

Climate

Students will learn how locations on the same lines of latitude have similar climates.

Grades: 6-8

Objective: Students will learn the parallel of latitude and the meridian of longitude for Arkansas and compare Arkansas' climate with the climate of countries with those coordinates.

Introduction: Begin by discussing the weather outside and what the seasons are like in Arkansas. Discuss generalities such as "the farther you are from the equator, the colder the climate." Have a student locate Arkansas on a world map and relate its distance from the equator.

Key Terms: climate; equator; International Date Line; grid; landforms; Prime Meridian; hemisphere; continent; parallels of latitude; map coordinates; meridians of longitude

Key Facts: The location of a country will determine its major climate zone. The closer a country is to the equator, the warmer the climate. Countries with similar parallels will have similar climates. Parallels, or lines of latitude, are imaginary lines running east and west on the globe. They are used to measure distance north and south of the equator. Meridians, or lines of longitude, are imaginary lines running north and south on the globe and are used to measure distances east and west of the Prime Meridian. Arkansas is located in the middle latitudes, thus we have a longer growing season than countries in higher latitudes.

Activity: Have students define the key terms. Using atlases, have students locate Arkansas by using coordinates (parallel and meridian), then locate five countries with the same latitude. Research those countries using textbooks, newspapers, encyclopedias, and library resources. Compare the climate of those countries with that of Arkansas, including average temperature and average amount of rainfall. Have students prepare a graph reporting the information found.

Closure: Have students mark Arkansas and the five countries of the same latitude on a world map and verbally compare the climates of these areas.

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