



# Central American Profile

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Grades: 6-8

Time: Two 50-Minute Class Periods

Geographic Theme

Location, Place, Movement

Purpose

Students will construct a "profile" of a Central American country. They will be given directions to assemble an informative summary which is suitable for display and comparison with others in a series.

Objectives

- Locate and label main features of each country's geography.
- Create and interpret graphs to show statistics for each country.
- Compare and contrast countries (government, culture, history, economy).

Materials

- Scissors
- Map sheets
- Glue
- Information sheets
- Crayons
- Geography textbook
- Icon sheets
- Atlas or almanac

## Procedures

Review on a map the location of Central America. Explain the directions as outlined on the directions page. Have students choose a partner if they wish. Pass out a directions page, icons page, and blank map to each pair of students. Furnish each pair with scissors, glue, colored pencils or crayons. Circulate and monitor progress, clarifying procedures for the whole class when necessary. As the maps are completed they can be displayed on a wall or bulletin board, preferably with a map of Central America in the middle with yarn strings or paper arrows pointing to the country's location on the larger map. As the students work, or after they finish, introduce the following discussion questions:

- Ask for possible reasons for the differences between countries.
- What characteristics do they have in common?
- How has the environment shaped those similarities?
- Does it also explain the differences?
- What are the main impediments to transportation in each country?
- What are the main occupations in each country? Why?
- Does each country's GNP seem proportional to its size? Its population?
- How do these countries' GNPs compare with the United States?
- Are the countries to the north different from those in the south? Are they similar enough to merit being set apart as a separate region called Central America?

## Evaluation

Finished map of the country correctly done. Comparison discussion.

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### Directions

You are going to be constructing a "profile" of a Central American country. Use the directions below to assemble an informative summary which is suitable for display and comparison with others in this series.

1. **MAP:** Carefully cut and paste the map labels where they belong on the map. Choose appropriate colors to enhance the map. You may want to show elevation, land use, climatic regions, or some other aspect, but be sure to add your symbols to the key. If this map is to be part of a series, you may want to be sure that each map in the series uses the same symbols to make comparisons easier.
2. **FLAG:** Locate a color picture of the flag in an almanac, encyclopedia, or atlas. Color it appropriately
3. **GRAPHS:** Cut and paste some of the icons onto the profile to accurately describe this country.
4. **OCCUPATIONS:** Make a pie graph showing the percentages of workers who work in agriculture, industry, and other occupations. Then paste on the three labels and fill in the percentage. Color your graph green for agriculture, red for industry, and brown for others.
5. **POPULATION:** Paste on one of the "1 Million" markers with the symbols for building, trade, invention, and transportation for each billion dollars in the gross national product.
6. **PER CAPITA INCOME:** Paste on a "\$100 bill" for every hundred dollars earned by an average person in this country each year.
7. **COMMUNICATIONS:** Cut and paste one figure for each person who must share a radio in this country. If there are three people per radio, for example, glue three figures by the radio. Do the same for televisions and telephones, filling in the number in the sentence which describes each.

