       (a) the far northern part of the state
       (b) the low elevation deserts
       (c) near the ocean
       (d) in the ocean

20. The top of Mt. Whitney, the highest point in California, is about _____ feet above sea level?
       (a) 100
       (b) 5000
       (c) 14,000
       (d) 30,000

Cumulative Test, Essay Section
Name:_____Date:_____

Here are the latitude, longitude, and elevation for two cities in California

City #1
Latitude: 40 degrees, 35 minutes, 45 seconds
Longitude: 122 degree, 23 minutes, 20 seconds
Elevation: 500 feet above sea level

City #2
Latitude: 35 degrees, 22 minutes, 23 seconds
Longitude: 119 degrees, 0 minutes, 20 seconds
Elevation: 400 feet above sea level.

21. Use your paper map as a guide to mark these cities on the map below:
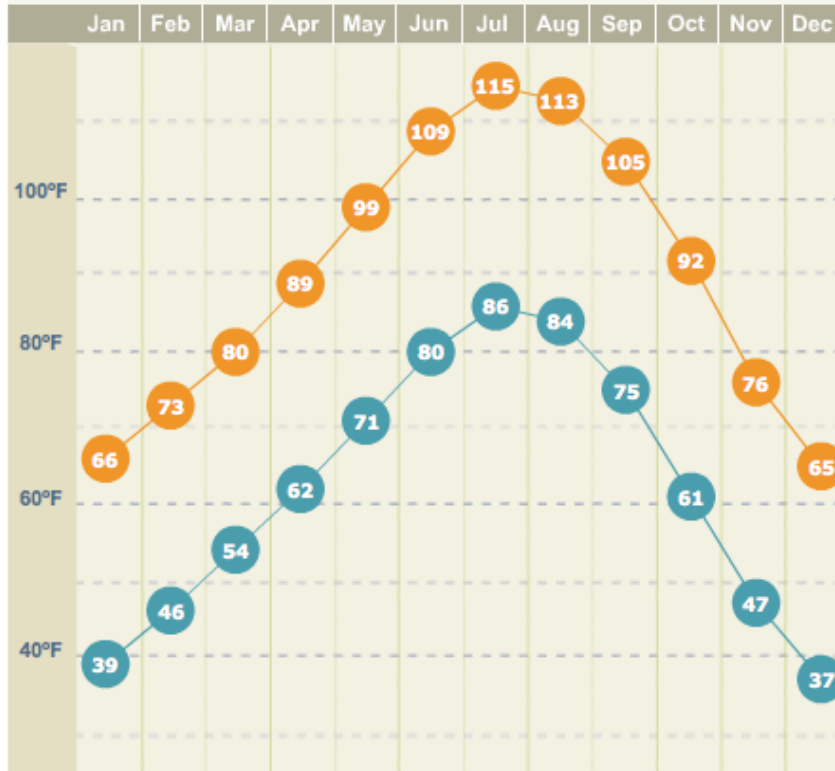
California
The Golden State

22.Based on the latitude, longitude, and elevation of these two cities, please describe them as best you can. Questions you should answer are: How are they similar? How much does it rain or snow? Are they mountain cities? What jobs might the people in these cities have? Can you describe the climate? You should think of some other comparisons on your own. *Use good organization in your writing and write in complete sentences.*

Note: Students wrote their responses on a separate sheet of paper

23.These graphs describe the yearly annual temperature and rainfall for a place in California. Using the following graphs, write one to two paragraphs describing what you think is this location's elevation, latitude, longitude, climate, water supply and population. Would you want to live here? Why or why not? *Make sure that your answer is well organized and clearly written.*

Average high and low temperatures by month

Average rainfall by month
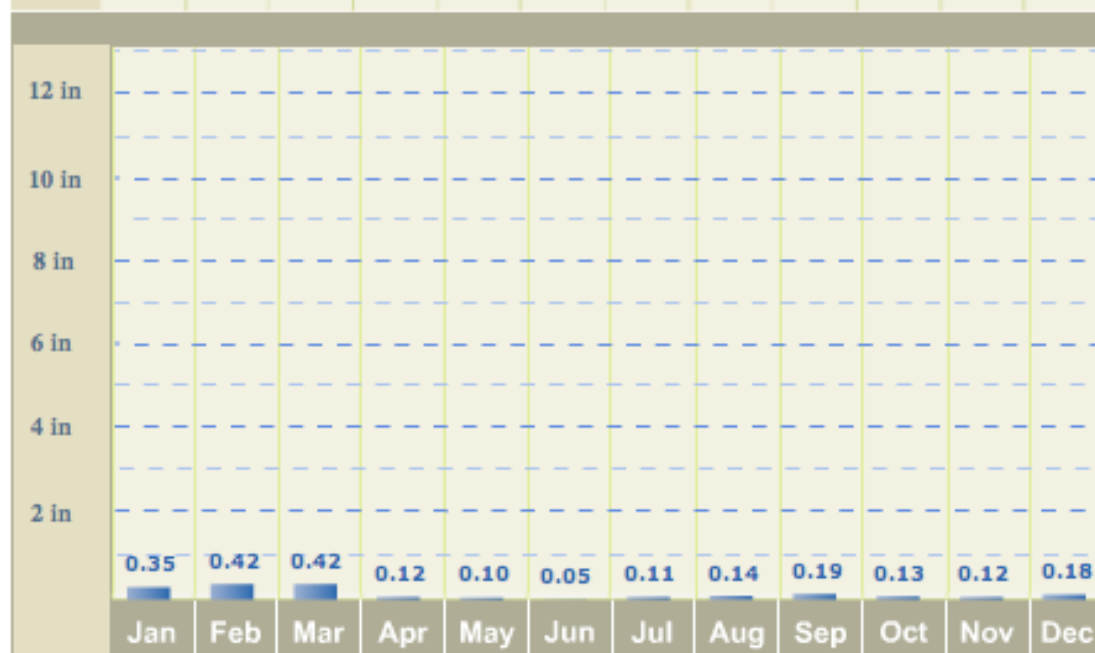
24. Expert Super Puzzler Bonus Question!
This is a map that shows the elevation, mountain ranges, cities, and other features of the country of Mexico.
How are California and Mexico similar?

Here is a map of California that we've used before: