

Map Interpretation (Map Analysis Activity)

Directions: Each of the photos shows a different map that serves as talking points for the different cartographic principles and map design elements. It is recommended to go over the notes on cartographic principles (TODALSIGS) first and then use this activity as a way for students to identify “good” maps and “bad” maps

Map 1 - McArthur’s Universal Corrective Map of the World

- TODALSIGs fairly solid, any missing elements do not really detract of ‘readability’ of map
- Talking points - Northcentric/Eurocentric view of the world, Up and Center perceived as most powerful, Greenwich Line/Prime Meridian reflect British perceptions
- Compass Rose - Incorrect, pointing ‘south’ but should point to top middle of map (approximate point of South Pole)

Map 2 - Population Trend - Bad Harmony Map

- Color Scheme (“Christmas Tree” color scale)
- Title makes no sense
- Compass Rose pointless
- Scale bar - missing numbers
- No data source
- No Author
- Legend - Largest should be on top
- Legend - Ranges of data is just bad...really bad

Map 3 - ??????

- No title
- No real information except agricultural crop pointing at highlighted countries
 - Should include legend
 - Need names of crops
- Alternating between crop closest to line vs. name of country
- Egypt, Tunisia, and Turkey’s lines all reach out to Atlantic Ocean??
 - Change color scheme of those three to white and place closer
 - Put symbols and names on country itself if possible

Map 4 - Georgia Covid Cases per 100k

- Title needs to be more descriptive
- Good example on changing statistical range can change appearance of maps
 - Principles from “how to lie with maps”
 - “Comparison” map - but uses different scale

Map 5 - Fox News Map of "Middle East"

- Iraq mislabeled
- Talking Point - need to be critical of all maps, source of map does not always guarantee accuracy or credibility

Map 6 - CNN Ebola Map

- Nigeria mislabeled
- Talking Point - need to be critical of all maps, source of map does not always guarantee accuracy or credibility

Map 7 - The Caucasus and Central Asia

- Example of a "good" map