

Thank you for downloading sample chapters of
Virtual Travel Activities for Kids!

Here, you'll find two chapters that are representative
of the book as a whole.

If you like what you read, I invite you to get your own copy
of the e-book or paperback!

Find Virtual Travel Activities for Kids on Amazon.

click to get your copy!



Virtual Travel Activities *FOR KIDS*

Explore the world from home with
52 fun, no-prep lessons

CATHERINE RYAN GREGORY

To & Fro Fam

TRAVEL TIPS FOR REAL FAMILIES

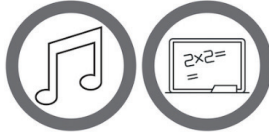
ToAndFroFam.com

Copyright © 2020 Catherine Ryan Gregory

All rights reserved.

5

Extreme!



Categories:

- Music + drama
- Math

Introduction

As humans, most of us can't resist a good superlative (aka the “-est” or “most ____”). Just look at our cultural obsession with extreme sports and extreme makeovers. Extreme situations, environments, activities or achievements make us consider what is possible when we push ourselves to the edge.

That's why this week, we're exploring a country by its extremes. By definition, these extremes don't represent the majority of a country. But tapping into kids' fascination with “-est” things is a fun way to explore the wide range of what's possible in a place.

Explore

Guiding questions:

- How many superlatives can you come up with? (Think of things that are super-hot, super-wet, super-high, super-old and so forth.)
- What are this country's superlative places? Use the list you created above to search for the country's -est spots.
- Is life very different in these extreme locations? How?

Helpful resources

- Online search engines will be your best resource here.
- Look up the *A True Book: Extreme Places* series. The books, which cover hottest/coldest, oldest/newest and more, are written for grades 3-5 but are great resources for all ages, with parent help.

Do

Tourism board. Learn about an extreme place in this country. Then script and record a commercial encouraging people to visit it. (This gets really silly when you pick a place that would *not* be a great place to visit, like the inside of a volcano or a deep sea trench!) What should visitors wear/bring/do? Why should they plan a trip there?

Adventures

Extreme home makeover. After you've learned about extreme places in this country, recreate them at home! The freezer could be the coldest spot, the shower the wettest and the yard the most biodiverse. Make a map of your house, pinpointing each extreme location (and labeling it with the name of that extreme spot in this country). For even more fun (that requires some pre-planning by an adult), create challenges for each spot. For example, for the country's coldest spot, you could freeze little plastic toys in an ice cube tray and challenge your kids to get the toys out.

Graphing opposites. After you research this country's extreme places, pair opposite superlatives (high/low, hot/cold, wettest/driest). For each, record data that shows those extremes (altitude, degrees, inches of rainfall). Then plot these on a bar graph to visualize the difference between the extremes. You can do this by hand using graph paper or a ruler, or you can use one of the many free online graphing tools. I like the user-friendly bar graph tool at MathIsFun.com.

Critical thinking questions

- How do people, plants and animals adapt to these extreme places?
- Are these extreme locations inhabited by people? Would you want to live there? Why would people settle in spots that make it difficult to thrive?

Write

Imagine you're a creature living in one of the extreme places in this country. You could be a person, animal, insect—anything! Then write a descriptive passage about what it is like there. Use all five senses (touch, smell, taste, hearing, sight) to help the reader feel as if they're actually there.

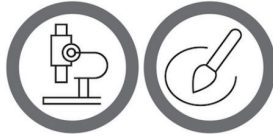
Fun facts

The highest place on earth—and the closest you can get to space without leaving the planet—is Ecuador's 20,000-foot-tall Mt. Chimborazo.

Dallol, Ethiopia is the hottest place on earth where people live. The average year-round temperature there is 95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 degrees Celsius), and temperatures routinely rise to 115 degrees Fahrenheit (46 degrees Celsius) at the hottest part of the day.

10

By Water, By Sea



Categories:

- Science + engineering
- Art + design

Introduction

Water is one of the earth's most precious natural resources—some even call it “blue gold.” After all, life as we know it can't survive long without water.

It's no wonder, then, that many civilizations were built around water. Oceans, rivers and lakes provide plenty for people to survive: food, transportation, energy and of course drinking water, to name a few.

This week, we'll explore a new country by water. Let's dive in!

Explore

Guiding questions:

- What bodies of water are in or next to this country? Look for oceans, rivers and lakes.
- Why do people often settle near water? What are the benefits? What are the challenges of living near water?
- Are there conflicts over water in this country?
- Is clean drinking water easily accessible here? If not, what problems result?

Helpful resources

- The rhyming book *Who Sank the Boat?* by Pamela Allen is a silly introduction to the mechanics of keeping a craft afloat.
- *Where on Earth: Coastlines* communicates the basic science about places where land meets the sea.
- *The Rhythm of the Rain*, by Grahame Baker-Smith, teaches the water cycle in a beautifully illustrated and easily understandable way.

Do

I'm on a boat. Pick a town or city in this country that's accessible by water. (You can look for ports, bays and any settlement along a

Adventures

waterway.) What jobs here depend on this body of water? Now “travel” by imaginary boat to another town you can get to via water—across the lake, along the river or by sea. Does this town rely on water in the same way, or does it use water differently (e.g. by transferring water to fields for agriculture, for tourism, or generating electricity)?

Continue to trace the entire route of this body of water through the country. Do the landscape and settlements stay similar, or does the water take you through vastly different places? Read the book *A River* by Marc Martin, then write and illustrate your own book that follows the path of this body of water.

Float on. This activity challenges kids to make boats out of different materials, encouraging experimentation and a growth mindset. Start by researching the boats used in this country. You can observe everything from industrial tankers to traditional canoes. Then gather a variety of materials, from empty yogurt containers and cardboard from the recycling bin to modeling clay, tin foil and tree bark.

Challenge your kids to make a boat with these materials and test their “seaworthiness” in the sink or bathtub. If the boat works, great! Leave it in the water for now and return to the materials, making another, different boat. If it doesn’t work, consider if you want to redesign the boat or start fresh with a new one. Can you draw inspiration from any of the boats used in this week’s country? When you have a variety of boats made from different materials, make waves in the tub to see which ones capsize.

Cookie science. Wherever water and land meet, you get weathering, erosion and deposition. Weathering is when water, natural disasters, plant growth or ice gradually break big rocks into smaller rocks. Erosion is when rocks and soil are moved by water,

Virtual Travel Activities for Kids

wind, gravity or ice. Deposition is the accumulation of rocks, dirt and sand. You'll explore these concepts using a cookie!

Each child gets a cookie on a rimmed baking sheet for this activity. (You can provide two cookies if kids want one for science and one to eat!) Start with weathering: How can you break up the cookie (standing in for a rock) with a toothpick (to represent a natural disaster like an earthquake or avalanche), a straw to represent wind, a dropper to represent water and an ice cube to represent ice?

Once the cookie rock is broken up, model erosion by moving the cookie crumbs. Blow through a straw for wind, tilt the baking sheet for gravity and drip water. Once the cookie is a bit wet, mold it into a new shape to show how sediment can collect into a new landform.

Where do you see examples of weathering, erosion and deposition in this week's country?

Critical thinking questions

- What happens when multiple places claim the same water (e.g. if a river creates a border between two countries, or a town downriver disagrees with the amount of water left to them)? Does anyone "own" water?
- How do waterways impact where you live? Does your home use rivers, lakes or the ocean for jobs, electricity, food, transportation, trade, recreation or other purposes?

Write

Write a story from the perspective of a drop of water. Where does it go? How does it get there? What does it “see” along the way?

Fun facts

Oceans cover more than 70% of the earth’s surface!

The Nile is the world’s longest river. Although it’s most commonly associated with Egypt, it flows through 10 additional countries.

Your Next Steps

You might have reached this page and wondered, *Where to next?*

The truth is, I'd love to be part of your next adventure!

Here's how.

Head over to my family travel blog, ToAndFroFam.com. You'll find recommendations for kid-friendly destinations, ideas for fun travel activities, travel hacks, tips on how to keep your kiddos happy en route, and even country-specific virtual travel activities!

Join the To & Fro Fam community. You can sign up for my newsletter that shares a must-know travel tip every week or join the conversation on Instagram, Facebook and Pinterest. (Look for @ToAndFroFam). Tag your posts with #VirtualTravelForKids to show the community where you and your kiddos have gone!

Finally, download a bunch of freebies, from an art museum scavenger hunt to family travel conversation starters. Find them all in one place at ToAndFroFam.com/freebies.