



Blueberries for Every Season

Social Studies (Geography) for Grades 5 - 6

Objectives:

Research, organize, and analyze geographic information, pertaining to climates

Materials:

Container of fresh blueberries, poster-size world map, pushpins, encyclopedias, computer with Internet access for researching countries, regions and climates, or books about different countries, regions and climates

Lesson:

Hang the world map in front of the class. Tell students they will be researching the different climates of the areas in North and South America that produce blueberries. Distribute books, if needed, when it's time to conduct research.

1. Show your container of blueberries to the class, noting the origin of your particular package.

Share the following information:

From April to October, we eat blueberries grown in the U.S. and Canada. During our winter, blueberries are grown in South America, where it is summer, and they are shipped to the U.S. so we can have fresh blueberries year round.

Blueberries are commercially grown in 33 states. Most of them are grown in Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, North Carolina, Georgia, Washington and Maine.

Mark the states with pushpins.

2. Share the following information:

The province of British Columbia is the largest producer of blueberries in Canada. Blueberries also grow in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces (New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia).

Mark British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and the Maritime Provinces with pushpins.

3. Share the following information:

Blueberries are also grown on the continent of South America, specifically in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil. South American blueberries are harvested from November to March.

Mark Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil with pushpins.

4. Share the following information:

We are now able to enjoy fresh blueberries year round due to the different growing seasons and global importing/exporting.

Review the following definitions:

Import – bring goods or services into a country from abroad for sale.

Export – send goods or services to another country for sale.

People all over the world can enjoy blueberries because the U.S. and Canada export them to countries including Japan, the United Kingdom, China, Australia, the Netherlands, Belgium, Israel and Egypt. Ask students to locate these countries.

5. Ask students why they think the growing seasons differ from region to region in the U.S., Canada and South America.

6. Explain the following definition:

Climate – The pattern or cycle of weather conditions over a large area, averaged over many years.

Ask students to describe what they think the climates are like in the states that grow the most blueberries.

7. Let students describe what they think the climates are like in British Columbia, the Maritime Provinces, Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay.

8. Divide class into different groups to research the climates of the world areas that produce blueberries: United States' top producing states, British Columbia, the Maritime Provinces, Chile, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil.

9. When research groups have finished, compare and contrast the climates of the different blueberry-producing areas in the world.

10. Have students create a chart that shows month-by-month blueberry harvesting times in areas of North and South America that the class has discussed. Students should use the information they found in their research about various regional climates and the blueberry harvesting information below.

In the U.S., blueberries are harvested April to July in the South, June through October in the Midwest and Northeast and April through October in the West. In Canada, blueberries are harvested July through October and in South America, they are harvested November through March.

