# Subject #3: Geography

**Project #48: Sponge Activities for Geography.** Introduce students to web-based geography activities that can be done in five or ten minutes between lessons, before lunch, in free time. I include five in this lesson.

| Higher-order thinking skills | Technology-specific: | Subject Area/ Learning-specific | Standard: NETS-S |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Applying—use concepts in new situations* | *Use technology to broaden subject matter competency, learn the basics of internet* | *Reinforce spelling, class word lists* | *4.d, 6.a* |

Grade level:        2-8
Prior knowledge:   Project 99 (Internet Basx)
Time required:     5-10 minutes
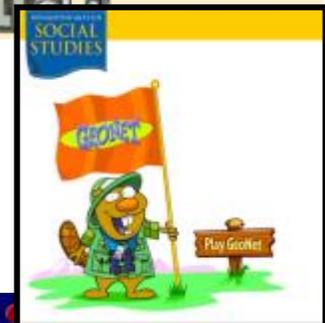Software required: internet browser, Google Earth
Vocabulary:       administrivia, website, structure, geography, favorites, hits

## Lesson Description

- What's a sponge activity? Originally used by Madeline Hunter, a "sponge" is an activity designed to produce learning during the times taken up by "administrivia." They stem from Hunter's teaching philosophy that there should be no wasted moments in her classroom.
- Each of these websites offers quick activities for students, taking 5-10 minutes.
- If you purchased the digital version of this book, Ctrl+click on the blue links or images in sidebar to access site.

## Computer Activity

- Give students a list of world locations in the news. Let them lose on Google Earth. Have them find the spots and read what people all over the world have uploaded about the location.
- Geography matching games
  http://www.quia.com/jg/29.html
- Geography—find letters in man-made and natural structures around the world
  www.geogreeting.com
- Quick quizzes—how much do you know about geography?
  http://www.prongo.com/quiz/
- Geography game—Geospy
  kids.nationalgeographic.com/Games/GeographyGames/Geospy
- Another Geography game—Geonet
  www.eduplace.com/geonet/

## Extensions

- Add these websites to favorites to be used more quickly

## Troubleshooting Tips

- *I get a list of hits—not the site (did you type the address into the search bar by accident, rather than the address bar?)*

# <u>Nineteen More Ways to Use Spare Classroom Time</u>

I keep a list of themed websites that are easy-in easy-out for students. They must be activities that can be accomplished enjoyably in less than ten minutes. In the parlance, these are called "sponges".

What exactly are sponge activities? The term, originally coined by Madeline Hunter, refers to an activity designed to produce learning during the time taken up by "administrivia." They stem from Hunter's teaching philosophy that there should be no wasted moments in her classroom.

Here's my list, by topic:

## Tech
- Desktop Wallpapers from National Geographic

## Vocabulary Building
- Hangman
- Games with high-frequency words
- Videos on reading, comprehension, phonics, sign language (similar to YouTube, but school-friendly)
- Web-based Mad Libs
- Dolch Flash Games

## Geography
- Geogreeting
- Quick quizzes—how much do you know about geography?
- Geospy
- Another Geography game—Geonet

## History
- Videos of historic events
- Kid's Website on the US Government and History
- History Happens: Stories on Video
- Newspaper front pages from around the world—interactive
- When they were Young: A Photographic History of Children
- Road to Revolution Game

## PowerPoint
- Jeopardy topics from Math to Science, organized by topic and grade
- Jeopardy games on Math and vocabulary
- Jeopardy, Hollywood Squares, Who Wants to be a Millionair