

## Geography for Tomorrow 7-Week Certificate Program: Sample Official Curriculum

### **Session 1: U.S. Geography**



- Lay out a U.S. map (political on one side, physical on other side)-start with political side up
- Introduce students to the concepts of cities, states, and location (**5 mins**)
  - Cities are places where people live and build institutions (government, schools, etc.), states are political entities, location means the exact place where something can be found
- Important states and their capitals + other important cities to point out on a map (**10 mins**):
  - Alaska (Juneau, largest state), California (Sacramento, contains the Bay Area and Los Angeles), Illinois (Springfield, contains Chicago), New York (Albany, contains New York City), Pennsylvania (Harrisburg), Texas (Austin), Virginia (Richmond), Wyoming (Cheyenne-1st state to give women the right to vote)
  - Country capital: Washington, D.C.
- Introduce them to rivers, mountains, lakes, and the concept of topography (the study of physical features) (**5 mins**)
  - Rivers characterize flowing waters, mountains characterize elevated land, topography deals with the study of physical features, elevation, and natural resources
- Turn over map to use the U.S. physical map, point them out to (**7 mins**):
  - The Great Plains, Rocky Mountains, Great Lakes (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior), Appalachian Mountains, Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, Ohio River
- **Special topic:** resources, where they are found and why they are so important (**13 mins**)
  - Oil: Texas, California, Gulf of Mexico area
  - Natural gas and shale oil: North Dakota
  - Coal: Appalachian region
  - Water: California lacks water (and is in a drought)
  - Wheat and corn: Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas
  - Resources are important as the backbone of the economy
- **Career topic:** government, economics, politics and policy, geology, Earth Science (**5 mins**)

- With knowledge of U.S. political geography, you can get involved with the U.S. government, politics, policy making (making of laws), and economics
- You can also get involved with Earth Science with knowledge of U.S. physical geography. Earth science studies the Earth's physical features, such as its rocks, landforms, and geological processes
- Blank map worksheet activity (**15 mins**)
  - They should have a blank map of the U.S. in their student packets
  - Have them fill out names of as many states that they know
  - This helps with forming mental maps: the basis for understanding the world
- Assign packet questions for homework