

# GIS: What Do You Know About Your Fellow Americans?

## Summary

Students will individually, or in groups, research American countries -- excluding the United States -- to learn more about the Americas. Students will assemble information about their assigned country. Once the information is collected, it will be entered into one ArcView theme table so the teacher (or students) can use ArcView to present all the information together to the entire class.

## Materials

- ArcView GIS 3.x
- Access to the Internet

## Instructional Procedures

**Goal:** In this lesson, students will realize that they have many American neighbors in addition to their neighbors in the United States. Students will individually, or in groups, research American countries -- excluding the United States -- to learn more about the Americas. Students will assemble information about their assigned country. Once the information is collected, it will be entered into one ArcView theme table so the teacher (or students) can use ArcView to present all the information together to the entire class. Students and/or teacher can create thematic maps to compare and contrast the information about the American countries. Queries can also be written to further investigate the data.

**Prerequisites:** Basic knowledge of ArcView GIS 3.x (teachers and/or students), Searching and browsing the Internet (students)

**Minimal ArcView Skills:**

- Opening a project
- Basic understanding of ArcView themes and theme tables
- Using the Legend Editor to create thematic maps
- Using the Identify Tool to get information on map features
- Using the Query Builder to create queries

If these skills are unfamiliar, complete the Quick Start Tutorial in Chapter 2 of Understanding ArcView GIS that came in the box with your ArcView software.

**Objectives:**

- Introduce table/database structure
- Use the Internet to perform research
- Develop an awareness of all the American countries

**ArcView procedures:**

- Edit an attribute table
- Hotlink to an image

**Introduction:** We call ourselves “Americans” if we live in the United States. What about people who live in Mexico – aren’t they Americans as well? Or how about people in Peru or Panama? Americans is a common designation for United States Citizens, but we must remember that we have other neighbors that are also Americans. This lesson will help you discover your American neighbors and how they compare and contrast to each other as well as to the United States.

**Note:** This lesson requires the students to obtain some general information about their assigned countries. You might want to incorporate this lesson into a more detailed research project. Have your students research and put together a presentation on their assigned countries along with the general information they collect for the ArcView table. The students answer certain questions that you create, and then they assemble their answers into a presentation. Some introductory sample questions:

Where is this country located?

What is the climate like in this country?  
What countries border this country?  
What are the largest cities in this country?  
What are the main religions in this country?  
Why type of government does this country have?  
Who is the leader of this country?  
What is the title of the leader?  
How is the economy in this country?  
What industries does the country have?  
What environmental issues does this country face today?  
Describe some of the current events in this country.  
Is this country part of the United Nations?  
What is this countries relationship with the United States?  
What is the prominent ethnic group in this country?  
Have each student/group give their presentation (based on questions comparable to those above) to the entire class and then the class as a whole can ask and answer questions about all the countries using ArcView and the table that they have created.

#### Bibliography

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#### Authors

[Utah LessonPlans](#)