

US DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION MAP GALLERY ACTIVITY

Patterns of Transportation

ACTIVITY SUMMARY

In this activity, students will use the US Department of Transportation Map Gallery website to look and analyze different patterns revolving around transportation. Students will be able to get a better understanding of central concepts such as settlement, movement, migration, immigration, population characteristics, and population distribution. Focusing on these concepts, students will gain more geographical understanding and acquire geographic inquiry. This activity would be most beneficial towards middle school or high school students.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- ☐ US Department of Transportation Map Gallery website
 - ☐ <https://maps.bts.dot.gov/MapGallery/>
- ☐ Activity handout

CONCEPT(S) ADDRESSED

- Settlement
- Movement
- Migration
- Immigration
- Population Characteristics
- Population Distribution
- Geographical Understanding

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this activity, students will be able to:

- Use the US Department of Transportation Map Gallery website to be able to explore different maps and inquire about multiple patterns of transportation.
- Identify and explain several concepts related to the different patterns of transportation.
- Ask compelling and supporting questions to guide inquiry to further understanding of movement, population, and transportation.

RELATED STANDARDS

Michigan Social Studies Content Standards

- ☐ 6 – G1.2.1 Apply the skills of geographic inquiry (asking geographic questions, acquiring geographic information, organizing geographic information, analyzing geographic information, and answering geographic questions) to analyze a geographic problem or issue.
- ☐ 6 – G1.2.3 Use, interpret, and create maps and graphs representing population characteristics, natural features, and land use of the region under study.
- ☐ 6 – G1.2.4 Use images as the basis for answering geographic questions about the human and physical characteristics of places and major world regions.
- ☐ 6 – G1.2.6 Create or interpret a map of the population distribution of a region and generalize about the factors influencing the distribution of the population.

- ❑ 6 – G1.3.1 Use the fundamental themes of geography (location, place, human-environment interaction, movement, region) to describe regions or places on earth.
- ❑ 6 – G1.3.2 Explain the different ways in which places are connected and how those connections demonstrate interdependence and accessibility.
- ❑ 6 – G4.3.2 Describe patterns of settlement and explain why people settle where they do and how people make their livings.
- ❑ 7 – G4.3.2 Describe patterns of settlement and explain why people settled where they did.

INSTRUCTIONAL SEQUENCE

1. Before beginning the online activity, participate in a whole class discussion on traveling. Ask students places they have traveled before. How did they get there? What forms of transportation are there today? Why is transportation important or essential?
2. After having a short discussion, introduce to students that they will be looking at various maps online from the US Department of Transportation Map Gallery. Have students go to <https://maps.bts.dot.gov/MapGallery/>.
3. Before starting the activity, ask students why we use maps, what their function is, and why they are useful.
4. Walk students through a demo using the “Transportation Infrastructure of the United States: 2015” map available on the website. Make sure to use the map on the second page.
 - a. Ask students what they notice on the map.
 - b. Have students identify the features.
 - i. Key
 - ii. What each symbol represents
 - c. Inform students of the zoom in and out button.
 - d. Can they identify any patterns?
5. Once showing students using the demo map, pass out the handout activity that students will complete when exploring, analyzing, and looking for patterns of transportation within the maps. Go over the expectations for each student when completing the activity. Have students work in assigned groups of two, however each student should have their own copy of the handout to fill out.
6. After students are finished with the activity, host another whole-class discussion on their findings. Have each group of two share with the class what they discovered, what they thought was interesting, and what they still ponder about.

Name: _____
Hour: _____

Date: _____

Patterns of Transportation Activity

Directions: Using the US Department of Transportation Map Gallery at <https://maps.bts.dot.gov/MapGallery/>, complete the handout by exploring, analyzing, and identifying patterns of transportation when looking at the various maps on the website. Complete with an assigned partner. Once finished with the handout, we will have a whole class discussion on our findings regarding transportation.

Prediction: Before looking at the maps, make a prediction on what you think you may discover.

Maps	What do you notice? See any patterns?
1. Transportation Infrastructure (2019)	
2. Top 25 Water Ports by Container Cargo (2015)	
3. Top 25 Busiest Amtrak Stations (2015)	
4. Persons Traveling into US (2015)	
5. Large Airports by Enplanements and Overall Delay (2015)	

6. Average Number of
Ferry Passengers &
Vehicles (2014)

What did you notice when looking at all of these maps? What are some big ideas that stood out to you?

Are there areas where more people are using transportation? If so, where at and what kind?

Where are most people settling? Where aren't people settling?

Thinking of the past, what do you think transportation looked like compared to today? What do you think transportation will look like in the future?

