

Map Analysis Guiding Questions

OBSERVE: Identify and note details

- What type of map is this (climate, economic or resource, military, physical, political, topographic, transportation, etc.)?
- What place or places does the map show?
- What size and shape is the map?
- What do you notice first? Describe what else you see.
- What details do you see that look unfamiliar, strange, or out of place?
- What, if any, words do you see?
- Does the map have any special features (e.g., legend, scale, description, notations, compass, etc.)? What information do these features provide?
- Are there details that suggest the time period this map relates to? Is the creation date listed in the bibliographic record? If the creation date is listed, was this map created at or around the same time period the map relates to?
- What other details can you see?

REFLECT: Generate and test hypotheses

- What tools might have been used to create this map?
- Why do you think this map was made? What might have been the creator's purpose? What evidence supports your theory?
- Why do you think the creator chose to include the details shown? What might have been left off the map?
- Who do you think was the audience for this map?
- What do you think the creator might have wanted the audience to see or think? Does the arrangement or presentation of the details affect how the audience might think? How?
- Does this map show clear bias? If so, towards what or whom? What evidence supports your conclusion?
- What was happening during the time period this map represents? If someone made this map today, what would be different/the same?
- What did you learn from examining this map? Does any new information you learned contradict or support your prior knowledge about the topic of this map?

QUESTION: What didn't you learn that you would like to know about? What questions does this map raise? What do you wonder about . . .

- Who?
- What?
- When?
- Where?
- Why?
- How?

What sources might you consult to learn more?