

The Loom: Transparency Map Project

These are detailed instructions for the Transparency Map Project that we suggest in the Student Activity Pages in Week 1 for dialectic and rhetoric level students. This is a fun project for many students, but fair warning: it is more costly and more time consuming than simpler approaches to geography assignments. If your student enjoys hands-on projects and is diligent, he truly can create a wonderful transparency atlas over the course of this year.

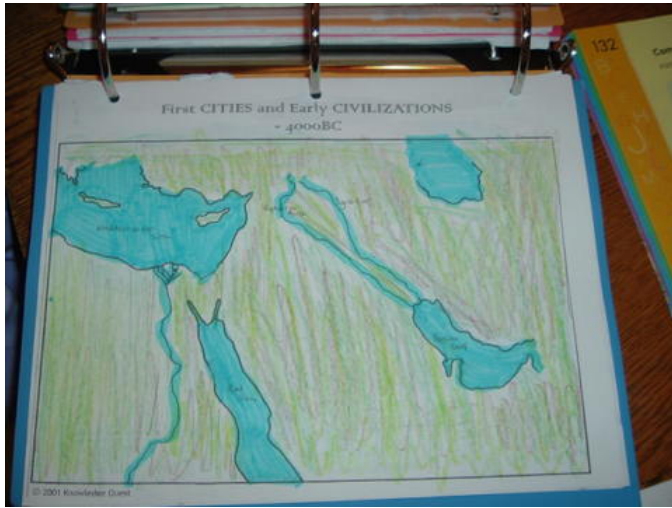
SUPPLIES NEEDED:

- A package of transparencies.** These are often labeled as being for overhead projectors. The number that you buy will be determined by how many countries or continents for which you choose to make this project. (See Step #1 below.) As you'll read below, we no longer recommend that you print the overlap directly onto the transparency because of distortion, thus resulting in borders that don't match up well or at all.
- Cardstock or heavy paper that you can put through your printer.** We suggest white cardstock and encourage you to avoid construction paper as it fades over time. Construction paper also doesn't always work well with many printers.
- Construction paper or other colored cardstock.** Colored pages make nice dividers for different geographical areas.
- Outline maps.** They don't need to have any geographical features on them. You can use our *MapAids* product, or print your own from the Internet or other resource.
- Ultra fine point Sharpies.** Get several colors: brown, blue, and green will be used for geographical formations. Other colors will be used in the legend. Use black for labeling political features, like cities.
- Paper clips.** Use large ones if you are using the foam board option below.
- Hole punch.** You'll probably need to punch holes in the transparencies. Use a 3-hole punch if you are using a binder, or punch 2 or 3 holes using a single-hole punch if you are using foam board, depending on how long you want to spend punching holes.
- Optional: white foam board.** If you aren't going to file your maps in a notebook, this will give your map overlays a strong foundation.
- Optional: 1" binder to store your maps.** If you aren't going to use the foam board, then this size of notebook will suffice to hold your Transparency Map Project.
- Optional: brads.** You'll use these if you've chosen the foam board option.

STEPS TO MAKE YOUR MAP OVERLAYS:

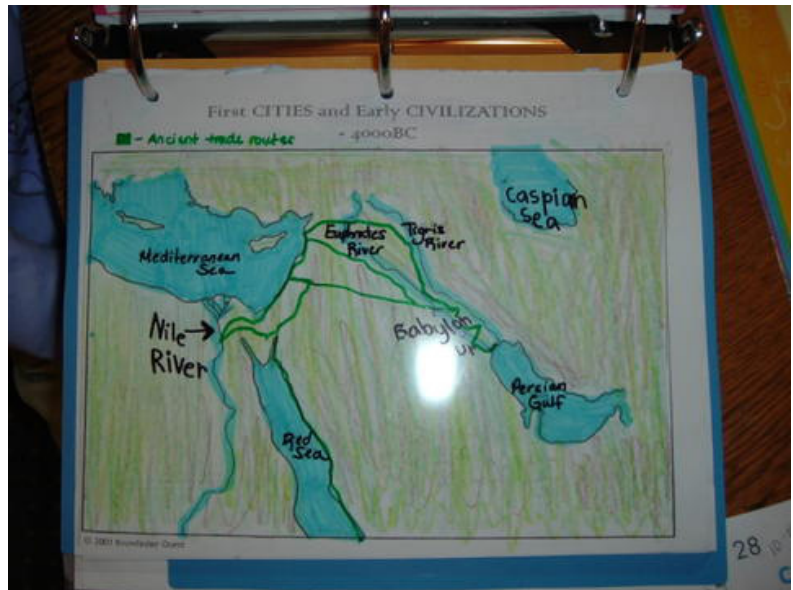
1. Choose which countries or continents you wish to create a map of for this project. The idea is not necessarily to work on this every week, but only as often as that country or continent comes up in your studies. For instance, in Year 2, you may want to track the progress of changes in European political boundaries. In Year 3, one idea is to track westward expansion of the United States.
2. If you have decided to use the foam board for your back surface, cut it to the size of your paper maps, which are typically 8½" x 11". Make sure you have an adequate cutting surface, and don't let children do this step unsupervised because it is easy for the knife (or other cutting device) to slip.
3. Punch holes in your foam board so that you can attach all of the maps to them later. If you aren't using foam board, just 3-hole punch one piece of cardstock and put on the bottom of the stack you're about to build.
4. Glue your base map, which you've printed on white paper, to the foam board. If you are using cardstock, just place the photocopy on top of it. (Your printer may also accept cardstock, so you can print your outline maps directly onto it.)

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- If you chose to print black and white copies of the base maps, have your student color in the major bodies of water or mountain ranges on this, your **base map**. (See example, left.)
- Add a clear transparency by paper clipping it down to the base map so it won't slip around while the student is working, and have him add labels for the geographic formations. These can include bodies of water, mountains, etc. (See the example, below.) Note that we have previously recommended that you print the overlay map directly onto the transparency. We have discovered that the thickness of the transparency distorts the map and thus doesn't line up exactly with the base map. We no longer recommend this method.

- Add another clear transparency and paper clip it down. This time you will add in political boundary lines. If your project is tracking the historical growth of a particular country, you'll do this in stages by adding more transparencies. (See the example at the bottom of the page.)
- Continue adding transparencies until the student has recorded all of the information needed for that era or that geographic area. Each top transparency can include a different legend, but you may wish to mask them with clear tape and a slip of paper so they do not become visually confusing.



- While storing, top each transparency layer with a piece of colored cardstock or heavy paper that can be removed when viewing the project. (Try not to forget this step as, over time, the markers will bleed a bit onto whatever is on top of them.)
- If you are using notebook-sized transparencies, build the project in the notebook or, if using foam board, use the brads you purchased to assemble all the parts together when all needed transparencies are complete.