



Q4 • Historical Reflection & Progress • Middle School

Geography Exploration • Maps Over Time

Theme: Historical Reflection & Progress

Time Required: 4-6 class sessions

- Historical and current maps of New Mexico (digital or printed)
- Chart paper or digital slideshow software
- Research resources (library or online)
- Access to mapping or presentation tools (e.g., Google Slides, Canva, or PowerPoint)

Activity Overview

Students explore how New Mexico's geography and culture have changed across centuries by analyzing and comparing maps from the 1700s to today. Through guided research and visual storytelling, they identify trends such as shifts in population, land use, or language. Their final project is a four-map slideshow — past, intermediate, present, and projected future — that illustrates how geography reveals cultural evolution.

Learning Objectives

- Analyze and interpret maps as sources of historical evidence.
- Identify how cultural, environmental, and political factors shape geography.
- Compare maps from multiple time periods to identify change and continuity.
- Create a visual presentation showing how maps tell evolving stories of place.

Essential Questions

- What can maps teach us about how New Mexico has changed over time?
- How do maps reflect human choices, culture, and power?
- How might future maps look different from today's?

Inspired Conversation Topics

- What details stand out in historical vs. modern maps of New Mexico?
- How does language or naming reveal identity and power?
- What environmental changes do we notice across centuries?