

Heads Carolina, Tails California: A Geographical Mystery

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Preview of Main Ideas

Students will be asked to solve a “geographical” mystery by asking geographic questions; acquiring, organizing and analyzing geographic information; and answering geographic questions. Students will listen to Jo Dee Messina’s song titled “Heads Carolina, Tails California.” Then students will form a hypothesis, develop questions, gather geographic data, and draw conclusions to solve the location of the protagonists in the song.

Connections to the Curriculum

Geography, social studies & English/Language Arts

Teaching Levels

Grades 6-8

Connections to the National Geography Standards

Essential Element: The World in Spatial Terms

National Geography Standard 1: *“How to use maps and other geographic representation, tools, and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.”*

Objectives

1. Students will use variety of maps to gather and collect geographic data.
2. Students will draw inferences from information presented in maps.

Geographic Skills

- Asking Geographic Questions
- Acquiring Geographic Information
- Organizing Geographic Information
- Analyzing Geographic Information
- Answering Geographic Questions

Time

One session

Materials Required

- Class set of United States outline maps
- Class set of Atlases
- Colored Markers or Pencils
- Class set of Lyric Sheets
- A copy of the song- *Jo Dee Messina's Heads Carolina, Tails California*
- Music Player

Opening the Lesson

1. Tell the students that they are challenged to solve a geographical mystery
2. Divide the class in groups of 3 or 4 and ask the students to listen carefully to the song, *Heads Carolina, Tails California* by Jo Dee Messina.
3. Ask each group to summarize the story in the song
4. Ask this question, "In which state are the main characters in this song currently living?"
5. Have each student make a prediction, record and post his or her answers.

Developing the Lesson

1. Hand out the United States outline maps, U.S. Atlases, and Lyric sheets
2. Have groups develop questions to acquiring information that could be used to determine which state the protagonists are attempting to leave.
3. Using the information gathered, have each group analyze and determine the answer to the original questions

Concluding the Lesson

1. Based on their findings, have each group answer the question, "In which state are the main characters in this song currently living?"
2. Each group will explain the process they used to come to their conclusions
3. Compare and contrast their predictions with their final answer.

Extending the Lesson

Assessment

Heads Carolina, Tails California

(Tim Nichols/Mark D. Sanders)

Baby, what do you say we just get lost?
Leave this one horse town like two rebels without a cause.
I got people in Boston.
Ain't your daddy still in Des Moines?
We can pack up tomorrow.
Tonight, let's flip a coin

Heads, Carolina Tails, California.
Somewhere greener, somewhere warmer.
Up in the mountains, down by the ocean.
Where? It don't matter, as long as we're goin'
Somewhere together. I've got a quarter.
Heads, Carolina Tails, California.

We can load what we own in the back of a U-haul van.
Couple modern day Moses', searchin for the promised land.
We can go four hundred miles before we stop for gas.
We can drive for a day, and then we'll take a look at the map.

Heads, Carolina Tails, California.
Somewhere greener, somewhere warmer.
Up in the mountains, down by the ocean.
Where? It don't matter, as long as we're goin'
Somewhere together. I've got a quarter.
Heads, Carolina Tails, California.

We're gonna get outta here if we gotta ride a Greyhound bus.
Boy, we're bound to outrun the bad luck that's tailin' us

Heads, Carolina Tails, California.
Somewhere greener, somewhere warmer.
Up in the mountains, down by the ocean.
Where? It don't matter, as long as we're goin'
Somewhere together. I've got a quarter.
Heads, Carolina Tails, California.

O---oh, California! Carolina! California

Class Predictions

Alabama

Arizona

Arkansas

California

Colorado

Connecticut

Delaware

Florida

Georgia

Idaho

Illinois

Indiana

Iowa

Kansas

Kentucky

Louisiana

Maine

Maryland

Massachusetts

Michigan

Minnesota

Mississippi

Missouri

Montana

Nebraska

Nevada

New Hampshire

New Jersey

New Mexico

New York

North Carolina

North Dakota

Ohio

Oklahoma

Oregon

Pennsylvania

Rhode Island

South Carolina

South Dakota

Tennessee

Texas

Utah

Vermont

Virginia

Washington

West Virginia

Wisconsin

Wyoming