Comparing country development
from the Esri GeoInquiries™ collection for Human Geography

Activity
Explore factors that define levels of development.

APHG Benchmarks
APHG: VI.B1. Analyze spatial variation in the Human Development Index.
APHG: VI.B1. Explain social and economic measures of development.

Learning Outcomes
- Students will distinguish between more developed, less developed, and newly industrializing countries.
- Students will identify characteristics used to determine a country’s level of development.

Map URL: http://esriurl.com/humanGeolnquiry13

Ask

Why do we study development?
- Development is “the process of improving the material conditions of people through diffusion of knowledge and technology.”
- How are more and less developed countries different? [More developed countries (MDCs) have advanced socially and economically, whereas less developed countries (LDCs) are in the early stages of development.]
- What is the Human Development Index? [The Human Development Index, created by the United Nations, measures the development of countries socially, economically, and demographically.]
- Click the link above to launch the map.

Acquire

What are examples of countries with different levels of development?
- With the Details button underlined, click the button, Show Contents of Map (Content).
- Turn on the two layers: HDI: High Development and HDI: Low Development.
- Which countries are in the very high development category? [Norway, Australia, Germany, and others]
- Which countries are in the low development category? [Niger, Central African Republic, Chad and others]
- Can a country have a middle level of development? [Yes: a newly industrializing country or middle-income country.]
- Turn on the layer, HDI: Medium Development.
- Which medium development country is an example of a newly industrializing country? [Egypt or South Africa.]

Explore

What characteristics help define a country’s level of development?
- Click several countries to compare their data.
- How is gross domestic product (GDP) used to assess development? [A high GDP, the total value of a country’s goods and services in a year, can indicate a MDC.]
- How is mean years of schooling used to assess development? [The average number of years in school indicates an educated population. Mean years of schooling is usually lower in LDCs.]
- How is life expectancy used to assess development? [High life expectancy indicates access to medical care: people in MDCs usually have longer life expectancies than people in LDCs.]
Analyze

Why is there such a difference between the levels of development of countries around the world?

- Click the button, Basemap. Select National Geographic.
- Describe the general location of MDCs and LDCs. [Many MDCs are located in the Northern Hemisphere.]
- What is the Brandt line? [A line believed to split Earth in two halves: the wealthy north and poor south.]
- Draw a line along the 30-degree north parallel. (See Line ToolTip below.)
- Are there any exceptions to the rule? [Yes. Australia is developed even though it is located in the Southern Hemisphere.]

Act

What patterns exist among country development levels?

- Which regions have a great number of MDCs? Why? [Europe and North America have more MDCs because of industrialization, trade, and education.]
- What characterizes the middle development countries? [They are spatially dispersed, often border water, and have trade partners.]
- How can countries advance in their development? [Industrialization, an educated population, specialization, and resource development.]

Layer and Pop-Ups

- Turn on a layer of data.
- Click a selected country to display a pop-up that shows more information.

Line

- If you see a Modify Map button, click it.
- Click Add, and then choose Add Map Note.
- Type a name, use the Map Notes template, and click OK.
- Follow the 30-degree north parallel dividing the wealthy north and poor south. Change the color of the line to red.

Next Steps

DID YOU KNOW? ArcGIS Online is a mapping platform freely available to public, private, and home schools. A school subscription provides additional security, privacy, and content features. Learn more about ArcGIS Online and how to get a school subscription at http://www.esri.com/schools.

THEN TRY THIS...

- Create a story map including elements of development to save and share with classmates.
- Use the Hot Spot analysis tool to uncover spatial clustering of high and low values for development indicators such as GDP per capita, life expectancy, and so on.

Text References

- Human Geography: Landscapes of Human Activities by McGraw Hill - Chapter 10
- The Cultural Landscape by Pearson – Chapter 9
- Human Geography: People, Place, and Culture by Wiley Press – Chapter 10

This GIS map has been cross-referenced to material in sections of chapters from these texts.