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The National Geography Standards

The National Geography Standards includes six essential elements that highlight the major components of geography. Under the six major categories are the eighteen standards that focus on general areas in geography that children are expected to know and understand.

Essential Element 1: The World in Spatial Terms

Geography studies the relationships between people, places, and environments by mapping information about them into a spatial context. The geographically informed person knows and understands the following:

- Standard 1** **Weeks 1–8**
how to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective,
- Standard 2** **Weeks 9–10**
how to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context, and
- Standard 3** **Weeks 11–12**
how to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on Earth’s surface.
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Essential Element 2: Places and Regions

The identities and lives of individuals and peoples are rooted in particular places and in those human constructs called regions. The geographically informed person knows and understands the following:

- Standard 4** **Weeks 13–18**
the physical and human characteristics of places,
- Standard 5** **Weeks 19–22**
that people create regions to interpret Earth’s complexity, and
- Standard 6** **Weeks 23–24**
how culture and experience influence people’s perceptions of places and regions.
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Essential Element 3: Physical Systems

Physical processes shape Earth’s surface and interact with plant and animal life to create, sustain, and modify the ecosystems. The geographically informed person knows and understands the following:

- Standard 7** **Week 25**
the physical processes that shape the patterns of Earth’s surface, and
- Standard 8** **Week 26**
the characteristics and spatial distribution of ecosystems on Earth’s surface.

Essential Element 4: Human Systems

People are central to geography in that human activities help shape Earth’s surface, human settlements and structures are part of Earth’s surface, and humans compete for control of Earth’s surface. The geographically informed person knows and understands the following:

- Standard 9** **Week 27**
the characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth’s surface,
- Standard 10** **Week 28**
the characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth’s cultural mosaics,
- Standard 11** **Week 29**
the patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth’s surface,
- Standard 12** **Week 30**
the processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement, and
- Standard 13** **Week 31**
how the forces of cooperation and conflict among people influence the division and control of Earth’s surface.

Essential Element 5: Environment and Society

The physical environment is modified by human activities, largely as a consequence of the ways in which human societies value and use Earth’s natural resources. Human activities are also influenced by Earth’s physical features and processes. The geographically informed person knows and understands the following:

- Standard 14** **Week 32**
how human actions modify the physical environment,
- Standard 15** **Week 33**
how physical systems affect human systems, and
- Standard 16** **Week 34**
the changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources.

Essential Element 6: The Uses of Geography

Knowledge of geography enables people to develop an understanding of the relationships between people, places, and environments over time—that is, of Earth as it was, is, and might be. The geographically informed person knows and understands the following:

- Standard 17** **Week 35**
how to apply geography to interpret the past, and
- Standard 18** **Week 36**
how to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

WEEK 1


 Daily Geography
ANSWER KEY**Monday**

1. title, compass rose, inset map, and legend
2. the Southwest region of the United States

Tuesday

1. cardinal directions
2. northeast, southeast, northwest, southwest

Wednesday

1. symbols for the state capitals, cities, state borders, and international border
2. Tucson; Mexico

Thursday

1. It shows the location of the Southwest in relation to the rest of the country.
2. 6

Friday

1. legend
2. Arizona

Challenge

Students should show a map of the Southwest region with Texas highlighted.

Parts of a Map

Introducing the Map

Share with students that as they read a map, they should notice the different elements that are shown. The first element is the title, which tells readers what the map is about. Other common elements include a legend, or key, and a compass rose. Define these elements for the students.

Have students look at the map of the Southwest region of the U.S. Ask students to locate and describe the title, the legend, and the compass rose. Point out that this compass rose includes both cardinal and intermediate directions. Discuss the definitions of cardinal and intermediate directions.

Students should also notice that this map contains another element—an inset map. Discuss what an inset map is and what it shows.

You may choose to share with students that as they work with other maps in this book, they will encounter additional elements such as a scale, coordinates, and an index.

Introducing Vocabulary

cardinal directions north, south, east, and west (N, S, E, and W)

compass rose a symbol that shows directions on a map

inset map a smaller map set within the border of a larger one

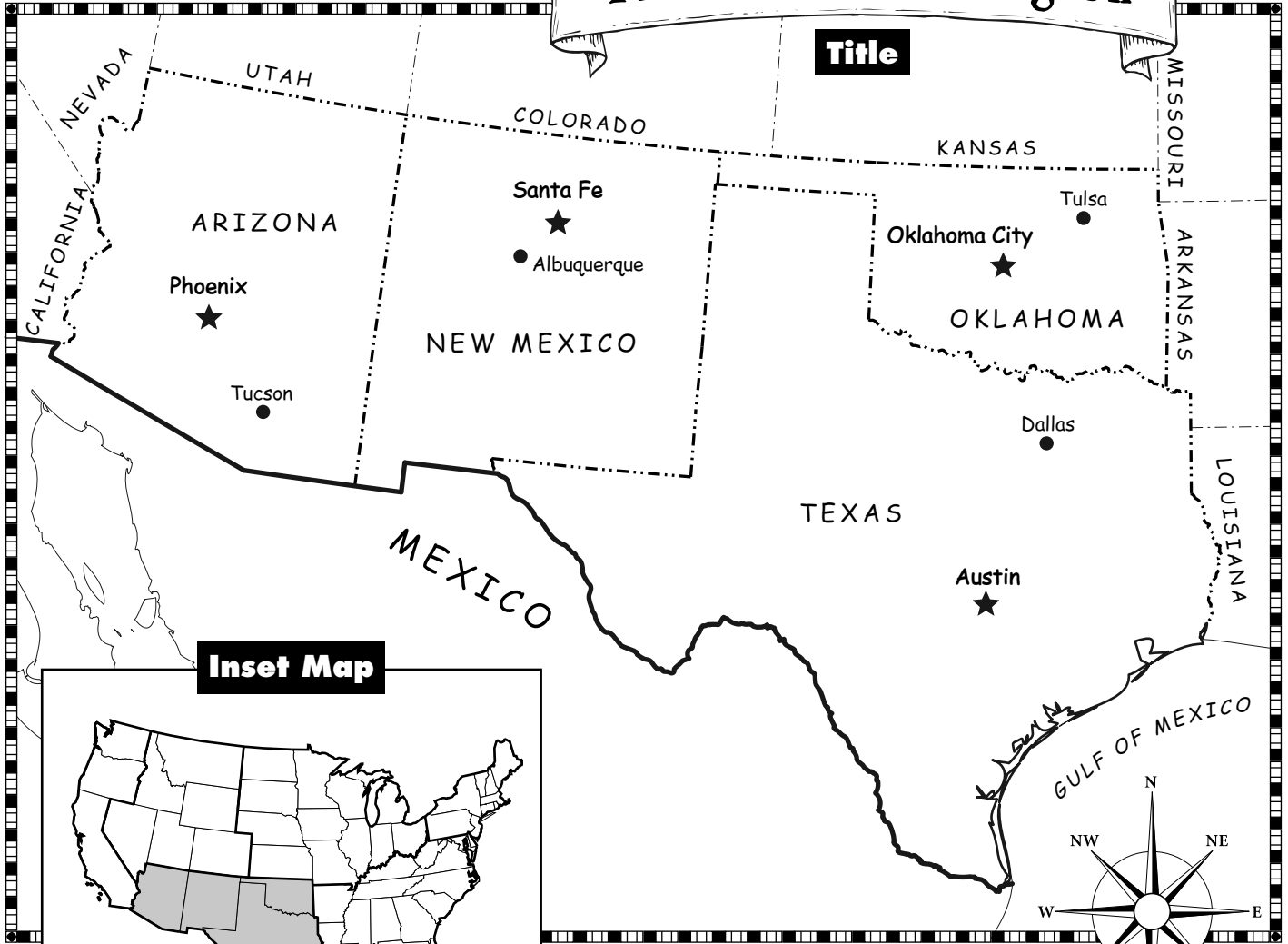
intermediate directions northeast, southeast, southwest, and northwest (NE, SE, SW, and NW)

legend (key) a list that explains the symbols on a map

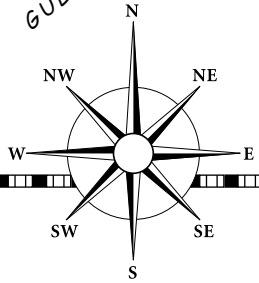
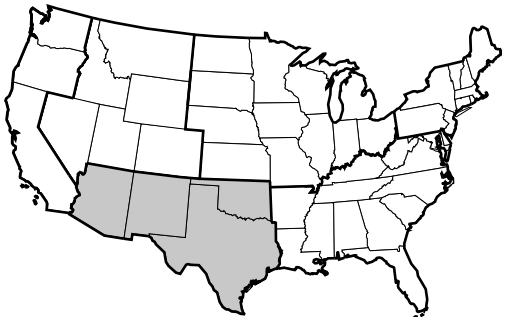
Parts of a Map

The Southwest Region

Title



Inset Map



Compass Rose

Legend

- ★ state capital
- city
- - - - state border
- international border

Draw an inset map that shows just the location of Texas within the Southwest region.



Parts of a Map

Monday

1. Which four important parts are labeled on the map?

2. According to the title, what is the map showing?

Tuesday

1. What is another name for the four main directions on a compass rose?

2. Name the intermediate directions on the compass rose.

Wednesday

1. What does the legend show on the map?

2. Name the city that is closest to an international border. What country does this city border?



Parts of a Map

Thursday

1. Why is the Southwest region highlighted on the inset map?

2. How many regions of the U.S. are shown on the inset map?

Friday

1. If deserts were added to the map, would the symbol be shown on a compass rose, an inset map, or on a legend?

2. Which state is the farthest west in the Southwest region?

Challenge

Sometimes there is a need for two inset maps. In the space provided on the map, make another inset map that shows only the location of Texas within the Southwest region.