Watermelon Vines Spread Across the U.S.

Teacher Instruction for Grades 5-6 Geography or customize for lower grades

Subject: Geography

Objective:
Students should be able to distinguish between the different regions in the U.S.

Materials:
- Political outline maps of the U.S.
- Colored pencils

Lesson:
Give outline maps to students and tell them you will be discussing the regional differences of the top watermelon-producing states in the U.S.

Introduction:
Watermelons are grown in 44 states, and the U.S. now ranks 9th in worldwide production of watermelon.

1. Ask students in which state do they think most watermelons are grown. Write the answers on the board.

2. Share the following information. Two - three hundred varieties of watermelons are grown in the U.S. and Mexico. Fifty popular varieties are grown regionally, with only a few produced on a national scale.

3. Tell students the states that are the top five for producing watermelons, including how many are grown in each state. Then, ask students to draw a watermelon in the middle of the top five watermelon-producing states on their outline maps.

2019 (thousand pounds)	
Florida	906,500
Georgia	822,900
Texas	667,000
California	510,000
Arizona	252,500

4. Explain the word **region**. (A region is an area with common features that set it apart from other surrounding areas.) Share the names of the four different regions where these top watermelon-producing states are located and ask students to use a different color to shade in each of the four different regions.

Pacific	**South Central**	**Mountain**	**Southeastern**
Washington	Oklahoma	Arizona	Kentucky
Oregon	Texas	Colorado	West Virginia
California	Arkansas	Idaho	Maryland
Alaska	Louisiana	Montana	Virginia
Hawaii		Nevada	Tennessee
		New Mexico	North Carolina
		Utah	South Carolina
		Wyoming	Mississippi
			Alabama
			Georgia
			Florida

5. Ask students to describe what they think these four regions are like. (For example, mountainous or flat, etc.) Write answers on the board.

6. Describe the regions to the students.

California, or the golden state is a Pacific State. The Pacific States is a mountainous region, with beaches and coastlines, thick green forests and hot dry deserts.

Texas, a South Central State, is often called the lone star state. The South Central States have large areas of flat land. They are known for their rich deposits of oil, found beneath the surface of land and the ocean floor.

The Grand Canyon state, or Arizona, is a Mountain State. Mountain States include some of the highest mountain peaks in the U.S. as well as desert lands and plains.

Florida is the sunshine state, and Georgia is called the empire state of the south. Both are Southeastern States with long jagged coastlines, valleys, rivers and deep pine forests.

Extension: Discuss remaining U.S. regions with students.

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