

Chart Your Geography Smarts: A WorldTeaser Geography Challenge for Kids

Subject: Geography; World Culture

Grade(s): 4-6

Overview

Students conduct a classroom-wide geographic literacy survey, chart the results on a graph, and then compare those results to the answers that young adults (18 to 24 years old) gave in a national geographic survey in 2006.

Objectives

Students will:

- Demonstrate knowledge of physical and human characteristics of given places around the world
- Collect, organize, and analyze survey data
- Create a bar chart to display that data, using Microsoft Excel
- Present those findings to a larger group

National Geography Standards

Standard 4: The physical and human characteristics of places.

National Educational Technology Standards for Students

Standard 3: Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.

Materials Needed

- Computer with Microsoft Excel
- Geographic Survey (one copy per learner)

Getting Started

Ask students if they have ever seen the television program called “Are You Smarter Than a 5th Grader?” Let students tell what they know about the program. Then, say: “In a recent national survey among young adults, only 31% correctly estimated the population of the United States. Do you think our class is smarter than the adults in the survey? Let’s find out.”

Write the following chart on the chalkboard:

Population Range

Number Answered

% Answered

- a) 10 million to 50 million
- b) 150 million to 350 million
- c) 500 million to 750 million
- d) 1 billion to 2 billion

Then, ask: “Which of the population ranges in this chart contains the correct population of the United States today?” Write the number of students who vote for each population range under Number Answered. Then, have students calculate the percentage for each range, based on the total number of students who voted, and enter their answers into the % Answered column.

Next, tell students that the correct answer is (b) 150 million to 350 million. (Note: If you have a computer available, you can check the exact population of the United States at any given moment at <http://www.census.gov/population/www/popclockus.html>) What percent of the students in the class got the correct answer? Ask: “How does our class compare to the national average of young adults?”

Finally, tell students that they are going to conduct a classroom-wide survey of six geography questions, chart the results on a graph, and then compare those results to the national survey of young adults.

Development

Duplicate the geographic survey below and distribute one copy to each student in the class. Tell students that they do not have to put their names on the paper. The purpose of the survey is to determine how much the class as a whole knows about world, rather than to “test” individual students. Allow sufficient time for students to complete the survey.

While students are completing the survey, put the following chart on the chalkboard. Then, tally the results of the classroom survey by a show of hands to each answer for each question.

Survey Results

	Number Answered	% Answered Correctly	Adults Answered Correctly
Question 1			
(a) Indonesia			
(b) South Africa			

- (c) Armenia
- (d) India

Question 2

- (a) Russian
- (b) Mandarin Chinese
- (c) English
- (d) Arabic

Question 3

- (a) China and Russia
- (b) United States and Mexico
- (c) North Korea and South Korea
- (d) Syria and Lebanon

Question 4

- (a) Honolulu, United States
- (b) Manila, Philippines
- (c) Tokyo, Japan
- (d) Mexico City, Mexico

Question 5

- (a) Less than half the size of U.S.
- (b) About the same size as U.S.
- (c) About double the size of U.S.
- (d) More than four times the size of U.S.

Question 6

- (a) Africa
- (b) Antarctica
- (c) Asia
- (d) Australia
- (e) Europe
- (f) North America
- (g) South America

Activity

Tell students that they are now going create a bar chart that visually shows the results of each survey question and compares the results to each questions with those of the adults. To create a simple chart, follow these directions.

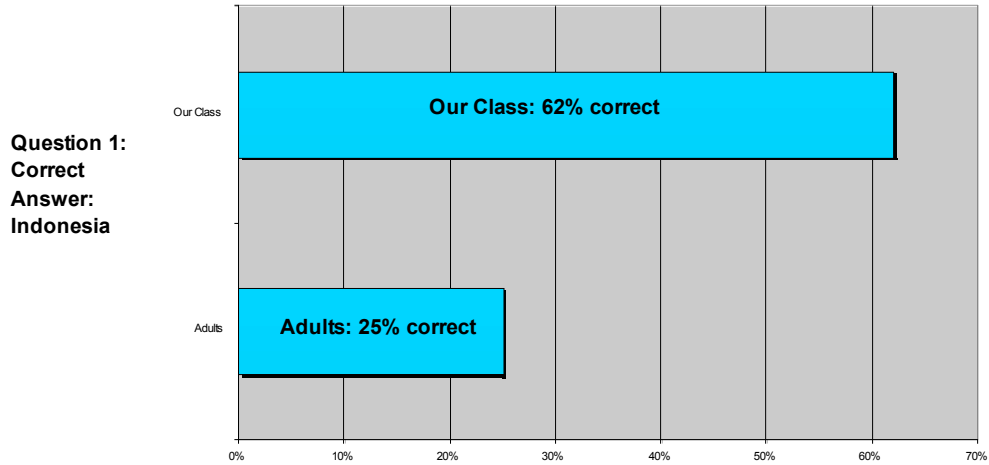
1. Open Microsoft Office Excel.
2. In Column B1, type the word Adults; in C1, type Our Class.
3. In Column B2, type the percent of Adults who answered this question correctly. (For example, for Question 1, 25% of adults answered the question correctly. Put 25% in B2.) In Column C2, type the percent of students in the classroom that got this answer correct, e.g., 62%
4. In Column A2, type the answer to the survey question. For example, type: Question 1:
Correct Answer: Indonesia
NOTE: You may want to create a bar chart for each question. If not skip a row and enter information in the same Worksheet for the next survey question.
5. Highlight A1 through C2.
6. Point to and click Insert on the Main Menu. Then, drag down and highlight Chart Wizard.
7. Under Chart type, click: Bar. Then, click Next.
8. Next to Series in: Click Rows. Click Next.
9. In the Chart title box, write the name of your school.
10. Click the Legend tab. Then click the Placement button for where you want the Legend to appear, e.g., Left.
11. Click the Data Labels tab. Under Label Contains, click Value. Click Next.
12. Under Place chart, click As new sheet.
13. Click Finish.

Here are some things you can do to enhance your chart.

1. Right click the Legend text box and Title text box and click Format Legend. Highlight the type and change the font, font style, and size, as desired.
2. Right click one of the bars in the bar chart and click Format Data Point. Change the color or the Fill Effects of your bars.
3. Click the Text Box icon on the drawing toolbar and insert a text box in each bar. Insert copy and format the copy as desired.

Geographic Survey

1. In which of these countries is a majority of the population Muslim?



Answers to Selected Questions from National Geographic-Roper Survey of Geographic Literacy

	Correct Answer	% Answered Correctly
Question 1:	Indonesia	25%
Question 2:	Mandarin Chinese	18%
Question 3:	North Korea and South Korea	37%
Question 4:	Mexico City, Mexico	62%
Question 5:	More than 4 times the size	39%
Question 6:	South America	59%

Reproducible Geographic Survey

Geographic Literacy Survey

Conducted by _____

Age _____

Grade _____

Directions: Read each question. Mark an X on the line next to your answer choice.

Question 1 of 6

In which of these countries is a majority of the population Muslim?

Choose Your Answer

- _____ (a) Indonesia
- _____ (b) South Africa
- _____ (c) Armenia
- _____ (d) India

Question 2 of 6

Which language is spoken by the most people in the world as their primary language?

Choose Your Answer

- _____ (a) Russian
- _____ (b) Mandarin Chinese
- _____ (c) English
- _____ (d) Arabic

Question 3 of 6

The most heavily fortified border in the world exists between which two countries?

Choose Your Answer

- _____ (a) China and Russia
- _____ (b) United States and Mexico
- _____ (c) North Korea and South Korea
- _____ (d) Syria and Lebanon

Question 4 of 6

Which city would be least likely to be threatened by a tsunami?

- _____ (a) Honolulu, United States
- _____ (b) Manila, Philippines
- _____ (c) Tokyo, Japan
- _____ (d) Mexico City, Mexico

Question 5 of 6

How does the size of the population of China compare to the population of the United States?

- _____ (a) China's population is less than half the size of the population of the U.S.
- _____ (b) China's population is about the same size as the population of the U.S.
- _____ (c) China's population is about double the size of the population of the U.S.
- _____ (d) China's population is more than four times the size of the population of the U.S.

Question 6 of 6

On which continent is the Amazon rain forest?

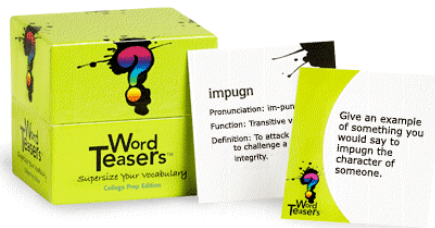
- _____ (a) Africa
- _____ (b) Antarctica
- _____ (c) Asia
- _____ (d) Australia
- _____ (e) Europe
- _____ (f) North America
- _____ (g) South America

Conclusion

Have students prepare a report of their findings to present to another class or during a Parent conference.

Survey Variations: (1) Allow students to select 10 WorldTeaser Challenge questions around which to develop their survey. (2) Conduct a school-wide survey and chart the results by grade.

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