

GIS: USA Overseas Expansion

Summary

USA Overseas Expansion is an introductory Historical GIS project. It combines basic Arcview skills with topics that are commonly taught in both World and United States History classes. The lesson contains notes for the teacher, student lessons and tables of data. The zip contains both a pdf and word version for modifying or adapting to your classroom situation.

Materials

- Shp files Admin98.shp and Cntry98.shp from the Esri Data & Maps set CD-rom one
- Student Directions worksheet, pages 3-11
- Arcview 3X
- United States History Textbook (optional)
- Internet access for "CIA World Fact book" (optional)

Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this lesson students will:

- Be able to create a GIS map with information about US territorial acquisitions.
- Gain Practice using GIS.
- Expand their knowledge of United States history.

Instructional Procedures

USA Expansion Overseas is in an introductory Historical GIS lesson. There is very little historical GIS material available for teachers so we must create our own. This a basic example of an Historical GIS lesson that can be used not only to enrich a History class but teach some basic GIS skills as well. Most of the data for the assignment (pages nine and ten) are included with the exception of the "Distnce_from"(Distance from USA) due to the variances that will occur.

If time permits instructors should consider not providing students with the data (page 9) and have them do the research (a blank fill in table is provided on page 10). Most of the information for the assignment was taken from standard United States History textbooks with the exception of the 'Status_today" field. If the Internet is available student will be able to get much of the information for the "Status_today" field from the CIA World Fact book site at WorldFactbook2000. If the Internet is not available the entire site can be downloaded and installed on a server or workstations equipped with WWW browsers such as Internet Explorer or Netscape.

There are several additional fields, which could easily be added. One would be a note or comment field. In this field such facts as the USA relations with Samoa in 1872/1878 could be cited. Another field could be "Owned by USA today" with a 'Y' or "N" choice. The Geographical Locations of the acquisitions would be an excellent additional field.

"How_acquir" (How Acquired) could be supplemented with another field noting that some places were acquired by two methods such as War and Purchase. In addition, there are other territorial acquisitions that can be added such as Wake, Baker and Midway islands. For a complete list sort the "Sovereign" field in the "Cntry_98" theme table and note the United States possessions.

Bibliography

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