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## EXPLORING WITH GEOCACHING

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RECOMMENDED GRADE LEVEL	5 & 6
ACADEMICS	LANGUAGE ARTS, SOCIAL STUDIES, AND FINE ARTS
TEKS ADDRESSED	<p>Language Arts: B-Knowledge and skills (15) Writing/purposes. The student writes for a variety of audiences and purposes, and in a variety of forms. (16) Writing/penmanship/capitalization/punctuation. The student composes original texts, applying the conventions of written language, including capitalization, punctuation, and penmanship, to communicate clearly.</p> <p>Fine Arts: Fine Arts (2) Creative expression/performance. The student expresses ideas through original artwork, using a variety of media appropriate to skill level. The student creates original artwork and explores photographic imagery using a variety of art materials and media appropriately.</p> <p>Geography: The student uses maps, globes, graphs, charts, models, and databases to answer geographic questions. (C) The student compares selected world regions and countries using data from maps, graphs, charts, databases, and models. The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data. (A) The student applies geographic tools, including grid systems, legends, symbols, scales, and compass roses to construct and interpret maps.</p>
DESCRIPTION	<p><b>What is Geocaching?</b> Geocaching is an adventure game for GPS users. The basic idea is to have individuals and organizations set up caches (treasures) all over the world and share the locations of these caches on the Internet. GPS users can then use the location coordinates to find the caches. Once found, a cache may provide the visitor with a wide variety of rewards.</p> <p><b>What is a GPS unit?</b> A GPS unit is an electronic device that can determine an approximate location (within around 6-20 feet) on the planet. Coordinates are normally given in longitude and latitude. You can use the unit to navigate from your current location to another location.</p> <p><b>Day 1:</b> Talk to students about longitude and latitude. Pass out blank United States maps and have students locate different states using longitude and latitude. Students should also practice writing the longitude and latitude locations for different states. Have students pair up and fill out the worksheet using longitude and latitude locations. Prizes may be offered to the pair that finishes first with all the correct answers. Both maps and worksheet templates will be provided to participants at Carousel.</p> <p><b>Day 2:</b> Before class starts, hide several caches outside, log the coordinates of their locations, and program GPS units with the different coordinates. Introduce the GPS unit to students and help them become familiar with using it. Go to <a href="http://www.geocaching.com">www.geocaching.com</a> and explain to students what geocaching means. Look up different areas near your school to count how many "treasures" are located in the area.</p> <p><b>Day 3:</b> Have students choose different countries. Students should research their country and discuss which items to include in the cache to represent their country (these can include drawings, maps, or any other item that represents the country). End the class by having students start a journal to document their experience thus far. Students should also include in the cache the name of their country, where it is located, and a picture of the country's flag.</p> <p><b>Day 4:</b> Each group will gather or make all the items and fill their caches. Each group should appoint a photographer to take pictures of the group as they complete the activities. Students will write in their journals at the end of the class.</p> <p><b>Day 5:</b> Use this day if students need extra time to make their caches.</p> <p><b>Day 6:</b> Accompany students, a few groups at a time, as they hide their caches and log the coordinates. *Take only a few groups out at a time so the other groups do not see where the caches are hidden. *Remind students that the caches should not be buried, only cleverly hidden. After all groups have hidden their caches, allow students to trade coordinates and take the entire class outside to find the treasures. Remind students to take pictures of their adventure. At the end of class, students should write in their journals and include a list of what they found in their treasure boxes.</p> <p><b>Day 7:</b> Have each group present an artistic interpretation of the items in the caches. Students can make a collage, write a story, sing a song, perform a drama, or use any other art form to describe what they found and how they imagine it got there. Students should continue to take pictures.</p>

	<b>Day 8:</b> Introduce students to Movie Maker. Help students upload their pictures to make a movie. Invite parents and community members to the school for a movie night. Students can show their movies and share their experiences.
TIME REQUIRED	Approximately 45-60 minutes per day, 1-5 days per week. Days per unit: 8.
MATERIALS	Hand-held GPS devices, containers, items to be placed inside caches, arts and crafts supplies, access to computers and Internet, and digital cameras.
APPROXIMATE COST	1 GPS unit per group of students, approximately \$90 each; cost of art supplies.
TEACHER TIPS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Try the activity yourself before having students work on it.</li> <li>2. Do not hide treasures until just before the search activity, to avoid tampering.</li> <li>3. Do not bury treasure.</li> <li>4. Teacher may want to take pictures as well, in case students' pictures do not come out.</li> <li>5. Celebrate accomplishment by inviting parents, school, and community members to view movies.</li> </ol>
ADAPTATIONS	Lesson may be modified for grades. For higher grades, you can have students research the countries on the computer. Students in lower grades can cut pictures out of magazines.
CONTACT	Northside ISD