**INTRODUCTION**

Spatial thinking is a powerful and useful geographic skill that strengthens student collaboration and communication and is key to active citizenship in our increasingly global and technological society. Spatial thinking allows students to identify, understand and analyze phenomena related to the spaces around them, recognizing location, scale, patterns, trends, and relationships.

Canadian Geographic Education, in partnership with the S.M. Blair Foundation, is proud to build on the success of their tiled map program and offer this instructional booklet. This resource provides teachers with the opportunity to strengthen their lessons plans and enrich their geography classes with hands-on interactive activities, centred on Can Geo Education's tiled maps. Students will explore the basics of geography, mapping skills, and physical and human geography.

Spatial thinking remains a fundamental skill that underpins the geographic toolkit that we aim to impart onto our students over the course of their kindergarten to grade 12 or secondary 5 (Quebec) education.

**MAP READING SKILLS**

Explain that there are five main elements to a map (title, border, legend, scale and north arrow). After putting the map together, ask students to point them out. Have students stand around the tiled map and face north according to the north arrow. Point out east, west and south. Ask students to point to water on the map. How do they know that it's water? Why would we choose blue to represent water? Help students find the Rockies. Explain that these are a major mountain chain that goes all the way from Canada to the United States. Play a short game of Simon Says with the directions, the water and mountains (ex: “Simon says face south and point to a body of water.”).

Piece together the Wild Migrations Tiled Map with the students or piece it together beforehand. Use a globe to explain that this is a view of the world from the side and flattened out. Take a piece of the map and fold it onto the globe then flatten it out. Ask students to describe what they see (colours, border, words, etc.) and if they can find Canada. Provide students with a string to outline the Canadian borders. Getting them to stand back around the map, and point out North and South America. Use ribbon or string to show the borders. Refer to the globe to help them better visualize where the continents are located.

Place a counter on your current location and ask students to name places to which they have travelled. Place counters on these places. Ask how they travelled there (boat, train, plane, car).
HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Using the Tiled Maps of Canada’s provinces and territories, either pieced together beforehand or by the students, help students find their current location in their province or territory. Discuss what a community is, the number of people living in their community, and provide examples of bigger or smaller communities in their province or territory. Make the distinction between urban and rural communities. Ask students to draw something that they might see in each type of community. Print off another province and territory and locate one rural and one urban community. Tell students the population of each, then have them determine which is which and show them where the communities are located.

Using the Wild Migrations Tiled Map, show students the location of Canada and the Inuit regions. Explain that the Inuit were semi-nomadic and traditionally followed migrating animals, which they depended on for food and clothing. Have students identify the different animals whose migration patterns are shown on the map, focusing on those in the northern regions. Ask students to think about where they would live if they had to rely on hunting and fishing like the Inuit. Have them keep in mind the changing of the seasons, the transportation available (boats in the summer, dog sleds in the winter), the animal migration patterns, and the time needed for animal populations to regenerate. Give students ribbons or string and counters to show what route they might take if they were nomads living off the land.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

At your school, track the weather with students for 14 consecutive days. Use online weather information or encourage students to observe the weather outside and use a thermometer. Using the Tiled Map of Canada, have students locate two other Canadian communities in another province or territory and track their weather over the same time period. When the 14 days have elapsed, ask students to compare the weather of all three communities. How are they similar? How are they different? What might be some reasons for the differences? What do we observe on the map that might explain these similarities and differences (mountain ranges, location farther north or south, water nearby)? Continue to monitor the local weather and have students predict the weather in the other two communities. Ask students to choose other communities on the map and check their weather. Have them explore the map for features that may influence the weather in those communities.

Using the Wild Migrations Tiled Map, have students look at the colours that represent the different types of land cover. Look at mixed forest, barren land, urban, wetland and cropland, and locate them on the map, focusing on Canada. Find photos online or use photos from the Canadian Geographic magazine to provide a visual prompt for each type of land cover. Then have students consider how these land covers could be used (ex: urban used for schools). Give students the land use photos (farm, crops, industrial, school, etc.) to place on the map. Start them off by placing the school photo card on the school’s location on the map. Discuss with students why they have placed the photo cards in their chosen spots.

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