COUNTRY COMPARISONS

The charts, maps and graphs students generate in the following activities may be used as a lead-up to individual country research and reports. Besides learning the meaning of basic statistics used to compare nations, students look for patterns, make generalizations and hypotheses, and generate questions which lead them into in-depth research. The graphs make an excellent hall or bulletin board display. The base maps can be used for atlases students create.

Population Density Activities

Materials:

Optional: *Facts Plus,* calculator.

Background information:

Population density is population divided by total area. The figures are rounded to the nearest whole number. Countries with high densities can be thought of as more crowded than those with low densities.

Suggested procedure:

1. Have students look up the area and population of the U.S. and China:
   United States area 3,539,230
   United States population 260,750,000
   China area 3,600,930
   China population 1,191,976,000
2. Note that, rounded, the areas of the United States and China are roughly equal. Define an area of the classroom to represent that area.
3. Have students divide a rounded U.S. population (250,000,000) by 50,000,000 (answer is 5), then choose five children, each to represent 50,000,000 Americans. Have the five stand in the area of the classroom previously defined to illustrate the "population density" of the U.S.
4. Have students divide an approximate population of China (1,000,000,000) by 50,000,000 (answer is 20). Choose 20 students, each to represent 50,000,000 Chinese. Have them stand in the same area of the classroom to show the "population density" of China. Compare.
5. Discuss the causes and effects of high and low population densities, such as crowding and demand for food, housing, schools, etc. What kinds of land will best support a high population density?
6. Show with a calculator how population densities are figured. Divide population by area and round to nearest whole number.
   U.S., 260,750,000 / 3,539,230 = 74
   China, 1,191,976,000 / 3,600,930 = 331
   Note: Hong Kong, a city in China administered by the British, is the most densely populated city in the world, with 242,000 people per square mile! 15,365 students would have to crowd into the same area of the classroom to show this density.
7. As a possible follow-up, have students find countries with population densities which are lower than the U.S. or higher than China. Search for the country with the lowest or highest population density in the world. Use calculators to figure densities.

Countries Questions

Materials:

Countries Questions worksheet, *Activity Book* p. 129, answers on p. 130.

Facts Plus for each student.

Background information and procedure:

Make sure students understand all the terms used on pp. 53–69. Terms are explained in depth in *Facts Plus* on p. 230. Population density activities (above) may be used to clarify that concept. Students complete the worksheet on their own.

South America Graphs

Materials:

Facts Plus class set.

Blank map of South America, *Activity Book* p. 144.

Copies of chart for South America, *Activity Book* p. 143, answers on p. 148.

Copies of graphs, *Activity Book* pp. 150, 151, 155, 157, and 158. Second and additional pages are *not* needed for South America.

Suggested procedure:

1. Students can first find South America on a globe or map, then locate and label the countries on the blank map.
2. Students use *Facts Plus* to complete chart.
3. Using information from the chart, graph population growth rate, population density, per capita GNP, average life expectancy and infant mortality rate.
4. Select one good example of each graph to post on the front board side by side. Other students keep their graphs at their desks.
5. Have students look for patterns. Which countries are highest and lowest in various areas? Are there any countries which stand out as different? Bolivia and Uruguay are examples.
6. Look at the statistics: Compared to other countries in South America, Bolivia has a high population growth rate, low population density, low per capita GNP, low average life expectancy, and high infant mortality rate. Uruguay has low population growth rate, medium population density, high per capita GNP, high average life expectancy and low infant mortality rate. Which country would you rather live in? What factors could possibly account for these differences?
7. Look for patterns and correlations. Are most countries which are high in one area high in another? Are there negative correlations, i.e. do countries which are low in one area tend to be high in another? As graphs for other continents are done, see if these correlations hold true.

Charts and Graphs

Note to teacher:

The charts and graphs on *Activity Book* pp. 131 to 160 may be used in a variety of ways. For example, give each student a different chart. Each completes a chart and graphs *just* the population densities. Post all population density graphs side by side. Make observations and generate questions. Perhaps divide the class into seven groups and have each group complete the table and *all* graphs for their group of countries.

Materials:

Facts Plus class set.

Copies of all charts, *Activity Book* pp. 131 to 143.

Copies of population density graphs or all graphs, *Activity Book* pp. 150 to 160, one graph for each indicator for each group of countries.

Suggested procedure:

1. Have students complete assigned charts and graphs.
2. Discuss as shown in the previous activity.
3. Perhaps post all in a grid on a large wall.
4. Check correlations noticed with the South America graphs. Do they hold true?

Make Your Own Atlas

Materials:

Charts from previous activities.

Blank world map, *Activity Book* p. 149.

Suggested procedure:

1. Begin by mapping infant mortality rate. Color countries with an IMR of 50 or less green, 51–100 yellow and 101 up red. Compare all maps and look for patterns.
2. Students may map other statistics by looking for highest and lowest numbers, making a key and coloring maps as was done for infant mortality rate.
3. Map anything else with any blank maps. Compile student-made maps into an atlas.

Name_____ Date_____

Countries Questions

1. What language is spoken in Uruguay? _____
2. What is the population density of Laos?_____
3. What is the area of Belgium? _____
4. What is the capital of Peru? _____
5. What is the average life expectancy in Turkey? _____
6. What is the per capita GNP in Sweden? _____
7. What is the currency in Guatemala? _____
8. What is the infant mortality rate in China? _____
9. What is the population of India?_____
10. What is the population growth rate of Kenya? _____
11. What is the population density of Algeria?_____
12. What is the location of Benin? _____
13. What is the population growth rate of the United Kingdom? _____
14. What is the area of Israel?_____
15. What is the per capita GNP in Nepal? _____
16. What is the average life expectancy in Paraguay? _____
17. What is the location of San Marino?_____
18. What language is spoken in Yemen?_____
19. What is the population of the United States? _____
20. What is the capital of Egypt? _____

The following questions are based on information found in Facts Plus, p. 70.

21. What are the Low Countries? _____
    _____
22. Is Brunei in Southeast Asia? _____
23. About how many countries are called Third World countries?_____
24. How many countries are in Central America? _____
25. In which ocean is Oceania?_____

Teachers: Lesson on p. 127, answers on p. 130.