Ask

What is a toponym?
- Toponymy is the study of place names. You will now take a tour of place names in the Americas.
  ➤ Click the URL above to launch the map.
  ➤ Open and read the map note located inside North America (North Dakota).
  ➤ Who was North America named after? Why? [Amerigo Vespucci was the first explorer to identify the New World as new continents.]
  ➤ Open and read the map note located off the west coast of North America.
  ➤ What is the language of origin and meaning for the name, Pacific? [Spanish, meaning peaceful]

Acquire

What is the toponymy of the East Coast?
- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select the Eastern Canada bookmark.
  ➤ Which languages were used for place names? [French and English]
  ➤ What other cultural traits influenced these place names? [Religion]
  ➤ Click the button, Bookmarks. Select East Coast.
  ➤ With the Details button underlined, click the button, Show Contents of Map (Content).
  ➤ Click the checkbox to the left of the layer name, Settlements - 1655.
  ➤ To display a legend, click on the layer name, Settlements - 1655.
  ➤ Where were the French settlements concentrated? [Along the St. Lawrence River and Quebec.]
  ➤ Where were the English settlements? [The eastern United States, and eastern Canada.]

Explore

What major migrations helped define California toponyms?
- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select California-Local.
  ➤ Which languages were used for place names? [Spanish and English]
  ➤ What other cultural factors influenced place names? [Religion and land use]
  ➤ Turn on the layer, Missions.
  ➤ Why did the Spanish build missions in California? [They built them for religious reasons.]
  ➤ What spatial patterns do you notice? [Missions are located along the coastal areas.]
  ➤ Click the button, Bookmarks. Select California-Regional.
  ➤ Turn on the layer, Mining Towns.
  ➤ How were missions and mining settlements distributed? [missions along the coast; mines inland, near mountains]
How does Trinidad’s toponymy compare to Canada and California?

- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select the West Indies bookmark.
- Open and read the map note near Cuba.
- Why is this area called the West Indies? [Columbus thought he was in Asia.]
- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select the Trinidad bookmark.
- Turn on the layer, Trinidad Toponyms. Click the layer name to display its legend.
- What were the dominant languages used for Trinidad’s place names? [Spanish, French, English, and Amerindian were the dominant languages.]
- What does the number of languages suggest? [Trinidad was a contested land, switching between influential countries multiple times.]

Act

What is the relationship between colonization and toponyms?

- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select the European Claims bookmark.
- Turn on the layer, Claims. Click the layer name to display the legend.
- How are regional place names in the Americas tied to colonization? [Eastern Canada has French toponyms. The American Southwest has Spanish toponyms. West Indies has French, Dutch, and British names.]
- Besides toponyms, how does colonization and these early claims affect the world today? [They affect religion, language, architecture, and so on.]

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...
- Use the Calculate Density tool to analyze the distribution of Spanish missions or mining settlements.
- Conduct research on the history of the mining settlements. Create a Story Map Tour explaining how the toponym reflects the history or geography of the place, e.g., French Gulch, Leadville.

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

- Human Geography by McGraw Hill – Chapter 7
- The Cultural Landscape by Pearson – Chapters 5, 6
- Human Geography: People, Place, and Culture by Wiley Press – Chapters 5, 6

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