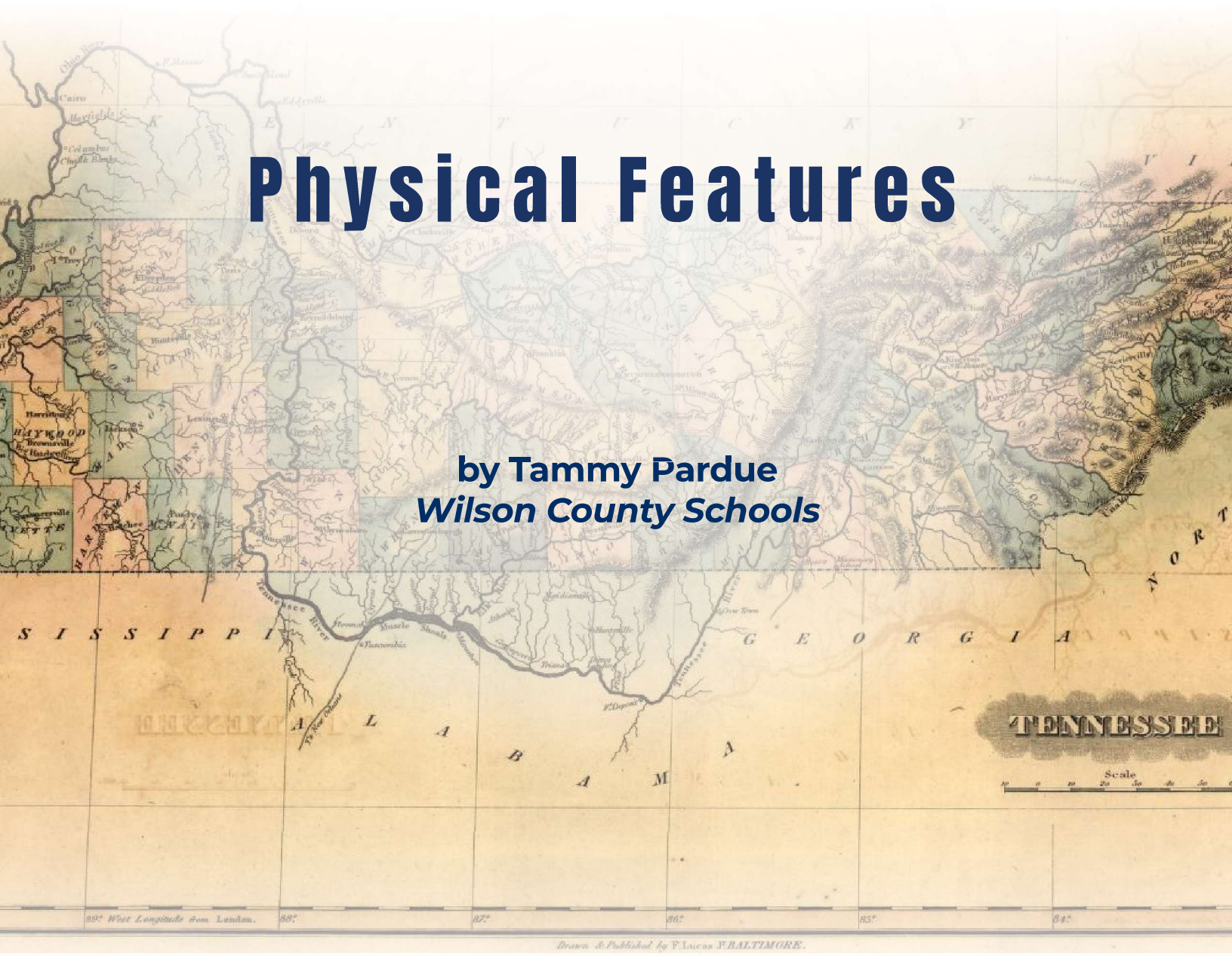
TN Standard 5 35 Social Studies

Mapping Student Possibilities: Navigating Primary Resources

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Physical Features

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TGA

This is an Open Educational Resource (OER) designed to provide inquiry-based lessons aligned with Tennessee 5th grade Social Studies Standards. This project bridges the gap between the new state standards and actual classroom implementation. Each lesson will help students transition from passive readers to active geographers, fostering the critical thinking and civic literacy essential for the next generation of Tennesseans. The Tennessee Geographic Alliance, Tennessee Council for the Social Studies, and Wilson County Schools Social Studies Department were instrumental to the process.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES Regional Partner

Physical Features	
Grade Level:	5
Duration Time:	1 50-minute lesson or 2 30-minute lessons

Brief Lesson Overview
Students will become familiar with major physical features on globes and maps. After reviewing land and water feature terms, Students will participate in four inquiry stations to explore maps of Tennessee and the United States and examine the following features. Water features: bay, canal, delta, gulf, ocean, river, sea, strait, stream Land Features: basin, canyon, desert, island, isthmus, mountain, peninsula, plain, plateau, valley

Standard:
5.35 Examine major physical features on globes and maps, including: • Water Features: bay, canal, delta, gulf, ocean, river, sea, strait, stream • Land Features: basin, canyon, desert, island, isthmus, mountain, peninsula, plain, plateau, valley
Success Criteria: I will know I am successful when I can…
I know I am successful when I can identify major physical features on globes and maps.

Assessment: Formative and Summative
Exit Ticket: https://canva.link/70j2crwly5foazl Summative: Socical Studies 5.35 Assessment Geography Physical Features: Land & Water Formative Assessment

Resource Materials:
Map #1: https://www.loc.gov/item/2003627038/ Map #2: https://www.loc.gov/item/90684112/ Map #3: https://www.loc.gov/item/2024586053/ Map #4: https://cumberlandgal.blogspot.com/p/cumberland-plateau-maps-what-makes-up.html
Other Materials:
Cognitive interest slides; Survive the Map - 1-Minute Lesson Hook.pptx Graphic organizer:https://canva.link/taurtqtt59bgpwu Vocabulary slides: Geography land water features

Cognitive Interest Cue:
3 minutes: Teacher will state to students: "Imagine your plane just crashed in an unknown area. You look out the window and find yourself stranded on a high, flat tableland. Half a mile away, there is a giant 1,000-foot drop into a dark, rocky wall carved by a rushing river. You have an emergency radio, but you can only transmit **ONE word** to describe where you are so rescuers can drop supplies. If you say you're on a **plain**, they'll drop the food miles away on flat ground. If you say you're in a **valley**, it'll fall to the bottom of the cliff. If you call the river a **strait** or a **canal**, the rescue boat will head to the wrong body of water. Earth's land and water aren't just shapes—they are survival coordinates. Today, you are learning the secret geographic code that cartographers, pilots, and explorers use so they never get lost." Have students write their one-word survival word on the back of a Post-it note, then leave it on their work area. *Slides to show during cognitive interest clue:https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/19_uXHq60O11Y6bl9DvAYUcT-SsRaMC-yGLKWnQ_-wA8/edit?usp=sharing* **Why This Cognitive Cue Works for 5th Graders** • **Creates Cognitive Dissonance:** It forces students to realize that "similar" features (like Plateau vs. Plain or Canal vs. Strait) have critical differences that matter in the real world. • **Reframes Vocabulary as a Tool:** Instead of memorizing a boring list of definitions, students view landform terms as "survival coordinates" or "codes." • **Immediate Visualization:** Showing a 3D topographic or satellite map grounds the abstract words into tangible, high-stakes geography.

Instruction: Step-by-step procedures for lesson

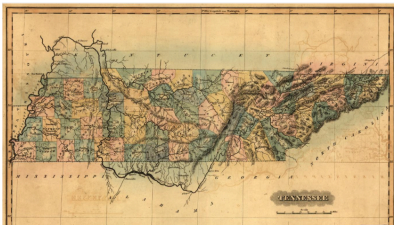
20 minutes: The Teacher will display the vocabulary cards around the room, place them on student desks/tables, or display them on a large screen. Each student is given a graphic organizer with each water and land feature named on the sheet, with space to write. Instruct students to move around the room to use the vocabulary cards or look closely at the screen to fill in their graphic organizer. They can draw or write whatever information they need to describe the land feature. When students finish their organizer, they can discuss their answers with a partner or small group and add any missing details until everyone is finished.

20 minutes: Apply what you know: Inquiry stations (two options)

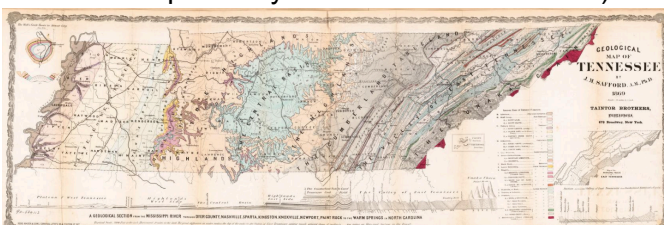
Option one: This activity can be done as a whole group on a large screen or with four small group computer stations. Students can view the maps on a large screen as a whole group or move around the room to examine each station closely and identify the correct features on the map. Students should be able to zoom in and out on specific parts of the map for closer examination. Students may use their graphic organizer as a reference while examining the maps. When they identify a water or land feature on the map, they write the map # in the indicated area on the graphic organizer. Not all of the features will be identifiable on the maps.

Option two: Teachers can print physical copies of the linked maps, label them #1-4, and display them around the room. Divide students into small groups. Give each group a particular colored pen. Have the small groups examine each map, then use their group pen to label the land and water features. They can use their notes from the graphic organizer to help them. Students will rotate to examine all the maps and make sure they identify all features.

Map #1: https://www.loc.gov/item/2003627038/ (Streams, Rivers of Tennessee)



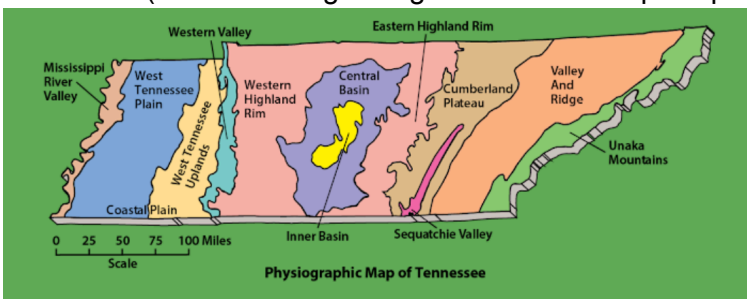
Map #2: https://www.loc.gov/item/90684112/ (Geographical map of Tennessee, Basin)
(Teacher note: teachers should encourage students to use the cross-section elevation on the bottom to help identify the different landforms.)



Map #3 https://www.loc.gov/item/2024586053/ (mountains, plateaus, plains, island, strait, bay, peninsula, canal, isthmus, sea, ocean)



Map #4 https://cumberlandgal.blogspot.com/p/cumberland-plateau-maps-what-makes-up.html
(Cumberland gal blog that has two maps explaining the Cumberland Plateau)



7 minutes: Closing, Students will look at their Post-it note from the cognitive interest cue activity, then receive an exit ticket. Now that they have examined the land and water features, would they keep the same survival word, or would they change it? Have the students write their new answer on their exit ticket. On the exit ticket, students will also describe the water or land feature they chose as their survival word. They will list what it looks like and why they chose that feature.

Cognitive Interest clue answer: plateau

Suggested Scaffolds

Graphic organizer: You could pre-fill in some features you think the student already knows so they can focus their time on unfamiliar terms.

If students are not familiar with the basic definitions of the land and water features, it is suggested you split this into two lessons. Complete the graphic organizer on the first day, and on the second day have students view the maps and identify the land and water features.

Extension or Cross-Curricular Opportunities

Extension option 1: Have students choose 4-7 water and/or land features and create their own map that illustrates those features. They can also write a descriptive paragraph to describe the area, including details about their chosen features.

Extension Option 2: Using one of the Library of Congress maps featured in the lesson, have students research one of the areas shown on the map. Students will then give a short verbal or digital presentation to share more information about that area.

LANDFORMS & WATER FEATURES

Name: _____ **Date:** _____ _____

WATER FEATURES

1. Bay Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

2. Canal Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

3. Delta Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

4. Gulf Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

5. Ocean Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

6. River Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

LAND FEATURES

10. Basin Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

11. Canyon Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

12. Desert Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

13. Island Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

14. Isthmus Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

15. Mountain Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

7. Sea Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

8. Strait Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

9. Stream Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

16. Peninsula Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

17. Plain Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

18. Plateau Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

19. Valley Map #

Definition&Characteristics:

Geography Physical Features: Land & Water Formative Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____

Section A: Water Features

Directions: Next to each term, write the letter in the answer blank that matches the definition for that term.

Term	Answer	Definition
1. Bay	_____	**A.** A human-made waterway that connects two bodies of water or allows boats to travel through land.
2. Canal	_____	**B.** A long, flowing body of fresh water that moves across land toward an ocean, sea, lake, or another river.
3. Delta	_____	**C.** The largest body of salt water on Earth; five of these cover most of the planet.
4. Gulf	_____	**D.** A narrow body of water that connects two larger bodies of water and has land on both sides.
5. Ocean	_____	**E.** A flat area of land formed where a river meets the ocean; it is created by the deposit of soil and sediment.
6. River	_____	**F.** A large body of salt water that is partly or completely surrounded by land; it is smaller than an ocean.
7. Sea	_____	**G.** A coastal body of water connected to an ocean or lake, formed by an indentation of the shoreline.
8. Strait	_____	**H.** A small, flowing body of fresh water that is smaller than a river and often flows into one.
9. Stream	_____	**I.** A large body of water that is partly surrounded by land; it is bigger than a bay and connects to an ocean or sea.

Section B: Shaping the Earth (Land Features Matching)

Directions: Next to each term, write the letter in the answer blank that matches the definition for that term.

Term	Answer	Definition
1. Basin	_____	**A.** A large, dry area of land that receives very little rain and has few plants or animals.
2. Canyon	_____	**B.** A piece of land that is surrounded by water on three sides and connected to a larger landmass.
3. Desert	_____	**C.** A low area of land that is surrounded by higher land; water often collects here to form lakes or rivers.
4. Island	_____	**D.** A low area of land between mountains or hills, often V-shaped or U-shaped.
5. Isthmus	_____	**E.** A narrow strip of land that connects two larger pieces of land and has water on both sides.
6. Mountain	_____	**F.** A deep, narrow valley with steep rock walls on both sides, often carved out by flowing water.
7. Peninsula	_____	**G.** A large, flat area of land with few trees, low in elevation, often possessing rich soil for farming.
8. Plain	_____	**H.** A piece of land completely surrounded by water on all sides.
9. Plateau	_____	**I.** A very high landform with steep sides that is much taller than a hill; often has snow on its peaks.
10. Valley	_____	**J.** A large, flat area of land that is raised high above the surrounding land, featuring steep sides and a flat top.

Section C: Map Recognition Challenge

Identify the physical feature based on the "Map Recognition Tips" from the vocabulary slides .

1. "Look for a triangle or fan-shaped area where a river ends at the coast, creating a web-like pattern." _____
2. "Contour lines show steep elevation changes, often labeled with a peak symbol." _____
3. "Appears as a bowl-shaped area; look for contour lines showing lower elevation in the center." _____
4. "Tan or light colors on maps with few rivers or water features." _____
5. "Straight or curved lines of water cutting through land... often connect rivers, lakes, or oceans." _____
6. "Look for a thin blue line of water between two pieces of land... often connect two oceans, seas, or bays." _____
7. "Land areas completely surrounded by blue water... can be small or large." _____
8. "Low areas between higher elevations... look for contour lines that show lower elevation in the middle." _____

Teacher Answer Key

Section A: Water Features Matching

1. **Bay:** G
2. **Canal:** A
3. **Delta:** E
4. **Gulf:** I
5. **Ocean:** C
6. **River:** B
7. **Sea:** F
8. **Strait:** D
9. **Stream:** H

Section B: Land Features Matching

1. **Basin:** C
2. **Canyon:** F
3. **Desert:** A
4. **Island:** H
5. **Isthmus:** E
6. **Mountain:** I
7. **Peninsula:** B
8. **Plain:** G
9. **Plateau:** J
10. **Valley:** D

Section C: Map Recognition Challenge

1. Delta
2. Mountain
3. Basin
4. Desert
5. Canal
6. Strait
7. Island
8. Valley

MAP PHYSICAL FEATURES EXIT TICKET

Name:

Class:

What is your one word to survive:

Describe the water or land feature you chose as your survival word. List what it looks like and why you chose that feature.

MAP PHYSICAL FEATURES EXIT TICKET

Name:

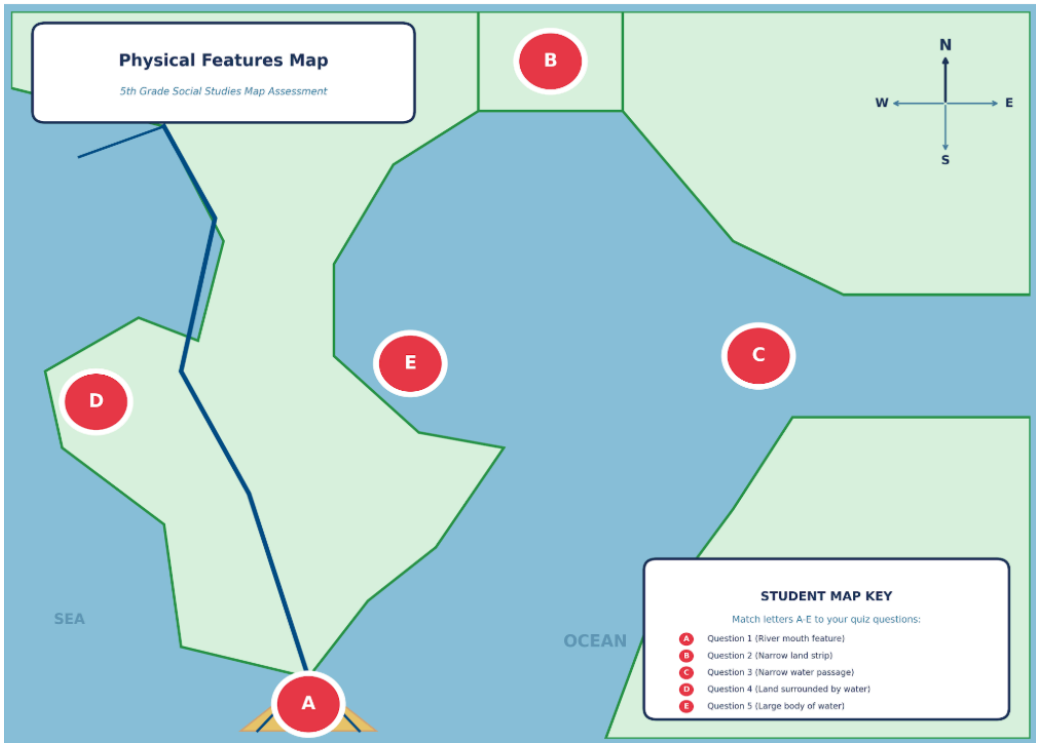
Class:

What is your one word to survive:

Describe the water or land feature you chose as your survival word. List what it looks like and why you chose that feature.

Social Studies TN Standard 5.35 Assessment

Name: _____ Date: _____



Part 1: Using the map answer questions 1-5

1. Look at Feature A on the map, where a river splits into smaller streams as it enters a larger body of water and deposits sediment. What physical feature is shown?

A) Delta

B) Strait

C) Isthmus

D) Basin

2. Examine the narrow strip of land labeled B on the map that connects two larger landmasses and has water on both sides. What is this landform?

A) Peninsula

B) Isthmus

C) Canyon

D) Plateau

3. On the map, Body of Water C is a narrow passage of water that connects two larger bodies of ocean/sea. What feature is this?

A) Canal

B) Gulf

C) Strait

D) Bay

4. Look at the area labeled D, which is a large landmass almost completely surrounded by water except for a narrow connection to the mainland. What is this feature?

A) Island

B) Peninsula

C) Plain

D) Delta

5. Feature E on the map shows a large area of water extending into the shoreline, mostly surrounded by land, and larger than a standard bay. What feature is represented?

A) Gulf

B) Canal

C) Stream

D) Strait

Part 2: Concept & Definition Questions

6. A low land area located between hills or mountains, often with a river flowing through it, is called a:

A) Plateau

B) Plain

C) Valley

D) Basin

7. Which land feature is defined as a large, high, flat area of land that rises steeply above the surrounding terrain?

A) Plain

B) Plateau

C) Basin

D) Canyon

8. A deep, narrow valley with very steep sides, often carved out by a flowing river over millions of years, is a:

A) Canyon

B) Basin

C) Isthmus

D) Delta

9. Which feature is an artificial or human-made waterway constructed to allow boats to pass or to move water for crops?

A) Strait

B) Canal

C) Stream

D) Gulf

10. A bowl-shaped depression on the Earth's surface that is surrounded by higher land is known as a:

A) Plateau

B) Plain

C) Basin

D) Valley

Answer Key

1. **A) Delta**
2. **B) Isthmus**
3. **C) Strait**
4. **B) Peninsula**
5. **A) Gulf**
6. **C) Valley**
7. **B) Plateau**
8. **A) Canyon**
9. **B) Canal**
10. **B) Basin**