

Expansion Diffusion of Major League Baseball

Theme:

Students will be looking at where the professional Major League Baseball teams were located before 1953. This will be analyzed in terms of today's professional Major League Teams and an analysis of population change in regions of the United States will be discussed.

Grade Level:

Grades 7-12

Time Required:

Two class periods on an 84 minute block schedule.

Overview:

The students will be placing pennants of major league baseball teams on a large map of the United States. Students will have the pennants of teams prior to 1953 and will find pennants of teams in today's MLB. Students will then be discussing and writing a conclusion as to where the population growth has occurred in the United States during the past 50 years.

Minnesota Social Studies Standard(s):

V. Geography

B. Essential Skills

1. The student will use maps, globes, geographic information systems, and other databases to answer geographic questions at a variety of scales from local to global.

Benchmark: 1) Students will demonstrate the ability to obtain geographic information from a variety of print and electronic sources.

V. Geography

B. Essential Skills

2. The student will understand the regional distribution of the human population at local to global scales and its patterns of change.

Benchmark: 1) Students will describe the pattern of human population density in the United States and major regions of the world.

V. Geography

C. Spatial Organization

1. The student will describe and provide examples of the primary factors behind the regional pattern of culture groups in the United States and around the world.

Benchmark: 1) Students will use regions to analyze the locational patterns of culture groups at various scales.

V. Geography

C. Spatial Organization

3. The student will analyze the patterns of location, functions, structure, and characteristics of local to global settlement patterns and the processes that affect the location of cities.

Benchmark: 1) Students will describe the contemporary patterns of large cities.

Subjects:

American History

Geography

Required Materials:

- Atlas of the United States.
- Five large United States Maps
- Handout of Top Metro Areas, 1950.
- Handout of Top Metro Areas, 2005
- Handout of Baseball Teams, 1950.
- Handout of Baseball Teams, 2005
- Stars or identification feature for the maps.

Optional Technologies:

Students could produce the map using any type of mapping software. Students could compare the two maps and discuss the differences and where population growth is occurring.

Objectives:

Students will be able to identify where the major population was located in the United States in 1950 and compare that with statistics today to see the diffusion of the American population during the past 50+ years.

Suggested Procedure:

Opening:

Students will be split up into groups for this assignment. Each group should receive a map of the United States, and the handouts provided in this lesson. Students will be asked to identify on their maps where the top metropolitan areas in the United States were in 1950 as well as where the MLB teams were located in 1950. Students should place their pennants on their map where each of the teams are located.

Development:

Students should now do the same for 2005.

Closing:

Students must now evaluate the difference in the location of the cities and the MLB teams from 1950 to 2005. Students will see the movement south in the United States towards the Sunbelt.

Suggested Assessment:

Students will be turning in their maps as a group but will be individually graded based on their writing activity which should ask the question “Where has the United States population moved in the past 50 years?”

Definitions:

- Sunbelt
- Diffusion
- Intraregional and Regional Migration
- Regions
- Push/Pull factors

Geography Standards:

1. Essential Skills – The student will understand the regional distribution of the human population at local to global scales and its patterns of change.
 - A. Students will use the concepts of push and pull factors to explain the general patterns of human movement in the modern era, including international migration, migration within the United States and major migrations in other parts of the world.

Weblinks for Teachers and Students:

- www.census.gov – provides numerous demographic statistics of the United States population.
- www.mlb.com – The official site of Major League baseball. Students can locate logos on the site and cut and paste them into making their own pennants.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why has the population of the United States continued to move south?
2. What factors in the South have made it a positive place to move? (pull factors)
3. What factors in the North/Northeast have caused people to move? (push factors)
4. Where would future expansion teams likely be located in the United States or Canada?
5. What does the size of these cities indicate about the growth rate of the United States?

Extension Activities:

Students could do the same for Professional hockey, football and basketball teams.

Credits:

Adapted and updated from a previous lesson – author unknown.

Kelly Swanson

Geography Teacher

Johnson Senior High School

Top Metropolitan Areas, 1950

1. New York City, NY	12,911,994
2. Chicago, IL	5,495,364
3. Los Angeles, CA	4,367,911
4. Philadelphia, PA	3,671,048
5. Detroit, MI	3,016,197
6. Boston, MA	2,369,986
7. San Francisco/Oakland, CA	2,240,767
8. Pittsburgh, PA	2,213,236
9. St. Louis, MO	1,681,281
10. Cleveland, OH	1,465,511
11. Washington D.C.	1,464,089
12. Baltimore, MD	1,337,373
13. Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN	1,116,509
14. Buffalo, NY	1,089,230
15. Cincinnati, OH	904,402

Top Metropolitan Areas, 2005

1. New York City, NY	18,323,002
2. Los Angeles, CA	12,365,627
3. Chicago, IL	9,098,316
4. Philadelphia, PA	5,687,147
5. Dallas, TX	5,161,544
6. Miami, FL	5,007,564
7. Washington D.C.	4,796,183
8. Houston, TX	4,715,407
9. Detroit, MI	4,452,557
10. Boston, MA	4,391,344
11. Atlanta, GA	4,247,981
12. San Francisco/Oakland, CA	4,123,740
13. Riverside/San Bernardino, CA	3,254,821
14. Phoenix, AZ	3,251,876
15. Seattle, WA	3,043,878
16. Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN	2,968,806
17. Cleveland, OH	2,945,831
18. San Diego, CA	2,813,833
19. St. Louis, MO	2,698,687
20. Baltimore, MD	2,552,994
21. San Juan, PR	2,509,007
22. Pittsburgh, PA	2,431,087
23. Tampa/St. Petersburg, FL	2,395,997
24. Denver, CO	2,179,240
25. Cincinnati, OH	2,009,632
26. Portland, OR	1,927,881