

The Island: Mapping a Reading

OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVES	GRADES
<p>In this lesson students will become cartographers creating a map based on a selected reading. They will construct a sketch map of the place described in the first chapter of the young adult novel, <u>The Island</u>, by Gary Paulsen. Students will use TODALSS to finalize their map. Other book selections or short stories could be used, particularly those from English class or popular young adult novels.</p> <p><i>Students will be able to...</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read critically for information • Construct a map based on information from a text • Demonstrate accurate map skills 	5 th – 8 th
	TIME
	3 class periods
	<p style="text-align: center;">REQUIRED MATERIALS</p> <p>Large piece of tagboard, newsprint or poster board Colored pencils, ruler, fine-line black or blue marker Handout: “The Island”</p>
MINNESOTA SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS & BENCHMARKS	
<p>Standard 1. People use geographic representations and geospatial technologies to acquire, process and report information within a spatial context.</p> <p>5.3.1.1.1 Create and use various kinds of maps, including overlaying thematic maps, of places in the North American colonies; incorporate the “TODALS” map basics, as well as points, lines and colored areas to display spatial information.</p> <p>6.3.1.1.1 Create and use various kinds of maps, including overlaying thematic maps, of places in Minnesota; incorporate the “TODALSS” map basics, as well as points, lines and colored areas to display spatial information.</p> <p>7.3.1.1.1 Create and use various kinds of maps, including overlaying thematic maps, of places in the United States; incorporate the “TODALSS” map basics, as well as points, lines and colored areas to display spatial information.</p> <p>8.3.1.1.2 Create and use various kinds of maps, including overlaying thematic maps, of places in the world; incorporate the “TODALSS” map basics, as well as points, lines and colored areas to display spatial information.</p> <p>9.3.1.1.1 Create tables, graphs, charts, diagrams and various kinds of maps including symbol, dot and choropleth maps to depict the geographic implications of current world events or to solve geographic problems.</p>	

SUGGESTED PROCEDURE

Suggested Procedure

As a class read the selection from The Island found on the handout, which are pages 1-3 of the first chapter. Discuss as a class the characteristics of the landscape described in the reading. Ask: Describe the island. What does the island look like? What features are prominent? Explain where the island is situated. Where do the people live? Is this a place they've seen? Is this a place they would like to travel? What would they do if they were in this place?

Explain to students that they will be making a map of the island based on the description they read. As a class list on the board the steps they will take to complete this map. Next, list the features that will be included on their map, such as rice stalks, bay, trees, beach, etc. Identify the needed components of the map by asking questions such as: Do you need to show the entire island? Do you need to include people on the island? Do you need to include animals and birds on the island? Do you need to draw the island as an aerial view? (It may be helpful to construct a class-based rubric to guide students using their input.) Students working in pairs or small groups draw a sketch map of the island using pencil and paper based on the description in the text.

Explain to students that they should begin their final map by making a rough draft using a pencil on the tagboard to sketch the map of the island. After the rough draft is completed with planning, labeling, and spelling checked, they will color the map to make a final copy. Review TODALSS if needed before students include them on the map using the marker.

Post the maps and have a gallery walk of the final maps. Students may complete a personal self-assessment of their map before posting as well as an assessment of others' maps during the gallery walk.

Extension

Other book selections could be used, particularly those from English class or popular young adult novels. The setting is often important and can be mapped and discussed. This strategy promotes the link between literacy and geography and encourages spatial thinking.

Assessment

Island sketch map final copy

Website Resources

The Island by Gary Paulsen, 1988; Scholastic Books (2006, New York)

The Island
By Gary Paulsen
(Chapter One, Pages 1-3)

The island lay in almost the exact center of a small lake in northern Wisconsin, seven miles north of the town of Maypine, fifteen miles east of the town of Pinewood—both named after the pine forests that had once been prominent and were now logged off—and was thought so unimportant that it appeared on no topographical maps of the area.

Indians had named the lake after its principal fish, a rough bottom-feeder called the sucker. When white men came to put their name on it, they followed suit and called it Sucker Lake; and for that reason the lake had been spared the building and crowding that came to many lakes in the northern fishing regions. Fishermen bent on spending their vacations and money trying for lake trout or bass or muskies were decidedly shy about taking time to fish a lake named after a soft-flesh fish many considered fit only for fertilizer or pet food, and then, too, suckers were normally associated with muddy lakes and dirty water—neither of which brought tourists. For that reason no resorts were built on the lake or anywhere nearby; and since the land around was rocky and had poor topsoil, no farmers settled there and the lake was left alone to exist much as it had since an Ice Age glacier had scooped it out and filled it.

Somehow the glacier, in its slow grind across the north, had missed a U-shaped spot in the middle of the lake and left a rise of land that became a rocky island. The left arm of the island was a sandy-dirt beach, from which the main body ran south, curved east and

then back again to the north, making a small north-facing bay about a hundred yards across. Wild rice stalks lined the bay, and some tree snags rose out of the water—old hardwoods that had died and not yet rotted.

There were fewer than four inches of topsoil on the island, and no large trees could grow, only a handful of poplars about twenty-five feet high, some small jack-pine not over twenty feet, and a scattering of red willow and hazel brush, all of which covered only the main body of the island itself and did not extend up into the arms of the U. The rest of it was covered by timothy grass and tightly woven weeds and clover, up to waist height where the soil was thickest, down to nothing where the rock was exposed.

The shore of the island facing north was a rim of beach about ten feet wide; the outside or southern edge was made up largely of rocks, curved and rounded by the ageless chewing of small waves pushed by the fall wind before the freezeup. On the right arm of the U a flat rock, about twenty feet long, projected out into the water and made a platform or table. This rock was so square it seemed almost sculpted—although it had been broken naturally by the glacier along straight fault lines—and seemed somehow out of place because of its sharp corners and flawless edges.

It can only be guessed what had happened on and to the island in the time before. Summer to winter to summer, over countless ages, it had been forming and changing. Once there

had not been a lake, only a swamp and giant beasts that shook the ground when they passed the high point that became the island. Before, all was covered by sea, and fish as large as boats, huge sharks, swam hunting past the rocks that became the island. When the sea was gone, there came the ice, the great sheet of blue-white cold that covered all there was, and everything died or was made to sleep and wait for thousands of years. when the ice was gone, it left a huge lake, a freshwater lake as large as many seas; and when that was gone, before man still, before we know of men or before there were men to know of men, the massive lake withdrew and left the smaller lakes. And from that time on it left the island.

From the time before, it is only possible to guess, only possible to dream of the battles of the dinosaurs tearing the earth and sharks as large as boats whipping ocean currents with their tails, only possible to imagine the saber-tooth tigers and mastodons and the men who could live with nothing but their minds as tools. From all of that time the small island in almost the exact center of Sucker Lake in the northern part of Wisconsin cannot be known, can only be part of theory and ideas. Hopes. Wishes. Dreams.

But in the summer of the middle of his fifteenth year on earth Wil Neuton discovered the island, or was discovered by the island—he was never sure which—and from that time on it is not necessary to guess about it any longer but only necessary to know Wil.

