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GLOBALMANIA

Master World Geography in 7 Months or Less

Terri Johnson



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Geography
in just 7
Months

by Terri Johnson

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Help Your Students
Master World Geography in Just 7 Months

By Terri Johnson

Are you ever surprised by how little geography most kids know these days? Are you surprised by how little geography you learned yourself back when you were in school? American students, in general, have a very limited understanding of world geography in comparison with students from around the world. European students, for example, have a much better handle not only of their own surrounding geography but of the entire world as well. It is the same with students from many parts of Asia and other regions of the world.

Perhaps you are thinking that I am only referring to public school students. But in reality, homeschooling students often suffer from a lack of knowledge in this subject area as well. The two subjects most neglected in the homeschooling arena are writing and geography. Why is this so? Skill areas, such as math, grammar and spelling are easier to measure than the artful skill of writing and so it gets pushed aside. Similarly, history and science require such large portions of time that the pursuit of geographical knowledge is often left out in the cold.

Since writing is not my expertise, we'll just tackle the subject of geography here in this short, but effective, ebook. How can we beef up our children's knowledge of geography in a way that will not require too much time or proficiency on our part as parents and teachers? Further, how can we introduce or accelerate this subject in a way that will be enjoyable, even painless, for our students as well as for ourselves?

Here is my seven month plan that will help you help your students master world and U.S. geography in just seven months. Think I'm crazy? Follow this step-by-step program and take my challenge over the course of the next seven month time period (note: this can run into or through the summer months as your kids will not consider this "school work"). If your students have not improved drastically in their knowledge of geography, please write to me and tell me that I am off my rocker and that it doesn't work. Here is my email address - terri@knowledgequestmaps.com. On the contrary, if you do see dramatic improvement, even mastery, in the subject of world and U.S. geography, write to me at the above address also. I would like to celebrate with you in this wonderful accomplishment!

Let's dive in... We will divide our program into seven 1-month increments. This is the only part of this program where you will need to make a decision. Each of the seven months, your student/s will study a different continent or geographical area and you get to decide the order in which these will be tackled. Here are the seven geographical areas:

Asia
Africa
Europe
United States
North America
South America
Australasia/Antarctica

Globalmania - Master World Geography in Just 7 Months

Each month will now be broken down into four weeks. If you end up with a fifth week in your month, just consider it review day and have some extra fun in that geographical zone. Pick one day of the week that will work best for spending some time with geography. For us, Fridays work best because they are more of a catch-all day. This day of the week is a bit more relaxed for us with less time constraints. You choose the day that will work best for your family and then allow your student 30 - 45 minutes, or even up to an hour, for geography fun.

Note: This course of study requires that you have a computer and an internet connection available to you. If you do not have this at home, you may want to choose your library day for your geography studies so that you can take advantage of the internet connection there. Or perhaps you can visit a relative's home that does have an internet connection. Most of our society now has access to the internet, but if this is not an option for you, then you may want to choose a different program for your children.

With that said, we will lay out our course of study for the 4 or 5 days out of the month that your children will work on increasing their geography knowledge.

Month 1: Week 1:

This is the day that we determine the baseline of each student's current knowledge in this particular geographical region (whichever part of the world that you have chosen for this month - see list above). Before you get started with your kids, however, there are two things I want you to do first. The first order of business is to download a great geography game from the internet that is completely free and very fun to play. It is located here - <http://www.seterra.net/>. The software download is for windows-only. If you are using a Mac, play the online version here - www.wartoft.nu/software/seterra/mac.aspx.

Once the game is downloaded onto your computer, click the icon that reads Seterra 4.0 to begin the game (version number may be higher). Select the language that you speak and click OK. Select the region of the country that you are working on this month and press the START button. We will focus on the subject areas of Countries, Capitals and Cities.

Now is the time to set the baseline for your own knowledge and familiarize yourself with the game. Choose Countries and click the START button. A map will load for the region that you chose and a country name will appear at the very top. Click the location on the map where you believe that country exists. If you choose the correct location, the map region will turn white. If you get it on the second try, it will turn a pale yellow. If you choose the correct location on the third try, the country will turn a darker yellow. If you do not choose the correct location on this turn, the country will brighten to a light green. Click on it now and it will change to the color red. Continue to identify the countries as best as you can until the quiz is completed. Seterra will give you a score for this round with a place to type in your name. Type it in and then continue to test your knowledge in the Capitals and then the Cities.

Now determine a baseline for your children. Have them complete the same quizzes and mark their levels by typing in their names at the end of the rounds. Now, your kids can continue to play these games to gain higher scores to beat their previous scores and more significantly, YOU. They will have a lot of fun doing this. Don't feel bad if they pass you by very quickly, that's what you are aiming for. Besides, you can play later once they lose interest in the game and increase your scores ideally to 100% with just a little bit of practice.

Week 2:

Choose two or three additional online games for your students to play that will test their knowledge of geography in that same region. Remember, you are concentrating for one whole month on just one area of the world. It may be tempting for your students to want to switch to another region of the world when they feel like they have a good handle on the area that you have chosen for them this month, but try to keep them focused on this one large section of the world so that they gain even more knowledge and expertise in this location.

Here are some additional online games to choose from. There are eight websites listed here, but remember to just pick two or three for this week.

- 1.** Sheppard Software has provided many free and fun to play geography games at their website - <http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/Geography.htm>. There are various levels of play so that your beginners and advanced students alike can find something to hold their interest. You do need to have Flash Player 6 or higher on your computer to be able to play these games, but no other downloading is necessary. The instructions are minimal, so it takes a few minutes to get the hang of the games in some instances (or at least it did for me!). Also, they do have other games across the curriculum, so feel free to check out their science and vocabulary games as well – plus many others!
- 2.** If you or your children like puzzles, then you will love this website! At this website - <http://www.yourchildlearns.com/geography.htm> - you can either play with the on-line puzzle maps, or you can download them to your own computer. If you would rather not download them, here is the direct link to the online map puzzles - <http://www.yourchildlearns.com/map-puzzles.htm>. These are a lot of fun and a great learning tool for kids of all ages (yes, even adults!).
- 3.** Take National Geographic's Geography Bee quiz! These questions can be fairly tough, but you get a second and even third chance to get them right (there are only 3 choices per question) thereby allowing you to KNOW the answer, which you are unlikely to forget. Also, the questions are new every day, so you can play every day and get new questions to answer. Very fun! Here's the website - <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/geobee>
- 4.** Test your knowledge of world or regional geography with this fun quiz at <http://www.lizardpoint.com/fun/geoquiz/>. A great aspect of this game is that children can see improvement quickly, even by their second round at the same quiz. Builds confidence and knowledge!
- 5.** This quiz site - <http://www.ilike2learn.com/ilike2learn/geography.asp> - allows you to not only learn about the countries and capitals of the world, but also the mountains and bodies of water. If you need a hint, or the answer, it comes in the form of a pop-up, so you may need to disable your pop-up blocker. This site seems to add new games frequently. Great learning tool!

Week 3:

This week, you will need to print some maps for your students to label and color. These maps have been provided for you at the end of this ebook. Print the maps that have been included for the region that you are studying during this month. Print a teacher's answer map for yourself and a blank map for each of your children. Ask them to label each of the country and city names that they can remember. They may freeze up and not remember very much. Do not worry about this. Have them leave their unfinished maps, play another two or three of the online games listed above. After 30 minutes or so, have them come back to their map and see how much more information they can add to it. Again, I wouldn't ask them to complete everything if they are unsure of the answers. You will come back to this later. They may be encouraged to color their map if this is an enjoyable activity for them. If not, don't push it. The goal here is to learn geography, not press through a coloring exercise they don't enjoy.

Note: If you have young students who can read well, but struggle with the manual effort of handwriting, you may certainly have them dictate the locations to you. Again, we are learning geography here, not doing a handwriting lesson (unless, of course, you are combining your skill areas). Your judgment should advise you about how much handwriting your children are capable of accomplishing in a given day.

Week 4:

Now that your students have a good handle on the geography of the region you are studying, it's time to test that knowledge and skill in games against other players. Here are a couple of websites where your kids can play with other players online. You do not have to use your real name or identity. In fact, I would suggest that you do not, but do give yourself a name you will recognize. Be creative when giving yourself or your students a user name. It can be part of the fun. Allow your students some time to play these games as they compete against fellow geography enthusiasts and increase their scores.

1. Here is a great quiz site - <http://www.actionquiz.com/quiz.php?trivia=geography>. Here you can play against other kids and teachers and see if you can win. You do not have to use your real name (no reason to, so don't!) and the game uses a pop-up window. So, if your computer blocks pop-ups, you either have to disable that feature to play, or if you get a message that allows you to open the pop-up, you can go about it that way. Warning: this is a fun game to play and rather addicting. After playing five times against some strong opponents, I finally won! Also, these quizzes also include flag symbols. You may want to learn the flags for the countries before playing this game. You can use the Seterra game on your computer to help you learn these.

2. This website - <http://www.geosense.net> - also allows you to play alone or against another player. You are asked to not only identify countries of the world but cities as well. It is quite challenging and also very addicting. I played six rounds against my opponent and only won twice (and I thought I knew my geography like the back of my hand - reality check!). If you do not mind that your scores are not recorded in their log, you can play as a guest. Or create a login ID to keep track of your scores and establish an identity at this site.

When your students can compete against other players and win consistently (or even half the time), they are ready to move onto the next region of the world, which you will do starting next week unless you have a "fifth" week in your month.

Also, this week, have your kids color in and label the geographical portion of the world that they have worked diligently on this past month. You can do this on a regular sized world outline map (included for you on page 8) or on a wall sized outline map. When your students work on wall maps, they can complete this exercise together rather than individually for a fun change of pace.

Week 5:

If you happen to get a 5th week in your month, you will want to use this extra day for reviewing all of the areas of the world that you have studied so far. See the suggestions listed under Months 8,9 and Beyond and utilize these activities or go back and review the area by continuing to play the games listed above.

Months 2-7:

Continue the course of study outlined under month 1, choosing a different region of the world from the list on page 2.

Months 8, 9 and beyond:

Well, you and your students did it. You completed the 7 month geography challenge! How did you do? Are you pleased with the results? And you may be wondering, what now? Well, I have some suggestions...

The Road to the White House – This game not only teaches about the electoral college, but also familiarizes the students with the placement of the 50 states. Read more about the game here – <http://www.knowledgequestmaps.com/The-Road-to-the-White-House.html>.

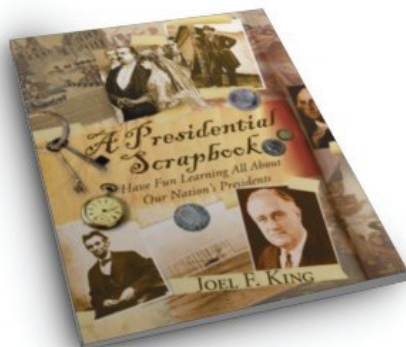
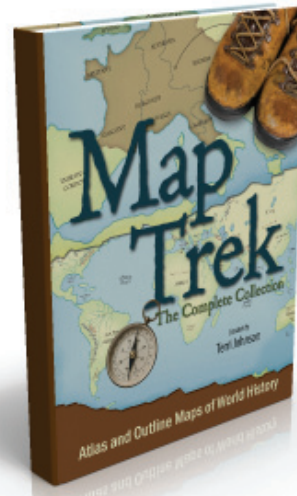
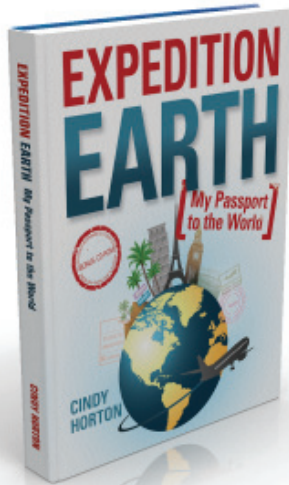
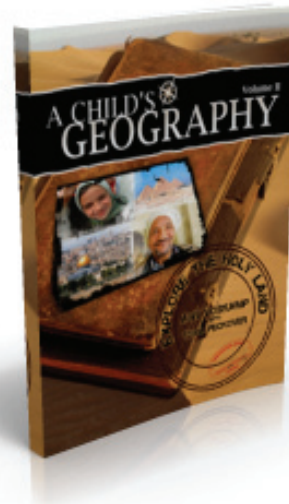
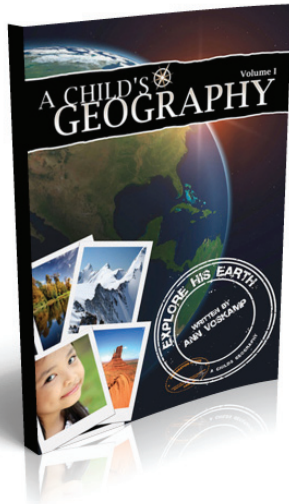
Memorize the Capitals of the United States (if this is your homeland) using books such as Yo Sacramento! or by visiting the various websites listed below:

For state capital hangman and state capital quizzes, visit <http://sf.factmonster.com/states.html#games>

For matching games and concentration, this is a good site - <http://www.quia.com/custom/4main.html>

For multiple choice matching games, click here <http://www.funbrain.com/where/index.html>
You decide how many capitals you want to match with this game - http://www.schoolexpress.com/funtime/states_capitals/capitals_how_many.php?name=Capitals

Find more fun and engaging geography products at Knowledge Quest's website, such as:



World and Continent MAPS

(labeled & unlabeled)*

*Be sure to download all 24 world and
continent maps from this webpage:
[KnowledgeQuestMaps.com/Globalmania.html](https://www.KnowledgeQuestMaps.com/Globalmania.html)