

RAFT IDEAS

Topics: Geology, Maps, California Land Features

Materials List

- ✓ Map of California or other reference material dependent on topic
- ✓ Transparency sheets
- ✓ Binder clips or stapler
- ✓ Permanent markers, several colors
- ✓ Optional: Blackline master of outline of California, page 2

This activity can be used to teach:

- Maps of Earth's features (Next Generation Science Standards: Grade 4, Earth and Space Science, 2-2)



California Geographic Assembly

Piecing features together one layer at a time



Use transparent layers to diagram and represent different map details of California.

Assembly

1. Cut transparency sheets to desired size.
2. Arrange 2-4 layers of the transparency sheets on top of each other.
3. Secure together at the top with staples or binder clips.
4. Using a permanent marker trace the outline of California onto the bottom layer.
5. On the other layer(s) draw specific features of California. Ideas include mountain ranges, agricultural areas, forested land, fault lines or waterways.

To Do and Notice

1. Observe the patterns of land features and land use in California.
2. What percentage of space is available for crops or forests?
3. Notice the directional orientation of the mountain ranges.
4. Which mountain ranges coincide with fault lines?
5. Into which lakes, bays, estuaries, or oceans do the waterways flow?

Content behind the Activity

California exists on two geographic plates; its intense topography is a result of the interactions between these plates which produce earthquakes and volcanic ranges. California's diverse geography includes mountain ranges - the Coastal Range on the west side of the state and the Sierra Nevadas on the east - and the centrally located San Joaquin Valley where the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers flow to the delta. The Mojave Desert occupies a large area in the South East corner of the State.

Capital: Sacramento, **Land Area:** 403,932 km² (155,959 sq. miles),
Population: 35,484,453, **Highest Point:** Mt. Whitney at 4418 m (14,494 ft),
Lowest Point: Death Valley at -86 m (-282 feet)

Taking it Further

- This technique (diagramming in layers) can be used for an endless variety of life science and physical science subjects: The human body, cell models, ancient civilizations, the Ring of Fire.
- Challenge student to design a short book using this technique.

Web Resources (Visit www.raft.net/raft-idea?isid=23 for more resources!)

- Maps of California- <http://geology.com/state-map/california.shtml>
- Information on Maps - <http://www.usgs.gov/>
- Ocean maps: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/03/g35/seasgis35.html>

