FREE TEACHING RESOURCE / 3–5 / 27

Map of Many Journeys

TEACHER GUIDE • lesson design & facilitation

Grade band: 3–5 | 4–5 sessions, 45–55 minutes

Media: washable art media and cut-paper supplies

The artistic problem

Create an imaginary map showing several kinds of journeys to a shared destination.

Essential question: Who gets to decide what a map highlights?

Place-based cultural lens: Compare historic and contemporary maps of New Orleans and Louisiana at a broad scale.

Learning targets

- Investigate the question: Who gets to decide what a map highlights?
- Apply symbol systems, scale comparison, legends, color hierarchy in a deliberate original composition.
- Use critique evidence to improve symbol systems and name one next step.

Student-visible success criteria

- The final artwork solves this problem: Create an imaginary map showing several kinds of journeys to a shared destination.
- Artwork includes a legend, clear destination, and two different path experiences.
- Process evidence shows three different options before selection.
- Visual decisions demonstrate symbol systems and support the intended audience.
- Feedback results in at least one visible revision that the student can explain.

Standards & studio habits

Louisiana Grade 3–4: VA-CE-E1, VA-CE-E3, VA-AP-E6; Grade 5 (5–8 cluster): VA-CE-M2, VA-CE-M7

Studio Habits of Mind: Develop Craft, Stretch & Explore, Express, Reflect. These habits are developed interactively, not in a fixed rank or sequence.

Instructional alignment: Louisiana benchmark codes are official broad grade-cluster benchmarks; specific expectations are developed locally. The ten instructional stages come from the supplied Artistic Investigations framework.

Preparation & materials

- Drawing paper or sketchbook for idea studies
- washable art media and cut-paper supplies
- Samples and images from reliable sources, with attribution
- Tools appropriate to local safety rules and grade level
- Choice of visual, oral, or written reflection tools

10-stage teaching sequence

01 / Engage Present the artistic question: Who gets to decide what a map highlights? Give students two contrasting examples that do not dictate a finished product.

02 / Investigate Compare historic and contemporary maps of New Orleans and Louisiana at a broad scale. Gather visual evidence and note what is observed rather than assumed.

03 / Skill Studio Demonstrate symbol systems, scale comparison, legends, color hierarchy. Make thinking visible by testing two alternate solutions and identifying what each communicates.

04 / Generate Develop three possibilities for the challenge: Create an imaginary map showing several kinds of journeys to a shared destination. Change the focal point, material, arrangement or viewer perspective between drafts.

05 / Plan Compare sketches to the success check (a legend, clear destination, and two different path experiences); choose a direction and state why it better communicates the intention.

06 / Produce Produce an original visual response using symbol systems, scale comparison, legends, color hierarchy; conference on one technical choice and one contextual question.

07 / Critique Partners identify where the artwork communicates the intended idea and locate evidence of symbol systems in the work.

08 / Revise Revisit the specific checkpoint: A legend, clear destination, and two different path experiences. Make one visible change after critique and preserve the initial view for comparison.

09 / Present Present with a title, medium, one key artistic decision and any needed credit or contextual limitation.

10 / Reflect Reflect: What evidence proves you improved symbol systems? What will you try or investigate next?

Studio sessions & evidence checkpoints

Session	Teaching move	Capture evidence
Day 1	**Observe + question** Compare historic and contemporary maps of New Orleans and Louisiana at a broad scale.	Notice/wonder log and initial study.
Day 2	**Develop craft** Demonstrate symbol systems, scale comparison, legends, color hierarchy. Make thinking visible by testing two alternate solutions and identifying what each communicates.	Technique trials and feedback.
Day 3	**Generate + plan** Produce three proposals and select one using criteria.	Three thumbnails and written/oral rationale.
Day 4	**Produce + critique** Create and test work against the checkpoint: A legend, clear destination, and two different path experiences.	Work sample and peer response.
Day 5	**Revise + exhibit** Make one substantial change; present and reflect.	Before/after evidence and a precise next step.

Key technique to model

symbol systems, scale comparison, legends, color hierarchy

Access without lowering the artistic goal

Maps may center walking, transit, boats, wheelchairs, or imaginative routes. Offer physical samples, captioned images, accessible demonstrations, flexible planning modes, and alternate materials while retaining the common visual learning target.

Teacher coaching questions

- What is the visual problem you are solving?
- Which decision communicates your intended meaning most clearly?
- What does your reference prove, and what are you still imagining?
- What could a viewer misunderstand?
- What visible revision will strengthen your next version?

Cultural care

Never ask children to reveal home addresses or daily private routes.

Stretch & explore

Swap maps with a peer and revise confusing symbols.

Design provenance: Original Studio Fieldnotes investigation developed for the 50-lesson library; informed by the teacher-supplied ten-stage Artistic Investigations architecture and reflective Studio Habits framework.