



## Where is Appalachia? Understanding Region and Regional Identity

**Grade Level:** 9-12

**Created By TAGE Teacher Consultant:** Michelle Crane

**Time Frame:** Two 50 minute class periods

**Curriculum Connection:** This lesson is intended to be used to introduce students to the different types of regions. It may be used during an introductory unit on Geography and Geographic Skills for a World Regional Geography course, or it may be used during a unit on the Geography of North America. This lesson can be used in conjunction with another lesson entitled “Appalachia: Perceptions of People and Place”, with this lesson preceding the lesson on perceptions.

### Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Identify the major factors which constitute the region of Appalachia,
2. Describe the different types of regions, and
3. Apply the types of regions to Appalachia.

### TEKS Strand(s) Objective(s):

(9) **Geography.** The student understands the concept of region as an area of Earth's surface with related geographic characteristics. The student is expected to:

(A) identify physical and/or human factors such as climate, vegetation, language, trade networks, political units, river systems, and religion that constitute a region; and

(B) describe different types of regions, including formal, functional, and perceptual regions.

(22) **Social studies skills.** The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

(A) design and draw appropriate graphics such as maps, diagrams, tables, and graphs to communicate geographic features, distributions, and relationships;

**Materials :**

<b>For Student Use:</b>	
Blank outline map of North America	Two per student - See resources below for a suggested outline map to use in class. You may wish to use a map which includes state boundaries.
Map pencils	
Atlases, textbooks or electronic maps of Appalachia	See the resource list below for resources. If students will be using online maps, they should have access to a computer lab with an internet connection.
Optional: Source evaluation handout	You may post the questions for students to use while looking at their sources. If desired, you can handout these out to students and have them write the answers to each question for each source.
Optional: Computer lab with internet access	Not required for completion of the lesson if necessary maps are located in textbooks or atlases, but can be used if available.
<b>For Teacher Use:</b>	
Large blank outline map of North America	You can choose to display the exact same map the students are using onto a dry erase board or a sheet of paper taped to the wall. The students will be marking on this, so make sure to use the appropriate marking devices for your medium.
Dry erase or other types of markers – several different colors	This depends upon which surface you are projecting the map onto. Make sure to have as many different colors as you can obtain, so each student’s sketch can be drawn in a different color.
Computer with a projection device and internet connection and speakers	Required for Warm Up and Introduction of the concept of regions activities. If teacher would like to use the electronic maps, but a computer lab is not available, the maps can be projected.
Regions: Features and Types Power Point	If students have previously been exposed to these concepts and terms, the Power Point is not necessary. Or, it may be viewed briefly as a review before continuing the lesson.
“Definitions of Appalachia” Audio excerpt	Available on NPR’s Celebrating the History of Appalachia page – you will need to scroll down to find the appropriate clip

**References:**

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**Strategies:** Students will use the inquiry method to investigate the components of the Appalachian region using a variety of sources and determine which type of region it is.

## **Procedures to conduct the lesson:**

Starting the Lesson/Warm Up: Day One: 5 minutes

Distribute an outline map to each student as they enter the room. Ask the students to draw a ring on the map indicating the region known as “Appalachia”. Ask the students to write 2 to 3 sentences explaining why they drew the boundaries where they did and explaining the key features which make up the region known as “Appalachia”. As the

students complete their written answer, move about the room and look at their maps. You will want to make note of any maps you find particularly interesting – ones that are substantially different from the others.

**Asking Geographic Questions:** Day One: 10 minutes

Once students have completed their task, display the Guiding Question for the lesson:

“How do we define the region of Appalachia?”

Call on a few students to come to the front of the room and draw their sketch of Appalachia on the projected map. Try to select students with different sketches, if possible. Make sure each student uses a different color to make it easier to see and evaluate the different answers. After students have completed their sketch, ask them to explain why they drew the area they did. What factors did they use to determine where the regional boundaries should be located? Did they mainly rely upon physical features or cultural features to select the boundaries? Once several students have completed the task, ask the class as a whole to discuss how they determined the boundary. How close were their answers to those on the board? As a group, did the class tend to favor physical or cultural features when determining the boundaries? Try to determine why the students relied upon the features they did.

When they have finished their class map, play the audio excerpt describing the evolution of how different groups have classified Appalachia.

The Lesson:

**Acquiring Geographic Information:** Day One: 15 minutes for Power Point, 15 to 20 minutes for source evaluation.

Next, ask students to define a region and explain the types of features which may be used to determine regional boundaries. If students have been introduced to the concept, this will be review. If not, expect them to give numerous responses of varying accuracy. At this point, you should introduce or review with students the types of regions and how they are defined using the “Regions: Types and Features” Power Point.

Once students are familiar with the types of regions and features used to define regions, ask them to generate a list of the types of resources they might use to determine the regional boundaries of Appalachia. This can be done individually or as a class. Monitor students to make sure they list a broad variety of resources – particularly, they will need to list a variety of specific types of thematic maps.

**NOTE:** You may choose to provide some or all of the maps for the sake of time. If so, provide a variety of maps, including a few which you feel may not be helpful, in order to provide the students with the opportunity to practice evaluating resources. Or, if desired, you can turn the students loose to collect the maps they need to use. It is suggested that the students use a minimum of 5 maps for reference. Make sure students generate a source list if they obtain the maps themselves online.

While the students are reviewing their sources, post or handout the following questions for them to use in determining which sources they wish to use:

1. Does this map show any features which distinguish Appalachia from the surrounding region? If not, you should consider moving on to another source of information. If so, continue on with the remaining questions.
2. What particular features shown on this map delineate Appalachia as a distinct region?
3. Are these features physical or cultural?
4. In your opinion, does this map make a good source of information for determining where the region of Appalachia is located? Continue reviewing your other sources until you have a total of 5.

**Organizing Geographic Information:** Remaining class period, Day One

Once students have gathered their 5 sources, have them select a color and draw a ring around each feature on the map they used for their warm up. They will use a different color for each feature, so they will have a total of 6 different colored rings on their first blank map.

**Analyzing Geographic Information:** Day Two: 15 to 20 minutes

Once the students have completed organizing their information on their first map, have them draw a new ring on their second blank map showing where they believe the region of Appalachia is located. Have them write a brief analysis on the back of their map explaining why they chose the maps they did and how they determined their new boundary of the region. This step is primarily for their own note-taking and does not necessarily need to be factored into the formal grade.

End the Lesson:

**Answering Geographic Questions:** Day Two: Remaining period

Finally, have students write a short essay answering the original Guiding Question:

“How do we define the region of Appalachia?”



Their answer should also include the following information:

Identify the features you used to determine your new boundary.

Explain why you chose these features and did not choose others.

List the type of region you feel applies to Appalachia based upon your sources and your final map. Explain why you feel this type of region applies to Appalachia more than the others.

Explain how your boundary changed from your initial drawing. Describe how your understanding of this region changed over the lesson.

Do you feel that your map is accurate, or do you feel you needed more sources of information to determine the boundaries?

If you felt you needed more sources of information, what types of sources would have been helpful?

**Questions:**

Explain why you chose these features and did not choose others.

Explain why you feel this type of region applies to Appalachia more than the others.

Explain how your boundary changed from your initial drawing. Describe how your understanding of this region changed over the lesson.

**Evaluation/Assessment:**

	<b>Not There Yet</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<b>Clearly Outstanding</b>
<b>Content</b>	<b>1 Point</b>	<b>2 Points</b>	<b>3 Points</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maps selected are not appropriate.</li> <li>▪ Maps are merely listed, no attempt at analysis is made.</li> <li>▪ Type of region described is inappropriate based upon selections.</li> <li>▪ Written answer does not utilize appropriate vocabulary.</li> <li>▪ Written answer is difficult to read due to spelling and/or grammar errors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maps selected are appropriate, but not varied.</li> <li>▪ Analysis of maps is attempted and mainly accurate.</li> <li>▪ Type of region described is appropriate and justification is reasonable.</li> <li>▪ Written answer correctly utilizes appropriate vocabulary.</li> <li>▪ Written answer is generally free from spelling or grammar errors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Maps selected are appropriate and depict a variety of features.</li> <li>▪ Analysis of maps is thorough.</li> <li>▪ Type of region described is appropriate and justification reflects a deep understanding of terminology.</li> <li>▪ Written answer demonstrates mastery of appropriate vocabulary.</li> <li>▪ Written answer is largely free from spelling or grammar errors.</li> </ul>
<b>Appearance</b>	<b>0.75 Points</b>	<b>1.25 Points</b>	<b>2 Points</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Map features are not clear and are difficult to read.</li> <li>▪ Map shows minimal effort.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Map features are clear and legible.</li> <li>▪ Map shows effort and attention to detail.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Map features are clear, legible and attractively drawn.</li> <li>▪ Map shows great effort and attention to detail.</li> </ul>