

Introduce an Unfamiliar Part of the World



Book Builder

GEOGRAPHY

Overview

Students research a place they have never been and build a book that introduces it to their classmates.

Steps for Teachers

1. Students choose or are assigned a region none of the class has visited
2. Students research its geography, climate, people and daily life
3. Students find one thing that would genuinely surprise a classmate
4. Students plan pages: where it is, what it looks like, who lives there, a day there, the surprise
5. Students write each page for a reader who knows nothing about the place
6. Students photograph or draw landscapes, or choose backgrounds that match the terrain
7. Students add a map page showing where in the world it sits
8. Students read the books aloud and collect questions the class still has

Example

A student introduces Svalbard: a map page showing how far north it sits, the four months with no sunrise, the seed vault cut into the permafrost, and the rule that you do not leave town unarmed because of polar bears. The surprise page is a photograph of a road sign warning of bears in three languages.

Grading Rubric

Criteria	Excellent	Proficient	Developing
Research Depth	Facts are accurate, specific and go beyond a first search result	Facts are accurate but general	Facts are thin, generic or wrong
Geographic Reasoning	The book connects the place's location to how people live there	Location and daily life are both present but not connected	The book lists facts without geographic reasoning
Respectful Portrayal	People are portrayed as ordinary and specific, never as curiosities	Portrayal is mostly respectful with a stereotype or two	Portrayal relies on stereotypes
Book Craft	Text is easy to read, art supports every page, and the layout is consistent throughout	Pages are readable with some crowding or uneven placement	Text overlaps art or is hard to read; layout is inconsistent