



Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame

The Geography of Athletics

Lesson Overview: This lesson will cause students to think about geographic issues and topics in Nebraska as they look at selected athletes in the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame.

Objectives

Students will gather and analyze data on selected athletes.

Students will discover aspects of Nebraska's demographics as they map and ponder questions.

Students will pose questions about selected athletes.

Students will determine how various sports have changed in popularity over time.

Nebraska State Social Studies Standards

SS8.3.6 and SS12.3.6 Students will analyze issues and/or events using the geographic knowledge and skills to make informed decisions.

SS8.4.4 and SS12.4.4 Students will identify and evaluate the effects of past, current, and potential future events, issues, and problems.

Materials needed:

Computer and internet access

Graphic Organizers

Nebraska State Road Maps

Sticky Note Tabs Or Outline Maps of Nebraska

http://nebraskalegislature.gov/maps.2011/counties/counties_high.jpg

Suggested procedure:

1. Introduce the students to the Nebraska High School Sports Hall of Fame website.
<http://www.nebhalloffame.org/>
2. Have students practice finding athletes on the site by clicking on the tab: Inductees by Name
3. Hand out the graphic organizer. The teacher can decide whether to have students work in teams to complete the organizer or as individuals.
4. Students should complete the graphic organizer for the twenty-three athletes.
5. Distribute maps to the students and instruct them to answer the questions and complete the activities that are listed below the graphic organizer.
6. Discuss the questions in class after the students have completed the work either individually or in groups.

Athlete	Sport(s)	School	Decade
Grover Cleveland Alexander			
Paul Amen			
Richie Ashburn			
Bobby Bass			
Scott Bream			
Bob Cerv			
Bob Churchich			
Sam Crawford			
Rex Ekwall			
Don Erway			
Bob Gibson			
Mel Harder			
Dennis Loewe			
Les Mann			
Clarence Mitchell			
Gary Neibauer			
Gregg Olson			
Kevin Penner			
Billy Southworth			
Russ Snyder			
Zane Smith			
John Sanders			
Arthur Vance			

Activities and Questions

1. What is the one sport that all of these athletes have in common?
2. Map the hometowns of each of these athletes. (use a Nebraska Road Map and mark the town with a sticky note tab or mark and note the athlete on a outline map of Nebraska) If you are not familiar with the location of the town use the city index and the coordinates to locate the community.
3. Where are the majority of the athletes' hometowns---In the eastern or western part of the state?
4. What does the answer in question 3 tell us about the population distribution in Nebraska?
5. How many of the baseball players were from towns that now have less than 2,000 residents?(use the city index to find population numbers)
6. How many of those players in question 5 played before the decade of 1970?
7. What does your answer in question 6 seem to indicate about the popularity of baseball before and after 1970?
8. How many of the players were from towns that no longer have their own high schools? A list of current Nebraska High Schools can be found at:
<http://www.greatschools.org/schools/districts/Nebraska/NE>
9. What does your answer in question 8 tell about rural population trends?
10. Choose one player that, if you could go back in time, you would like to watch him play. Why did you choose that person? What is one question you would like to ask him?