Our Countries

A country can be big or small. There are about 192 countries in the world.

What country do you live in? Many of you live in the United States, but some of you may live in Canada or perhaps even on the island country of Samoa.

You and other readers share the Earth and perhaps a continent and a country. Are we perfect or what?

Questions to talk about:
1. About how many countries are there?
2. Which country do you live in?

I’ve listened to my child read the passage, and we’ve discussed the questions.

Date __________ Signed __________________________________________

Optional Second Reading (initial here): ________
A Bird's-Eye View

Chapter 1 • Our World

Our Planet

Earth is my home and yours too. We all share the planet Earth.

When we walk on Earth, everything seems flat. However, Earth is really round.

A globe is a round map shaped like the Earth. A globe is the best way to show what the Earth looks like.

Most maps that we draw are flat maps. Most flat maps are drawings of smaller parts of the Earth—the continents, islands, countries, and states. We can draw maps of our neighborhoods, buildings, and even our homes.

Questions to talk about:
1. What is the name of the planet we live on?
2. Why is a globe the best way to show what Earth looks like?

Questions to talk about:
1. What kind of map are most maps?
2. What is a continent?
3. Do you live on a continent or an island?

Our Continents

Continents are vast areas of land. There are seven continents in the world. Most of you live on the continent of North America.
Ben’s Apartment

Ben and Maya live in the same apartment building.

Questions to talk about:
1. What do you see in the map of Ben’s house?
2. Do you or your parents own a map? What do you use it for?

I’ve listened to my child read the passage, and we’ve discussed the questions.

Date __________ Signed ________________________________

Optional Second Reading (initial here): ________
A Bird’s-Eye View

Chapter 2 • Our Neighborhoods, Our Homes

Ana, Ben, and Maya’s Neighborhood

We can make maps of our world, our continents, and our countries. We can also make maps of smaller places, like our neighborhoods. A map is what a bird would see if it looked down from the sky. This is a bird’s-eye view of the kids’ neighborhood.

Maya’s Apartment

This is a bird’s-eye view of Maya’s apartment.

Questions to talk about:
1. Look at the map above. What is this a map of?
2. What are some of the places you can find on this map?

Questions to talk about:
1. What do you see in the map of Maya’s house?
2. What would a map of your room include?

Note: Numbers are for school use only.
Why do people move?

Sometimes people have to move.

Sometimes people choose to move.

People move to start a job, to be near family, or just to have an adventure. Most people move to find a better life.

Questions to talk about:
1. Why do people move?
2. Has your family ever moved? Why did your family move?

I've listened to my child read the passage, and we've discussed the questions.

Date __________  Signed __________________________________________

Optional Second Reading (initial here): ________
People come and people go. People are always on the move. They move from one place to another—over land and sea, by train, plane, bus, and car. Sometimes even on foot.

Think about packing everything you have and moving it to a new place. Could you really take everything? How many boxes would you need? Could you send it by plane? Could you pack it in your car? Could you carry everything you have on your back?

People are moving all the time. Did you know that many families move one time every five years? That takes oodles and caboodles of boxes! Packing all your belongings is a lot of work.

Questions to talk about:
1. What are some ways people move?
2. How often do many families move?
**Immigrants Today**

Today, people are still moving to America. People come by boat, but they also travel by car, bus, train, and plane. Has anyone in your class moved from another country? Is anyone from Spain, Mexico, or Japan? Where are you or your relatives from?

Over hundreds of years, immigrants have shared colorful customs, tasty foods, and the rich sounds of many languages.

America is a wonderful mix of people and traditions from places all around the world.

Questions to talk about:
1. What are some things that immigrants have shared with us?
2. What is your family’s history?

I’ve listened to my child read the passage, and we’ve discussed the questions.

Date __________ Signed _________________________________

Optional Second Reading (initial here): ________
People on the Move
Chapter 2 • From Here to There

If you live in the United States, you’ve probably moved at least one time. You may have moved a few blocks, across town, or to a different state. You may have traveled by car, bus, train, plane, or even in a ship.

From Country to Country
Some people move from one country to another. These people are called immigrants. You, your parents, your grandparents, or your great-grandparents may have come to America from another country.

The Earliest Americans
Thousands of years ago, there weren’t any people in America. Some scientists think that the first people came to our continent about 14,000 years ago. These people may have walked from Asia to America on a strip of land that no longer exists.

Questions to talk about:
1. What is an immigrant?
2. When do scientists think the first people arrived in America?

Immigrants 200 Years Ago
Before there were planes and cars, immigrating to any country was very hard. People walked. They rode on animals. They rode in carts and covered wagons pulled by animals.

Many immigrants traveled by boat. Men, women, and children were often crammed into small spaces for weeks at a time. Many immigrants had to leave most of their belongings behind.
All of the kids in Mr. Chapman’s class had brought something to write about. Emily had a purple button, Jason had a pebble, Alison had a bent straw, and Betsy had an old woolen shawl. Soon everyone was busy drawing and writing. There would be many interesting stories to read.

Questions to talk about:
1. Can you think of a story you might write about a family member?

I’ve listened to my child read the passage, and we’ve discussed the questions.

Date __________ Signed ________________________________

Optional Second Reading (initial here): __________
People on the Move

Chapter 3 • Maya’s Story

Maya Martinez stood in front of the class clutching a small wooden box. “I have something very cool from my great-great-great-great-granddad,” Maya said as she carefully counted the “greats” on her fingers.

Maya slowly opened the box. The class was absolutely still. Maya pulled out a faded red bandana. “My super-great-granddad was a cowboy,” said Maya. Then she added, “This is his bandana. It is old, old, old.

“Mama says my super-great-granddad was a slave. His father was stolen from Africa. They put him in a big boat and brought him across the ocean. I don’t think my super-great-granddad’s father wanted to come. The slave traders made him move.”

“When my super-great-granddad became a free man, he was very happy. He became a cowboy. I’m going to write my story about the bandana and how my super-great-granddad went on a cattle drive.”

The class asked Maya questions. Maya wasn’t sure how to answer many of them, but she got a lot of ideas for her story.

Questions to talk about:
1. How do you think Maya feels about her super-great-granddad?
2. Why did Maya’s super-great-granddad’s father come to America?

Questions to talk about:
1. What do you think Maya’s super-great-granddad may have liked about being a cowboy?
2. If you were going to write a story, who would you write about?
Two weeks passed. Maya wrote a story about her super-great-grandfather and got an A++. She sat down and wrote a new poem.

**An Almost Perfect Day**

It’s an a-okay day,
An almost perfect day.
Many things, a lot of things,
Have really gone my way!

The corner kick was fine,
A soccer game so fine.
Perfect, truly perfect,
That winning goal was mine!

An e-mail from pal Ben,
Funny, just plain Ben.
Awesome, really awesome,
Bones from way back when!

It’s been a super day,
An almost perfect day.
Many things, a lot of things,
Have really gone my way!

I’ve listened to my child read the passage, and we’ve discussed the questions.

Date __________  Signed __________________________________________

Optional Second Reading (initial here): ________

Please listen to your child read the story for accuracy and expression. You may wish to have your child read a second time to strengthen skills.
Modified Practiced Passage

That Kind of Day

It was a perfect day, until Maya got an e-mail from her friend Ben. Maya stomped around the apartment. Then she sat down and wrote a poem.

A Yucky, Yucky Day

It’s been that kind of day,
A yucky sort of day.
Nothing, absolutely nothing,
Nothing’s gone my way!

Got mud on my new shirt,
I stained my birthday shirt.
Awful, absolutely awful,
As bad as eating dirt!

Mom packed a yummy lunch,
My favorite-ever lunch.
Yucky, absolutely yucky,
To find a bug to munch!

The soccer game was on,
The kick was mine or gone.
Shocking, absolutely shocking,
To find my face on the lawn!

My bestest friend is Ben,
Funny, just plain Ben.
Awful, absolutely awful,
He’s on the move again!

It’s been that kind of day,
A yucky sort of day.
Nothing, absolutely nothing,
Nothing’s gone my way.

Questions to talk about:
1. What kind of mood was Maya in?
2. What went wrong for Maya the day she wrote this poem?

Questions to talk about:
1. What happened when Maya was playing soccer?
2. What is Ben going to do? How does Maya feel about that?
3. What do you do when you have a yucky day?