



# FAMILY GEOGRAPHY NIGHT

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A Manual for Hosting a  
Successful Family  
Geography Night

Center for Geographic Education in Oregon

## Credits and Acknowledgements

### **Published by:**

The Center for Geography Education in Oregon, Portland State University

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## I. Introduction

### **What is a Family Geography Night? Why host a Family Geography Night?**

Hosting a 'Family Geography Night' is a fun and exciting way to encourage families to come together, learn together, and get excited about geography. It is also a way to strengthen connections between schools and families in a safe, nurturing, and welcoming atmosphere. Parents, siblings, and students learn together, teach each other, and have fun in the process.

In an increasingly complex and intertwined world community of cultures and nations, it is important for our students to be geographically literate. Unfortunately, geography in the United States has been relegated to a minor role in the school curriculum and, among the world's educated industrial societies, Americans rank among the least literate in geographic knowledge. We need to prepare our students to be global citizens and hosting a Family Geography Night is one small step toward creating an awareness of geography and an understanding of why it is important to be geographically literate.

Implementing a Family Geography Night in your school or community is relatively easy. We provide a few ideas to get you started. Drawing from the expertise of The Center for Geography Education in Oregon (C-GEO) Teacher Consultants (TCs) who have held successful Family Geography Nights, this manual offers practical advice on how to set up an event, how to handle publicity, volunteers, and funding. It also provides ideas for activities, a list of resources, and some models of Family Geography events. There are





many different ways to do a Family Geography Night and the format needs to work for you, your staff and your community. If you already have a Math, Science, or Literacy Night in your school, Family Geography Night could easily follow the same format. Or, you may want to try something completely different. Flexibility is the key. An important thing to remember is that if the evening is to be successful, it needs to be a blend of geographic knowledge and fun!

We hope that this manual is useful and that you will host your own Family Geography Night. We welcome comments and suggestions for adding to this manual. If you have some good models to share, please send them to Melinda Glover ([geogall@pdx.edu](mailto:geogall@pdx.edu)), and if you host a Family Geography Night, let C-GEO know ([geogall@pdx.edu](mailto:geogall@pdx.edu)). We may be able to help you with materials and maps!

## II. Planning and Funding the Event

Holding a successful Family Geography Night will require advanced planning. The following checklist will help you think about the type of event that you want to hold and the kinds of details that you need to consider. It may be wise to start with a modest event, perhaps just your own class, and then expand the activity the following year when you have some experience under your belt.

### **Identifying Theme, Place, Time and Format**

1. Start planning as early as possible!
2. Will it involve the whole school, your grade level, or just your class?
3. Where will it be held? (Cafeteria, your classroom, gym, or library, and how many people will each room accommodate?)
4. When will you hold this event? (Check the school calendar. Perhaps you would like to hold it in conjunction with Geography Awareness Week or/and an Art Night.)
5. What type of activities (stations, large group, a mixture of both) will you include? Will you have a theme?
6. Who do you need to consult before organizing this event? (principal, fellow teachers, janitors, PTA, etc.)
7. If you use stations, how many helpers will you need to help at each station?

8. Who can you use as helpers? (upper-grade students, parents, other teachers, retired teachers)
9. What about consideration for parents and students for whom English skills are limited? Will you provide translators?
10. How will you provide training for your volunteers?
11. What kinds of materials will you need to support your activities? (games, puzzles, prizes, etc.)
12. How will you pay for these materials?
13. How will you make sure that these activities are geographical?
14. How will you publicize the event? (letters to parents, posters around the school, school newsletter, school and district website, a local newspaper, school marquee)

### **Getting Others to Help by Creating a Planning Team**

1. Head Coordinator
2. FGN Planning Committee Members
3. Publicity
4. Stations
5. Volunteer Sign-up Coordinator
6. Food
7. Facilitators to staff stations
8. Teachers and Staff
9. Also check into groups such as Scouts, 4-H, Orienteering or Geo-caching clubs, High School Honor Society, churches, businesses, etc.
10. Older students
11. Set-up/Clean-up crew
12. Back-up Helpers

### **Post-event Planning**

1. Will you use an evaluation form to get feedback from the participants about the event? What should that form look like?
2. What needs to be done after the event?
3. Cleanup
4. Thank you letters
5. Write a piece about the event for the local paper.

6. Submit a report about the event to C-GEO if you received a C-GEO Family Geography Night Grant.



### **Funding Your Family Geography Night**

There are many ways to fund a Family Geography Night. Possible funding sources include a C-GEO Family Geography Night Grant, your Parent Teacher Organization, local business sponsors, school student body fund, community grants, and/or Title I Parent Involvement Funds.

On the C-GEO website, there is a section dedicated to grants. This information can be found at <http://www.pdx.edu/geography-education/grants>. A sample C-GEO grant application can be found at the end of this document, or at <http://www.pdx.edu/geography-education/sites/www.pdx.edu.geography-education/files/SAMPLE%20FGN%20Grant%20Application.pdx>

### III. Suggestions for Promoting the Event

1. Create banners letting the school know about the event and hang them around the school.
2. Write a letter home asking parents and guardians to bring students to a Family Geography Night, and offer “**No Homework**” to those who attend.
3. Create a flyer that can be sent home with each student. A copy of the flyer can also be sent to ‘home school’ students and to local pre-schools.
4. Advertise the event on your school marquee. This is a good way to let your community know about activities in your school.
5. If you have a school web site, advertise the event and provide a short account of what families can expect at Family Geography Night.
6. Include a FGN invitation in your Principal’s Weekly Newsletter, and the school calendar.
7. Events like this are of interest to the media, especially if they coincide with Geography Awareness Week or Earth Day. Contact the local newspaper and radio stations to inform them of the event. Send a flyer with a short description of the event to both.
8. Provide stickers to put on students’ shirts as they go home on FGN day.
9. TALK IT UP! Ask teachers to remind students about the event and get them excited to come. Make a surprise visit to each classroom, bringing games, puzzles, and prizes to show the students.

### IV. Activity Ideas for Family Geography Night

#### **Pre-Event Activities**

Build students’ background knowledge, encourage teacher involvement with geography and Family Geography Night, get students excited about event, and improve FGN attendance.

#### **Geography Question of the Day**

Post questions in central place. Add a new question, and the answer to yesterday’s question, each day. Students can submit their answers each day, and correct answers could earn a raffle ticket to be used at the upcoming Family Geography Night.



### **Door Decorations and Scavenger Hunt**

A few weeks before Family Geography Night, invite teachers and students to decorate their classroom doors with interesting facts and pictures about a favorite country, state, city, or landmark. Classes can then compete in a trivia competition, with answers being found on classroom doors. Everyone will learn some new facts, and the focus on geography will build interest in the upcoming Family Geography Night.

### **Geo-literacy Event – All classes will read the same book.**

Give each class a copy of the same book, a reading schedule, and a map relating to the story. Ask teachers to read one chapter to their classes each day. Build in a few “catch-up” days, so everyone is close to the same schedule. Provide geographic questions to go with the story, and ask those questions as trivia questions every couple of days. Often teachers will integrate the story into their writing, math, or art lessons.

### **Publicize the event with your Family Geography Night Theme**

One school used “Children Around the World” as their theme. Each classroom received a book (One World, One Day or Wake Up, World!). Photos of each class surrounding a giant inflatable globe were posted on the bulletin board—along with the invitation to Family Geography Night.

## **Station Activity Ideas**

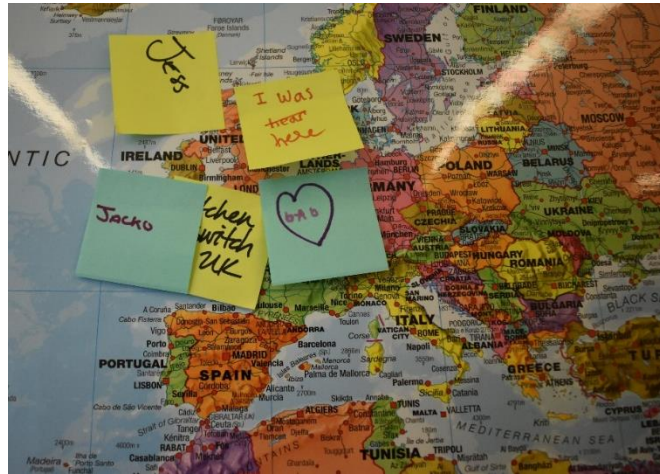
Choose general stations, or choose a theme and focus your station activities around that theme. Include a range of activities—all ages and interests—individual, small group, large group. Many items used in the activities described below can be purchased inexpensively. Please see the resources page for suggestions.

### **Global Connections**

As students and parents arrive, ask them to put a sticker on the map(s) to show where they were born, where they have traveled, where they would like to travel, where they have lived, where items of their clothing were made, etc. Choose one topic, or create a key to indicate several topics. Leave stickers on maps after the event, to display your students’ diversity.

*Supplies Needed:*

1. World, USA, and/or Oregon maps
2. Various colored stickers

**Geography Passport**

As families arrive, give a Geography Passport to each student. Passports will list all the stations and their locations. When activities are completed, the Passport holder gets a stamp or a sticker on the passport.

*Supplies Needed:*

1. A "Passport" with a map of stations
2. Compass rose stamps or Geo Stickers

**Oregon Topography or "Grown in Oregon" Cookies**

Order cookies from your local bakery. Ask a volunteer to put "agricultural products" in zippered sandwich bags. Assemble cookies, canned frosting, plastic knives or wooden craft sticks, napkins, and sandwich sized bags at a table. Place instructions (maps and keys) at nearby tables. When people present their ticket at the cookie station, use the knife/stick to place about a tablespoon of frosting on a cookie, and put cookie on a napkin. Give the cookie and a baggie of "products" to them. They can go to one of the nearby tables and decorate their cookie, using the key and the map. They can either eat their cookie, or put it in the bag to take with them.

*Supplies Needed for Topography Cookies:*

1. Oregon-shaped cookies
2. White frosting
3. Craft sticks (to spread frosting)
4. Paper napkins
5. "How to Make" instruction sheet
6. Oregon topographic map
7. Sandwich-sized baggies
8. Plastic gloves (for helpers)
9. Blue gel frosting
10. Chocolate chips
11. M&Ms
12. "Red Hots"

*Supplies Needed for "Grown in Oregon" cookies:*

1. Oregon-shaped cookies
2. White frosting
3. Craft sticks (to spread frosting)
4. Paper napkins
5. "How to Make" instruction sheet
6. Grown in Oregon Map (available from Agriculture in the Classroom)
7. Sandwich-sized baggie
8. Plastic gloves (for helpers),
9. "Agricultural Products"—see sample key at left.



## *Hug a Planet Pictures*

Individual students can have their pictures taken hugging a globe. Polaroid pictures work well for instant results, but prints made from digital images are much less expensive. Students could make Globe Picture Frames at another station, their photos would then be inserted into the frames when the prints were ready, and framed photos would be delivered to classrooms for students to take home.

### *Supplies Needed:*

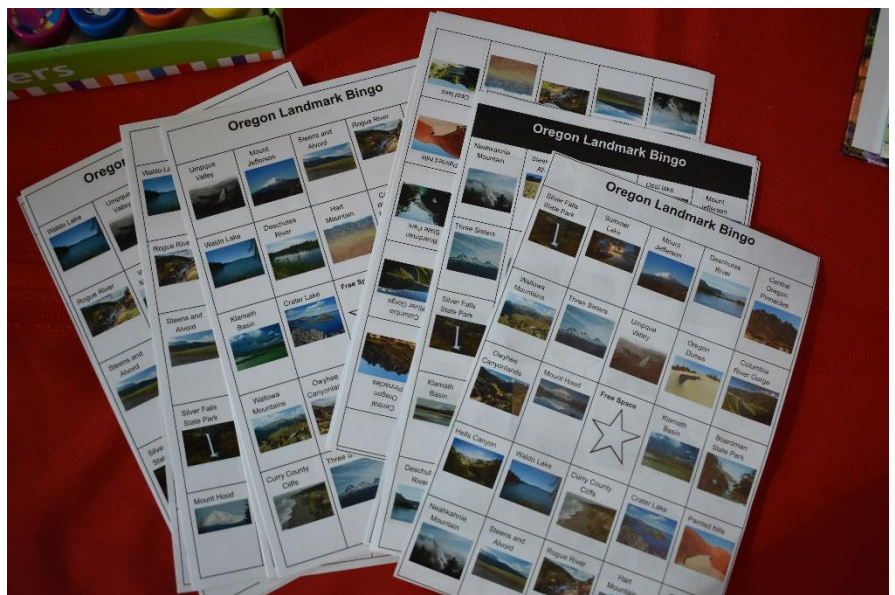
1. Large fabric or inflatable globe
2. Polaroid or digital camera

## *Bingo – Landform/USA/other Geography-Themed Bingo Games*

Play as any Bingo game, but put the picture piece under the document camera for non-readers. Winners of each Bingo game will be awarded a small geography-related prize (pencils, earth bouncy balls, erasers, bonus tickets for the evening's raffle, etc.). This is always a popular station, so be prepared with plenty of small prizes.

### *Supplies Needed:*

1. Bingo game
2. Document camera
3. Picture pieces of landforms/states/etc.
4. Prizes



## *Floor Puzzles – USA, World, Children of the World, Oregon, etc.*

Provide a large open space for students and their parents to assemble the puzzles.

### *Supplies Needed:*

1. Giant Puzzles



## **Geography Board Games**

Students and parents try out their skills on various geography-related games. It may be helpful to teach the games to a couple of older students who can be “game experts.”

### *Supplies Needed:*

1. A variety of geography-related games—the best games are fast-paced easy to play, and include a variable number of players. One favorite is the *Scrambled States of America Game*.

## **Geography Trivia Questions Catch**

Players toss the 24” ball to each other and call out the answer to the question found under their thumb.

### *Supplies Needed:*

1. USA and World maps
2. Inflatable “Clever Catch” Geography Balls

## **Map Twister and Maptangle Games**

These active games will tangle up kids (and their agile parents), literally. Players will draw a card, find the geographic location on the floor mat, and place their feet or hands on that place.

### *Supplies Needed:*

1. Map Twister Game and/or Maptangle Game
2. Large open space

## **Me on the Map**

Students make a colorful multi-circle model of their world. Students will trace and cut out 8 different-sized circles, preferably in different colors. Beginning with the smallest circle,





they will record their home address. The next largest circle will be their city, then county, state, country, continent, hemisphere, and planet. Stack the circles with the smallest on top, align top edges (as closely as possible), punch 2 holes through all papers, and tie with yarn.

*Supplies Needed:*

1. Book *Me on the Map* by Joan Sweeney
2. Construction paper in several colors
3. Patterns of 8 different-sized circles (made from tag board cardboard, or empty cereal boxes)
4. Pencils
5. Scissors
6. Markers
7. Hole punch
8. Yarn

**United States or World Walk—a “cakewalk” with a geography theme**

Players walk across the large maps as the music plays. When the music stops, the players freeze. Draw a couple of state or country cards from the pile. The player standing on that state or country wins a prize.

*Supplies Needed:*

1. Large map of the US or World (or state or country posters scattered on the floor)
2. Music
3. State name or country name flashcards
4. CD player
5. Prizes

**Additional Activities**

**Free Geography Materials Table**

Provide families with a packet of geographic puzzles and other activities that they can do at home. Include an assortment of free materials, including activity sheets and family-approved geography website listings. Students love free stuff!

### **Giant Oregon Map**

Borrow the giant map of Oregon from C-GEO. Use activity ideas from the Giant Map Manual, or make up your own ideas. It's a good idea to have an adult in charge of the map, so kids and parents remember the "No Shoes" rule.

### **Literature Connection**

Invite a community member or high school group (FFA) to read a favorite story to the group. One favorite is *Pancakes, Pancakes* by Eric Carle. Then make a list of all the pancake ingredients that come from Oregon. Use the Grown in Oregon Map from Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom. Another favorite is *How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World* by Marjorie Priceman. Have a world map handy as you read this story.

### **Music—Sing-Along or Folk Dancing**

Use a karaoke machine and geography-themed CD (from Ron Brown—see Resources). Project the words with a digital camera so everyone can join in the fun! Ask your school's music teacher, PE teacher, or another talented adult to lead folk dancing. Perhaps a local dance team would help out.

### **"People Around the World"**

Ask teachers and community members share photos, artifacts, and experiences from their travels. Use "Eggsperts" (from Amazon.com) to create a game-show format to gather answers from the audience.

## **Possible Geography Arts and Crafts Ideas**

1. "Earth Safety Pin ArtProject"  
<http://familycrafts.about.com/library/projects/blspbdearth.htm>
2. Japanese Sumi-e painting – find an artistic volunteer to lead this station
3. Craft Foam Globe Picture frames, necklaces, etc. – Oriental Trading
4. Floor puzzles to color
5. Clothespin dolls from around the world

## V. Selected Resources for Activity Materials

### **Oriental Trading Company**

[www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) , prizes and craft kits

### **Copper Gifts State Cookie Cutters**

[www.coppergifts.com](http://www.coppergifts.com) , Oregon cookie cutters

[www.cheapcookiecutters.com](http://www.cheapcookiecutters.com) , Brazil & Turkey (the country) cookie cutters

### **Mindware Catalogue**

[www.mindwareonline.com](http://www.mindwareonline.com) , games

### **Young Explorers Products**

[www.youngexplorers.com](http://www.youngexplorers.com) , games

### **Lakeshore Elementary Catalog**

[www.lakeshorelearning.com](http://www.lakeshorelearning.com) , games

### **Teach Children**

[www.teachchildren.com](http://www.teachchildren.com) : games, pencils, Bingo games

### **Educational Insights**

[www.educationalinsights.com](http://www.educationalinsights.com) : games, puzzles

### **SmileMakers**

[www.smilemakers.com](http://www.smilemakers.com) , prizes and stickers

### **Intelli-tunes by Ron Brown**

[www.intelli-tunes.com](http://www.intelli-tunes.com) , geo-themed music CDs

[www.montessori-n-such.com](http://www.montessori-n-such.com) : rubbing plates, geography puzzles, books, etc.

### **American Educational Products**

[www.amep.com](http://www.amep.com) , “Clever Catch” geography balls

### **Oregon Agriculture in the Classroom**

[www.aipc.oregonstate.edu](http://www.aipc.oregonstate.edu) , Grown in Oregon Map

### **Amazon**

[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) , books, games

**XUMP Science Toys**

[www.xump.com](http://www.xump.com) , good quality inflatable globes at reasonable prices

**Gallopade International**

[www.gallopade.com](http://www.gallopade.com) : state coloring sheets/books, novels

**VI. Three Model Programs****Family Geography Event #1**

1. Grade Level Rotation during the School Day
2. Can't do an evening event?
3. Need an easy way to get staff on board to promote geography?
4. Have a large school and not a lot of extra space?

***This family geography event may be for you!***

**Background**

There are 5 teachers who teach 5<sup>th</sup> grade at my school, and each one of us hosts a geography activity in our classroom for an afternoon. Parents are invited to join their children for this special grade level event. This makes it easy for staff to work together to host this event. It also includes all students at our grade level and promotes teamwork across the classrooms, as students from different classes are mixed together.

This was the second year my grade level team has held a family geography event, and we timed it so that students participated in activities around the same time they would participate in the National Geography Bee preliminary competition. In addition, students were finishing up geography units in their classrooms, so holding an afternoon geography celebration at school was a great culminating activity for everyone.

Holding a family geography event at your school can be simple and fun! Here are some easy steps to get you started.

**Before Event**

1. Select a date and time frame for the event—Fridays work well for this!
2. Advertise, advertise, advertise...
3. Each teacher selects a geography activity to host for the event.
4. Give each group a geography name: Globes, Atlases, Continents, Oceans, etc.
5. Create a schedule which shows the time and location of group movement.
6. Prizes (see included list) are organized to be awarded at the end of each rotation.

Activity	Room	12:30-12:55	1:00-1:25	1:30-1:55
<b>Maptangle</b>	26	Atlases	Oceans	Maps
<b>Oregon Bingo</b>	22	Continents	Atlases	Oceans
<b>Geography Baseball- World</b>	27	Globes	Globes	Atlases
<b>Scrambled States</b>	25	Maps	Globes	Continents
<b>Geography Baseball - USA</b>	31	Oceans	Maps	Globes

**During the Event**

1. Each student who participates in the day's events receives a ticket at their first station. They write their name on it and put it in the team's drawing bag. At the end of each session, draw out several tickets. Winning students' tickets are removed and a student takes the bag with the remaining tickets to the next station for the rest of the day's drawings.
2. Families who come to the event join their children's group and participate in the geography games.
3. At the end of the day's rotations, each student is given a small prize (a globe keychain works well) to recognize their participation in Geography Day.

**Geography Games to Use**

1. Geography Baseball
2. Maptangle
3. Scrambled States
4. Oregon Bingo



**Geography Crafts to Use**

1. Geography on the Web
2. Geo Landforms
3. Topography Cookies

**Sample Family Geography Day Schedule: Where to Get the Stuff?**

1. Brain-Builders.com 1-800-819-6264
  - Maptangle Game
2. Teach Children.com 1-866-301-1023 <http://teachchildren.com/gal-109or.html>
  - Oregon Geography Bingo Item: GAL-109OR
3. Funagain Games 1-541-482-1939 [www.funagain.com](http://www.funagain.com)
  - Scrambled States Game
4. Rand McNally <http://store.randmcnally.com/>
  - Education Geography Baseball
5. Oriental Trading Company (prizes) 2269 <http://www.orientaltrading.com>
  - Plastic Globe Banks
  - Vinyl Earth Kick Balls
  - Earth Punch Balls
  - Metal Globe Key Chains

Have fun planning your geography event! Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

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<http://teachers.sherwood.k12.or.us/Hopkins/MConrad/index.htm>

## Family Geography Night #2

### Family Geography Night Pioneer School (PreK-8 Evening Event)

Families from Pioneer School, and our community college pre-school are invited to attend a program of fun, educational geography activities. The goal is for students and parents to become aware of the importance of geography; and learn about people, places, and conservation efforts around the world.

As students arrive at Family Geography Night, they will each receive a souvenir bag, containing a small prize (pencil, key chain, etc.), tickets for an Oregon-shaped cookie and the raffle prize drawing, and a passport with a map of stations around the school. One of our retired teachers has donated a large supply of maps from National Geographic, so we will also include a map in each souvenir bag. Raffle prizes will be awarded throughout the evening. At the Welcome Table, students will have the opportunity to graph the “county of origin” of foods/clothing/toys/etc. from around the world.

A few weeks before Family Geography Night, teachers and students will be invited to decorate their classroom doors with interesting facts and pictures about our global economy and/or ways to help protect our Earth. Classes can then compete in a trivia competition, with answers being found on classroom doors. Everyone will learn some new facts, and the focus on geography will build interest in the upcoming Family Geography Night. This activity has been quite popular with both students and teachers in past years.

Again, this year, teachers and parents will be asked to share their travel experiences with our students. We will ask them to focus on the people they met in their travels, as well as conservation projects they learned about during their travels. Our presenters will emphasize the commonalities of people around the world. It is important for children to understand that “countries” are made up of “individuals,” so they will become more understanding of cultures different from their own. Since we want as many students as possible to hear our travelers’ stories, and we want audience participation, we are planning a game show format for this station. In order to get more families involved this year, we are planning 2 stations of “People Around the

World.” Since Pioneer School is a K-8 school (with a pre-school in our building), older students will help adults in facilitating activities at the included stations.

### **Stations Used**

The stations will provide a range of learning level activities. There will be something for all ages and interests. Attendees can spend as much time at each station as they desire. A variety of activities were chosen so that some would be done individually, some in small groups, and some in large groups. Family Geography Night will last for about 2 hours, in the evening.

#### People Around the World

Parents and teachers will share photos and stories from their travels. Students and their families will use buzzers to “buzz in” and answer questions from the presenters.

#### Grown-in-Oregon Cookies

Our most popular station—educational AND yummy!

#### Oregon Bingo

Great for families with small children.

#### Map Floor Puzzles and Geography Rubbing Plates

Popular, even for older children.

#### Geography board games

Our middle-schoolers love to help the little ones play the games.

#### Giant Oregon Map and “Scavenger Hunt”

Families who complete the “hunt” will earn their own copy of the Student Atlas of Oregon!

#### World Craft

A choice of projects, including something for our youngest “geographers.”

#### “Hug Your Planet” photos and frames

Each student will be photographed with our “giant” globe, and then he/she will make an Earth Day picture frame for the photo.

## **Prizes**

1. Souvenir Bag
  - Pencil
  - Earth eraser, OR Earth/Flag bouncing ball
  - Oregon coloring page
  - Map
2. Door Prizes
  - Inflatable globes
  - Puzzles
  - Globe Stress Balls
  - US Map Sticker Scenes
  - “Recycle” spiral notebooks
  - Oregon coloring books
  - Geography/history mystery books
3. Game Prizes
  - US Landmark posters
  - Earth kick balls
  - Earth and Flag bouncing balls
  - Erasers
4. Grand Prizes
  - Inflatable Glow-in-the-Dark Earth Ball and USA Bingo (donated to us)
5. Scavenger Hunt
  - Student Atlas of Oregon (for first 25 families to complete the Scavenger Hunt)

## **Educational Benefits**

Attendees of Family Geography Night will continue to develop an appreciation for geography and will learn about the following geographic concepts

1. Physical and cultural landmarks around the world
2. Everyday products imported from around the world
3. Oregon’s major landforms and place names
4. Agricultural products of Oregon
5. Geographic vocabulary
6. World Cultures
7. Map-reading skills

## 8. Conservation of Earth's resources

***Locations, helpers, and supplies***


Event	Where?	Who's helping?	Prizes/supplies
Greet and sign-in and Raffle tickets	Main Entrance	Zelda	Prizes, goodie bags, pens, sign-in sheets
Oregon Bingo	Room 126 Mr. Kinney's Room	Tracy T.	Globe pulls, Earth balls
Map Floor Puzzles & Geog. Rubbing Plates	East Wing hallway		Puzzles, rubbing plates, crayons, paper, covered table
Cookies—Oregon	Cafeteria	Nelda's crew	Cookie supplies and milk
"People Around the World"—teachers sharing travels	Room 154 Ms. Richard's Room	Jeremy	Eggsperts and small prizes
Geography board games, including activities re: Turkey	West Wing Hallway	Zach	games
Giant Oregon Map and "Scavenger Hunt"	Room 144 Mrs. Seifert's Room	Reed	Oregon Atlases, scavenger hunt questions, pencils, clipboards
Picture Frames & other craft projects	Library	Tracy C.	Craft kits, scissors
Photos w/ globe	Room 142 Mrs. Hunt's Room	Bill Verna	Sheet backdrop Globe



**Example of Geography Night Passport**

## PASSPORT FAMILY GEOGRAPHY NIGHT

Just for fun, get your passport stamped at each station!

Picture Frames and World Crafts  Library	Geography Board Games, & Turkey activities West Wing Hallway	Floor Puzzles  East Wing Hallway	“Grown in Oregon” Cookies  Cafeteria
Sign-in and Get Your Raffle Tickets Main Entrance	Geo-Facts Scavenger Hunt Classroom Doors around the whole building	Geography Rubbing Plates  East Wing Hallway	Oregon Bingo  Mr. Kinney’s Room Room 126
Get Your Photo taken with the Giant Globe Mrs. Hunt’s Room Room 142	“People Around the World” — teachers sharing travels Mrs. Richard’s Room Room 154	Giant Oregon Map & Scavenger Hunt Mrs. Seifert’s Room Room 144	

## Family Geography Night #3

### Family Geography Night Chief Joseph Elementary School Portland

Family Geography Night will serve K-3 students and their families at Chief Joseph Elementary in North Portland for the purpose of exposing families to basic mapping skills, increasing geographic knowledge and fluency among the student population and fostering community. The evening will include a brief keynote speaker.

#### Organization

This two-hour program will take place in our cafeteria. Activities and stations will reflect the seven map work skills as defined by Colin W. Bridge in *Primary Geography Handbook*. Each skill will be the focus of both a table activity and an interactive information station—totaling 14 educational experiences. Activities will accommodate up to 8 people at a time, and stations will serve 4-5 at one time. Middle school students from our sister campus will staff each station and activity.

#### Stations and Activities

##### Location

Station: How Can I Describe Where I Live in Oregon?

Activity: Where in the World Are You?

##### Perspective

Station: Our School—Different Perspectives

Activity: My Way

##### Conventions

Station: Memory, Landmark Style

Activity: Guess My Symbol

##### Scale

Station: Why So Big?

Activity: Measure Map

##### Direction

Station: Follow Your Route

Activity: Treasure Hunt

### Using Globes and Atlases

Station: Maps and Atlases and Globes, Oh My!

Activity: Around the World

### Thinking Skills

Station: How Has Our Neighborhood Changed Over Time?

Activity: Comparing Public Transportation Systems

### **Location Station: How Can I Describe Where...?**

National Geographic Standard # 1: How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information.

Skill: Knowing where you are

#### **How can I describe where I live in Oregon?**

- Work together as a family to find your city on the Oregon map. Using the grid, find your city's coordinates.
- Tell one thing that is special about your place in Oregon.



*Map of Oregon*

#### **How can I describe where Oregon is in the world?**

- Using the grid and its coordinates on the world map, describe to your family where Oregon is located in the world.
- Try telling where Oregon is in the world in relation to a landmark.



*World Map*

This station is primarily about reading coordinates on a map. Families work together to locate their home town on a map of Oregon and describe its location using the map's features. For an extension, with the help of the station's lead, the family can generate other ways to describe a point on a map. For this station, you could use any type of map that has a grid and mark your own simple coordinates. I would use a political map of Oregon and for the world, a map with pictures or symbols of natural and manmade landmarks.

### Materials Needed

1. Presentation board
2. Map of Oregon with grid and coordinates
3. Map of the world with grid and coordinates

### Location Activity: Where in the World Are You?

National Geographic Standard: #1. *How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information.*

Skill: *Knowing where you are*

This table activity is for two or more players and is an extension of the Location Station. Again, participants locate and then describe the location of various political and physical landmarks. The focus remains on the reading of coordinates but also includes practice with cardinal directions and referencing landmarks as a way of locating the place. For younger students, it might be best to work in partnership with an older family member.

Directions: Taking turns, pull a card from the deck. Find your card's location on the world map. Using only words (no pointing!), give your family clues to your place. The player who correctly guesses your geographical location wins the next turn. Hints for giving clues: 1. Give the location's grid coordinates. 2. Reference a nearby landmark. 3. Use cardinal directions. 4. Share something you know about the country or landmark.

Amazon  
River

Egypt

Panama  
Canal

Pacific  
Ocean

Supplies Needed:

1. Sets of cards with various country names or landmarks
2. Table-sized world map with grid and coordinates

**Perspective Station: Our School, Different Perspectives**

National Geographic Standard: #1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information. #3. How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places and environments on the earth's surface.

Skill: Making and using maps and plans

**OUR SCHOOL**  
**Different Perspectives**

<p><b>A</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> <p>Aerial Photo</p>	<p><b>B</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> <p>Birds-Eye View Map</p>
<p><b>C</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> <p>Student-Made Map</p>	<p><b>D</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 100px; height: 100px; margin: 0 auto;"></div> <p>Emergency Exit Map</p>

Directions: As a family, use the four school maps to complete the questionnaire.

**Questionnaire:**

1. How are all four maps similar?
2. How are they different?
3. What does *Map B* show that *Map D* does not?
4. If you were looking for the school library, which map would you use?  
Why?
5. What is the purpose of *Map D*? How is its purpose different from the other?

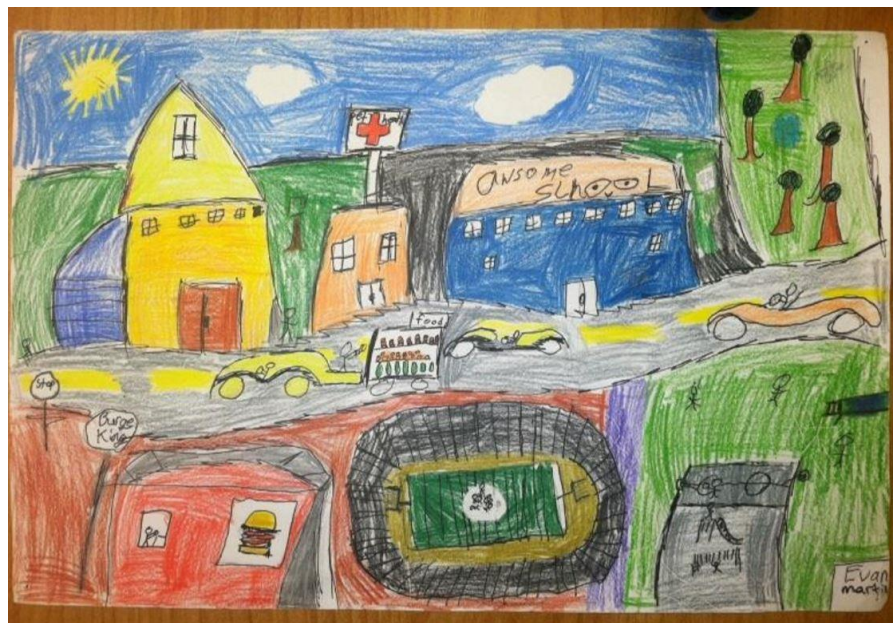
**Supplies Needed:** Aerial photo of the school, birds-eye view map of the school, student-made map of the school, emergency exit map of the school, questionnaire, and a presentation board

**Perspective Activity: My Way**

**National Geographic Standard:** 2. *How to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context.* 3. *How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on the earth's surface.*

**Skill:** *Making and using maps and plans*

**Directions:** Make a mental map of your route to school or work. A mental map is a map made solely from your memory based on your experiences and understanding of a place. Include your starting and ending location and landmarks along the way. Once each family member has completed his/her





mental map, share each with the group. Challenge: Does your map have a title? A legend? A compass rose? Have you used color to show your route?

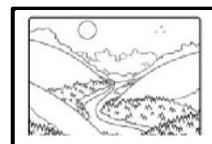
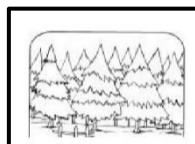
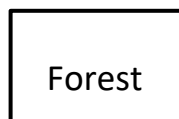
Supplies Needed:

1. Pencils
2. Paper
3. Crayons
4. Example of a student's mental map

**Conventions Station: *Memory, Landmark Style***

National Geographic Standard: #1 *How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information.* #4 *The physical and human characteristics of places.*

Skill: *Understanding symbols, lines, and color*



Directions: Play *Memory* with the given geography term cards. Two-three players per deck of cards. Shuffle cards. Deal cards out face down in a 6 x 4 grid on the table. Taking turns, turn cards up, two at a time, attempting to find a match. A match includes a word card and its corresponding picture card. When a match is made, the player keeps the two matching cards and continues his/her turn. If no match is made, play rotates to the left. Play continues until all cards are paired.

Supplies Needed:

1. Cards with geographic terms (in words). Cards with corresponding photos. Each deck should include 12 terms. Make at least 3 decks to accommodate multiple families at one time.

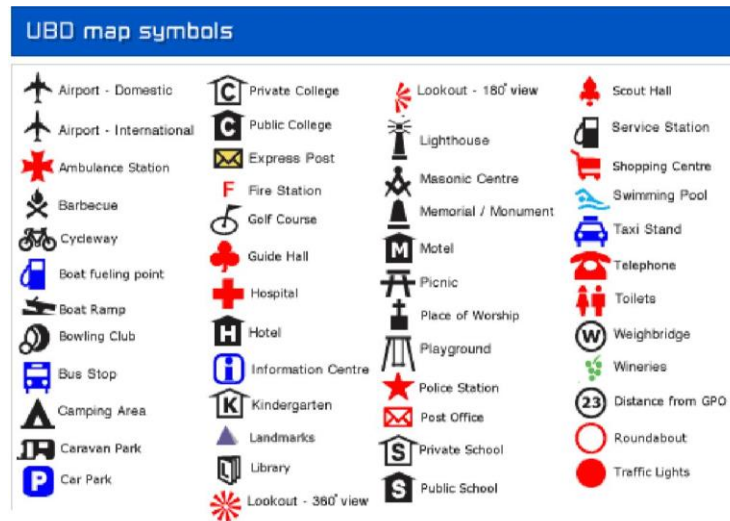
Word Bank: *basin, coast, forest, glacier, lake, landforms, mountain, mountain range, ocean, plateau, river, valley, volcano*

### **Conventions Activity: Guess My Symbol**

National Geographic Standard: #1 *How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information.*

Skill: *Understanding symbols, lines, and color*

Directions: Maps use symbols to convey information. Most map symbols are standardized so we can all read and understand them. Check out the poster for some examples of geographical symbols. For fun, design your own symbol for one of the given geographic terms or landmarks. (Or...think of your own!) Be smart about your design. Symbols should be simple, easily reproducible, and recognizable. Keep your geography term a secret until you have finished creating your symbol, then have your family try to guess what your design represents!



### Materials:

1. Chart of a few common symbols for reference
2. Paper
3. Pencils
4. Crayons
5. Cards with map locales and landmarks (words only)

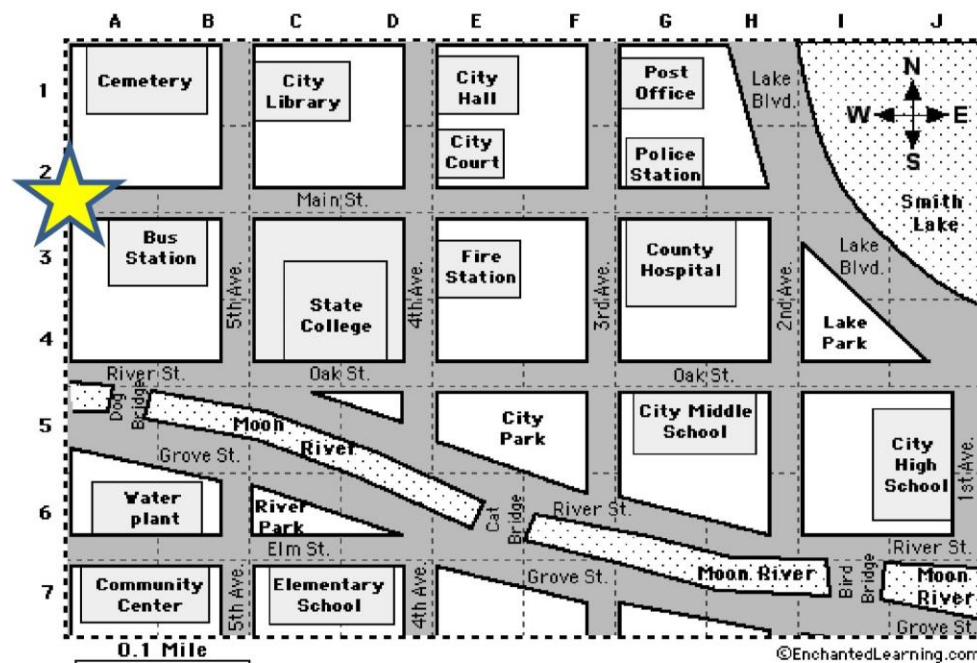
Word Bank: capital, railroad, mountain, river, interstate, lake, hospital, town square, school, library, airport, camping, picnic area, forest, desert, fire station, playground, post office, city hall, ocean, etc.

### Direction Station: Follow Your Route

National Geographic Standard: #1 How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information. #3 How to analyze the spatial organization of people, places, and environments on the earth's surface.

Skill: Fluency with routes and journeys

This station involves following written directions. Children can work on their own or with their family to complete the task. Using a neighborhood map, label a starting place with a yellow star. Write up directions from the yellow star to various destinations. Make each set of directions into a playing card. Participants pull cards and following the route, move a playing piece along with the map board. See the example card below.



**Route Card #1**

- Go east on Main Street for 1 block.
- Turn and go south on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- When you come to the river, follow River Street southeast.
- Stop at 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.
- On the northeast corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and River Street, you will find your destination.
- Where are you?
- Is there another route you could have taken?

Directions: To begin, place your game piece on the yellow star. Pull a route card. Move your marker along the map, following the directions on the route card. Stop now and again along the way to make predictions about your destination. Where do you think you are going?

Materials:

1. Direction/route cards
2. Neighborhood map mounted on a playing board
3. A game piece

VII. Additional Family Geography Night Activities

You will find links to the documents listed below on the C-GEO website under Resources for Teachers at the link labeled "Addendum to Family Geography Night Manual – Additional Activities"

Activities that combine math and geography skills excellent for any Family Geography Night, but especially good for events using Title I Parent Involvement Funds can be found at

<http://www.pdx.edu/geography-education/math-and-geography-activities>

The following were designed by participants of the C-GEO Turkey and Eurasia Summer Institutes. They would work well if you were to have an international theme.

Family Geography Night Activities that Compare/Contrast Turkey and Oregon

1. Country or State?

2. Turkey and Oregon Puzzles
3. Memory Game
4. Which is Bigger?
5. 10 Things in Common
6. Interesting Facts
7. Traditional Games

Family Geography Activities Focusing on Russia, Mongolia, the Trans-Siberian Railway, and China

1. Name That Currency (Four Currencies of Eurasia)
2. Name That Currency (Eurasia and Beyond)
3. Landmarks “cake” walk
4. Time Zone Game
5. Architecture of Eurasian Cities

### VIII. Sample Family Geography Grant Application

**SAMPLE**

#### **Center for Geography Education in Oregon Family Geography Grant Application**

TC name

Home address

Home phone number

Pioneer School

School address

Phone number

Years of Summer Institute attended: 2007, 2008, and 2011

**Title of Project:**

Family Geography Night

**Brief description of the project:**

Families from Pioneer School will be invited to attend a program of fun, educational geography activities. The goal is for students and parents to become aware of the importance of geography, and to learn about people and places around the world.

Starting date: Spring 2012

Expected completion date: Spring 2012

**Explanation of Project:**

As students arrive at Family Geography Night, they will each receive a bag, containing a small prize, ticket raffle prize drawing, and a passport with a map of stations around the school. Each attendee will add a sticker to a world map, indicating all of the places where they have lived or visited.

A few weeks before Family Geography Night, teachers and students will be invited to decorate their classroom doors with interesting facts and pictures about a favorite country, state, city, or landmark. Classes can then compete in a trivia competition, with answers being found on classroom doors. This activity was quite popular with both students and teachers last year. This year, I plan to ask our travel speakers to partner with classes, to create the door decorations together.

This year, students from our local medical school and parents from Pioneer School have been asked to share their travel experiences with our students. I have asked them to focus on human geography. As we learn about different cultures, we will emphasize the commonalities of people around the world. It is important for children to understand that “countries” are made up of “individuals,” so they will become more understanding of cultures different from their own.

Since Pioneer School is a K-8 school, older students will help adults in facilitating activities at the following stations:

1. People Around the World—Parents from our school, and students from our local medical school will share photos and stories from their travels.
2. Grown-in-Oregon Cookies—our most popular station—educational AND yummy!
3. Oregon Bingo—great for families with small children.
4. Map Floor Puzzles—popular, even for older children.



5. Geography board games—Our middle-schoolers love to help the little ones play the games.
6. Giant Oregon Map—A retired teacher has already volunteered to lead this station.
7. “Scavenger Hunt” using Student Atlas of Oregon, Oregon newspaper inserts, and the Giant Oregon Map—Families who complete the task will receive a copy of the Atlas to take home!
8. History Day presentations by our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders—tri-fold displays in the library.
9. Japanese Sumi Painting—taught by an artistic Pioneer School parent.

The stations will provide a range of learning level activities. A variety of activities were chosen so that some would be done individually, some in small groups, and some in large groups. Family Geography Night will last for about two hours in the evening, from about 5:30-7:30 pm. I have estimated costs based on 150-225 people attending the event. Last year, attendance was about 175 students, plus parents.

**Prizes:**

Souvenir Bag and Bingo:

1. Soft globe pull
2. State Pencil
3. Erasers or Earth Superballs

Door Prizes:

1. Inflatable Globes
2. Puzzles
3. Globe stress balls
4. Books
5. Geosafari Game

Scavenger Hunt:

1. Student Atlas of Oregon (for first 25 families to complete the task)

**Educational Benefits:**

Attendees of Family Geography Night will continue to develop an appreciation for geography, and to learn about the following geographic concepts:

1. United States

2. Physical and cultural landmarks around the World
3. Continents
4. Oregon's major landforms, place names, climate, and agriculture
5. Geographic vocabulary
6. World Cultures
7. US and World History

Total Budget Request:

Item:	Quantity:	Unit Cost:
<i>SmileMakers</i>		
Globe Stress Balls (24 per pkg.)	1 pkg.	\$23.99
Blue Earth Superballs (48 per pkg.)	1 pkg.	\$17.99
Shipping and Handling		\$9.99
<i>Grown-in-Oregon Cookies</i>		
Sugar Cookies	250	\$0.65 (per cookie) = \$162.50
White Frosting	9	\$2.19 (per 16 oz. cont.) = \$21.90
Hazelnuts, pretzels, fish-shaped crackers, cranberries, animal crackers, mints, white chocolate chips, pine nuts	Various	Approx. \$20.00
<i>XUMP Science Toys</i>		
Inflatable Globes	10	\$1.95 each = \$19.50
Shipping		\$6.99
<i>Scholastic Books</i>		
<i>Our Earth</i>	1	\$4.00
<i>Little Gardener's Guide</i>	1	\$5.00
<i>Amazon</i>		
<i>The Kingfisher First Picture Atlas</i>	1	\$11.69
<i>Nat. Geog. Kids Beginner's World Atlas</i>	1	\$12.89

	Geosafari Multimedia Game	1	\$7.87
	<i>Supplies for Japanese Sumi Painting</i>		
	Brushes	6	\$10.00
	Paper	1 pkg.	\$20.00
	Ink	1 bottle	\$9.00

**TOTAL: \$ 363.31**

<i>Oregon Geographic Alliance</i>		
Student Atlas of Oregon	25	\$5.00 each = \$125.00